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June 8 was a disaster for Theresa May and a triumph for Jeremy Corbyn. Marxists need to explain how it happened and map out how our labour movement can take further steps forward. Towards that end LPM presents 36 propositions

1. The results of the June 8 general election were almost without exception excellent from our viewpoint. The Tory share of the vote was 42.4%. Humiliatingly though, they lost 13 seats. Labour's share rose to 40% and saw it gain 30 seats. No less positive, the Scottish National Party suffered a significant setback. They are down by 21 seats. True, as we have long warned, there was an always present danger of a Tory rebirth north of the border. Ruth Davidson now has a 13-strong group of Scottish MPs. But Labour is back too. Having been reduced to a single MP, Labour now holds seven seats in Scotland's central belt. Those on the left who pathetically trail the SNP - eg, Socialist Workers Party, Socialist Resistance, Scottish Socialist Party, etc, and wanted to "make" June 8 an "independence election" - have had their answer. And in Wales, instead of the Tories gaining, it was Labour.

2. With good reason we can say that there is a return to two-party politics. Not that it ever really went away. Capitalism, the existence of two main classes, the first-past-the-post system - all tend to produce two great camps: one of capital, the other of labour.

3. What of the other parties? The Liberal Democrats were well placed to Hoover up

discontented remainers because of their manifesto promise to oppose Brexit and the offer of a second referendum. True, they gained four seats. However, their share of the vote fell to just 7.4%, an all-time low. An additional bonus: Nick Clegg lost in Sheffield Hallam - the final coda to the Cleggmania that swept the country just before the 2010 general election.

The UK Independence Party now looks to be heading the same direction as the British National Party. And it was not Stand Up To Racism that was responsible - Theresa May stole their programme. This helps to explain why the Tories could increase their overall total vote to 13.6 million. Nevertheless, especially in the north of England Labour too benefited from Ukip's collapse. Northern Ireland's politics are ever more polarised. The Democratic Unionist Party gained two seats, as did Sinn Féin. In parliamentary terms the official Ulster Unionist Party and the Social Democratic Labour Party suffered complete wipe-out.

4. Was June 8 a second EU referendum? Was it chiefly about Europe and Brexit? That is what pundits suggested when the general election was first called. And, obviously, that is what Theresa May and her Tory strategists intended. The same can be said of Paul Nuttall and Ukip, and Tim Farron and the Liberal Democrats. However, unless they could not help it, that was never going to be the case with Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell. Their position on the EU was, and is, deliberately equivocal. They campaigned 'remain' in 2016 and now they say they respect the 52%-48% 'leave' vote. Moreover, they want a Brexit that protects British jobs and British industries, while simultaneously making noises about reducing the flow of labour from abroad. A classic left-nationalist fudge.

5. Lord Ashcroft's analysis of the general election is revealing. Six out of 10 of those who voted 'leave' in 2016 voted Tory this time. Only 25% of them voted Labour. Meanwhile, amongst 'remainers' 25% voted Tory, 51% Labour and 24% Liberal Democrat. In other words, in terms of electoral base the Conservative Party is solidly pro-Brexit; that of the Labour Party

and Liberal Democrats is opposed to Brexit. Certainly, taken as a whole, this bloc has no wish to see a hard Brexit. That said, when it comes to reasons for voting, while Tory and Lib Dem voters rated Europe as their key issue, Labour voters were much more likely to be motivated by education spending, NHS cuts, student grants, poor housing, low wages and opposing foreign intervention. Given how well Labour actually did, certainly when it came to poll predictions, it is clear that June 8 was not a Brexit election.

6. Arguably June 8 was a generational election. The figures are startling. Of those aged 18-24, a massive 66% went with Labour, a mere 18% with the Tories. And this cohort came out in record numbers, many for the first time. But when it comes to the over-65s, the picture almost reverses: 58% Tory, only 23% Labour. What this reflects, however, is not a generational war: rather class retrogression - the proletarianisation, the de-petty-bourgeoisification of the younger generation. They might be attending university, or already have graduated. But they come out of full-time education burdened with huge debts, and then they can only secure precarious or comparatively low-paid jobs. As for the dream of home ownership, it is likely to remain just that: a dream. They have to stay with aged parents, pay exorbitant rents for tiny, often shared, flats. Sociologists insist on classifying them as middle class, but, of course, they are no such thing. They are working class. They have to get up in the morning and sell their labour-power. Even those who still aspire to make it into the middle class bitterly oppose the Tories, their austerity, their anti-migrant national chauvinism, their warmongering, their amorality and their worship of the market. Newly qualified teachers, junior doctors and young techies alike voted Labour in huge numbers. Corbyn excited them, inspired them, motivated them.

7. Ever since Jeremy Corbyn looked like he was going to win the Labour leadership contest in 2015, certainly since the Brexit vote and Theresa May as prime minister, Marxists arrived at five main conclusions.

One, the Labour right would fight an unremitting civil war against Corbyn and the left; two, we had a once-in-a-lifetime chance to transform the Labour Party; three, there would be no hard Brexit; four, whatever May was saying about waiting till 2020 and the fixed-term parliament act, she would eat her words and call a snap election over Brexit; five, the Labour Party would come out of the general election badly defeated.

