



Labour Outlook

Summer
Update
2021

Take the fight to the Tories - For Socialist Solutions



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Inside:
Jeremy Corbyn MP
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Socialist solutions to the crisis

Richard Burgon MP

This crisis has not only shone a spotlight on the huge inequalities in our society – it has deepened them.

It's been a good crisis for some. British billionaires increased their wealth by £106bn during the pandemic. But it's been a disaster for the majority.

Tens of thousands of people needlessly lost their lives. We've seen a growing corporate takeover of government and the stench of corruption as billions in Covid contracts are handed to those with friends in high places.

We've seen the crisis used as cover for further outsourcing – with Serco and others put in charge of Test and Trace.

We've seen an education recovery fund that gives working class kids just £1 per day. And we've seen the crisis used to drive down wages and conditions through "fire and rehire".

This crisis must be the moment when we ditch the free-market model that has failed people and planet and replace it with a better society.

I am optimistic we can win the progressive change needed because the public agree with us. Polls show people want a more inclusive and equal society out of this crisis.

And I am optimistic because the Thatcherite ideas rammed down people's throats for decades are on the ropes. It wasn't long ago that we were told the state should play no role in the economy. After the banking crisis and now this crisis, nobody can seriously argue that.

So change is in the air. But if left to its own devices that change will mean a Tory Party using the state to bail out the billionaires while leaving the rest of society to sink.

So we on the left need to be winning the argument – in our party, in our unions, in our communities for a progressive way out of this crisis.

The wind is in our sails. When even a centrist US President is announcing the end of trickle down economics, a massive public investment programme

and taxes on the super-rich, then that's the very least Labour should be arguing for.

Even the Tories have had to adopt the language of 'levelling up' and 'building back better'. Of course that's empty rhetoric.

But the left can use that space to fight for a better society - from a wealth tax on the super-rich, to a Green New Deal that means we don't deal with the climate crisis as badly as the Covid crises. For a National Care Service that treats older people with dignity and for a 15% pay raise for NHS staff. For a minimum wage of £10 per hour, for millions of new council homes and for so much more, this is the moment for progressives to seize the agenda and fight for a society that serves the many, not the few.

• **Richard Burgon is MP for Leeds East and Secretary of the Socialist Campaign Group of MPs**



We need system change, not climate change!

In November, Britain will host COP 26, an annual summit of all the countries which are part of the UN's climate change treaty.

This will be a vital moment to strengthen the climate justice movement and demand real action from the UK, US and international community to tackle climate catastrophe, with a global climate strike day on November 5 and mobilisations around the country on November 6.

• **Find out more from the Campaign Against Climate Change:**
www.campaigncc.org

No to Tory class warfare - for an economy that delivers for people and planet

Despite the Tory spin, faithfully echoed by much of the media, Boris Johnson's Government is carrying forward their decade of economic class warfare – as exemplified by year upon year of vicious austerity and cuts - by using the crisis to continue their restructure of our economy to further benefit the very wealthiest.

Millions of people every day experience the destruction and privatisation of our public services, the real-terms pay cuts for public service workers and beyond, the drastic increase in job losses (with many more to come unless further action is taken) the rise and rise of insecure work (ensured by letting practices such

NHS staff fight for pay justice

Holly Turner,
NHS Workers Say No



Last summer a group of Nurses created NHS Workers Say No, a campaign group fighting for pay justice for all NHS workers after a decade of real terms cuts to our wages. We kicked off the #NHSPay15 movement to increase pressure on the Government to pay us what we are owed. Major Health Trade Unions such as GMB and UNITE also support our demands and are actively campaigning with us.



as 'fire and rehire' rip), escalating poverty and deepening wealth inequalities that could be ended.

It is women, Black and Asian and disabled people that have been the hardest hit by both Tory austerity and their disastrous handling of the pandemic.

And we know the Tories do not have the ambitious policies needed to address the climate emergency – any action they do take is insufficient and designed to look after the wealthiest first.

But there is an alternative – polling shows the popularity of socialist policies. This includes policies such as expanding public ownership and a massive programme of public investment to – amongst other things – rebuild decent

It's no surprise that we have 100,000 vacancies across the NHS (predicted to rise to 250,000 by 2030), when we have seen our pay cut by up to a fifth. We know from polling that 1 in 3 Nurses want to quit so we are hurtling into an increasingly alarming situation. How on earth can we be expected to retain our highly skilled and experienced staff when they are repeatedly beaten down and degraded by this Government? As workers we have been left trying to plug the recruitment crisis, whilst not being paid properly and even as we continue to give our all, we are repeatedly ignored regarding our pay and now this Government has delayed our pay anniversary which should have been in April - why?

