


UNITY

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Forget the 'Golden Age' –hold a general election

By John Pinkerton

IN his first statement to the British Parliament new Tory Prime Minister Johnson promised the "beginning of a new golden age". Behind his 'One Nation Tory' bluster about uniting the country, closing the opportunity gap and ensuring no person, no town and no region is left behind, the reality of a Tory Brexit will be an accelerated race to the bottom - on the same track that the European Union is institutionally committed to.

Only a general election resulting in a Left Labour government offers an alternative.

The leader of the British Labour Party made it clear this week that his party is ready for the general election it has been calling for since last autumn. Most of its candidates have been selected and a summer campaign plan is in place.

"With Johnson and his divisive hard-right Cabinet gambling with people's jobs and living standards, it is now clear that the only way Brexit can be resolved is by taking it back to the people."

"The choice at the next general

election will be stark. The new Prime Minister and his hard-right government have prioritised tax giveaways to the richest and big businesses and are staking all of our futures on a sweetheart trade deal with Donald Trump that would risk the takeover of our NHS by private US companies."

"Labour is looking to the future with plans to ramp up investment in exciting projects like the Mersey Tidal Power Project, which will kick-start Labour's Green Industrial Revolution, power up the north and create thousands of new jobs."

Johnson's right wing populism, talking tough on getting the EU back to the negotiating table and empty promises of good times ahead, also increasingly looks like getting the Tories on to an election footing.

This week he has been on the stump in Scotland and Wales, with Northern Ireland to follow.

He announced a £300 million growth fund for devolved nations. This was slammed by the leader of the Labour Party in Scotland: "After years of callous Tory cuts to public spending, this offer contains nothing new and seems to be little more than

a political stunt from the new Prime Minister."

The Scottish National Party has branded Johnson the "last prime minister of the UK" and is intent on using a Tory Brexit as the opportunity for pushing a second vote on Scottish independence.

Along the same lines, Sinn Fein's President said this week that the party would meet the Tory Prime Minister during his planned visit to Belfast and remind him of "his obligations under the Good Friday and subsequent agreements including the provision for a unity referendum".

She went on to say: "If the British Government have factored into their calculations a hard border, then they must factor in a unity referendum."

She also declared that "Irish unity is the route back to the EU" – so it now seems that membership of the EU is the core goal of Sinn Fein politics.

In stark contrast the left alternative is to see leaving the EU as opening the door to planned, public sector led economic regeneration and the end of austerity.

That outcome from a general election would provide a much better place from which to further the debate about both a new Ireland and a new Europe.

Editorial

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Warning sign

SINCE the last edition of Unity we have seen elections in Greece and the not unexpected defeat of Syriza, once seen as a radical party of the left when it came to power in 2015.

Since that time it has consistently capitulated to the reactionary forces that govern the European Union and so has paid the price.

The former finance minister Yanis Varoufakis sacked by that government has seen his new party enter parliament alongside the Communist Party whose vote and seats held up.

Unfortunately this comes at a time when the Labour Party leadership in Britain has succumbed to the demand of the Remain campaign in supporting second EU referendum with the option of Remain being on the ballot paper.

Shadow Foreign Secretary Emily Thornberry, who spoke at a 'People's Vote' rally could hardly conceal her joy at the change of policy emphasising that Labour will campaign for Remain.

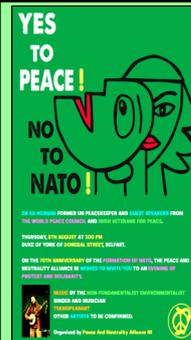
Her comments were then echoed by John McDonnell who stated he was "tremendously pleased" about the commitment to a second referendum, also stressing the party will campaign for Remain.

The instance of a second referendum misnamed a "People's Vote" is nothing to do with democracy but is the reaction of those who couldn't bring themselves to accept the result of the 2016 referendum.

It seems that respect for that decision has now been forgotten, as is the fact that the present Labour programme could not be fully implemented within the confines of the EU.

What we could be faced with is large numbers of working class Leave voters deserting the party in the event of an election.

The fate of Syriza is surely warning sign.