8. Like many, we were surprised by Labour's strong showing. We expected that the ongoing attacks against Jeremy Corbyn by the pro-capitalist right in the Labour Party, aided by almost the entire bourgeoisie media, would lead to Labour receiving a trouncing in the ballot box. We feared a Tory landslide and that Labour reduced to a parliamentary rump would demoralise the hundreds of thousands who had joined or rejoined the Labour Party because of Jeremy Corbyn's leadership. We warned that the strategic goal of transforming the Labour Party would, as a consequence, flounder. It seemed desirable to try and lower expectations in the short term with a view to securing the long-term goal. We are glad that our fears did not materialise.

9. Our fears were understandable. In the couple of weeks before June 8 polling companies were reporting that, while the gap between the two main parties had narrowed, it was still considerable. ComRes gave the Tories a 12% lead (down from 21% when the election call was first made). ORB put the Tories at 44% and Labour 38%. On the day of the election, Lord Ashcroft produced estimates giving a Tory majority ranging from 52 to 96. Given past performance in by-elections and the recent round of council elections, such figures appeared quite likely. Labour was also plagued by a rightwing anti-Corbyn campaign that amounted to out-and-out sabotage. Labour MPs habitually briefed against Corbyn, staged coordinated resignations and regularly demanded his resignation. Rank-and-file leftwingers were subject to vile charges of anti-Semitism, intimidation and even assault. Thousands were expelled or suspended. While, of course, no rightwing Labour

MP actually wanted to lose their seat, without exception they expected Labour to do badly. Therefore "working the tea rooms" and the renewed preparation of leadership bids. Yvette Cooper and Chuka Umunna were widely touted. So was Clive Lewis (thanks to Owen Jones).

10. Terrified by the prospect of an increased Tory majority, Jon Cruddas, Clive Lewis, Helena Kennedy, Hilary Wainwright, Tulip Siddiq, etc pleaded for Labour to stand aside for the Greens in Brighton Pavilion and the Isle of Wight. In line with this, Compass - a "leftwing" pressure group once aligned with the Labour Party, but now uniting "people across different political parties (and those with no party affiliation)" - promoted its 'Progressive Alliance'. This popular front involved tactical voting and Labour, the Lib Dems, Plaid, the SNP, the Women's Equality Party and the Greens getting together to "co-create a new politics".

11. Of course, there was no increased Tory majority. Nor was there a 'Progressive Alliance'. Thanks to Tory blundering, May's cowardice, Corbyn's wonderfully successful town and city rallies, his more than competent media performances, the alternative Labour machine in the form of Momentum and a huge army of individual members canvassing and campaigning, not least by Facebooking, Tweeting and Snapchatting, Labour did remarkably well.

12. Nevertheless, by all accounts, the Labour surge took place with the finishing line already in sight. The general election became really interesting only in the closing weeks. According to Lord Ashcroft's post-election analysis, unlike the Tory vote, Labour's took some time to firm up: 57% decided to vote Labour in the last month, 26% in the "last few days" of the campaign.

13. And there has been another significant influx into the party. Tens of thousands have joined. It should be said, moreover, that the majority of them stand instinctively, albeit vaguely, to the left. They soaked up Labour's policies from the social ether ... and gave them their own take. Tory propaganda also had its own, altogether unintended, effect. Corbyn was denounced as a communist, a Marxist, a friend of

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extremism, an advocate of class war. The Tories repeatedly showed old pictures of him standing alongside Gerry Adams; they repeatedly showed old pictures of him speaking in Trafalgar Square in opposition to the Iraq war.

14. This hugely expensive media and advertising campaign totally backfired. Nowadays many people, especially the young, are looking for an alternative to capitalism. They no longer fear socialism. They positively yearn for radical solutions ... and they are looking to Jeremy Corbyn to deliver.

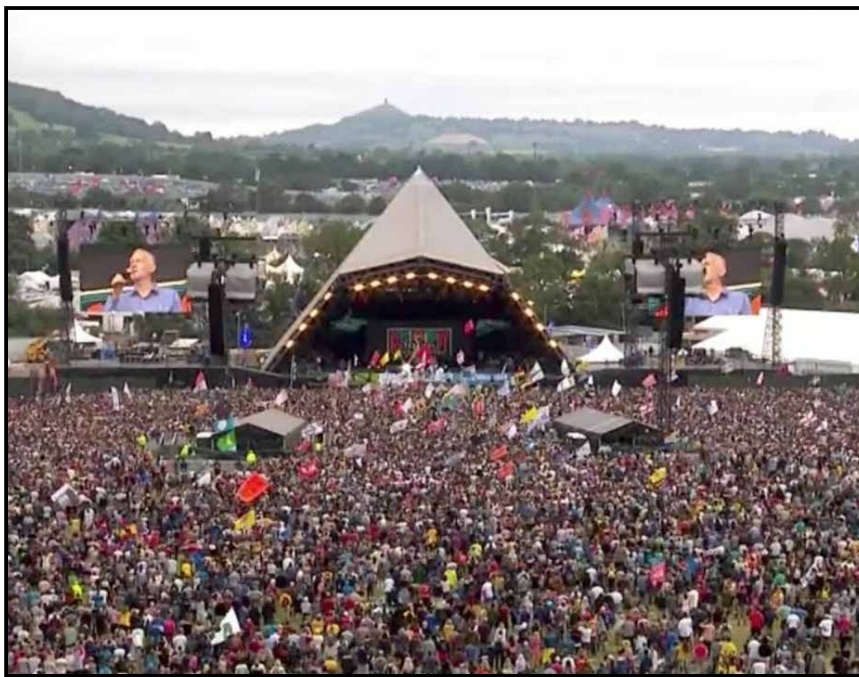
15. The Tories attacked Corbyn for suggesting some causal link between what has happened to Muslims in the Middle East over the last couple of decades and Manchester, London and other recent examples of home-grown Islamic terrorism. Well, there is a link. That is not to excuse the bombings, the car attacks, the stabbings. It is merely to state the obvious ... and served to bring attention to Tory cuts in police numbers in pursuit of their austerity agenda.