We all need to be taking this situation very seriously, because if we don't force change the NHS will become increasingly dangerous. This is about safety and standards is why we are fighting for pay justice as safety is intrinsically linked to that. Without a restorative pay increase an already chronically understaffed workforce will be destroyed, and would be a move which would speed up privatisation in the NHS. We will see more NHS staff leaving or potentially working for outsourced companies and privatisation will speed up at an alarming

public transport, universal, world class public services and homes for all - and for substantial increases in public sector pay and the minimum wage as part of raising incomes for everyone.

Instead of the meek opposition being provided by Keir Starmer, now is the time for Labour to put forward a radical vision of the future, putting people's jobs and livelihoods ahead of the needs of the mega-rich. To win again, Labour must stand for an ambitious, bold economic alternative on the scale needed to match the challenges we face and that can deliver a truly green, equal and socially just economy.

• **Join over 20,000 in signing the People's Plan for jobs and livelihoods at bit.ly/planforthepeople**

rate which will have consequences for us all.

After a decade of cuts to our wages, the government's recent offer of a 1 percent pay rise increase – a further real terms pay cut - is a kick in the teeth and adds insult to severe injury. We have publicly urged the Labour Party Leadership to take more action and support us in our fight for pay justice. Keir Starmer has failed to make clear what he thinks acceptable pay rise should be, other than it should be "at least 2.1%" and "fair". This is not good enough, as leader of the opposition and representing a party with a proud history of championing public services and fair treatment of workers, we should be able to count on his support. We expect to see the party that formed the NHS, get behind the workers in their fight to save it.

What we are seeing now is workers becoming organised, building power within their unions and increasing the pressure in fighting for we are owed, and we are united in doing that. So if you are a nurse or healthcare worker, or an ally of our profession, then please support us in our fight.

• **Follow the campaign at twitter.com/NurseSayNO**

Stand up to the racist Tories' divide and rule

Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP



The latest Queen's Speech was a reminder that the Government is more interested in cracking down than

levelling up. The 31 bills announced this year laid out a clear anti-democratic agenda, building on some of the similarly authoritarian legislation brought forwards in the last Parliament: voter suppression, strongarming student societies, cracking down on protest and looking to shore up their grip on power.

They sent a clear message that Boris Johnson's Government is more interested in centralising wealth and power whilst stoking the divisions they exploited to gain power in the first place.

We need to understand that the erosions of civil liberties come from a place of anxiety as well as strength. The Tories are terrified firstly by the immediate threat of a growing groups of social discontents after a decade of vicious austerity, secondly by the long-term demographic challenge they face as a party deserted by young people and thirdly by the evident lack of a plan for dealing with these things.

Hence, they've fallen back on their favourite tried and tested tactic: divide and rule. Faced with a resurgent Tory Party that openly boasts about prosecuting a 'war on woke', Labour can't sit on the fence or, worse still, elect to take part in it. Some Labour grandees seem to have missed a fundamental point: the more ground we cede to the Tories, the more they win.

The very framing of culture war carries the implication that the issues discussed under its aegis somehow float free from material reality, as if trans people aren't subject to disproportionate levels of poverty, violence and homelessness, or as if the Black Lives Matter movement wasn't a response to the actual racism experienced by Black people in Britain.

Our 2017 General Election campaign was by far the best answer we've had to a collapsing vote share and the undiluted social conservatism the Tories have adopted in the wake of Brexit. By talking about the material issues facing people in our country, we were able to short-circuit the Brexit debate and get a fresh hearing.

Ultimately, the culture war is just one front of the wider Tory war on working class people and the few against the many. Rather than pandering to the imagined prejudices of Red Wall voters and taking the culture war on its own terms, Labour needs to find a new way of talking about these issues that centres the idea of social solidarity and strengthens the bonds between class and race.

• Bell Ribeiro-Addy is MP for Streatham and co-chair of the Socialist Campaign Group of MPs

Say no to Tory denial of institutional racism

MPs Bell Ribeiro Addy MP, Diane Abbott, Apsana Begum and Zarah Sultana, leading trade unionists, black community organisations and others are amongst signatories to a Stand Up To Racism campaign statement demanding that the Government recognise that "Institutional racism is neither a perception nor a narrative, nor an anachronism. It is a reality embedded in the police, criminal justice system, health, education and employment."

