

Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

Fighting for communism – the future that works!



About the CPGB-ML

An understanding of society (theory) and a way of uniting to change it (organisation) are the two things that we need to make a socialist revolution. Ordinary people in Britain have everything to gain by getting involved in this process sooner rather than later. This world isn't working for us and we deserve better!

Not only do we need to campaign against the bad conditions and lack of prospects for working-class people in Britain today, but we need to work for a completely different type of society – one where people's needs decide everything.

So many problems face this world: environmental catastrophe, poverty, disease, racism and war. They'll never be

solved while capitalism remains, but they could all be sorted if society was set up for the benefit of the majority rather than the private gain of a few billionaires.

Our party is different because we consistently apply Marxist science to all areas of our work, and we're not scared to tell it how it is. We refuse to be intimidated by the barrage of lying propaganda that fills Britain's mainstream media. It is the capitalists' job to try to stop us from building a socialist society; it is our job to do it anyway!

Challenge your ideas – challenge their propaganda – seek the truth – serve the people – change the world!

Contact the CPGB-ML to find out more.

watch: [youtube.com/proletariancpgbml](https://www.youtube.com/proletariancpgbml) :: read: cpgb-ml.org

Get in touch with local activists, find out more about the party and join the struggle!
Send us this form or an email and we'll contact you:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

274 Moseley Road, Birmingham, B12 0BS :: 01924 218 737 :: info@cpgb-ml.org

Save our NHS!

www.cpgb-ml.org

Britain's National Health Service provides excellent care to all, from the cradle to the grave, free at the point of use, regardless of ability to pay. This outstanding achievement is lauded and appreciated by workers, but our love for the NHS is not shared by our rulers, because, by denying opportunities for profit-taking, it's 'bad for business'.

Engineering a crisis

Following decades of sustained attack by successive governments, cracks in the system are now showing. The Health and Social Care Act 2011 aimed to finally dismember the NHS by removing the government's statutory responsibility to provide care, and by compelling small groups of fund-holding GPs (Clinical Commissioning Groups) to seek bids from private companies.

Nationally-planned provision has been jettisoned. CCGs rely on financial 'consultants' to plan service provision – and these firms unashamedly advance the agenda of private health and the insurance industry. Meanwhile, the NHS is being carved up into isolated business units (foundation trusts) that are compelled to reduce costs or face financial penalties. Yet, despite all the cuts they've made, *every single one of Britain's NHS Trusts is now in financial deficit.*

Britain's overall spending on health (8.5 percent of national income) is well behind that of other developed countries. Payouts to pharmaceutical companies, equipment suppliers and PFI loan sharks far outstrip any 'increases' in funding. Less widely trumpeted by politicians are the £30bn 'Nicholson Challenge' cuts presently being applied – which are *on top of* the £20bn cuts already made in NHS budgets since 2010.

Widespread pay restraint and pay freezes threaten to make working in the NHS eco-

nomically untenable. Bursaries allowing working-class nurses and midwives to train are to be scrapped, and junior doctors are threatened with unworkable hours and a 30 percent pay cut. This has led to the first strike action by British doctors in 40 years.

Despite the negative spin from Prime Minister David Cameron, Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt and the rest of their government, doctors received overwhelming support for this action, taken under the slogans 'Not Fair, Not Safe' and 'Save Our NHS!' The health secretary's call for 'seven-day working' is widely understood to be a fraud. The NHS is *already* a 24/7 service. Hunt's proposal – calling for more work for less pay by the same or fewer staff – is really a *cut* masquerading as 'service improvement'.

Privatisation and profiteering

A superficial analysis attributes these policies to the *personal malice* of one minister or another. Hunt is the current bogeyman, as Andrew Lansley was before him. But it was *Labour* health secretary Frank Dobson who burdened the NHS with the millstone of Private Finance Initiative debt that is steadily dragging the NHS down.

By 2017/18 Britain's *annual* PFI repayment will reach a staggering £10.1bn, as we are forced to repay up to 12 times the initial sums 'loaned'. This usury is quite literally costing lives, and scrapping it could save the NHS, yet none of our ministers will be persuaded to 'see sense': servicing capital is their goal, not safeguarding our health.

The need to wring profits from every avenue, including health care, and to drive down labour costs by abolishing social provision, are an overriding necessity of capitalism in crisis. For the British ruling class, this is a matter of survival.

Capitalist v socialist medicine

MP Andrew Bridgen's denouncing of the NHS as 'Stalinist' (ie, people-centred) contains a grain of truth. *The NHS was in fact modelled on Soviet medicine*, since capitalism has no interest in caring for *all* workers. The model of *capitalist* medicine being enthusiastically pursued by our rulers is the US model: entirely privately-owned, it's the most expensive and inefficient in the world, costing \$6,719 per person per year while leaving 50+ million Americans uninsured and many millions more underinsured. For most of the capitalist world's inhabitants, repaying national debt to financiers is the top spending priority, and poverty and sickness are the natural lot of the working poor.

The *socialist* alternative can be seen today in countries like Cuba, where publicly-owned, universal health care is delivered for just \$362 per person per year, and achieves population health statistics that rival and even surpass those of developed countries. The difference? *At no point in the Cuban system is there anybody who is driving up costs by making a profit.*

The Labour party claims credit for creating the NHS; in fact, it was part of the post-war consensus – a 'welfare' concession made by British capitalism due to the relative strength of the working class in 1945, when the Red Army and Soviet socialism had vanquished the most aggressive imperialist states and the soviet system had proved its superiority by providing rising living standards while workers elsewhere were enduring the miseries of the great depression.

With the USSR's collapse, however, capitalists no longer feel compelled to make concessions to British workers, who seldom now even dream of revolution.

How can we save our NHS?

While applauding the contribution of the various campaigns that have sprung up to defend the NHS, we must admit that these have a tendency to be far too narrow in scope and to allow themselves to be misled by politicians' promises. Only by clearly understanding our rulers' determination to dismantle the NHS and by coordinating our efforts to save it can we hope to succeed.

We must demand:

1. The immediate scrapping of all PFI debt.
2. The scrapping of the 'internal market'. It is pushing privatisation, not 'efficiency'.
3. The scrapping of Foundation Trusts, CCGs etc, which act as businesses first and health providers second.
4. The reintroduction of integrated health planning, commissioning and provision on a national and regional level by the NHS.
5. An end to the private provision of health care. It doesn't 'add choice' or 'increase overall health funding'; it adds cost, and ultimately deprives the poor of health care.
6. An end to pay freezes and 'restraint' and to the push towards tearing up national employment contracts and frameworks.
7. The nationalisation of all drug and medical technology companies. It has long been the case that while public debt is social, profitable enterprises are in 'private' hands.

The CPGB-ML believes that the welfare of workers can only be safeguarded by a socialist system of economy, controlled and administered by the working people themselves. Let the capitalists' ministers try and show us otherwise; let them start by meeting this list of simple demands.

Save our NHS!

2 February 2016