Moreover, the electorate was usefully reminded by the Tories that Corbyn was one of the tiny minority of MPs who consistently stood against the imperial interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria ... and the hell on earth they created. Not only has the 'war on terror' cost the lives of 'as many as two million people' (Physicians for Social Responsibility). The conditions were created for al-Qaeda, Ansar al-Sharia, al-Nusra, Islamic State, etc. As for Gerry Adams, British ministers now regularly meet and greet him. Sinn Féin is integral to the constitutional arrangement put in place by the 1998 Good Friday agreement. As for being pictured alongside Gerry Adams - Charles Windsor, Bill Clinton, Nelson Mandela and Tony Blair have all posed for the world's cameras, smiled and duly shook hands with the great peacemaker.

16. The general election greatly diminished Theresa May. She is a shadow of her former self. Her remaining time as prime minister is surely limited. Already her trusted aides, Nick Timothy and Fiona Hill, have been forced to fall on their swords. Leading rivals retain their ministerial posts and have demanded one token concession after another. The "confidence and supply" deal with Arlene Foster and her Democratic Unionist Party is a recipe for weak and unstable government. May's allies are sectarian, bigoted, eccentric, crazed ... and unreliable. Expect MPs to be transported to the Commons by ambulance. Expect desperate government bribes. Expect by-election defeats. Indeed, so slim is the government's legislative majority, so fractured are the Tories, that what will happen in the Brexit negotiations is extraordinarily unpredictable.

17. The Brussels bureaucracy, the EU 27 - crucially Germany and France - will play hard ball. British negotiators will be treated with contempt. After all, Theresa May did not get the mandate she asked for. She was rebuffed, thwarted and punished by the British electorate on June 8. True, the Great Repeal Bill that parallels Brexit could be presented to parliament as a one-line motion. Politically, however, that is impossible. Meanwhile the two-year clock is already ticking away. The March 2017 vote on article 50 saw to that. Therefore, with an unprecedented mass of legislation to steer through parliament, in all probability Brexit will simply grind to a halt. Tellingly, both president Emmanuel Macron and the German finance minister, Wolfgang Schäuble, have recently put on record that the EU is "open" to a British change of heart.

18. Big business frets over the uncertainty. The June 23 2016 EU referendum came as a terrible shock for the core representatives of capital. Now they have the June 8 2017 general election. A double whammy. Note, Moody's is already casting doubt over Britain's stability and its Aa1 credit rating. Understandably, desperate voices are being raised calling for a "national unity government" made up of ministers from both main parties. Of course, as the *Financial Times* readily admits, in the "real world" it will not happen. Corbyn



Jeremy Corbyn wows Glastonbury

has no apparent appetite for a coalition and is obviously relishing the prospect of a decaying Conservative Party and outright victory in the next general election.

19. The fact of the matter is that Labour's *For the many, not the few* manifesto, is only a tad to the left of Ed Miliband's 2015 offering. *Britain can be better* promised a ban on "exploitative" zero-hours contracts, to "freeze energy bills", "abolish non-dom status", to "value" trade unions as an "essential force" in society, to "reduce tuition fees to £6,000" annually, invest in health and education, put in place a national rail body and encourage "public-sector operators", build "at least" 200,000 homes, "cut the deficit every year", "replace" the House of Lords with an elected "Senate of the Nations and Regions" and "build an economy that works for working people".

20. *For the many* promised to eliminate the "government's deficit on day-to-day spending within five years", "invest in cutting-edge" industries and to "upgrade our economy", bring back into "public ownership" the rails, establish "publicly-owned water companies", no new "private prisons", "regain" control over "energy supply networks", "review laws on trade union recognition", "repeal the trade union act", "ban zero-hour contracts", a programme to build a "million new homes", a Britain "for the many, not the few", etc. 21. In other words, a pro-worker Keynesianism that was tried, tested and failed in France with the 1981-83 socialist-communist government under president François Mitterrand. Having begun with the mildly leftwing policies of the common programme, which were presented as a step in the direction of socialism, Mitterrand presided over the so-called *tournant de la rigueur* (austerity turn) two years later. Capital went on strike, inflation shot up and French competitiveness slumped. The fate of the Syriza government in Greece should also stand as a warning.

22. That *For the many* is in fact Mitterrandist lite did not stop the economicist left going into rhapsodic overdrive. The manifesto was welcomed as "a socialist platform", "a programme which would help begin the socialist transformation of Britain", etc.

23. However, there was nothing socialist about *For the many*. For orthodox Marxism socialism begins with a fundamental break with capitalism - socialism being, the rule of the working class and the transition to a classless, stateless, moneyless society. But *For the many* does not even adhere to a reformist socialism ... which holds out

the prospect of ending capitalism through introducing socialism in one country at a time through piecemeal legislative change.

