

# WORKERS

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## BREXIT: STOP THE SABOTAGE

**Scotland** SNP antics fail

**Rail** Timetable chaos

**Construction** Crisis looms

**Steel** On the edge

**Midlands** New renaissance

**CPBML** Fifty years on

**NHS** Pay settlement

*plus* News,

**The Manifesto** Music revival

**Book Reviews**

**Galileo** EU blackmail

**and more**

# WORKERS



## Be prepared to walk away

WHAT ON EARTH is the government doing? The clarity of the referendum two years ago appears to have become mired in a desperate – and futile – search to come up with a plan that the EU will like. That’s not what we voted for.

The tangle of detail and objections is designed to trap us in the EU net. It’s clear that the EU wants a bad deal that will deter any other country from leaving its fracturing club. So we must insist the government walk away from the table.

It’s clear, too, that our own political generals have no stomach for the fight. While the government is taking a “collaborative” approach to negotiations, the EU is just lapping up concession after concession. We run the risk of settling for an even more slavish relationship than before June 2016.

The “negotiations” are matched by lack of prepa-

rations for independence, such as building the necessary infrastructure to enforce control over our economy, borders and laws. In practice this amounts to sabotage.

And all the while parliament, with its massive majority of MPs who voted Remain, is promoting the sabotage, supported by the Lords. Both houses talk about constitution and sovereignty, but what they mean is that they are sovereign over the people.

Only the fact of the 17.4 million Leave voters – and no sign of regrets, in fact the opposite – holds them to any appearance of carrying out our decision. We must act, and act now.

Let’s return to the simplicity of our decision. Reinstating the red lines for Brexit. That would terrify the EU would-be masters. Only then can real negotiations begin – from the true position of British strength. ■

## Things fall apart

ANOTHER MONTH, another EU crisis meeting in Brussels. Over the weekend of 23/24 June it was the turn of migration to top the agenda.

For all the talk of “European solidarity” the EU’s summits are increasingly looking like meetings of Mafia families, each jostling for power and worried about their own skins – especially Germany’s Merkel.

The insults flew. Italian interior minister Matteo Salvini called France’s president Macron “arrogant”.

Macron warned darkly about countries “that massively voice their national selfishness” and talked about nationalism spreading “like leprosy”. Hungary, Slovakia, Poland and the Czech Republic weren’t even invited – and would have boycotted anyway.

As things fall apart, none of them will acknowledge that the rise of openly neofascist parties all over Europe is a direct consequence of their own migration policies. Reaction is driving reaction. ■



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## Construction crisis looms

BRITAIN NEEDS to build, rebuild and renovate many thousands of homes and workplaces, and also to radically overhaul infrastructure. But a crisis is looming because large numbers of British builders are nearing retirement and not being replaced, leaving Britain desperately dependent on EU labour.

Although 90 per cent of workers in the construction industry are British, builders from overseas, and particularly the EU, make up a growing proportion of the workforce, particularly at the younger end. Almost half of British nationals in the industry are aged 45 or over, whereas 50 per cent of those from overseas are aged 35 or under.

The situation will be particularly acute in London. The Office for National Statistics found 28 per cent of construction workers in the capital come from the EU, while 7 per cent are non-EU nationals. Just two-thirds of the construction workers in London are British.

If these trends are not tackled, Britain will be left with an ageing set of workers and few replacements at a time when we have so many construction needs before and after Brexit.

A crisis can still be averted. But it will call for something quite rare, something very strange to recent capitalism. It will call for concerted planning as well as many-pronged interventions by government, the civil service, construction companies, schools and colleges to ensure youngsters are encouraged into high-quality apprenticeships, courses and training in order to provide the next generation of vital skilled builders that Brexit Britain will require in the future.

Things must happen. Inactivity and disdain are not acceptable. Our country and its economy have to be nurtured by positive actions. ■

## CHILD HEALTH

### Teachers helping out

THE HYGIENE LEVELS of a growing number of children attending primary schools are so bad that teachers are having to provide basic items of personal hygiene to large numbers of them.

A survey carried out by charity In Kind Direct shows that one in three teachers are providing pupils with products such as toothpaste and soap, while 80 per cent of primary school teachers have seen a rise in the number of children arriving at school unwashed or not looking presentable in the last five years.

Across Britain, 18 per cent of teachers say they intervene on a weekly basis – with the rate as high as 50 per cent in London. ■

## UNIVERSAL CREDIT

### Losing out

THE CHARITY Gingerbread has warned that single parents, particularly those who are working, are losing out under Universal Credit. The charity says that single parents will be £1,300 per year worse off by 2020 on Universal Credit than on the old benefits system. Citizens Advice has warned that continuing payment delays which leave a fifth of people not receiving their full entitlement on time, and a tenth not receiving any money on time, are putting people “at risk of falling behind on bills and getting into debt – a heavy price to pay for a system not working properly.”

Meanwhile, StepChange Debt Charity has said that a fifth of people seeking help from them are struggling with additional vulnerabilities such as illness or bereavement. ■

If you have news from your industry, trade or profession call us on 020 8801 9543 or email [workers@cpbml.org.uk](mailto:workers@cpbml.org.uk)



Photo courtesy GMB Scotland



Pickets outside the HQ of East Dunbartonshire Leisure &amp; Culture Trust in Kirkintilloch.

## ON THE WEB

A selection of additional stories at [cpbml.org.uk](http://cpbml.org.uk)...

### The EU's Italy debacle

The crisis over the makeup of Italy's government shows the EU is afraid of the country's people.

### Myth and manoeuvring over the Irish border

The whole issue, "backstop" or none, is being used as a backdoor way of delaying and perhaps blocking Brexit.

### Fish: Scandal of discards ban

The EU could bankrupt most of the UK fishing fleet during the transition period.

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## SERVICES

### Dunbarton strike

PICKETS WERE out in force in East Dunbartonshire at the end of June at various council-run venues after more than 500 Unison members voted unanimously for strike action for four days up to 26 June over cuts to terms and conditions including reductions to holidays.

They will join with Unite and GMB members in "a summer of discontent". This will mean the closure of all schools, nurseries, libraries and museums in the county during the days of the action.

Shortly before the action began, in

what the GMB trade union called "a major test of the Scottish government's public pay policy", 92 per cent of their members working in Scotland's 32 local authorities rejected the latest pay offer on 19 June.

The employers had made an offer including rises of 3 per cent for earners of up to £36,500 and 2 per cent for those earning more, up to £80,000. Union members affected cover posts such as home carers, school cleaners, pupil support assistants and workers in refuse disposal and roads & maintenance.

The union pointed to a decade of wage cuts and freezes in real terms, and deteriorating conditions. The lowest paid have been worst hit. ■

## 'Right to buy' – but no money

THE DEMAND for housing continues to rise, with continuing uncontrolled migration into Britain playing a significant part. As prices have continued to rise, wages have not kept up, so many are seeking low-cost housing from a sharply dwindling supply.

Since Thatcher launched her attack on public housing – until then known as council housing – there has been an ever-downward spiral in provision. Now it is renamed "social housing", or, even worse, "affordable housing" (who decides what others can afford?). New figures show there has been a collapse of new builds in what is left of the public sector.

The number of social homes being built has fallen from 39,402 in 2009/10 to just 1,409 in 2017/18. This is under 3 per cent. The total for 2017/18 exceeds that for the year before, with the Government promising new investment in low-cost housing in the wake of the Grenfell tragedy. Dominic Raab, the Housing Minister, said: "We are ambitious to do much more to build the homes Britain needs, and to make them more affordable for those on low and middle incomes." Fine words.

Thatcher's main weapon of choice, "Right to Buy", remains. Despite the hundreds of thousands of homes this moved into the private sector with its rapidly rising prices, the scheme was revamped recently in an attempt to clear out homes owned by Housing Associations and other "social housing". The effects are now being felt.

Councils have warned that they need more money to replace properties sold off to social housing tenants under the Right to Buy scheme. More than 60,000 houses have been sold through Right to Buy, some at half the market rate, in the past six years. With the government taking some of the sale cash, councils have been left with enough for just 14,000 replacements, prompting the Local Government Association to call for a "fundamental reform of the way the scheme is funded".

The association says two-thirds of councils in England will not be able to replace the same number of homes they sell under the scheme in five years' time. ■

## NORTH SEA Ballot on Total rigs

UNITE IS balloting workers at three of Total's North Sea oil rigs for industrial action following the company's refusal to reduce the number of unpaid working days. The Alwyn, Dunbar and Elgin-Franklin rigs are sited northeast of Aberdeen.

Before the oil crash of 2014, workers worked 2 weeks offshore (12 hour shifts each day) followed by 3 weeks at home.

Workers agreed that, twice a year, they'd work 3 weeks offshore followed by 2 weeks at home – generating 14 additional working days with no extra pay – until the company finances improved.

In 2014 oil was \$28 a barrel but has since risen to \$78 a barrel. Total's net profit rose by 28 per cent last year, but it is refusing to return to the previous practice.

Unite has attacked the French company's intransigence as staggering. Action could involve an overtime ban or a series of 24-hour strikes. ■



Caron Badkin/shutterstock.com

The modernist entrance to New Street station, Birmingham.

## West Midlands renaissance

THE WEST Midlands is undergoing a rebirth, with more jobs created than in any other region, a trade surplus with China, and businesses like HSBC UK relocating to the region.

Birmingham still needs an extensive integrated public transport network. But there is progress – the building of HS2 and of new rail stations, improvements in the region's train services, the creation of new rapid bus routes with newer cleaner buses, and the extension of the Metro system across the region, creating a "Crossrail for the West Midlands".

These infrastructure projects are on a scale not been seen in the region since the 19th century. But air pollution causes 1,600 premature deaths in the West Midlands every year and some roads have higher pollution levels than the insides of bus depots. Birmingham City Council has proposed a Clean Air Zone for the city. Some urge an urban National Park around the Tame Valley and an urban green space like the New York Highline.