**Yes to Peace,
No to NATO**
On the 70th anniversary of the formation of NATO,
NATO,
the Peace And
Neutrality
Alliance NI

wishes to invite
you to an evening of protest and
solidarity

Thursday, 8th August at
7.00pm Duke of York,
Commercial Court, Belfast
Guest Speaker: Dr Ed Horgan
Former UN Peacekeeper
Music by the non-
fundamentalist

environmentalist singer and
musician Teknopeasant

Organized by PANA (NI) as part of
Féile an Phobail, The People's Festival 2019

For further details contact:
panasteeringcommittee@gmail.com

**Tribute to
the Belfast
International
Brigades**
Guest Speaker:
Dr Feargal
Mac Bhloscaidh



will give a
Presentation: "100 Years after
the Caledon Lockout"
Friday 9th August 12. 00
pm to 14.15 pm
Light Lunch 12.00 pm
Free and open to all. Booking
advised:

Shankill Road Library
Organised by the International
Brigades Commemoration as
part of
Féile an Phobail, The People's
Festival 2019

**International Brigade
Memorial Lecture**

By Gary Denis

Workers invite Johnson to make shipyard the “first port of call” during this weeks visit

WORKERS at Harland and Wolff held a rally on Tuesday lunchtime this week in protest at the imminent closure of the shipyard which currently employs around 130 people, specialising in wind and marine engineering.

Workers have locked the gate of Belfast’s iconic Harland & Wolff shipyard in protest and say they will not leave until the threat of closure has been resolved.

They invited British Prime Minister Boris Johnson to make Harland and Wolff his first port of call during his visit to Belfast on Wednesday, but unsurprisingly this invitation was not taken up.

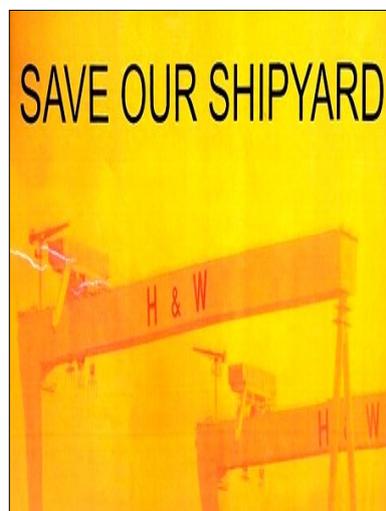
Instead the workers took their protest to Stormont where Johnson was meeting the main political parties.

But they missed an opportunity to show him the facility, explain the role it could still play in British shipbuilding, and outline immediate business prospects.

Unite Regional Secretary Jackie Pollock expressed full support for the workers’ determination to defend not only their jobs, but Northern Ireland’s skill base into the future:

“Harland and Wolff’s greatest asset is its workers.... And they feel they have no other way to highlight the imminent threat to the yard and to Northern Ireland’s skillbase but to remain here, Unite fully supports our members in their decision.

He said it should not be forgotten that only three years ago Harland and Wolff supported approximately 2,500



jobs directly, and thousands more indirectly.

“Neither local management, nor the yard’s owners, nor the British Government have so far been prepared to take control of the situation and ensure that Harland and Wolff does not end up liquidated and sold off, bit by bit, to the highest bidder,” Jackie Pollock concluded.

Defend jobs and services



Previously it was expected the firm would enter into administration at 5pm on Wednesday if a buyer or rescue plan could not be put in place.

However Paul Beattie told the crowd of workers and trade union activists at the rally that senior management informed him that proceedings have been put on hold until next Monday.

“The pressure we have brought to bear, from yesterday until today, not only has it focused the minds of the politicians, and we have told them what we want them to do, it has also sharpened the pencils of the senior management team,” he said

GMB regional organiser Michael Mulholland said the Scottish government is drawing up plans to nationalise the Ferguson shipyard on the Clyde, and said it would be “ironic” if one of Boris Johnson’s first acts as prime minister was to let Harland and Wolff “sink by default.

“GMB demands Harland and Wolff is renationalised, securing hundreds of jobs and Belfast’s place as a global centre of shipbuilding.”