24. *For the many* accepts capitalism, does not mention socialism, wants to reconcile antagonistic classes. In fact, for those willing to see, there are many tell-tale formulations in *For the many* designed to appease the pro-capitalist right in the Labour Party. No wonder after the shock of June 8 one MP after another has gone to TV and radio studios to sing its praises. The opening section of *For the many* includes the revealing statement that Labour "will support businesses". Big capital is given the assurance that a Corbyn Labour government will keep corporation tax "among the lowest of the major economies". And then there is the pledge to "put small business at the centre of our industrial strategy". We are furthermore told that Corbyn and McDonnell will set a "target" for "eliminating" the deficit "within five years".

25. Indeed, sadly, it is worth noting that *For the many* internalises many aspects of Thatcherism. Take the programme for building a million homes. Nine tenths of them are projected to be private. Only a tenth council and housing association. A Corbynite take on the Tory ideal of the property-owning democracy: a cynical attempt to undermine working class consciousness by getting mortgage slaves to imagine themselves as little capitalists.

26. Nato membership goes unquestioned and there is the boast that the last Labour government "consistently" spent above the 2% benchmark. Indeed it is claimed that the Tories are putting "Britain's security at risk" by "shrinking the army to its smallest size since the Napoleonic wars". We are also told that the "scrapping of Nimrod, HMS Ark Royal and the Harrier jump-jets have weakened our defences and cost British taxpayers millions". Unlike the Labour 1983 manifesto, *For the many* commits Labour not to a "non-nuclear defence policy", but renewing the Trident missile system. Bizarrely, this is proposed in the name of fulfilling Britain's "obligations" under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. So building the next generation of SSBN submarines - together capable of obliterating 172 cities - is meant to be a step towards "a nuclear-free world".

27. No genuine leftwinger, no genuine socialist, no genuine Marxist could possibly support *For the many*. Our motto remains: "For this system, not one man, not one penny" (Wilhelm Liebknecht speaking

in the German Reichstag in 1871). The working class should, as a matter of elementary principle, oppose the standing army, not regret its reduced size. We are for a popular militia, not weapons of mass destruction.

28. Nor are socialists purveyors of the myth of Britain's "long established democracy". Britain's quasi-democracy is in historic terms recently established. And every democratic advance has been won from below in the face of fierce opposition from above. Most male workers only got the vote in 1918. Women in the late 1920s. And, of course, the capitalist press, the media, the education system normally ensures that the electorate normally votes for safe, careerist, bribable candidates (eg, a clear majority of Labour's 262 MPs elected on June 8). Moreover, the country is a monarchy, where the privy council, the secret service, the bureaucracy, the army high command and the judges can legally dispose of any unacceptable government. Yet *For the many* innocently proclaims that: "Democracy is founded upon the rule of law and judicial independence." A classic liberal formulation. And, apart from calling for an elected second chamber, a "more federalised country" and a vague phrase about "inviting recommendations about extending democracy", the existing constitutional order is accepted.

29. The same goes for capitalism. *For the many* believes that capitalism, the economic system, can be managed for the benefit of the many. It simply cannot be done. Capitalism is a system of exploitation based on the endless self-expansion of capital and generalised wage-slavery. Individual capitalists and top managers can have their dividends heavily taxed and their salaries capped. But capital has to expand through extracting surplus value from workers ... without that capital will cease to be capital, stay as money, find its way abroad, etc. In fact, the "creation of wealth" is not, as *For the many* maintains, "a collective endeavour between workers, entrepreneurs, investors and government". Wealth is created not by so-called entrepreneurs, not by investors, not by government. No, wealth is created by workers ... and nature.

30. Past Labour leaders have promised much in opposition ... but once in office they always side with the interests of capital ... typically disguised with the coded phrase, used by *For the many*, of putting the "national interest first". And in the "national interest" they keep down

wage rises, attack irresponsible strikes and back British capitalists against their foreign rivals.

Therefore the real significance of *For the many* lies not in how leftwing it is. No, it encapsulates the political drift, the taming of Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell. Once they were left reformists; now they seem to have reconciled themselves to the existing constitutional order and system of capitalist exploitation. Obviously the same applies to the main writers of *For the many* - reportedly Andrew Fisher, a former darling of the LRC, and Seumas Milne, a former Straight Leftist.

31. However - and it cannot be stressed too strongly - for the ruling class, for the political, business and state establishment, Jeremy Corbyn remains totally unacceptable as a potential prime minister. His past statements on Marxism, the monarchy, Nato, nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union, Iraq, Zionism, Palestine, etc, rule him out as a safe option. No wonder, as soon as he was elected Labour leader, there were rumours of unnamed members of the army high command "not standing for" a Corbyn government and being prepared to take "direct action". Prior to that, the normally sober *Financial Times* ominously warned that Corbyn's leadership damages Britain's "public life".

32. Despite that - and again it cannot be stressed too strongly - the majority who voted Labour on June 8 did so not because of what *For the many* actually says, but what they believe *For the many* says. Hence, while there is the strong probability that Corbyn and McDonnell will steer to the right in the attempt to secure PLP unity and victory at the next general election, there is also the chance of transforming the Labour Party into a united front of a special kind and equipping it with the minimum-maximum programme of classical Marxism.

