

Socialist Resistance

forum

The General Election and the Left

Speaker

Alan Thornett

*- Respect National Council
and Socialist Resistance*

**Tuesday
17th November
7.30pm**

***Bennetts Bar,
Bennetts Hill,
Birmingham City
Centre.***



*Don't worry, here comes the New Labour
Titanic to save us from Global Warming!*

Despite the collapse of the thirty year neo liberal project, the three main parties are promising more of the same. No matter how much the right wing crusade has fallen into discredit, they have on offer; war, climate destruction, unemployment, public service cuts, wage cuts, privatisation, racism, repression and surveillance and a lack of affordable housing for working people. The differences between these parties are of degree, not of substance. Labour are putting in (inadequate) fiscal stimuli, whereas the Tories would let the market rip. But all three are united on the cuts and making the working class pay for the crisis

If they are allowed to get away with it, the damage and chaos they create will cause even greater misery and provide more opportunities for the far right. But this is by no means inevitable. The capitalist onslaught can, and must be, stopped by mass opposition.

Strikes, rallies, demonstrations and occupations need to become the order of the day. It is not a question of going back to the seventies, it is a question of going forward towards a new society; one based on public need and not on private profit. We will not get there because of the actions of great leaders, we will get there by the kind of mobilisations that almost brought Blair down in 2003, that broke the Poll Tax in 1990, that won the recent college dispute in London and that challenged the right of factory owners to do as they please at Visteon and Vestas.

Organisation

When in struggle, working people normally have numbers and militancy on their side, but what is often lacking is organisation, solidarity and leadership. This forum will concentrate on one aspect of all this, the need for a new political party of the oppressed.

The General Election

It is important that there is a viable left challenge at the General Election. While there are a small number of left Labour candidates worth backing, a vote for them is also a vote for the Brown (or whoever replaces him) leadership. If you have a right wing Labour candidate, you get the worst of both worlds. And while no one wants to see the Tories win, it is totally insufficient to have a strategy of just voting Labour.

It is now very late for the whole of the left to construct a united team of candidates, but even now any moves towards unity will be welcome.

One such opportunity will be at the conference to be hosted by the RMT in London on November 7th. The backing of one of the country's strongest unions would be a real spur towards unity against New Labour.

On November 14th, there will be the *Respect* conference in Birmingham. It has the biggest electoral footprint on the left, and has the possibility of doing very well, or even winning, in three Westminster seats. (*Socialist Resistance* will be backing these challenges)

Then there is Dave Nellist in Coventry, Caroline Lucas in Brighton, and a few other areas where the left could do well.

The forum will discuss the outcome of the two conferences mentioned above and other developments towards left unity before the election, and how we can most aid the success of the candidates already in the field.



*Latin America has swung
left over recent years.
Can we do likewise over
here?*

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