The region's manufacturers are already addressing the air quality problem. The latest diesel engine technology is the cleanest yet and is constantly improving. NOx and particulate emissions from Jaguar Land Rover diesels are comparable to petrol, with 20 per cent lower CO2 emissions.

Electric vehicles are the future, and the region's automotive companies have made plans. Geely has invested £300 million in building the new electric London taxi and electric vans in Coventry. GKN is investing tens of millions in developing electric axle systems, and Jaguar Land Rover is spending hundreds of millions more on the company's Solihull plant to prepare it for the electric vehicle revolution. The government has supported these developments, funding the new Faraday Battery Institution at Warwick University to research electric battery storage technology.

The Local Industrial Strategy in the West Midlands is designed to grow this sector, where the region already has a world-class competitive advantage. New clean vehicles and components will be exported around the world, supporting thousands of jobs and keeping British engineering at the forefront of automotive manufacturing. We need a thought-through plan which gives manufacturers the time to develop these new technologies and bring them into production. ■

## WHAT'S ON

### Coming soon

#### JULY

Wednesday 11 July, 7.30pm

Brockway Room, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL

"Brexit: Stop the Sabotage!"

CPBML Public Meeting

Brexit is in danger. Across the establishment, in the Commons and the Lords, those who wish to defy the democratic mandate of the EU referendum are moving from obstruction to sabotage. They will do anything to keep Britain in the EU. They must be stopped. Come and discuss. All welcome.

Saturday 14 July

Durham Miners' Gala, 8am to 5pm

The biggest labour movement gathering of the year. For details of this year's event, see [www.durhamminers.org/gala](http://www.durhamminers.org/gala)

Friday 20 July to Sunday 21 July

Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival, Tolpuddle, Dorset



Workers

The annual festival commemorates the Tolpuddle Martyrs, six farm labourers deported to Australia in 1834 for the crime of forming a trade union. Costs £40 for the music part of the festival on Friday and Saturday. Sunday is free. The traditional procession starts at 2pm on the Sunday. For more detail, see [www.tolpuddlemartyrs.org.uk](http://www.tolpuddlemartyrs.org.uk)

#### SEPTEMBER

Sunday 2 September, 11am to 5pm

Burston School Strike Festival, Burston, Near Diss, Norfolk

Annual rally to celebrate the longest strike in history. Organised by Unite with assistance from the South East Region of the TUC, The Burston Strike School Trustees and Thompson Solicitors. See [burstonstrikeschool.co.uk/rally2018/](http://burstonstrikeschool.co.uk/rally2018/)

Two years after the referendum, how far are we along the striking out for a truly independent nation?

# Take control for an inde



Lenscap Photography/shutterstock.com

The headlines on 23 June 2016 as the people of Britain set out to vote in the great Brexit referendum.

REFERENDUMS ARE the best expressions we have of real democracy, government by the people. In 2016 every individual was asked what they wanted, yes or no to the EU. People approached the question, and the democratic manner in which it was being asked, straightforwardly because they came out and voted. The decision must be carried out.

Yet now we find politicians taking an infuriatingly slow and halting approach to leaving. And with every pause and concession the EU becomes even more aggressive, intransigent and insulting.

Britain is treated as a security risk that can't be trusted with data from the Galileo satellite navigation system (developed with British knowhow and money – see page 8). The EU won't even allow air traffic organisations to discuss how to keep planes in the air after Britain leaves should there be no Brexit deal (see Box, page 7). Brussels says

- This article is adapted from a speech given at the CPBML May Day rally in London in on 1 May 2018.

it can't bend "the rules". But it has only one rule: to make it as hard as possible for any country to leave its coercive club.

The government will not negotiate terms in the spirit of the referendum result. Home Secretary Amber Rudd was planning to water down border controls after Brexit in a "labour mobility partnership" before she resigned.

We have the prospect of giving way on leaving the EU customs union – the so-called "hybrid option". And then there's the "huge obstacle" created over the eminently solvable issue of the Irish border.

## Contempt

Those who want to stop Brexit show contempt for democracy, and contempt for the people. They also show the deep lack of self-confidence in Britain's establishment circles. They assume we are weak and the EU is strong, while the reverse is true.

They say the margin of victory was insignificant. No. It was clear. 17.4 million voted to leave – numerically the largest vote for anything or anyone in Britain.

They say people didn't understand what they were voting for or were led astray by Leaver lies. Actually, research by Rob Ford, professor of political science at Manchester University, shows that people made up their own minds, relatively unaffected by the campaigns. And they didn't trust what politicians from either side said.

They sneer at the 17.4 million. We are a mix of racists and xenophobes (a desire to exert national control couldn't be anything else could it?). We're little Englanders (even the Welsh apparently), and "populists" – an insult for those who won't support corrupt governments. We're stupid and unthinking (if we weren't we would have listened the

**'They assume we are weak and the EU is strong. The reverse is true.'**

# path to freeing ourselves from the EU, taking control and Independent Britain

Project Fear of Osborne, Cameron and their establishment friends). We didn't know what was good for us – how could Cornwall and Wales be so in favour of leaving when the charitable EU had given them so much grant money? Perhaps because they remembered it was our money in the first place.

Remainers say the referendum wasn't valid because it bypassed parliament – and MPs know better what is good for us. MPs are fond of defining democracy as the supremacy of parliament. So now they pit parliament against the people.

Yet for years MPs nodded through EU diktats without debate in the form of parliamentary secondary legislation. These self-styled democrats want to see parliament become a regional council under orders from the EU. They say if we had another chance to vote, there would be a different decision. In fact poll after poll shows that however they voted most people now just want to get on with it.

Instead of leaving cleanly in March 2019 we are now to suffer a woeful “transition” or “implementation” period (implementation of what, if nothing is agreed?). So no real leaving until the end of 2020, if then.

The red lines for Brexit must remain: control of our borders, economy, trade, laws and money. Having decided to take control at last, we must not hand it back to the EU.

## What independence means

In the fog of negotiations a negative line of thought has emerged – the call for “free trade” after Brexit. Trading independently with other countries across the world on a mutually beneficial basis is nothing to do with so-called “free trade”, which is free only for capitalism.

The free trade lobby wants to revive the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership or TTIP, where international capitalism will be given a free ride whatever the cost to our economy. This is the opposite of taking control.

Instead of planning what we can do here, free marketeers say just import as cheaply as possible from elsewhere – be it people, goods, energy, food, transport.

Thatcher said “There is no such thing as society.” Well, she's dead and gone. Taking control means an end to her dead spirit.

## EU tries aviation blackmail

THE EUROPEAN Commission has banned the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) from talking with the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) about fallback arrangements in the event of no deal on Brexit, jeopardising travel across Europe.

Why such an extraordinary act? A Times article on 18 June explains it as “a move to raise pressure on No 10”. One thing is clear: the “pressure” Brussels believes it is applying is designed to remove the no-deal option from the table.

So why the ban on allowing aviation safety regulators from communicating, other than it has all the outward appearance of a “difficult obstacle”? Aviation is an easy target because it is not covered by WTO rules, unlike trade.

Aviation safety looks like a good candidate as an “obstacle” but only if there is a failure to prepare before Britain leaves in March 2019. A mutual recognition agreement which would minimise disruption could be drawn up in 9 months – but the EU says talks cannot start until December.

The best way to fail to prepare is to prevent the CAA and EASA from communicating prior to Brexit. If successful, Theresa May and her Brussels counterparts will have the necessary excuse to add another year to the schedule in the event of “no-deal”. Perhaps the EU thinks that after all that time Britain will simply forget to leave. It has another think coming.

Pilots union BALPA is reported as saying a Brexit “no deal” would spell disaster for UK aviation”. But it proposes no alternative other than staying part of EASA, even though bilateral agreements would be a better solution.

Meanwhile, the US regulator, the FAA, has given assurances that it will accommodate a ‘no deal’ outcome, despite the *Times* claim that “America could refuse during that time to recognise European planes that include parts made in Britain.”

The UK has clout in the aviation industry but will Theresa May's government, replete with remainers, fail to use this advantage? Only if we allow it. ■

Capitalism has refused to invest in our most valuable resources, especially our people.

This must change. We must talk about taking control, not taking back control, because we never had it in the first place. Now we have the chance to assert it. We must ensure control by the people for the people.

For instance, we know that fishing is an essential resource for our island nation, a resource which has been largely handed over to the EU. Time to seize it back as a central part of our future economy and for a healthy life.

The knowledge needed to plan an economy resides in the people – regardless of how they voted in the referendum. Drop those old divisions. Together we can look forward and plan for the future.

Investment in the young is a test of the health of an economy – they are the future. During our membership of the EU we have had zero hours, the “gig economy”, landlords fleecing young tenants, debt, sky high

house prices driven by complete lack of regulation and national control of the housing market, all fuelled by hundreds of thousands of young people flocking every year to Britain from elsewhere in the EU since 2004. All are a testament to the utter failure of the “free market” in Britain and most of the rest of Europe.

Our country is in a bad way. The social and legal structures required for a civilised society have been or are being dismantled, as cuts and privatisation force us into the arms of the market.

There's a great deal to do. Brexit enables the people to make Britain different and far better. But it won't fall into our lap. We must decide to do it. And it certainly won't happen if we wait for it to be directed from above.

Of course we need new skills. But we must recognise that there has been a concerted deskilling – with many employers

*Continued on page 8*

*Continued from page 7*

jettisoning skilled workers while failing to invest in the training and machinery a modern economy needs. This is not new – and isn't only due to the EU – but it's now made much worse by employers grabbing full advantage of an infinite supply of cheap labour from abroad, particularly from the EU.

And it's not just a low skill problem. Talk of attracting “the brightest and the best” from abroad exploits those countries which are losing their skilled workers to a Britain unwilling to invest in training and upskilling our own people.