33. It is quite possible that the Tories will be doing their damndest to avoid another general election in the short to medium term. Under these conditions our main emphasis should not be demanding "Theresa May out, etc. Just as David Cameron was smoothly replaced by Theresa May, the Tories will smoothly replace Theresa May with another leader. No, our main emphasis must be on transforming the Labour Party, defeating the right and democratising the entire labour movement from top to bottom.

34. If a Corbyn-led Labour Party wins a House of Commons majority and forms a government, we will defend it against attacks from the Labour right, the capitalist press, the City, big business, the secret state, etc. However, while it would be quite right to place specific demands on a Corbyn-led government, we need to bluntly state that a Corbyn-led government based on carrying out the *For the many* manifesto would not only be chasing an illusion - the left-Keynesian illusion of a fair, just, equal capitalism: it will be a capitalist government that, because of the exploitative inner logic of capitalism, will sooner rather than later attack the working class.

35. The danger is that this would demoralise Labour's voter and activist base, put the Labour right firmly back in control and lead to yet another, even more reactionary, Tory government. However, that scenario can be avoided if the left, crucially the left in the Labour Party, commits itself, not to be a Corbyn fan club, but, instead, to stand firmly on the principles and perspectives of working class rule, socialism and the transition to a stateless, moneyless, classless society. Of course, those principles and perspectives have to be given solid, well defined organisational form. The left needs to be reconstituted as an alternative Labour leadership and therefore an alternative government.

36. Under conditions of government, a thoroughly democratised Labour Party, a Labour Party that is open to the affiliation of all socialist organisations, a Labour Party that has been remade into a permanent united front of the working class, would desecrate *in masse* wayward MPs, including a wayward Labour prime minister ●

Ten-point action programme

Even with a bad general election result there is good reason to believe that Corbyn would have seen off another leadership challenge. Obviously, with June 8, Corbyn's position has become considerably stronger. However, while there is every reason to defend Corbyn against the right, we must go far beyond that. Our goal is socialism and towards that end we must put in place and fashion the organisational means. That is why LPM advocates this 10-point platform.

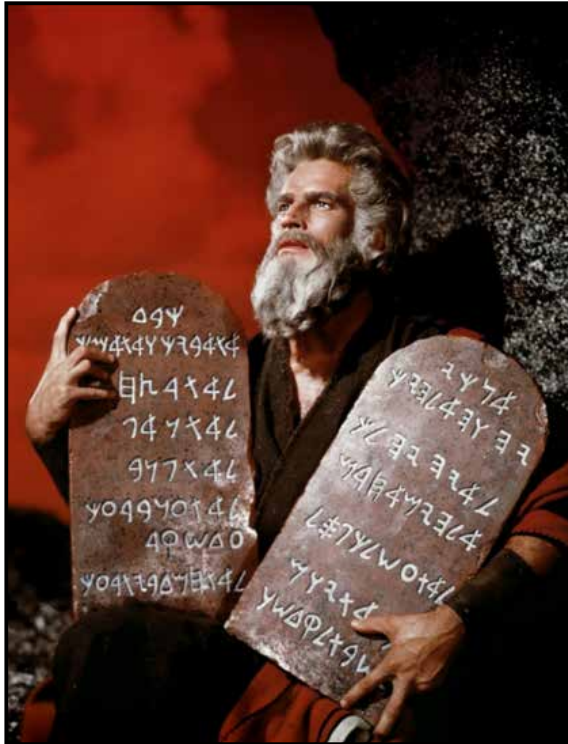
1. Fight for Labour Party rule changes. Crucially, all elected Labour representatives must be subject to mandatory reselection based on 'one member, one vote'. MPs must be brought under democratic control - from above, by the NEC; from below, by the CLPs. Mandatory reselection, of course, terrifies the right. It was this, "even more than nuclear disarmament and membership of the European Community, that became the main catalyst for the launch of the breakaway Social Democratic Party". Progress, the rightwing party within the party, furiously denounces mandatory reselection as "a weapon of fear and intimidation". Yes, mandatory reselection is viewed as an affront by every wrecking, every hiring, every parliamentary careerist.

It is worth revisiting the background. Interestingly, and with good reason, we read, on the Progress website, that mandatory reselection carries "echoes of the Paris Commune, and of the Russian soviets, where delegates were subject to recall if they displeased their local citizenry. It rests on the idea that leaders will always be tempted to sell you out, once they get power." Well, surely, that is what history actually shows.

For decades, sitting Labour MPs - certainly those in safe seats - enjoyed a job for life (as long as no better offer came along). They might visit their constituency once or twice a year, deliver a speech to the AGM and write an occasional letter to the local newspaper. Meanwhile they lived a pampered, middle class life, frequented various London's gentlemen's clubs and spent their weekends in the home counties countryside with Lord this and Lady that. Despite such evident moral corruption, they were automatically the candidate for the next election. Unless found guilty of an act of gross indecency or had the party whip withdrawn, they could do as they pleased.

With the insurgent rise of Bennism that situation was increasingly called into question. The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, founded in 1973, committed itself to a range of internal reforms - crucially mandatory reselection of MPs, which was finally agreed by the 1980 conference. What this saw, however, was not a Labour Party equivalent of the Paris Commune or the Russian soviets - there was no right of instant recall. Nevertheless, once in each parliament, our MPs had to get the endorsement of their local general management committee. Note, GMCs were made up of delegates elected by local party and trade union branches. They were sizable bodies, typically consisting of 100 or even more delegates.

