

NO TO LABOUR AUSTERITY FOR ECOSOCIALISM



Anti★Capitalist Resistance is a revolutionary ecosocialist organisation that fights for internationalism and a democratically planned economy to stop capitalism destroying our planet. If you like what you read, check us out at anticapitalistresistance.org.

LABOUR IS TRAPPED IN THE LOGIC OF NEOLIBERALISM AND AUSTERITY

LABOUR were elected last June as a 'party of change'. But there has been no change. Time after time they have repeated the attacks carried out against working class people by the Tories, in some cases making them worse.

They refused to scrap the two child limit imposed by the Tories.

They implemented the attack on trans kids the previous government had been preparing — depriving these young people of the right to health care and control of their bodies

They cut winter fuel payments to millions forcing a choice between heating and eating — at the same time arguing that means testing is a progressive approach.

Their approach on migration is grotesquely summed up by their candidate in the Runcorn by—election who says their main priority is closing the nearby asylum hotel. They also set up a camera at an airport so you could see asylum seekers being deported in real time in an act of sadistic nationalism.

Kendall's attacks on disabled people will push more and more people into poverty, and inevitably cost lives. They will also actually force some people currently working with the support of benefits to stop doing so! And if she is able to stop Personal Independence Payments for people under 22, discrimination against young people will be further reinforced

Their Employment Rights Bill has been gutted with the promise to repeal the 2016 Trade Union Act pushed off into the indefinite long grass. As many trade union leaders have argued, the Bill needs urgently strengthening.

For all those who want to resist austerity and scapegoating, a different approach is needed. To fight the far right, defend the right to protest, and improve our battered living standards whether we are in paid work, studying, or claiming benefits, we need to say no to the politics of divide and rule.

Labour's economic agenda is rooted in an obsession with capitalist growth as the only way to fund public services. But we are in a period of stagflation with low or even negative growth forecast.

This means this will be a Labour government that will only **cut**, only implement **austerity**, and only indulge in **reactionary** arguments around people on benefits.

It's old school pro—capitalist logic that businesses needs to boom, that the rich need to 'create jobs and wealth', that the public sector is only a drag on the healthy economy.

And these arguments are creating the basis for a future Reform government. ★

An alternative economic plan... that could be implemented tomorrow!

By Jamie Gough

LABOUR inherited from the Conservatives utterly inadequate spending on public services, benefits and the regulatory activities of the state. Rather than the desperately needed increases in spending on these, the government has continued with the the Tories' spending plans, carried out further immediate cuts to them, and is now proposing to cut them further.

While there is leeway for greater borrowing, in the medium and long term increase in public spending needs to be funded by increases in taxation of capital and of the rich. This should be the central demand of socialists and the labour movement because it challenges neoliberalism which is still dominant.

Increase taxation of capital

Reeves's botched proposal to raise £25bn from hiking employers' national insurance was always going to be a failure as bosses passed on this to their workers in lower wages. Instead there has to be a significant increase on taxes on profits and asset values of companies. These are the primary means that any government can properly gain tax revenue from business.

The rate of corporation tax, the main tax on profits, is currently 25%. It should be raised to 50%. Also there are 340 types of tax breaks (reductions in corporation tax) that corporations get for "investments" costing at least £150bn a year – the corporate welfare state. None of them has been shown to have any economic or social benefits. These should be abolished.

Introduce a Development Gain Tax (DGT) on the profit made by a landowner when they obtain planning permission for a new development.

End the bank subsidies! The government pays interest on bank reserves held at the Bank of England. Reducing this by two thirds would save around £22bn a year.

Increase taxation of the rich

Increase the top rate of income tax from 45%. Tax the pension contributions of the rich at the highest rate of income tax. Increase the rate of national insurance on incomes over £150,000 from its present flat rate. Charge national insurance on investment income. Make council tax progressive rather than its present regressive form.

Many City financiers gain their income as capital gains – profit from buying and selling assets. Capital gains are presently taxed at around 20%. Capital Gains Tax should be raised to the highest rate of income tax.

Place punitive taxes on the luxury consumption of the rich such as private jets, mega yachts and flights in space. Increase tax on harmful forms of consumption such as SUVs and highly processed food.

Taking back essential services into public ownership

Though not strictly part of the budget, the ownership of public services impacts not only on their benefits to users but also on their



costs to the government. In fifty years of neoliberalism, numerous public services and infrastructures have been shifted from the state to corporations. Privatised services are not only less efficient but much more costly to national and local government. This needs urgently to be reversed.

