

TORIES OUT: BUT HOW?

The Tories ruled on the promise that they will “solve” the Brexit crisis. It’s clear their rule *is* the crisis – and we must stop them now or suffer the consequences.

Tories can’t rule, but they still wreak havoc

They failed to legislate after the Monarch Airlines collapse, allowing directors to grab millions before Thomas Cook crashed with thousands of jobs. When we should be expanding public transport to tackle the climate emergency, the Tories stand by while 1200 jobs are threatened at Wrightbus. Austerity, privatisation, the housing crisis, debt, poverty and Universal Credit continue to blight Britain. The hostile environment against migrants destroys lives, livelihoods, homes and families. British arms cause death and destruction from Palestine to Yemen.

Boris Johnson, voted in as PM by fewer people than were on a Thomas Cook holiday when it went bust, isn’t executing a master plan – he’s making increasingly risky gambles, and they aren’t paying off. Having expelled Tory MPs, the DUP bigots can no longer give him a majority. The supreme court annulled his prorogation. He dodges questions about awarding public funds to a friend. The FT and Economist prefer a Corbyn government to this chaos.

Johnson, the racist, sexist, greedy Etonian should resign. We need a general election and a Corbyn-led Labour government.

Changing minds takes a movement

Despite talk of Corbynism as a mass movement when he was first elected, the sad fact is that strikes and participation in mass demonstrations have declined. The inspiration of socialist ideas in the mainstream could have boosted every movement. Instead, energy has overwhelmingly gone into fighting off sabotage by the Labour right, parliamentary manoeuvres, internal battles within Labour, and some electioneering.

While some of this work was important – such as winning positive changes to Labour policy – it hasn’t been enough to shift the polls radically in our favour. There’s been more focus on arguing about which Brexit policy would least damage Labour’s chances than to changing people’s minds.

Climate strikes show the way



Climate strikers in Manchester, 20 September

The climate strikes led by school students have shown that mass action can change public opinion in ways that a parliamentary focus can’t. Climate has soared up the political agenda. People have educated themselves and each other. Unions, politicians and businesses have been forced to begin to respond, however inadequately.

The climate strikes have pushed collective action rather than individualism to the centre of political debate, just as Extinction Rebellion have re-popularised the idea of direct action and defying the law when necessary. School students have inspired workers to strike, despite repressive anti-union legislation.

Labour’s best chance of winning a general election is if we all organise resistance in our workplaces, schools, colleges and communities, uniting across the Leave/Remain divide.

We can't rely on MPs or the courts.

Most MPs – Tory, LibDem and Labour – backed austerity. Many aren't opposing Johnson for the reasons people demonstrating today are. They don't back EU membership as means to defend migrants, workers rights or environmental regulations, but for its free-market rules and as a way of giving Britain more power on the world stage – never good news for peace or social justice. Even if Labour wins an overall majority, we can expect many MPs to continue undermining Corbyn and pushing a right-wing agenda.

The supreme court simply defended the very limited democracy of the status quo. It was only through working class action that parliamentary democracy was won in the first place, often in the face of brutal repression, from Peterloo, through the Chartists to Sylvia Pankhurst and the Suffrage Movement. But that democracy barely touches most aspects of life

– the dictatorship of the boss and the landlord, violent and racist police, or the unelected judges who impose ludicrous injunctions against strikes and protests. Democracy is best defended and expanded when people take strike action, march in the streets, organise in their schools, universities and communities.

Even if we had a socialist majority in parliament, the government would face pressure from the economic power of the city and employers, from the media and the courts. Let's not forget that in 2015 a senior serving army general threatened a mutiny if Corbyn tried to scrap Trident, pull out of NATO or shrink the military.

We have to fight to get the Tories out, and to extend democracy – scrapping the monarchy and the Lords, ending the exclusion of millions of migrants from voting, and securing strong rights to demonstrate, occupy and strike. That would help us win on all our issues.

26 october 2019 0930 - 1700
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