The NHS, for example, operates a corrupt system which steals trained health staff from abroad while doing its best to deter our own young people from training by loading them with debt. And where they do train, they work in tough conditions on low pay.

If it's cheaper to import – whether brains or goods – that's what the employers will do if they can get away with it.

The lie that nations and their peoples can't match up to the tasks and provide for their own future is at the heart of the EU project. Open borders and uncontrolled immigration make it impossible to plan a future – both here and in the countries enduring widespread emigration of their peoples.

When we are united, we are strong. Remember how we defeated the push to join the euro? Despite heavy pressure, it was impossible to force through in the teeth

of popular opposition, including some prominent people in the government.

Fishermen and their coastal communities from northern Scotland to southern England have built a strong movement for a clean Brexit in spite of their relatively small numbers – because people at large see their importance.

The popular desire to take control has been no thanks to our trade unions. With honourable exceptions such as the RMT, the unions mostly ignored the anti-trade union record of the EU and either stayed on the fence or shamefully encouraged members to vote Remain. Advice which most of their members ignored.

There is still much to do to bring the focus back on the founding aims of British trade unions – the fight to maintain and improve pay and conditions in the workplace – an essential aspect of taking control. But first the members themselves must take control of their own unions.

### Fear

Populism has come to be a term of abuse. Why? There is acute fear of the ideas of the people. Any movement which rejects the establishment view is treated with fear and hostility. They do not trust the people to make intelligent choices.

But there is nothing wrong with speaking in defence of your country, its people, its history and its democracy.

There is no such thing as a citizen of a

## 'Populism has come to be a term of abuse. Why?'

country without borders – you become subject to laws and powers that can't be held to account. That is undemocratic. Without national sovereignty, we can't take control and will be ruled by “the market”.

Only sovereign nations, not blocs, can be a force for peace. Yet some who condemn the EU say at least it has kept the peace. Not true – look at the Balkans, Ukraine, the Middle East. And now its drive to increasing centralisation and an EU army enables it to represent US interests in Europe even more efficiently.

Leaving the EU will not by itself lead to independence, but unless we leave we cannot achieve it. Once we leave we can decide on these matters for ourselves. We must take responsibility for our vote for change and make sure we carry it through.

We need not be despondent. We should be full of cautious optimism. Our decision to leave, combined with determination to see it through, can be a huge step forward.

Embrace the change we decided to make! Seize the opportunity for democratic renewal! Take control for an independent Britain! ■



### CPBML/Workers Public Meeting, London Wednesday 11 July, 7.30 pm “Brexit: Stop the Sabotage”

**Brockway Room, Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, WC1R 4RL**

Brexit is in danger. Across the establishment, in the Commons and the Lords, those who wish to defy the democratic mandate of the EU referendum are turning from obstruction to sabotage. And they must be stopped. Come and discuss. All welcome



**With its decision to block Britain from sensitive parts of the Galileo project, the EU is treating us like an enemy...**

# EU space blackmail

THE BATTLE over Brexit is now reaching into space, following the EU's decision to exclude Britain from "sensitive" areas of the Galileo satellite navigation project.

It's a decision that has drawn anger from government – as a source said, "It implies they wish to treat us as a hostile state, which is frankly laughable."

Even Labour's Hilary Benn was moved to say in the Commons, "The European Commission's approach in this matter is counterproductive and, in suggesting that the UK could suddenly become a security risk after we have left, frankly insulting."

It is also a decision that shows how the politics of the EU – and above all its determination to make it as hard as possible for any country to leave – count more than efficiency, common sense or even money.

The Galileo project is aimed at producing an independent European global positioning system that would mean countries don't have to rely on the US's GPS or Russia's Glonass for positioning signals. (China is currently upgrading its own system, known as BeiDou-2.)

Galileo is also more accurate than any of its competitors, providing resolution down to one centimetre to governments and paying commercial customers.

Galileo also has what it calls a Public Regulated Service (PRS) to ensure continuity "when access to other navigation services may be degraded" and built in resistance to malicious interference. In the modern world, access to a system like this is essential for a country's security.

Now the EU, led by the European Commission, is saying Britain will no longer have access to the development of the PRS. Already, one secure data repository has been moved from Southampton to Spain.

It has also barred British companies from bidding for Galileo contracts – on the basis that they are a security risk! Not only does this deprive companies here of work,

**'Nothing matters more than the United States of Europe.'**



ESA/CNES/ARIANESPACE-Service Optique CSG, G. Barbastie

**March 2015: two Galileo satellites lift off from the Spaceport in French Guiana.**

but without British skills the whole project could take three years longer, cost billions more and almost certainly work less well.

But all this counts for nothing with the EU. It wants to let all its member states know that however much money they have contributed, whatever knowhow they have put in, all that will be lost if they leave the EU. Nothing matters more than locking nations into the most important project of all, the United States of Europe.

## The enemy

Years into a project to which Britain has contributed €1.4 billion (more than 10 per cent of the cost so far), we are told we can have no further say in its development nor know anything about how it works. That would put Britain's security into the hands of the EU, which is already treating us like an enemy.

The government response so far has been robust, saying that Britain will develop its own system (possibly in partnership with Australia). "Any gap in UK involvement in the design and development of Galileo and PRS, whereby the UK is unable to manufacture components or assure those manufactured by Member States at any point, will constitute an irreparable security risk," the

government said in a statement on 24 May. "It will mean the UK will not be able to rely on the system for our own security and defence needs."

It should start right now: as the events with Galileo have demonstrated, Britain cannot conceivably rely on the European Union for any part of its national security. Yes, there will be a cost, but it is a cost worth paying.

And the government is clear that we have the ability to do it: "The development of a domestic system is economically viable and made possible by the expertise of the UK space sector," it said. So get moving!

Commentators note that the EU move puts the December agreement on the Brexit transition in jeopardy. And so it should. That agreement was crystal clear that UK participation in EU projects would be "unaffected" and continue for the "entire lifetime of the projects".

The British government has already told Brussels that it wants its €1.4 billion back – a demand predictably dismissed by the EU as baseless. The government should tell the EU that either we get it back, or they get nothing at all of the promised £39 billion Brexit settlement. ■

**It's been called the biggest disaster to befall our railways  
privatised rail industry and an inept government that does**

# The day the timetable fell

AFTER WHAT HAS been described as a "meltdown" of the timetable, Britain's rail industry is now mired in the worst crisis since a succession of serious accidents resulted in private infrastructure owner Railtrack being effectively nationalised in 2002. And the crisis will be with us for a long time to come.

Key infrastructure and rolling stock enhancements in the London area and the north west region allowing the opening up of many new routes and services resulted in a complete recast of much of the timetable that started on 20 May. That new timetable literally fell apart on the first day, and during the following week Thameslink operator Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) cancelled an average of 500 trains a day, 13 per cent of its services. Arriva Northern, which runs local services across northern England, failed to run around 11 per cent of its trains – 300 services a day.

Any timetable change that changes established travel patterns is never initially well received as commuters figure out how they will get to work. But irritation quickly turned to anger when it became pot luck. Trains ran as and when they could, going to unfamiliar stations in London and Manchester, with many trains missing stops out. Thousands of people were (and still are) getting to their workplaces late every day.

Rail staff, too often kept in the dark by their employers, have borne the brunt of this chaos as frustrated passengers vent their anger, and assaults have rocketed.

## The blame game

The chaos continues, with no sign of an end. Inevitably, politicians of every hue have wanted to get their faces in the paper or on TV clamouring for action by someone – anyone! They blame the government, the private train companies, Network Rail, or the unions, depending on their political position. And these all blame each other.

What is clear is that a number of factors combined to produce the timetable debacle. And the root cause is the complexity of the fragmented privatised rail industry coupled with an inept government that fails to understand how the industry works.

In London, the Thameslink route is at the centre of the problems. A project initially called Thameslink 2000 has finally been



Rcsprinter123 (CC-BY-SA 3.0)

**All shiny, the first 150 unit to bear the new Northern livery. Meanwhile, the franchise cancelled 500**

delivered – 18 years late! So they had plenty of time to plan for its implementation.

New direct services using new trains have begun between Peterborough, Cambridge and Bedford to the north of London and Brighton, Horsham, Littlehampton and Maidstone to the south. Advanced automated signalling systems have been commissioned by Network Rail, which resulted in the ability to timetable 18 trains an hour through the central section between St Pancras and Blackfriars, to be increased to 24 trains an hour in December. Trains have been diverted through this section from London termini such as King's Cross and Victoria. With these huge changes, timetables for much of the south east have been totally revised, with knock-on effects for longer-distance trains.

The government began this sorry saga in 2013 by ignoring expert advice from Network Rail that the timetable obligations it was expecting from the then new franchise holder GTR were unworkable. It then

demanded from Network Rail a significant cut in timetable planning resources while at the same time requiring huge increases in new train services. To cap it all, it then delayed crucial decisions about the phasing in of the new services which left Network Rail's overstretched timetable planners with an impossible task.

Inevitably, Network Rail was only able to produce the timetable with weeks to go before the launch. Poor management and planning by GTR then resulted in far fewer drivers being trained for the new routes. On day 1, only 9 of the 90 Peterborough drivers needed to run the service were trained.

The north west region has seen the opening of a new line allowing trains to run between Manchester's Victoria and Piccadilly stations. That line opened on time, but electrification schemes between Manchester and Preston, and between Preston and Blackpool, have over-run.

The new electric trains that were to have run on these lines could not do so, so the

in peacetime history – caused by the complexity of the  
n't understand how the industry works...

# ell apart



0 trains a day when the new timetable came in.

existing diesel trains have continued to run, causing a shortage of trains elsewhere. This was exacerbated by the long-running dispute between Arriva Northern and the RMT over the government's pig-headed decision to reduce costs by undermining safety and encouraging Arriva Northern to remove guards in the teeth of opposition from the union and passengers alike. A delay in reaching an agreement with drivers' union Aslef over working rest days added to the mix, delaying driver training for new routes.

