

# Fighting for communism

- the future that works!

Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

## WE DEMAND

- Nationalisation of ALL utilities (without compensation) along with monopoly producers, manufacturers and distributors of food so as to ensure a secure supply of all necessities at affordable prices, free from the vacillations and disruptions of the world market.
- Requisition and building of social housing and introduction of a rent cap to address the housing crisis.
- Leaving Nato, bringing all troops and military contractors home, and ending all aspects of British involvement in aggressive wars abroad.
- Lifting the minimum wage to a level providing a decent family existence.
- Legislation for pay/benefit rises that keep pace with REAL inflation.
- An end to currency devaluation through endless money printing.
- An end to the self-defeating sanctions war against Russia, which is fuelling both the energy and the inflation crises.
- An end to all subsidies to monopoly corporations and banks. Any business considered 'too big to fail' or 'necessary to the national economy' that cannot make an adequate profit out of ordinary operations should be nationalised without compensation and run according to a plan based on meeting the needs of the people.

With the crisis deepening by the day, we must demand urgent measures to address the cost of living for workers and stop ordinary people from bearing the burden of a crisis that was not of their making.

*The market has proved itself to be totally unable to meet the needs of the people. The capitalists have shown themselves to*

*be entirely unable to run their own system for the benefit of society.*

Ultimately, only socialist science can make clear both the causes of and solutions to this crisis. We need to build a socialist organisation that can harness workers' power to build a rational society free from poverty, inequality, insecurity and war.

# Defy the anti-trade union laws!

watch: [youtube.com/proletariancpgbml](https://www.youtube.com/proletariancpgbml) :: read: [thecommunists.org](https://thecommunists.org)

PO Box 78900, London, SW16 9PQ :: 07827 501 420 :: [info@cpgb-ml.org](mailto:info@cpgb-ml.org)

[thecommunists.org](https://thecommunists.org)

The failure of wages to keep pace with galloping inflation, alongside insane hikes in rents, food prices and energy bills since 2008, and reaching unprecedented heights in recent months, have been driving desperate workers across the country onto picket lines for more than a year now.

For a time it seemed as if this spirit of widening resistance might grow roots, and that there was a chance that union leaders would be pressured by their members into overcoming such crippling divisions in the labour movement as multiple unions for the same jobs (three unions in the rail industry, twelve in the NHS), separate deals being cut in different regions etc, that so weaken the movement.

Rousing speeches from the RMT's Mick Lynch and others also raised hopes that the strike wave would endure and spread, uniting workers in their common struggle. Perhaps, who knows, we might even begin to move on from the fight for a 'fair day's pay' to the fight against the wages system (capitalist exploitation) itself.

Sadly, it seems these old divisions are not going to be so easily overcome. Rank opportunism and class-collaborationism have grown deep roots in the working-class movement, distilled in the imperialist Labour party and poisoning all working-class politics for more than a century. Even when the strike wave was at its height, the usual suspects were banging on about how our salvation would come with the election of a new Labour government.

Now, with the strike wave in decline, the collapse of the Tories in the local elections has been greeted by this gentry with an orgy of wishful thinking about a revival of Labour fortunes, all in the hopes of taking workers' minds off class struggle.

## Nurses' leader reveals true nature of British unions

In a way, the most illuminating example of misleadership by a union bureaucracy came from a union that was not one of the big guns of the TUC, had never previously called a strike, and therefore lacked the opportunist experience of more seasoned players who know how to play the game. This standard formula consists of talking a good enough game to win the trust of union members, judging when to rebrand a slightly less awful deal as a 'victory', and judicially combining a reputation for occasional militancy with the position of having both feet stuck firmly in the bog of Labour party social democracy.

Poor Pat Cullen of the Royal College of Nurses. At first it seemed that the nurses' struggle to win back some of what has been lost through 15 years of below-inflation pay deals – a fight that was enthusiastically supported by the public – was carrying all before it.

But Cullen almost from the outset was searching for the exit. Initially, the nurses demanded a pay rise of 19.2 percent, by way of partial compensation for a real-terms pay cut since 2010 that is officially acknowledged to have been at least 20 percent, but has, in reality, been far higher. Before a shot had even been fired, Cullen inexplicably distanced herself from this demand, casually declaring her willingness to meet the government "half way" at about 10 percent.

After many more well-supported strikes and growing public fury at the boneheaded refusal to pay the nurses a decent wage, the government offered an insulting pay deal that amounted to a roughly 5 percent rise.

Pat Cullen jumped at the deal and recommended acceptance by RCN members in fulsome terms and with a hefty dose of blackmail.

What happened next was that the nurses, who had had it up to here with being kicked around, rejected Cullen's advice and voted overwhelmingly to keep striking and get the job done. If nurses had never been on strike before, they certainly made up for it now.

The RCN, thwarted in its attempt to soft-soap the membership into accepting a shabby offer, now zigzagged between acting as a tool of the government and putting on a show of militancy. Cullen underwent a dizzying about-face, belatedly donning her militant mask again and announcing that strikes would carry on, vocally spurning the very offer she had so recently commended to her members.

But sure enough, when the next push-back by the government came in the form of a pettifogging legal technicality, curtailing one of the strikes by four hours through the courts, Cullen once more snapped to attention, ordering the nurses to comply with the ruling and hastening to tell the world that they would not *dream* of breaking the (bourgeois, anti-union) law!

## Bowing down before the anti-union laws

Yet this is precisely what is most urgently needed if any workers are actually to win the pay rise they so desperately need. Strikers must refuse to confine their struggles within the bounds of a set of anti-trade union laws that were specifically designed to hamstring working-class power; they must do whatever is necessary to win, whether secondary action, flying pickets, wildcat

walkouts or anything else, creating facts on the ground by independent class action.

We have no personal animus against Pat Cullen, and dwell on her case only because it exposes so clearly the limitations of trade-union politics when faced with a class war assault launched by capitalism to force down the workers' standard of living. The same class-collaborationist practice is just as rife across the rest of Britain's unions, only not always quite so crassly expressed.

In Cullen's case, the gear changes were so clunky that everyone could hear them and wince. The nurses, as all working people, deserve better leadership than this, and the grit and determination shown by their struggle makes it clear that, once even a fraction of that spirit is able to connect itself to scientific socialism, nothing will be able to hold them back.

As the global economic crisis of capitalism deepens at breakneck speed, as our rulers indulge in endless money-printing to prop up the failing banking system yet again, galloping inflation and a rampant war drive are only going to make an already dire situation infinitely worse for workers everywhere.

The sooner workers ditch their affiliation to organisations that are institutionally bound to the Labour party in particular, to social democracy in general, and to the capitalist system in toto, the sooner will we be able to mount a meaningful resistance to the war being waged against us, turning the tables on our rapacious rulers and their decadent and dying system.

***Break the link with Labour;  
Defy the anti-trade-union laws!***

***Turn the struggle for decent wages  
into a struggle for socialism!***