At the prompting of the bourgeois media and desperately seeking acceptability, Neil Kinnock sought to extract trade unions from the voting process altogether. He failed, but accepted a compromise. A local electoral



Charlton Heston in 'Ten commandments'. Our demands are from below

college for the selection and reselection of candidates was introduced. Ordinary members were given a direct vote for the first time, leaving GMCs with the right to nominate and shortlist only. This electoral college system gave unions and affiliated organisations up to 40% of the vote, with ordinary members having some 60% (the actual balance was different in each seat, depending on party and union membership).

Trigger ballots were a product of the 1990s. Formally honouring conference's "desire to maintain reselection", they made it significantly "easier for MPs to defend their positions". Trigger ballots allowed for a sitting MP to be subject to a full-scale ballot of the membership. But only if they lost the trigger ballot.

2. We need a sovereign conference once again. The cumbersome, undemocratic and oppressive structures, especially those put in place under the Blair supremacy, must be rolled back. The joint policy committee, the national policy forums, etc, must go. **3.** Scrap the hated compliance unit "and get back to the situation where people are automatically accepted for membership, unless there is a significant issue that comes up" (John McDonnell). The compliance unit operates in the murky shadows, it violates natural justice, it routinely leaks to the capitalist media. We say, allow in those good socialists who have been barred, reinstate those good socialists who have been expelled or suspended.

4. Momentum proved to be an effective campaigning organisation. An alternative election machine for Corbyn and McDonnell to wield, given the sabotage, bias and limited imagination of Iain McNicol and the Victoria Street HQ. But politically the stultifying

inertia imposed on Momentum has proved to be an own goal. Eg, Jon Lansman blocked all Momentum attempts to oppose the 'anti-Zionism equals anti-Semitism' smears; nor did he allow Momentum to fight the 2016 purge of leftwing supporters of Corbyn. It is now impossible to transform Momentum into a democratic organisation - an organisation that can educate, activate and empower the rank-and-file membership. So there is an urgent need for the left to organise within Momentum branches where they still exist ... but, also, go far beyond that by expanding the influence and organised strength of Labour Party Marxists.

5. Winning new trade union affiliates ought to be a top priority. The FBU reaffiliated. Excellent. Matt Wrack at last came to his senses. He took the lead in reversing the disaffiliation policy. But what about RMT? Especially after June 8 we can surely get RMT militants to finally drop their support for the thoroughly misconceived Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition project. Not only vote Labour, but reaffiliate to Labour ... and exert real influence. And what about the NUT? This year's Cardiff conference saw the executive win an amendment by the narrowest (50.63% to 49.37%) majority, which effectively ruled out affiliation. This can surely be changed ... if we campaign to win hearts and minds. Then there is PCS. Thankfully, Mark Serwotka, its leftwing general secretary, has at last come round to the idea. True, PCS affiliation to the Labour Party will run up against the Trades Disputes and Trade Union Act (1927), introduced by a vengeful Tory government in the aftermath of the general strike. Civil service unions were barred from affiliating to the Labour Party and the TUC in the name of ensuring

the "political neutrality" of civil servants. The Civil and Public Services Association - predecessor of PCS - reaffiliated to the TUC in 1946. Now, however, surely it is time for the PCS to reaffiliate to the Labour Party. Force another change in the law. **6.** Every constituency, ward and other such basic unit must be won and rebuilt by the left. Our individual membership grew from 200,000 in May 2015 to over 500,000 because of the historic opening provided by Corbyn. And with the general election campaign membership has again risen by many thousands. A million members is within our grasp. However, the left must convince the sea of new members to attend meetings ... only then can we sweep out the right from the NEC, the HQ, the councils and the PLP. Elect officers who support genuine socialism. Elect officers who are committed to transforming our wards and constituencies into vibrant centres of socialist organisation, education and action.

7. Our goal should be to transform the Labour Party, so that, in the words of Keir Hardie, it can "organise the working class into a great, independent political power to fight for the coming of socialism". Towards that end we need rule changes to once again permit left, communist and revolutionary parties to affiliate. That is what we mean by a united front of a special kind. As long as they do not stand against us in elections, this can only but strengthen us as a federal party. Today affiliated organisations include the Fabians, Christians on the Left, the Cooperative Party ... the Jewish Labour Movement and Labour Business. Allow the Socialist Workers Party, Socialist Party in England and Wales, CPGB, the *Morning Star's* Communist Party of Britain, etc, to join our ranks.

8. Being an MP ought to be an honour, not a career ladder, not a way for university graduates to secure a lucrative living. A particularly potent weapon here is the demand that all our elected representatives should take only the average wage of a skilled worker - a principle upheld by the Paris Commune and the Bolshevik revolution. Our MPs are on a basic £67,060 annual salary. On top of that they get around £12,000 in expenses and allowances, putting them on £79,060 (yet at present Labour MPs are only obliged to pay the £82 parliamentarians' subscription rate). Moreover, as leader of the official opposition, Jeremy Corbyn not only gets his MP's salary. He is entitled to an additional £73,617.

Let them keep the average skilled worker's wage - say £40,000 (plus legitimate expenses). Then, however, they should hand the balance over to the party. Jeremy Corbyn, John McDonnell and Diane Abbott ought to take the lead in this.