## Carillion

The electrification delays were partly down to the collapse of Carillion, the main contractor for the work – yet another example of a government failure of contracting out public services to a company that was well known to be a financial basket case. And poor ground conditions slowed the erecting of electrification equipment, with uncharted old mine workings a major problem.

The road to disaster was well and truly

set. Senior managers began to see the reality of the looming timetable fiasco. But they still pressed on without contingency plans and without telling the people they call “customers” that their working lives were going to be turned upside down from 20 May.

As the façade crumbled and scratch services were put in place, GTR and Arriva Northern failed to update information systems – including their websites. Staff were left in the invidious position of not knowing what was going on.

Trains were shown that did not exist. Late trains were told to miss out stops to catch up on their schedule, but no one was telling those waiting at intermediate stations. In some cases passengers were surprised to find the train they were on hurtling through the station they wanted to get off at. On the first day, there were four-hour gaps in some services.

Secretary of State for Transport Chris Grayling leapt to blame Network Rail for the timetable meltdown, no doubt driven by his hatred for the public sector and his pressing need to find someone to blame. A Labour Party move to capitalise on the discomfort of “Failing Grayling” by moving a vote of no confidence in the Commons was defeated by Tory MPs from the suburbs keen to be seen to reflect the anger of their commuter constituents but too timid to follow through.

As TSSA General Secretary Manuel Cortes observed: “A responsible general takes responsibility for what happens on his watch. Grayling is not of that mould. He has blamed unions, then industry bosses, anybody but himself. But on his watch our rail network has simply fallen apart.”

RMT General Secretary Mick Cash said: “It is clear as day that both Govia and Arriva are in breach of their franchise terms by any reasonable measure [...] Both these cowboy outfits should be stripped of their franchises with the public sector given a chance to run the services based on the principles of safety, reliability and accessibility and not private greed.”

Faced with explaining his part in the timetable fiasco to the Transport Select Committee, the Chief Executive of GTR resigned. It is only a matter of time until Grayling is forced out too.

There is no sign of an end to the “emer-

**‘Travellers to Windermere in the Lake District were left with no trains at all for the foreseeable future.’**

gency” timetable that has been introduced, which left travellers to Windermere in the Lake District with no trains at all for the foreseeable future. Services have now been started by a heritage train operator using old British Rail trains.

The timetable crisis is not the only problem besetting the railways. The industry regulator, the Office of Rail and Road, announced on 14 June that for the first time since 2010 franchised rail passenger journeys in Great Britain fell to 1,705 million in 2017-18, driven by a 9.2 per cent fall in season ticket journeys.

Over the past two decades passenger numbers have grown substantially, and recent rail franchises awarded to companies like Arriva Northern and South West Railways have been based financially on that growth continuing. But rises in ticket prices coupled with increasingly unreliable services have throttled demand, and these private companies now face an uncertain future.

The government has had to take the East Coast line back into state control again, reviving the old LNER name last used in 1947, after the Stagecoach/Virgin East Coast company effectively went bust. Grayling was compelled to renationalise despite his deep ideological opposition to doing so. With over-optimistic financial forecasts by other recent franchisees, more may follow soon.

Instability in rail was underlined by the announcement in June by Alstom, the company that services and maintains the Virgin West Coast trains, that 200 staff are facing redundancy. Some depots are closing, and the remaining staff are being expected to work longer hours on worse contracts of employment. ■

## With tariff wars looming, Britain needs to look to its own industrial needs for steel...

# Steel: on the edge

WORLD RAW STEEL production capacity far exceeds current demand. That's the background against which the USA has imposed tariffs on imported steel. But Britain has quite different interests from the EU in responding to that development.

Most of the increase in steel production capacity since 2000 has been in China, which is currently responsible for around half of world production (see box). The result has been a flood of underpriced steel and closures in producing countries.

Members of the G20, comprising the largest industrialised and developing nations, agreed a deal in November 2017 intended to address the implications for their home industries. This mainly focused on China. The EU is the largest open market for steel in the world, so is vulnerable to increased imports in response to tariffs elsewhere.

The USA imposed 25 per cent import tariffs on steel imports this March (and also a lower tariff on aluminium). This may undermine the 2017 agreement, but is not a straightforward response to that or necessarily directed solely at China.

Temporary exemption was granted to the EU and others. Brazil is the second highest exporter to the US, providing 13 per cent of its imports. But like South Korea, Australia and Argentina, it has now been permanently exempted from the tariff.

Tariffs were imposed on imports from the EU from 1 June. They also applied to Canada (responsible for 16 per cent of imports) and Mexico (9 per cent) after both declined to agree to changes in the NAFTA trade agreement with the US.

### Trade imbalance

Britain exports around 350,000 tons of steel a year to the US. That's less than 7 per cent of our total annual production, and worth around £350 million. This is mostly made up of specialised products, not currently available from US steelmakers. EU exports to the US, on the other hand, are valued at around £6 billion a year and comprise an inventory that US steelmakers could easily replicate.

There are also signs that imports into the EU from Turkey, which is subject to US tariffs, are increasing. These are com-

**'Steel unions have ignored the role of the EU and the opportunities that Brexit offers.'**

peting with German and other steel producers in the EU, but generally not with British products.

The response of steel unions (GMB, Unite and Community) to the US tariffs rightly attributed problems in the industry to overcapacity, but ignored the role of the EU and the opportunities that Brexit offers to make our own trade deals.

Britain needs to look to its own industrial needs for steel as well as to the future for our production. Import controls for the basic raw material, rebar, used as precursor for specialist steel production required in all aspects of engineering and construction, is a positive step forward but one that needs to be extended. Most of Britain's imports come from EU member states, Germany in particular.

Britain's current annual output is around 10 million tonnes. Germany produces at least three times that amount and benefits from generous state subsidies, particularly cheap electric power. Poland, France, Italy and Sweden have capacity in excess of our own.

### Specialist

Britain has a continuing requirement for mass production of the basic steel rebar from imported coal and iron ore. This capacity needs to be protected and developed. But although Britain is a small player in raw steel production, we are a world leader when it comes to specialist steels and associated research.

The government is promoting its industrial strategy and may be starting to confront the issues for Britain's steel industry. Working in collaboration with Liberty House headed up by the entrepreneur Sanjeev Gupta, it has pub-

## Too much of a good thing?

THE GLOBAL STEEL sector is again in a state of overcapacity, at the greatest level it has ever been. The sector, predominantly fuelled by China's expansion since 2000, has grown to over 2,300 million tonnes while only needing 1,500 million tonnes to meet global demand. Some growth in demand is predicted, but still less than planned expansion in capacity.

The result is unviable profit levels in the steel industry and an influx of cheap steel worldwide, leading to closures and disruption, as happened in the British steel sector in 2015. Countries with domestic steelmaking capacity have sought commitments from China to reduce its excess capacity and eliminate further subsidies to the sector.

China has acknowledged the problem and made commitments to reduce

capacity, which have yet to materialise. But since 2007 China has added 552 million tonnes of new capacity, equivalent to seven times total US steel production in 2015. The perceived lack of progress forms part of the justification for the recent US action on tariffs, yet only 2 per cent of US steel imports come from China

In 2016 the G20 set up the Global Forum Steel Excess Capacity, which led to the 2017 agreement. This proposed transparency between producing nations about plans and economic support. But it has no answer other than creating a level playing field between countries by restricting state subsidies. The forum says this will enable markets to function, which implies further closures and restructuring, as happened in the EU 30 years ago. ■



**Blast Furnace Number 5 at Port Talbot, South Wales.**

lished the “Greensteel” strategy. This aims to drastically slash the amount of raw material imported into Britain. To make that a reality, it proposes to dramatically increase our capacity to re-cycle scrap using electric arc technology powered by renewable energy.

Such a programme would have only a tenth of the carbon footprint generated by the use of blast furnaces. Around 6.6 million tons of raw steel are currently imported into Britain each year. But out of the 10 million tonnes of scrap steel created annually, a staggering 7.2 million tonnes is exported for processing. The amount of scrap steel is projected to double over the next 10 years.

### Investment

Liberty House aims to capitalise on this by increasing its steel recycling capacity five-fold to 5 million tonnes a year through an

investment programme costing around a billion pounds and creating hundreds of jobs. The mothballed steel plant at Newport has been reopened as has a big furnace at Rotherham. And a number of other assets have been acquired, mainly from the Tata conglomerate.

The nuclear industry, electric car development, HS2, the Northern Powerhouse and the house building programme will all require access to specialist steels. Scrap steel can be re-used by exploitation of technologies developed here in Britain.

Outside the EU our steelmakers will be the preferred supplier for this extensive programme of works, being able to compete on quality, price and delivery through local supply-chain networks and with no

legal obligation to tender with direct competitors.

It's even possible for steel produced in Britain to be exported to China. British Steel was formed out of the former Tata long steel (bars and wires) division and posted a profit for its first year of operation 2016-2017. It has secured a deal to supply crane rails for the Yangshan deep water facility in Shanghai. That's part of a £57 billion project to build the world's largest cargo port in Shanghai.

These rails are a high quality specialised product made at the Scunthorpe works and rolled at the plant in Skinningrove, Teesside. The company is also supplying other similar developments in China and aims to pick up further contracts elsewhere in Asia as a result. ■

**'We are a world leader when it comes to specialist steels and associated research.'**

## Meet the Party

**The Communist Party of Britain Marxist-Leninist's regular series of London public meetings in Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1R 4RL, will continue on Wednesday 11 July (see notice, page 8). And you can find us distributing Workers and leaflets at Tolpuddle and Burston – see page 5 for details.**

**M** **As well as our regular public meetings we hold informal discussions with interested workers and study sessions for those who want to take the discussion further. If you are interested, we want to hear from you. Call us on 020 8801 9543 or send an email to [info@cpbml.org.uk](mailto:info@cpbml.org.uk)**

On the 50th anniversary of CPBML's founding – Easter 1968 – the party: one by two who joined 50 years ago, including a

# 50 years on, why a revolution



**The comrades from 1968:** For a long time our working class - the oldest in the world - lacked one crucial element: it had not produced a true revolutionary party from its

ranks, a huge limitation in terms of its direction of travel.