• Add your name at
<http://bit.ly/SUTRstatement>



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The battle for Labour Party democracy

**Rachel Garnham,
Vice Chair, Campaign for
Labour Party Democracy**

Recent elections and polling demonstrate that only through building a coalition of those who want to see a challenge to this profit-before-people, incompetent and corrupt Tory government and who support a society for many not the few, particularly engaging young voters, can we win progressive administrations who will challenge the status quo. To do that we must defend our democratic processes within the Labour Party, trying to ensure our leaderships at every level are in touch with grassroots members and trade unionists and thereby in touch with the communities in which they need to win support to win elections.

This is demonstrated most clearly in Wales, where Mark Drakeford as Leader, elected on a left platform by grassroots members and trade unionists and now

governing on a programme of people first, investment not cuts, and supporting public services, has been able to regain majorities in seats lost in 2019 and win a significant victory in the Senedd elections. This is a direct outcome of Party democracy – a huge benefit to people in Wales, and to all of us in demonstrating a centre-left Labour government is not only possible but successful.

Labour was created to represent working people in parliament. To successfully do this we need to grow and inspire our membership, empowering those members, representing ordinary people across the full diversity of the population, to have a genuine influence on candidates and to develop the policies we need to achieve a transformational Labour government.

Our current democratic structures include members' rights to select candidates, agree policies, and organise at a local level to promote Labour values. But Party democracy is under attack,

through imposition of candidates, abuse of disciplinary processes, and Starmer's disregard of the pledges on which he was elected. We as grassroots members need to continue to defend and make the most of available processes – for example, we must win policies and places on the new National Women's Committee at Labour Party women's conference, we have important elections to the Conference Arrangements Committee and National Constitutional Committee over the summer and we have annual conference coming up, where we can promote motions to maintain a left, popular platform and, according to media reports, win a rule change to restore the whip to Jeremy Corbyn. There are many hurdles, but in 2017 we showed against all the odds that a left Labour government could be possible. Only through defending, and making the most of, Party democracy can we hope to win in the future.

• **To get involved, visit the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy at www.clpd.org.uk**



Women Will Not Be Silenced

Labour Outlook was proud to support the recent launch of Women Will Not Be Silenced. We publish below a statement from their launch and ways you can get in touch:

"Sisters, we have observed that society is becoming a difficult and more hostile place for women and the gains great women leaders have fought for over many decades are being rolled back.

We believe that women have not achieved equality on any level. There

is a pressing need for us to reconnect with one another and rebuild our solidarity to enable us to continue our struggle for women's most basic and fundamental human rights.

We believe that women have a basic right to be safe, to speak up and to be heard. We also have a right to have control over our own bodies, but these rights are under assault. Women must have a right to resources and to fair and equitable access to every institution within society."

Twitter: twitter.com/NoSilence101

Facebook: fb.com/WomenWillNotBeSilenced

Web: womenwillnotbesilenced.co.uk

You can read the full version of this statement at www.labouroutlook.org

We need a push for peace, not nukes and NATO

Sam Browse, Labour Outlook contributor

The Tory Government's disastrous response to the ongoing Coronavirus crisis has enriched big business while 3 million go without support and many struggle on pitiful levels of Statutory Sick Pay; reduced some incomes to less than minimum wage; and created an unemployment crisis predicted to reach a horrifying 2.2 million out of work.

For the Left, it's important to also understand that this Tory approach of protecting profits, not people, extends beyond Britain's borders.

That's what motivates the recently announced £16.5bn increase in military spending, it's what drives Boris Johnsons' announcement that Britain – despite its legal obligations under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty – will expand its nuclear arsenal, and it's what has instigated the order to send an aircraft carrier to the South Pacific.

All these actions entail a view of Britain which derogates to it a right to intervene, with impunity, in the affairs of other countries – a view which, as the Black Lives Matter protestors remind us, has historically justified an imperialism dedicated to extracting profits, by force,

from abroad. That project lives on today – wars on Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya, despite the lofty promises of so-called “muscular liberals”, have left millions dead and lives devastated, while private corporations profit from access to oil and contracts won by miraculously new found political influence.