9. We must establish our own press, radio and TV. To state the obvious, texting, Twitter and Facebook, etc have severe limits. They are brilliant mediums for transmitting simple, short and sharp messages. But, when it comes to complex ideas, debating history and charting political strategies, they are worse than useless.

10. Programmatically, we should adopt a new clause four. Not a return to the old, 1918, version, but a commitment to working class rule and a society which aims for a stateless, classless, moneyless society, which embodies the principle, "From each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs". That is what socialism is all about. Not a measly £10 per hour "living wage", shifting the tax balance and a state investment bank. No, re-establishing socialism in the mainstream of politics means committing the Labour Party to achieving a "democratic republic" ●

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

1. The central aim of Labour Party Marxists is to transform the Labour Party into an instrument for working class advance and international socialism. Towards that end we will join with others and seek the closest unity of the left inside and outside the party.

2. Capitalism is synonymous with war, pollution, waste and production for its own sake. Attempts to rescue the system through Keynesian remedies are diversionary and doomed to fail. The democratic and social gains of the working class must be tenaciously defended, but capitalism must be superseded by socialism.

3. The only viable alternative is organising the working class into powerful and thoroughly democratic trade unions, co-ops, and other schools for socialism, and crucially into a political party which aims to replace the rule of the capitalist class with the rule of the working class.

4. The fight for trade union freedom, anti-fascism, women's rights, sexual freedom, republican democracy and opposition to all imperialist wars are inextricably linked to working class political independence and the fight for socialism.

5. Ideas of reclaiming the Labour Party and the return of the old clause four are totally misplaced. From the beginning the party has been dominated by the labour bureaucracy and the ideas of reformism. The party must be refounded on the basis of a genuinely socialist programme as opposed to social democratic gradualism or bureaucratic statism.

6. The aim of the party should not be a Labour government for its own sake. History shows that Labour governments committed to managing the capitalist system and loyal to the existing constitutional order create disillusionment in the working class.

7. Labour should only consider forming a government when it has the active support of a clear majority of the population and has a realistic prospect of implementing a full socialist programme. This cannot be achieved in Britain in isolation from Europe and the rest of the world.

8. Socialism is the rule of the working class over the global economy created by capitalism and as such is antithetical to all forms of British nationalism. Demands for a British road to socialism and a withdrawal from the European Union are therefore to be opposed.

9. Political principles and organisational forms go hand-in-hand. The Labour Party must become the umbrella organisation for all trade unions, socialist groups and pro-working class partisans. Hence all the undemocratic bans and proscriptions must be done away with.

10. The fight to democratise the Labour Party cannot be separated from the fight to democratise the trade unions. Trade union votes at Labour Party conferences should be cast not by general secretaries but proportionately according to the political balance in each delegation.

11. All trade unions should be encouraged to affiliate, all members of the trade unions encouraged to pay the political levy and join the Labour Party as individual members.

12. The party must be reorganised from top to bottom. Bring the Parliamentary Labour Party under democratic control. The position of Labour leader should be abolished along with the national policy forum. The NEC should be unambiguously responsible for drafting Labour Party manifestos.

13. The NEC should be elected and accountable to the annual conference, which must be the supreme body in the party. Instead of a tame rally there must be democratic debate and binding votes.

14. Our elected representatives must be recallable by the constituency or other body that selected them. That includes MPs, MEPs, MSPs, AMs, councillors, etc. Without executive elected representatives should take only the average wage of a skilled worker, the balance being donated to furthering the interests of the labour movement ●

LONDON COMMUNIST FORUM

Sundays, 5pm: Weekly political meeting and study group organised jointly by Labour Party Marxists and CPGB. Details in *Weekly Worker*.

VENUE:

The Calthorpe Arms,
252 Grays Inn Road,
London WC1X 8JR

Parallel campaign delivers win

One of the biggest upsets of the election took place in Sheffield Hallam, where a pro-Corbyn candidate defeated the former deputy prime minister, Nick Clegg. **Carla Roberts** reports

Sheffield Hallam is one of the richest constituencies in the country and had never previously been in Labour hands.¹ Yet on June 8 Labour's Jared O'Mara, a member of Momentum, defeated former Liberal Democrat leader Nick Clegg.

Oddly enough, it was also an upset for the regional Labour Party too. The campaign was underfunded, understaffed and would not have got off the ground without the help of local Momentum supporters. No cash was allocated from the regional party office for Hallam's campaign, and so the entire £4,000 spent (compared to the maximum of £12,000 per constituency) was raised locally. This leaves Hallam rather short financially, especially when it comes to sending delegates to annual conference in September.

Was this just the result of the defensive campaign run by the Labour HQ - an effort to protect Labour seats rather than take the fight to the Tories? That is what is being argued now. But *The Skwawkbox* reports similar underfunding problems in other parts of the country² - including in areas with marginal Labour seats held by leftwingers, such as Wirral West.

But how come any leftwingers were chosen to contest in this election in the first place? We know that candidates were selected in backroom deals between Corbyn's people and the national executive. But the allocation of funds, resources and manpower is organised via regional Labour Parties - ie, full-timers appointed by general secretary Iain McNicol and co.