It had no political body ready and willing to prepare all those wishing to end capitalism, the source of all the woes working people face.

For over two centuries our working class had battled independently in its trade unions, seeking survival by its own efforts. But by 1900 it embraced the distraction of a Labour Party and in doing so went down the path of voluntary emasculation.

Social democracy only sees workers as passive, an electoral force to be harnessed, whose lot on earth should be determined by politicians alone. This is a philosophy based on fear and hatred of the working class.

Another key impulse to the making of our Party was the negative example of the outfit pretending to be a revolutionary party, the Communist Party of Great Britain. Despite having the word communism stowed in its name, it never acted as a revolutionary organisation. It wanted to be merely a variant or even a member of the bigger social democracy, the Labour Party. It was always a revolutionary fake.

So 50 years ago, at the call mainly of industrial workers in the engineering union led by Reg Birch, our founding chairman, the Communist Party of Britain Marxist-Leninist was founded to rectify weaknesses that had long been undermining the potential of our class to take control of society.

With the CPBML there was now a revolutionary organisation produced by workers themselves, openly committed to encouraging the working class to go for revolution and the assumption of total power. Our Party was and is unlike any other organisation in Britain, wedded to achieving a ruling destiny for our class – socialism – where workers

• These are edited and shortened versions of speeches given at the CPBML May Day rally in London in on 1 May 2018.

take control of the direction of society and refashion the country in their image rather than submitting meekly to the grind of exploitation and the intimidation of oppression. The roots and origins of our Party were in the organised working class. We are an organic development of that section of our class.

From the off we insisted that our work must focus on Britain. Workers need to have not just an interest in, but an affinity for, Britain because to have any chance of influence and eventual power, a working class must feel they belong to and ultimately own a country.

Although we probably weren't fully aware of it in the early years, it now seems obvious that our Party was and is part of the reinvigoration and revival of communism in the world, following the sad decay of previous revolutions and earlier parties.

## One aim

Our Party has had one unshakeable purpose: to change the thinking of the British working class – that is, to change its ideology – so that we can secure the understanding that our survival with dignity is impossible under a declining capitalism, that only revolution and working class rule will assure work, peace and security for all. The immediate purpose of British workers must be as complete a break from the EU as is possible and the building of an independent economy that serves the interests of the people, not finance capital.

We start from the premise that it is our class that is the source of change. It is working people that make history, not MPs, not politicians, not activists, not do-gooders. We understand the proper relationship between party and class. We do not subscribe to the outlook of certain parties in the past that saw themselves as an intellectual elite of full-time, professional revolutionaries, separate at the level of ideas and importance, doling out theory to the workers.

We know that workers are thinking beings, not led or misled by anyone except perhaps themselves. Examine Britain's working class heritage and you can see there was once a tradition of strong-minded trade unionists, who were very skilled and full of intrinsic dignity, who were sure of



Workers

**Founding chairman Reg Birch speaking at an engine demonstration in 1971, against the Industrial Relations Act introduced**

themselves and acknowledged no external authority – only their unions. These characteristics are still needed. The skill, sheer professionalism and creative potential in workers is what social democracy and the establishment elites most hate and fear. As a Party, we will not be separate from the working class of Britain because we are from it.

Both the "lefty" politicians and the capitalist establishment are disdainful and contemptuous of this class force. For us, we do not seek to command the working class for it is composed of thinking beings who must be convinced themselves of the need for any course of action, whether it is leaving the EU, going for independence or making a revolution. They will have to make up their own mind for all these good things to happen properly.

Party members work in voluntary

**'We know that workers are thinking beings.'**

68 – our London May Day rally heard two reflections on a founder member, and another from a young comrade...

# Revolutionary party matters



Engineering workers' rally on Tower Hill, London, organised by the government of the day.

association, where everyone is expected to take responsibility and play a full part in developing the thinking and activity of the Party, solely for the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness and power of the working class. We operate on the willing and equal commitment of members.

We have no full-time professional revolutionaries and never will have. Communists must share the rigours of work or the nightmare of unemployment, and never be removed or be apart from the class.

The tasks of thinking, of facing up to unpleasant reality, and more importantly of suggesting ways to advance, are hard to do. To make an impact on the world, this reluctance to think and produce useful ideas has to be overcome. So in the party we reflect on and analyse current affairs in Britain and the world collectively. We prompt one another. Together we develop a strategy and tactics that not only make sense of the predicaments we face in Britain and the world but also chart a way out of the mess surrounding us.

We try to do our stuff to the best of our ability, and we want others to contribute. If you agree with our ideas, join us. ■



## The young comrade:

A founder member of our party recently said that this Party is needed more now than it was even at its inception.

To us, 50 years ago sounds like a long time, but in the course of history it is nothing, it's not even a blink of an eye. And history is important because if you refuse to learn from history then you can't make history.

So this is not an old party. This is a new party. And it is a party of a new type. It's not one of many in a shop window of consumer choice – we are not asking for votes.

It's not a single interest or lifestyle party, nor is it entryist, trying to infiltrate other parties. We are not deceitful but open and straightforward. We are not to the left of anything. We are not to the right of anything. The Party is an open proclaimer of the interests of the working class, and so it is entirely unlike any other party in Britain.

What workers want and what is in their interests are not always the same, which explains why we are so far from having socialism in Britain.

But in the EU referendum there was a convergence of what workers wanted and were prepared to vote for and what was in their class interest. This needs to develop into national class interest. The objective needs of the working class will need to become their desires. Socialism is in the interest of the working class but we will only have it when workers want it.

## Class interest

The job of identifying what is in the interests of workers as a class becomes ever more important. And that is why our party is even more necessary now than it was those 50 years ago.

This Party expresses the interest of the working class and because the working class, properly defined, comprises virtually the entire British people, then we seek to express what is in Britain's national interest.

If this Party did not exist, it would have to be created. So if you are a doer rather than a watcher then you should join us.

Progress will not come from social

media. It will come from people coming together to discuss, resolve and act. We use all the tools at our disposal just as workers always have, so we use Twitter, Facebook and the Internet just as previous generations used pamphlets and leaflets. Face-to-face contact, though, remains decisive.

The future has always belonged to the young, if for no other reason than we have more of it ahead of us. So we must take an especial responsibility for how our country moves forward. Not just by voting in a referendum when given a chance, as many of us did in 2016, but in pressing forward the case for Britain as an independent nation just as we press the case for workers as an independent class.

The particular industries that created the class which created this Party are now reduced and much changed. So young workers have to find ways to organise in new ways in new industries. Workers must overcome the fragmentation inherent in many modern industries and find ways of organising within and against Google and Uber just as previous generations had to organise in engineering and mining. The obvious difference, and difficulty, is that the older industries brought workers together whereas the newer ones keep them apart.

If you are prepared to act against war, if you are interested in making your country a better place to live in and your workplace a better place to work in, join us.

As a Party we denounce the disgusting inhuman and inhumane aggression against Syria and we call on the working class to do so. We oppose the rising hysteria of warmongering propaganda against Russia.

We call on workers to join their trade unions, to fight for better pay and conditions and to see this fight as part of the fight for lasting social progress and the taking of power by our working class.

May Day is international workers day, so we send greetings to our comrades building socialism in the world, to our friends, sisters and brothers in Cuba. We send our solidarity to those fighting aggression and backwardness in Syria and elsewhere.

And we rededicate ourselves to the enduring struggle for peace and for working class power, the only route to making lasting progress possible. ■

**Uniting Britain and defeating separatism are essential for struggle spreads in public services, transport and energy,**

# Separatist antics fail to

IN A BOOST to Brexit and the quest to achieve a fully independent Britain, defeats and afflictions on several fronts are beginning to weaken the SNP government and the wider separatist movement in Scotland. While the Welsh Assembly accepted the EU Withdrawal Bill, the Scottish Parliament did not, voting by 93 to 30 to reject consent.

The area of contention is a group of 24 areas – out of 157 devolved areas – that need to be kept under central control in order to safeguard integrity of the UK's own internal single market. This is necessary to properly negotiate trade deals outside the EU after Brexit. The 24 items cover such activities as fisheries, agriculture, food labelling, environmental protection and public procurement.

The SNP dramatised this into a “power grab by Westminster”, staged walk-outs in Parliament during June and threatened to frustrate the Brexit process by copying the tactics used by the Irish nationalist Charles Parnell in the 19th century.

It was not long before there was a growing perception around Scotland of the SNP's antics as hypocritical. Being all-supportive of the EU and demanding membership of both Customs Union and Single Market, they would, if their break-up of Britain were to be achieved, abandon control of all 157 powers back to the European Union anyway.

## No veto

The SNP case was further weakened when the architect of the devolution convention, Lord Sewel, intervened to point out that it had never been intended that any constituent part of Britain could hold an ultimate veto over matters that need to be resolved by Britain as a whole. Neither was the repatriation of Britain's powers from the EU meant to be part-distributed to Holyrood – as if the 2014 referendum to keep the UK together had never happened.

Over 40 years ago this Party fought against separatism with its pamphlet *Unity not Devolution* showing a united working class as the backbone of the nation. Several bodies are now coming onboard to seek to reverse devolution.