And now, as the new multipolar global economy erodes the dominance of a US-based ruling class, America and its allies resuscitate the logic of mid-20th century international relations to prosecute a Cold War against China.

Rather than defend empire in decline and the profits of British and American big business, we should embrace the new multipolarity and commit to addressing the real cross-border challenges faced by the global “many”: tackling the climate emergency, vaccinating the globe against this pandemic and those of the future, and extending support to the millions of refugees, fleeing from war, persecution, and the damage caused to their homes and livelihoods by catastrophic global heating.

We should also express our solidarity with those fighting back against the rule of profit over people – most recently in Peru and Bolivia, where the left have formed governments, but also in Palestine, where the US relies on an ally for regional influence – Israel – despite

its repeated violation of the human rights of Palestinians and their right to self-determination.

And we should fight against attempts to move Labour's foreign policy to the right and ditch the anti-war internationalism of the Jeremy Corbyn years, as represented by recent attempts to push the party into backing more nuclear weapons and NATO expansion.

Our fight, today, is global. It demands an internationalist and an anti-imperialist response – one that opposes the rush to war and the threat of nuclear annihilation, while it supports those struggling everywhere for a world that puts people before profit.



Keep speaking up for Palestine

Millions of people around the world, including here in Britain, protested against the Israeli Government's recent attacks on the Palestinian people.

Those who stand in solidarity with Palestine will welcome the ceasefire but will not stop speaking up against the illegal occupation of Palestine and for the Palestinian peoples' rights.

The fundamental injustices remain. For 54 years Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, have been illegally occupied by Israel. Gaza has been under siege for 14 years. Palestinians with Israeli citizenship are denied equal rights and millions more are scattered across the region and wider world as refugees.

The overwhelming might and firepower of Israel - its military, police and armed citizens - means that this is not a conflict, it is the systematic oppression of the Palestinians. We must stand with the oppressed against the oppressor.

As the recent statement from the Socialist Campaign

Group of Labour MPs said, “A long-lasting peace for both Palestinians and Israelis can only be secured through a just solution that tackles the underlying injustices: Israel's illegal occupation, its colonial settlements, its denial of the right of Palestinian refugees to return, its violations of human rights and international law and its siege of Gaza.”

Keep speaking up, keep protesting and build solidarity in the labour movement and beyond for justice for Palestine!

• **Join the Palestine Solidarity Campaign at www.palestinecampaign.org/join**

• **Follow Labour & Palestine at twitter.com/LabourPalestine and fb.com/LabourandPalestine**



Solidarity with Cuba against the US blockade

Ryan Smith, Cuba Solidarity Campaign

In June, the world voted on the illegal US blockade of Cuba at the United Nations General Assembly for the twenty-ninth time. When the last vote took place in 2019, 187 countries voted in favour of Cuba's resolution calling for an 'end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo' imposed by the United States.

The Cuba Solidarity Campaign had hoped that Biden administration take a constructive approach by acting swiftly

Bolivia shows a better world is possible

Tim Young
Friends of Bolivia

When a US-backed military coup in November 2019 denied Evo Morales another term as Bolivia's elected President, he identified corporate capitalism's desire for the country's vast lithium resources as the driving factor – to the usual chorus of denials.

But then followed the giveaway remark of Elon Musk, boss of the electric car firm Tesla whose products depend on lithium: "We will coup whoever we want. Deal with it."

But the coup regime under 'interim president' Jeanine Añez lasted less than a year, with the Movement Towards Socialism

to reverse some of the 240 anti-Cuba measures imposed under Trump. Unfortunately, there is little evidence of this being a priority and there is a powerful right-wing Cuban American lobby in the US working very hard to stop it.

The blockade continues to be the main obstacle to Cuba's economic development, and during the height of the pandemic, the US blocked a shipment of vital medical supplies from China from entering Cuba. The shipment included more than two million masks, 400,000 rapid diagnostic kits and 104 ventilators. The Cuban Government labelled the move as "another twist of this genocidal, inhumane policy."

It is because of this that solidarity with Cuba is as vital as ever.

• **TAKE ACTION: Ask your MP to oppose the US blockade at www.cuba-solidarity.org.uk/edm**

A longer version of this article can be found at www.labouroutlook.org

(MAS) led by Luis Arce securing victory by a massive 27% margin in the Presidential election in October 2020, after massive street protests rocked the coup regime.