The water and sewage companies should be nationalised without compensation, enabling them to be run in an ecologically responsible way.

The great majority of social care, which employs 2.5 million workers, is now run by transnational corporations as a cash-cow. It should be nationalised without compensation and run by local government, as a free public service.

The Labour government is taking back the railways into public ownership gradually as contracts end. This needs widening to buses and trams, which should be owned and directly operated by local government.

Contracting out of NHS work and other work of national and local government to private corporations should be reversed and this work carried out by public employees.

Our central demands for the budget should therefore be to increase taxation of corporations and the rich and to bring back public services and infrastructures into public ownership. ★

LABOUR'S EXTREME NEOLIBERALISM
Jamie Gough challenges Labour's economic strategy and argues for an alternative based on people's needs not corporate agendas.
New book out with Resistance Books — £5
www.resistancebooks.org

Trans Liberation... no excuses

Anti★Capitalist Resistance stands firmly for the liberation of all people from exploitation and social oppression. All working people are subject to exploitation, but some also suffer specific forms of social oppression due to their gender, gender identity, sexuality, ethnicity or whether they are disabled.

Trans people as a group are at the sharp end of reaction. They are facing a coordinated assault from the far right and the British state against their very existence. They are routinely mocked, condemned and increasingly denied access to life-affirming medical care. The recent Cass Review was a sustained attack on healthcare for trans children in a language of fake concern.

Trans people are also partly on the frontline as a populist easy target trialling the ground for further attacks on other parts of society. At the same time, alleged concern for women and "women's single-sex rights" is being weaponised in a similar way to the alleged concern over antisemitism, which is being used to restrict further the right to protest and the right to free expression. We wouldn't accept it for any other group, and we do not accept it for trans people. We are not just fighting for rights; we are fighting for liberation – for people to live as they please, free from social stigma.

A strategy of mass resistance

ACR is in favour of a mass movement to fight against the billionaires class and the huge profits made by corporations off the back of our work. We need to be clear in our community groups and trade unions resisting austerity that we can fund public services, expand the social wage for everyone and implement the principle of universality — no to means testing. We need to link these struggles up with the climate crisis, the fight for a decent life is also the fight against ecocidal capitalism.



What is ecosocialism?

CAPITALISM is driving us towards serious environmental disaster. Every day, the news seems to get worse. It is not just global warming, but deforestation, 'forever chemicals', plastics in our blood, acidification of the oceans and biodiversity loss.

It is clear that the continued existence of capitalism is incompatible with sustaining life on Earth. Capitalism is 'developing' our global economy but at a huge cost to the environment and indigenous communities. The ideology of growth no matter the cost would be the ideology of a cancer cell.

Ecosocialism is a response to this. It starts from the way that capital exploits both people and planet, how it extracts value from us and resources from the earth in ways that are unsustainable. It is a new way of thinking because it is a criticism of previously 'productivist' socialist economics. Productivism is production for the sake of capital accumulation and wealth—as ends in themselves. Post—capitalist societies like the Soviet Union prioritised expanding production without regard to the environmental consequences. This had devastating results of which Chernobyl and the destruction of the Aral Sea are the most obvious.

Social Democratic parties also adopted a productivist approach, often alongside post—colonial exploitation of the global south's resources. Labour's environmental policy has always been subservient to the interests of capital. The U—turn by Starmer's Labour over the £28bn green investment is an example of how these parties cannot even consistently advocate for a 'greener

capitalism' (if such a thing is even possible).

There are debates about how to tackle the environmental crisis. Some people advocate replacing fossil fuels with renewables to maintain the consumption habits of some people in the West, others argue for a 'degrowth' strategy, reducing economic activity to keep within planetary boundaries.

An ecosocialist strategy has to involve a fight in the workers' movement to win our trade unions to the idea of a green transition away from extractivist and armaments work. It focuses on campaigns that expand public services and the social wage to shift away from individual consumption towards more collective provision. This doesn't mean finger wagging at individuals for buying things but focusing on a relentless criticism of the consumption habits of the very wealthy, the environmental destruction of multi nationals, the sickening waste of the imperialist war machines.

We fight to build an economy based on democratic participatory planning which aims to bring human economic activity into alignment with a sustainable relationship to nature. That planning will involve not only those involved in different types of production but the citizens and communities who need what is produced. ★

You can read our ecosocialist manifesto online (and listen to it at AC Radio)

<https://anticapitalistresistance.org/ecosocialist-revolution-a-manifesto/>



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