Of course, the SNP antics were part of a strategy to use the Brexit process to create



Workers

**Last year, three years since winning the Scottish referendum, supporters of a united Britain celebrated with the launch of the Union City Glasgow campaign. It aims to counter and reverse the notion of Glasgow as a “Yes” [to Scottish separatism] city. A large amount of publicity was generated when these banners and placards were held up as a separatist march passed.**

circumstances in which the party could demand and win a second Scottish independence referendum. Hence the launch in May of an “economic blueprint”, the Sustainable Growth Commission report. But it was roundly condemned from all sides – including by proponents of separatism.

At the SNP annual conference in Aberdeen in June over 250 people attended a fringe meeting where loud applause was given to strong criticism of the “blueprint”. As well as embracing “austerity”, it comes firmly down on the side of globalised capitalism – perhaps as an entrance essay for EU membership.

The leadership of the Scottish TUC –

who frequently bow in reverence to the EU – could only complain about being excluded from contributing to the document while praising its call for “the need for government, businesses and trade unions to work together”.

Having trotted off to Brussels the week before, SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon remarked that the SNP conference “marks the start of a new chapter on Scotland's road to independence”.

She had gained direct access to the EU's chief negotiator, Michael Barnier, to pledge allegiance to, and seek ways for Scotland to remain in, the EU Customs Union and Single Market, despite Brexit.



# securing our nation's independence. And as class support for separatism weakens...

## to derail Brexit

While Barnier complained in a speech in Lisbon that Britain was refusing to spell out exactly what it wanted, he was no doubt hearing in Brussels exactly what the Scottish separatists wanted.

It took a former SNP deputy leader, Jim Sillars, who had tirelessly campaigned for Brexit, to voice the thought that arises from this by accusing his own party of "acting like a fifth column for the EU".

In a bout of wishful thinking, the separatist movement resorted to inflating the numbers on its rallies. A body monitoring the recent SNP and "Yes" movement marches showed this conclusively. The Union City campaign in Glasgow counted the numbers as the march passed. Combined with aerial footage they demonstrated a crowd total nearer to 8,000 rather than the 80,000 claimed.

A similar exercise was carried out in Dumfries in south west Scotland. On both occasions the counter demonstration – for a united and independent Britain – was well received by the public.

### Farming

The Scottish government's proposals on farming in its Climate Change Bill were described in late June as "devastating for farming" by Quality Meat Scotland chairman Jim McLaren, speaking at the Royal Highland Show. This came just as Nicola Sturgeon and Carwyn Jones (her Welsh counterpart) addressed a conference of the British-Irish Council, calling for staying within the EU Customs Union and Single Market.

Undermining their deliberations, too, was Michael Gove's timely intervention pledging financial assistance to Scottish agriculture to ease the cessation of EU subsidies following Brexit.

Then came a joint statement from the Scottish Fishermen's Association and the National Farmers' Union urging Scottish ministers to get on with ensuring they devote enough money and manpower to implement trade and export policy following Brexit. Campaigning continues by Fishing for Leave from its HQ in Glasgow.

A steady stream of negative publicity and unrest has hampered progress for the separatists. Failings in dealing with the NHS, policing and education in Scotland are

**'The disputes encourage a turning away from separatist thought.'**

ongoing. A 5 per cent cut from central government became an 11 per cent cut to local authorities from the Scottish government.

Action by trade unions against this is beginning in earnest as we now see in the strikes organised by Unison, Unite and GMB (see page 4). The RMT, Aslef and TSSA continue their agitation against the ongoing privatisations carried out by the Scottish government, as in the cases of Northlink Ferries and train sleeper services (now run by Serco), and ScotRail (now run by Abellio).

In services, nearly 80,000 jobs have gone, while in college education 140,000 places have gone. In the year to June a total of 30 libraries closed down, up from 15 in the year before. For the previous decade such annual closures had been in single figures. The campaign Library Matters is gearing up to fight this.

In education, members of Scotland's largest teaching union, the EIS, voted in June to escalate a pay dispute to "strike readiness" and began preparing a ballot for August when summer holidays end.

Transnational energy companies have received the bulk of subsidies while smaller community energy projects get tiny loans. On 22 June Unite Scotland announced a yes vote for industrial action at Total E&P Shetland Gas Plant. Enthusiasm for this was shown by the 96.8 per cent yes with 96.9 per cent participation. Offshore members were expected to follow suit. The enforcement of three-week shift rotas was among the terms and conditions being reviewed by the company across its North Sea operations. Balloting on a separate dispute over hours was ongoing as *Workers* went to press (see page 5).

Still in the north, some success for RMT as well as Nautilus International was reported at the STUC annual conference.

While presenting the motion on support for seafarers on the Orkney Ferries, speakers from these unions outlined how they had achieved good results after a long campaign of solidarity and perseverance for better pay and conditions. They had broken the "pay cap", resulting in increased membership.

An earlier campaign by the RMT had highlighted the need for more attention to be paid to moving heavy freight by rail. This is a particular necessity in Scotland with the long distances involved. The RMT's General Secretary Mick Cash laid out the overwhelming case, citing the problem as being "a lack of strategic planning and integration as a result of our fragmented, privatised railways".

In the face of the Scottish government buying Chinese steel for the new River Forth bridge, the Community union received unanimous support from the STUC conference for its Save Our Steel campaign. They demanded the reintroduction of high quality steelmaking and slab casting facilities in Motherwell, at the Dalzell and Clydebridge plants.

### Fiasco

In late June the fracking fiasco continued when the Court of Session in Edinburgh, Scotland's supreme civil court, ruled that the long perceived Scottish government ban on fracking for shale gas was not a ban at all. Ministers had to admit that despite proclaiming a ban, they had been merely been expressing a preference.

Ineos, meanwhile, had been forced to import shale gas by sea from the USA. With a proper evaluation and solving of safety concerns, this operation based at Grangemouth could play a major role in Britain's quest for energy self-sufficiency.

The disputes within Scotland encourage a turning away from separatist thought and EU dependency. Polls reveal a steady support for a united Britain, with the "No" answer to the question "Should Scotland be an independent country?" staying at a constant 50 per cent. The question was asked between January and June by Survation, Ipsos Mori and YouGov. The "yes" reply received 42 per cent in January, 46 per cent in March and 41 per cent in June, with the rest being "don't knows". ■

**The pay agreement in the NHS has broken the freeze – and livened up union democracy...**

# Unison settles on pay



**Workers picketing at UCH Hospital, London, during the pay dispute in 2014.**

MEMBERS OF UNISON, the largest union in the NHS, have voted overwhelmingly to accept the latest pay agreement with the employers in England. Overall, 13 out of the 14 bargaining unions have said yes.

Since 2010, pay in the NHS has been cut every year. Despite the incessant and ignorant repetition that there has been a “pay rise”, or even a “pay freeze” every year, the reality is that inflation, and particularly inflation in the cost of the things workers need most to live and work, has increased by more, sometimes substantially more, than those “increases” there have been in pay.

When pay has gone up by 1 per cent and inflation by 3 per cent, then health workers have had a pay cut of 2 per cent. It’s

**‘The turnout should represent a fundamental change in how members are involved...’**

now estimated that since 2010 cuts like these have amounted to several thousand pounds for many in crucial jobs.

Hunt and his cronies were waiting to see how long we’d put up with this state of affairs. There were enough straws in the wind for them to have understood that health workers won’t put up with it any longer, and neither, for that matter, would the NHS as a whole.

And let’s not forget Brexit, allegedly the cause of all our ills. In fact, because it will be a lot harder, and hopefully impossible, for the NHS to rely on “international” (a euphemism for foreign) workers, it will also be harder to use overseas labour to hold down wages here.

## Change

All of which has meant that the new NHS pay deal is something different.

First of all, and not to be underestimated, it protects and reinforces the NHS pay system (known in the trade as Agenda for Change). Calls for its undermining or even abolition have been put to bed with this comprehensive deal.

In particular, attempts by Hunt to remove incremental progression have not only been warded off, but the scales have

been compressed, which means that it now doesn’t take as long to reach the top, the rate for the job.

Second, it is funded by government – or, at least, the first of the three years over which it operates is, and if the second two aren’t there should be hell to pay.

Third, the rises themselves, while obviously not clawing back eight years of pay cuts in one go, represent the first steps in that direction.

Fourth, there was a danger that those at the bottom of the scales would be paid less than the national minimum wage. Such an indictment, and threat to the integrity of the pay system, had to be tackled, and it was. Those closest to the bottom of the scales will now gain most in this deal.

And although the agreement covers only NHS workers in England, the unions expect that government will make money available for similar arrangements in other parts of Britain.

## Electronic voting

Unison, as the leading NHS union, has for many years been pointing out that as an alternative to simply bleating about how few members participate in ballots we should use electronic balloting. This decision has now been vindicated.

Postal turnouts of below 10 per cent have been regular, and even looked on as relatively high compared with some ballots and particularly with elections. The consultation on this deal has made a decisive turn by going online.

The turnout of 30 per cent is far from brilliant, but should represent a fundamental change in how members are involved. It’s also a creative way of addressing the fact that if the law, and our members, don’t change, Unison will never have a national dispute in the NHS again, as it’s now virtually illegal, with the requirements of the Trade Union Act meaning that more than 50 per cent need to vote in favour.

Although Unison is still a long way from that, this ballot turns an important corner. That of this higher turnout 84 per cent voted to accept shows a maturity in the membership often absent from many self-proclaimed “activists”, who will have a job on their hands to describe this as a sell-out. ■

Written in Czech in 1932, a choral version of the *Communist Manifesto* has been premiered in English...

# Marx music revival

GLASGOW HAS heard a major contribution to the celebrations of the 200th anniversary of Karl Marx's birth – and the 170th of the *Communist Manifesto* – with the remarkable revival of a long-forgotten choral setting of passages from the book itself.