The new government has faced an enormous task after Añez's coup regime was characterised by widespread repression, corruption and incompetence, but in a range of areas – from ending austerity, to kick-starting the economy by increasing people's spending power and public investment, to increasing expenditure on health to 10% for the first time, to opposing privatisation of natural resources and introducing a new wealth tax – Bolivia's left is again showing us that there is an alternative.

Internationalists must give our support to the people of Bolivia against any attempts by reactionary forces, inside and outside the country, to turn the clock back against the advances in democracy, equality and social progress.

• **Friends of Bolivia on Twitter: twitter.com/BoliviaFriends**

Facebook: fb.com/BoliviaFriends



No return to Blair Wars

Within Labour in recent months, we have seen numerous voices – including Shadow Defence Minister John Healey MP and the 'Open Labour' group – try to argue for a turn away from the foreign policies of the Jeremy Corbyn years and towards backing NATO, nuclear weapons and a general return to the failed politics of 'liberal interventionism' which led to the disastrous wars in Iraq, Libya and elsewhere.

Andrew Murray and Lindsey German of the Stop the War Coalition have produced a must-read response to a publication from 'Open Labour', setting out clearly the case for anti-war internationalism and opposing a new Cold War, with a foreword from Jeremy Corbyn MP.

As the introduction to the pamphlet says "not only are the main lines of Stop the War's policies popular in the country, but they are also overwhelmingly popular among the Labour Party membership. And the contemporary international situation makes them as relevant as ever."

• **Read it at <http://bit.ly/blair-wars>**

Upcoming event

Why socialists support a united Ireland

Saturday July 3 at 2pm

Register at <https://bit.ly/unitedirelandlabouroutlookforum>

With special guest Francie Molloy MP (Sinn Féin) Chair Rachel Garnham (former Labour NEC member) plus more participants to be announced.

With plenty of time for questions & discussion. This is the fourth in a series of "Why Socialists..." forums hosted by Labour Outlook.

Hosted by Labour Outlook. Kindly streamed by Arise.

Vaccine Justice: No-one is safe until everyone is safe

Jeremy Corbyn MP

While many people in the UK have now had both vaccines, many poorer countries will have to wait years to protect their people. Some rich countries have acquired enough doses to vaccinate their entire populations nearly three times over, while experts suggest that nine out of ten people in poor countries will not receive a vaccine this year.

The longer this situation continues, the more the likelihood increases of more vaccine-resistant variants emerging and dragging the entire world frighteningly backwards.

This is to say nothing of the economic impact; Oxfam calculates that the virus' economic impact may push half a billion people into poverty.

Not only are richer countries hoarding vaccines; they are preventing poorer countries from producing their own. The United States now supports a waiver – albeit limited – of intellectual property law to allow all countries to produce vaccines. But the UK, the EU, and other major powers continue to block it.

Our movement must put pressure on them to change course, and to challenge the rigged trade system as a whole that routinely prevents vital products like medicines getting to those who need them. This pandemic has compounded already existing crises of inequality. If we are to learn its lessons, we must campaign for a society that works for the many, not the few.



• **Jeremy Corbyn's Peace and Justice Project is running a Pandemic Solidarity campaign.**

You can find out more and sign up here: www.thecorbynproject.com/projects

Build the resistance to the Tories – support the People's Assembly Against Austerity

The People's Assembly Against Austerity unites those opposing the Tories' reactionary agenda and has local groups all over the country. *Labour Outlook* urges all readers to get involved.

Twitter: twitter.com/pplsassembly

Facebook: fb.com/ThePeoplesAssembly

Website: thepeoplesassembly.org.uk

If you are in the Labour Party, be sure to connect with the Labour Assembly Against Austerity too at:

Twitter: twitter.com/LabourAssembly

Facebook: fb.com/labour.assembly.against.austerity



**Labour
Assembly
Against
Austerity**



Labour Outlook is the place to go for the best news and views from the Left every day, brought to you by the *Arise – A Festival of Labour's Left Ideas* team.

Regular columnists include Socialist Campaign Group MPs such as Richard Burgon, John McDonnell. Apsana Begum, Jon Trickett and Bell Ribeiro-Addy.

We also feature campaigners from organisations such as We Own It, Stand Up to Racism, the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and Zero Covid UK, and the latest updates from all those in the frontline against the Tories in workplaces and on the streets, plus those fighting Keir Starmer's attacks on Labour Party democracy and left policies.

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