It seems to us that what happened in Hallam has indeed been part of an organised, Britain-wide attempt by Labour HQ to undermine Jeremy Corbyn, prop up the vote of rightwing MPs - and accept that marginal seats with leftwing candidates would be lost. If that is indeed the case - and the evidence is mounting up - then heads must now roll: McNicol must go.

Sheffield Hallam was not identified as a marginal that would be worth fighting for. The regional Labour Party - no doubt under instruction from Labour HQ - had decided that all fire should be concentrated on supporting the rightwing Progress supporter, Angela Smith (who has called for Corbyn's resignation many times and will undoubtedly do so again³), in Penistone and Stocksbridge constituency to the north of the city, and directed volunteers from across the other five Sheffield constituencies to that area. Hallam was effectively written off, despite the fact that in 2015 Nick Clegg only won the seat with a margin of just over 2,500 votes.

Jared O'Mara has a very low profile, to put it mildly.⁴ He is a disability campaigner with cerebral palsy, has run twice - unsuccessfully - for the local council and is treasurer of the small Sheffield City Labour Party branch. In effect he was regarded as a mere paper candidate.

But, once local Momentum members and others on the Labour left heard that a fellow Corbyn supporter had been selected as the candidate, they pulled out all the stops to make it a successful campaign. It was an uphill struggle against the Labour bureaucracy: for days after the election was called there were no leaflets, no web presence and hardly any official support for the campaign. Residents in Hallam were bombarded with one glossy, pre-produced Lib Dem leaflet after the other, while the scruffy black and white numbers produced for Jared looked like something the cat had dragged in. Large areas of Hallam were entirely left out of the 'campaign plan' and no effort was made to leaflet or canvass there.

It was Momentum members who



Nick Clegg: humiliated

first got together with Jared to take some photographs of him, plan the campaign and discuss how to make it as vibrant as possible. It was Momentum members who drove Jared to leafleting sessions and events, because his official agent was hardly ever around.

At times, almost a parallel campaign had to be organised, bypassing official Labour structures. Sometimes it felt as though the bureaucracy was hell-bent on sabotaging things. Right until the end, even volunteers from Hallam itself were encouraged to campaign for Angela Smith. Campaigners were told not to drive around with a megaphone, not to produce specific leaflets to hand out outside schools and not to organise any public meetings or even a fundraising event. But leftwingers in Hallam

did most of those things anyway and some were eventually adopted by the campaign.

The left really started to get its act together at a crucial CLP campaign meeting a week after the election was called. Over a hundred people turned up and it became clear that a majority was not happy with the official mantra being put out by most of the local leadership that 'Hallam could not be won'. Momentum supporters and other leftwingers in the meeting disagreed and encouraged others to at least try and run a campaign to win the seat.

The ball really got rolling when Momentum organised a canvassing training session in Hallam at the beginning of May with a campaigner from Bernie Sanders' team. For three hours the importance of actually talking to people was discussed, to

fees, their responsibility for austerity - as well as their role in privatising a lot of services across Sheffield, when they were the largest party in the local council. Luckily, most people ignored the 'advice' of the agent to stick to the script and left the training session enthused and equipped with some useful 'persuasion techniques'. The video is now online.⁵

After that, the left continued to organise, mainly via email and Facebook (all Labour Party meetings were, of course, suspended). It took some effort to convince other lefties from across Sheffield to come to Hallam. Incredibly, many of them had followed the Labour HQ instructions and went to campaign for Angela Smith. But many eventually joined us in Hallam and on polling day more than 200 people crammed into the campaign headquarters.

There was an incredible buzz on June 8. Campaigners drove around Hallam in a decorated car with a megaphone, playing 'Liar, liar' and 'The magic money tree', and calling on people to vote Labour. Groups of teenagers waved back and shouted 'Vote Labour!', while passing drivers raised their fists in support. Campaigners started to believe they could actually win the seat - although it still came as a shock to many when the result came through. The story goes that Jared was so convinced he would come second that he had to shoot off in the middle of a night to a nearby 24-hour Tesco to buy himself a new suit for his acceptance speech! Alas, we can reveal that this is not true: he was wearing his dad's jacket and a black pair of jeans.

Despite our well-known criticism of the Lansman coup in Momentum,⁶ I have to admit that Momentum nationally was most helpful. Once they were informed by local members that Hallam was indeed a marginal seat - and one contested by a pro-Corbyn candidate - they really pushed for Momentum supporters across the area to come out and help (and surprisingly went against the instructions of the local Labour Party). Local Momentum supporters from across Sheffield report receiving several phone calls and text messages urging them to get involved.

In that sense, Jared O'Mara really is Momentum's first MP. Can you imagine what kind of impact an organisation like Momentum could make if it were a democratic, members-led campaign? But I am not sure Momentum is up for doing what is now necessary: helping to get rid of the saboteurs in the Labour Party - and not just in Sheffield Hallam ●

Notes

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheffield_Hallam_\(UK_Parliament_constituency\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheffield_Hallam_(UK_Parliament_constituency)).
- <https://skwawkbox.org/2017/06/12/proof-labour-hq-funnelled-resources-away-from-pro-corbyn-marginals>.
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtVoeTOAp2U.
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jared_O%27Mara.
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=TyO6gULzjg&t=180s.
- <http://labourparty.marxists.org.uk/jes-to-a-momentum-opposition-no-to-a-split>.

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OR CONTACT US VIA EMAIL:
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