The original piece was completed by the Czech composer Erwin Schulhoff in 1932 for a large array of performers – four solo singers, double choir, children's choir and large wind orchestra. The idea of presenting a first translation into singable English for the first time – as well as a reconstruction of the musical score – was the brainchild of a music student at the University of Glasgow, Harold Thalange.

Thalange also conducted the performance, at the end of April, which was given by the university's Chapel Choir and an orchestra that he had organised for the occasion, using a translation of the singable version that the Czech poet Rudolf Fuchs had made of the Marx–Engels text for Schulhoff to set to music.

## Believed lost

Schulhoff had sent the only copy of the full score to the Leningrad Conservatory for safe-keeping, but it was believed lost during the long siege of the city during the Second World War.

He had become convinced by the ideas coming out of the Soviet Union after working in Berlin in the 1920s and 1930s. He was on the run from the Nazis in the later years of the 1930s, but was captured in 1941 and died in Wülzburg concentration camp in 1942. (Fuchs also died in 1942, during an air raid in London.)

All that remained was the musical score for the voices, and from that the Czechoslovak Radio Orchestra and Choir reconstructed the instrumental parts for its first revival in 1976. Now Thalange has felt compelled by this history, and by the importance of the piece, to create for the first time an English translation in a singable version.

Musically, Thalange has used a single

**'A message vital for our future...'**

Photo courtesy Harold Thalange.



The University of Glasgow Chapel Choir perform Schulhoff's *Communist Manifesto*.

choir (sopranos, altos, tenors and basses) with 4 solo singers – and re-arranged the orchestra to consist of 13 brass players, a pianist and several percussionists. Selected singers perform the children's choir role from Schulhoff's original score.

The results were impassioned and dramatic, with excellent and enthusiastic input from the choir and powerful and convincing singing from the solo singers. Key moments from the Marx–Engels text are presented: from the "spectre" haunting Europe of the opening, the encouragement to proclaim the ideas of communism, the transformation of struggles against slavery then against feudalism and then the modern working class against capitalism.

A sequence of tenor solos interrupted by chorus drones about the destructive power of capitalism, sings of how it paves "the way for more extensive, more destructive crises". The first half ends in blazing key changes, dramatically proclaiming how workers are "the class that holds the future in its hands!" The second half is equally tumultuous, leading to the full cast finally belting out "We have nothing to lose but our chains; we have a world to win!"

When we think of the popularity of choral works like Handel's *Messiah*, it is worth noting that centuries of performance practice and refinement have contributed to creating

the near-perfect versions we know. Now we have had a single performance of a revived choral work with a message vital for our future.

It goes without saying that, given more performances, that opportunity can be taken to refine it too. Different positioning of the choir for maximum audibility of the all-important text could be tried. The use of mutes for the brass to balance better with choir and soloists could be tried – as well as employing more moments of light, shade and crescendos as the piece builds.

We have to thank Harold Thalange for this revival, for arranging, conducting and organising it. As he has hinted, there are likely to be many more gems of music and song to be uncovered that would help to shine a light on the essential Marxist message.

And thanks to Glasgow University's Chapel Choir for studying and performing the piece to such high standard. This enterprising choral group continue their weekly series of "Choral Contemplations" and are due to take their repertoire – ranging from 16th-century polyphony to new arrangements – to China when they visit in the autumn. ■

• This review was written for CPBML online by Scottish composer Eddie McGuire

## A former British ambassador to Germany analyses how it dominates the EU...

# Berlin rules



Adam Berry/EU/AFP-Service

**All very pleased with themselves: (from right to left) Martin Schulz, then President of the European Parliament, German Chancellor Angela Merkel – and their handpicked candidate for President of the European Commission, Luxembourgger Jean-Claude Juncker, 2016.**

*Berlin rules: Europe and the German way*, by Paul Lever, hardback, 276 pages, ISBN 978-1784539290, I. B. Tauris, 2017, £17.99. Kindle edition available, paperback edition due September 2018.

THIS CANDID and well-informed study of Germany's leading role in the EU is written by Sir Paul Lever, British Ambassador to Germany from 1997 to 2003. It shows how Germany has dominated other member states.

Lever accurately sums up our position in the EU before our decision to leave as "...completely without influence in the European Parliament and with no ability to persuade its fellow Council members to resist the Parliament's grab for power."

Jean-Claude Juncker was appointed Commission president in 2014 thanks to Chancellor Merkel's support. Lever explains Juncker was someone "...for whom no one in Britain had voted, who was opposed by all the main British political parties and who did not receive the vote of a single British member of the European Parliament."

All EU member governments now adopt the German policy to raise taxes and cut public spending. As this is included in the Treaty of Fiscal Union, the consequence is

that "...this view will govern the whole of the eurozone. No deviation from it will be allowed."

Lever writes, "The countries who have, at German insistence, adopted deflationary policies and budgetary austerity in order to stay within the euro will want to know what their reward will be for their sacrifice...They will, on present form, receive no answers. No political party in Germany has any plans to improve the economic situation of any of Germany's EU partners."

### How Germany benefits

Germany's economic model depends on outperforming its European partners. This is guaranteed by the way the EU works. Lever says, "Germany is by far the biggest beneficiary of the euro, just as it is of the EU's internal market. This is no coincidence. It has been German policy to ensure that the structures and rules of the EU and of the euro were cast in a German image. They have succeeded in doing so."

An example is the directive on services in the internal market. This allows companies from countries with lower social security entitlements and contribution rates to compete with those where benefits and charges were higher. "No one in the debates in the

**'All EU member governments now adopt the German policy to raise taxes and cut spending...'**

European Council or the European parliament had the courage to point out that this is precisely the logic of a single market."

This imbalance means that many of the other member states will be uncompetitive within a single currency area. They will inevitably struggle to generate the growth to sustain the fiscal discipline to which they are committed at Germany's insistence.

The result? "The social cost will continue to be huge. Countries whose economies are not as competitive as Germany's will be continually forced to deflate and to cut back on their borrowing and their public expenditure."

One example, "At an acrimonious meeting of eurozone heads of government on 11-12 July 2015 – described by some participants as the most brutal which the EU had ever experienced – the Greek government was forced to choose either to leave the euro or to accept austerity measures much more stringent than those which its citizens had rejected in a referendum only a week previously."

The EU's future is "more Europe", more integration. Lever points out that both the right-of-centre and socialist parties in Germany favour "...more integration within the EU, with the eventual goal of creating a federal European state."

In 2012 Merkel forecast that the European Commission was bound to become the government of the EU, the European Parliament its source of democratic accountability and the Council of Member States its upper chamber. When the German government was formed in 2013 the coalition agreement said, "We strive for a closer network of European forces which can evolve into a parliamentary-controlled European army." ■

The banks have managed to convince many that they create wealth. Really?

# The making of value



A clear message from the TUC anti-austerity rally in London, March 2011.

*The value of everything: making and taking in the world economy*, by Mariana Mazzucato, hardback, 358 pages, ISBN 978-0241188811, Allen Lane, 2018, £20. Paperback, Kindle and eBook editions available.

MARIANA MAZZUCATO is Professor in the Economics of Innovation and Public Value at University College London. She has researched and written about the connection between innovation and growth. See *Workers March/April 2015* for a review of her book *The Entrepreneurial State: debunking private versus public sector myths*.

Mazzucato writes that “It is...only through an open debate about value...that we can help...transform the financial sector into one that is truly focused on nurturing value creation in the real economy.” And again, “critiques...will remain powerless...until they become firmly grounded in a discussion about the processes by which economic value is created.” But she does not explore why critiques are on their own powerless to change the financial sector into a force for creating value.

She notes the labour theory of value and consistently criticises its supposed refutation by capitalist cheerleaders espousing the marginal utility theory. She writes, “Rent – which was regarded as unearned income –

was classified as a transfer from the productive to the unproductive sector, and was therefore excluded from GDP [gross domestic product]. But if, as marginal utility holds, the ‘services’ of a landlord or hedge fund manager are treated as productive, they magically become part of GDP.”

As she points out, “Until the 1970s, the financial sector was perceived as a distributor, not a creator, of wealth, engaging in activities that were sterile and unproductive. At that point, through a combination of economic reappraisal of the sector and political pressure applied by it, finance was moved from outside to inside the production boundary – and in the process wreaked havoc.”

Value extraction passed for value creation and the value extractors laughed all the way to the bank. We see this every time a retailer or service company folds after having been passed from one venture capitalist to another until nothing is left.

**‘The value extractors laughed all the way to the bank...’**

Capitalists know that the minimum labour time spent on producing a product determines its value. Marx’s labour theory of value shows how a large part of the value that we as a working class produce goes to benefit the capitalist and not society. Through exploitation “value is extracted from labour’s share of earnings in order to restore corporate profits.”

Mazzucato claims financial regulation can be used to reward long-termism and also help to direct finance towards the real economy, as opposed to feeding on itself.

But why has this rational policy not yet been implemented? Mazzucato ducks this vital question. She repeats that we can control markets, but she never says how we can do so. Merely showing that a policy is rational is not enough. For example, what happens if we try to nationalise some industries and to set up investment banks in a “mixed economy”? When we do not own the keys to all the banks, the capitalists will hit back and wipe out any gains.

## Unproductive

The financial sector does not serve the wider productive economy. The average holding time for equity investment in the USA fell from four years in 1945 to two in 2008 to just 22 seconds in 2011. Mazzucato says there’s good evidence that companies finance most of their investment in production and new product development internally through their own resources. Only 15 per cent of funds generated by the finance sector go to businesses in the non-financial sector.

In 2000 Britain’s Competition Commission found that the big four banks had agreed not to compete in their services for small businesses, using their 90 per cent market share to extract £2 billion a year profit and push their average return on equity to 36 per cent.

Then when the banks caused the 2008 crash, the state bailed them out, and ultimately workers pay the price. The Federal Reserve’s Quantitative Easing schemes totalled \$4.2 trillion in the period 2008-14. The Bank of England undertook £375 billion of QE between 2009 and 2012 and the European Central Bank committed 60 billion euros a month from January 2015 to March 2017. ■

**As our working class fought to survive, organisation began organically, not relying on outside help...**

# Trade unions – past, and future

UNIONS WERE BORN in conspiracy against employers and their governments. Responding to a much changed society and a historical need, the British working class emerged after land enclosures and the spread of capitalist farming. The early trade unionists chose an active response: they organised and fought.

The working class was there in its own making, self-reliantly creating its own defensive organs. Fortunately, the trade unions came before interfering bourgeois political parties. But before long others were telling workers what was best for them.

In 1834, 10 years after the repeal of the Combination Acts, do-gooder Robert Owen set up the Grand National Consolidated Union. It saw phenomenal growth to possibly half a million members only to collapse just as rapidly within the space of a year. You can't impose development on a working class; they have to grow organically to it, and see it as their own.

## Defensive

Trade unions in Britain are primitive, elementary, defensive organs – the weapons of a working class against the ravages of capitalism. That's how they were born, that's how they should continue. Trade unionism means struggle to live, and that's all. Trade unions and struggle begin when those most able to argue, most able to demand something for their labour power come together to express the collective need. Those most developed then have to convince others and enlist their support.

In the early nineteenth century workers reacted, even where their crafts and traditions were under threat or dying, defying illegality. Struggle was better than passivity and acceptance of their lot. The machine-breaking supporters of Ned Ludd (1811-1816) or the agricultural storms unleashed by Captain Swing in the 1830s left an indelible imprint upon ideas and the social relations of the nation they inhabited.

All these developments should be respected as well as the dogged attempts

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Part two of our survey of British trade unions. The first part, published in the May/June issue of *Workers*, looked at the origins and very early years.

at dignity by the craft unions. We should never fear skill. And who knows what responses will come in the future from workers under threat of losing their jobs and role from the escalation of artificial intelligence?

Later in the nineteenth century there was an imposed development of general unions supposed to help workers outside craft unions. But they weren't the actual creation of those workers. Instead of permitting or enabling people to work it out themselves the approach was "we will organise you into a union". Those who joined such general unions lacked control of them.

The most backward thing that the trade unions ever did was to form the Labour Party in 1900. It represented a turning away from the potential of class strength, a conscious disavowal of revolution and a dangerous acceptance of capitalism's right to exist.

Unions in Britain were once mainly based on identifiable skills or industrial sectors. That was still widely true just 30 years ago; now they mostly aren't. Since the first formation of national unions, there has been a relentless fascination with amalgamations and mergers, which has accelerated with the creation of so-called "super-unions".

## Density

The daunting number of members in such unions often conceals that in many areas their membership density is low. This (and the remoteness of the national organisation) imperils effectiveness in workplaces and sectors.

Only a few brave unions have resisted the urge to merge away their identity inside leviathans and keep to representing an identifiable membership with close accountability. Overall union activity is weaker rather than stronger for any move away from sensible bargaining groups.

Strength does not come from monstrous, shapeless bodies. Strength does not come from general secretaries, national executives or union officials. Strength can only reside in a committed and involved membership.

We should ask in every union "how strong are we in our localities and work-



**Balloons and razzmatazz...all the essentials of the membership numbers, membership density and in**

places?" Somehow workers in the big unions must find a way to create sectoral identities with real powers of action. Otherwise their needs will rise against unacceptable structures and come up with something new.

We have also seen a shift away from the working class culture of building industrial strength in unions. Instead there's a view that unions can be campaigning bodies. This is not their purpose and is as much a diversion from their role as was the creation of the Labour Party.

This suits the caste of self-styled

**'Only a few brave unions have resisted the urge to merge away their identity inside leviathans.'**

# n locally and grew future



e modern “super-union” – yet for all their vast involvement are often low.

leaders and politicians who have effectively been allowed to assume control in many unions in the absence of an authentic mass of workers wanting to direct matters. Taking back active control of proceedings is essential for British workers. This would transform the influence of trade unionism, which is increasingly ignored.

## A better way

In the early days of British trade unionism, organisations rose and fell, appeared and disappeared according to popular tides and economic conditions. Perhaps we have become used to permanent bodies. But that can change when a working class sees a better way of protecting its interests.

Much has happened in recent decades to unmake the British working class. The major concern of trade unionists in the coming years should be to remake it. Changes in the nature of work over the last half century have not replaced class contradictions. In many ways they are more glaring and acute than ever. The way forward depends on developing once more the self-reliant capacity of our class in a time of desperate historical need. ■

Worried about the future of Britain? Join the CPBML.

# NO ADVANCE WITHOUT INDEPENDENCE

The Communist Party of Britain Marxist-Leninist held its 17th Congress in 2015. The published Congress documents are available at [www.cpbml.org.uk](http://www.cpbml.org.uk). At that time the need to leave the EU was urgent, and on 23 June 2016 the working class of Britain took the vital step to eject the EU from Britain and entered a new epoch. The tasks identified at the 17th Congress remain as relevant as ever, and the decision to leave the EU makes the question of Britain’s independence immediate and practical. The tasks facing the working class and Party are:

**Develop a working class industrial strategy** for the building of an independent industrial manufacturing base for Britain, including the development of our energy industry. Our capacity to produce is the basis for providing the public services the working class needs.

**Rebuild Britain’s trade unions** to embrace all industries and workplaces. The trade unions must become a true class force not an appendage to the Labour Party or business trade unionism. Reassert the need to fight for pay.

**Preserve national class unity** in the face of the European Union and internal separatists working on their behalf. Assert workers’ nationalism to ensure workers’ control and unity. Resist the free flow of capital and the free movement of labour.

**Oppose the EU and NATO (USA) militarisation** of Britain and Europe and the drive towards war on a global scale. Identify and promote all forces and countries for peace against the USA drive for world domination by economic aggression, war and intervention. Promote mutual respect and economic ties between sovereign nations on the principles of non-interference and independence.

**Disseminate Marxist theory and practice** within the working class and wider labour movement. There is no advance to socialism without Marxism. Develop again our heritage of thinking to advance our work in and outside the workplace.

**Re-assert that there are only two classes in Britain** – those who exploit the labour of others (the capitalist class) and those who are exploited (the working class). Recruit to and build the party of the working class, the Communist Party of Britain Marxist Leninist.

### Interested in these ideas?

- Go along to meetings in your part of the country, or join in study to help push forward the thinking of our class. Get in touch to find out how to take part.
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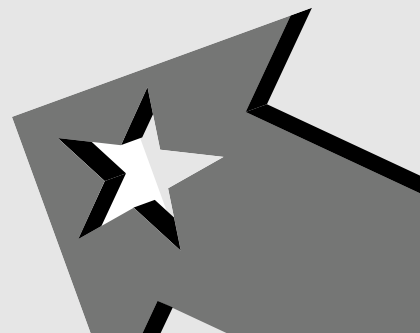
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# Time for a new democracy

**'It has become crystal clear that the people of Britain cannot rely on parliamentary democracy to carry out the referendum instruction.'**

WE ARE AT a crucial moment in British history. Are we going to press ahead confidently for a full Brexit that will allow the potential of our nation to flourish, or will we be cowed by the EU and voluntarily bind ourselves with such restrictive chains that leaving becomes remaining?

The problem, bluntly, is the machinery of what is called parliamentary democracy, but which increasingly is revealing itself as intensely anti-democratic.

Delivering Brexit constitutionally depends on forcing the desired outcome onto a divided government and recalcitrant Westminster MPs, so many of whom supported Remain. And it has become crystal clear that the people of Britain cannot rely on parliamentary democracy to carry out the referendum instruction.

Brexit is not politics as usual. It is the most important political issue since the Civil War in the 17th century. At its heart is the question of whether Britain will exist as an independent nation. So the failure of parliamentary democracy to deliver on the referendum is not failure as usual. It shows that the entire system needs to change.

The people must exercise sovereignty to take control. The mechanisms are not yet to hand, but they must be created. And they can only be created in the battle with those who are seeking to betray Brexit.

That battle must be fought out in every arena – local and national, workplace, trade union. It will start as a form of resistance movement, but it must become more. We say it again: Take Control.

We need a real democracy in Britain, a people's democracy where our representatives do our bidding or lose their jobs. A democracy where sovereignty resides in the people.

People have assumed that all they need to do is elect their representatives, and then they can then sit back while those representatives do the business. To take control, we all have to be involved.

We must concentrate the maximum pressure on the political establishment. We have to find ways to compel the government into leaving properly and to actively use the whole reach of the state to improve the condition of Britain. Preparations must be moved forward, so that full advantage is taken of Brexit.

With Brexit the state must implement a vision for Britain and target investment where we need to transform industry, infrastructure and skills. The state can guide productive forces forward (even under capitalism) – indeed it is often more daring and willing to take risks than private business.

The government must creatively use the state in a number of areas. Plan how to protect and increase the fishing industry and provide material and financial support now. Initiate studies into how to expand the electronic recording of the movement of goods in and out of the country. Manufacture the devices needed, if necessary in government-supported firms.

Work to keep our military forces independent of the EU and protect our domestic procurement industries. Devise a plan to develop a more self-sufficient energy industry.

Enhance our transport and communications network to sustain an increase in our economy.

Raise the skills of millions of British people in a planned and concerted way (proper apprenticeships, high-quality vocational courses and training, enlist the young for the future) so that Britain will have the skills to succeed – a key foundation for the country to thrive as an independent nation.

If the people are sincere about gaining independence from the EU, then everything we do before and after departure has to prepare and develop our country – its industry, infrastructure and assets – for this demanding new situation. We cannot stand still, we have to advance to independence. ■

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## BREXIT PAMPHLET

**Take Control spells out clear red lines for independence from the EU and calls for the campaigning bodies left dormant after the referendum to be reactivated.**

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