



WEBINARS

August 2020

WEBINARS - RACISM AND NATIONHOOD

CAMPAIGN FOR FREE SPEECH

This important event discussed how we can fight back against McCarthyite attempts to stifle debate on the issue of Israel/Palestine - and label those unjustly expelled and suspended as 'unpersons' who we are not allowed to share platforms with. No to (self-)censorship! Discuss how we can fight back and mobilise for free speech in the Labour movement and beyond!

Speakers include **Norman Finkelstein, Tariq Ali, Chris Williamson, Jackie Walker, Marc Wadsworth, David Miller and Tony Greenstein.**

Chaired by **Tina Werkmann** of Labour Against the Witchhunt and Labour Left Alliance) [watch](#)



PALESTINE, ISRAEL'S ANNEXATION PLANS AND THE TWO STATE PROPOSAL

Introduction by **Moshe Machover** Israeli socialist and founder of Matzpen [watch](#)



BLACK LIVES MATTER: Organised by Merseyside LLA. **IS THE LABOUR INSTITUTIONALLY RACIST**

Antisemitism is routinely alleged to be at the heart of the Labour Party, but little is said or done about anti black or Muslim racism. The racist targeting of Diane Abbott over a number of years is well known, and many black Labour Party members voiced anger at the recent attacks on Diane and Bell Ribeiro-Addy. The treatment of Jackie Walker, one of the leading black militants in Labour, was at the heart of the spurious antisemitism campaign.

Introductory speakers: **Kerry Ann Mendoza** (The Canary), **Jackie Walker** and **Laurence Westgaph** (historian and community activist) [watch](#)



SOCIALISTS AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN IRELAND Organised by LLA Northern Ireland

Speakers: Cllr **Donal O'Cofeigh**, **Anne McShane** (Marxist in Cork)
Sam Gibson (LLA Northern Ireland) [watch](#)



SCOTTISH NATIONALISM AND THE LABOUR MALAISE

A discussion with **Sandy McBurney** and **Steve Freeman** [watch](#)



THE AGE OF FINANCE CAPITAL

Part of our webinar series 'Learning from Marx' Peter's discussion paper is online [here](#): "The old adage that 'money makes the capitalist world go around' was contradicted by the 2008 global financial crisis, which revealed that money can also cause capitalism to come crashing down. The decade of austerity which has followed provides further evidence (if it were needed) that capitalism is dominated by finance capital and has been for some time. The zeal with which the system attacked the working class, while taking refuge in bailouts (socialism for capitalists) makes clear who finance capital's nemesis is. Since the crisis, finance capital, as a function and ruling class, has remained mired in 'secular stagnation', wallows in parasitic forms of accumulation and remains most active in preventing socialist advance.

In short, the left needs to arm itself with an understanding of the era of finance capital we live in. This session provides a basic introduction to the theory of finance capital, drawing briefly on the work of Marx, Hilferding and Lenin as a basis for considering some of finance capital's modern-day manifestations.



[watch here](#)

CAPITALISM IN CRISIS

Can Modern Monetary Theory solve it?

Speakers: **Chris Williamson** and **Michael Roberts**

Debate between Chris Williamson (former Labour MP) and Michael Roberts, Marxist economist.



The Covid-19 outbreak has demonstrated vividly the failure of neo-liberalism and the market economy. Working class people will have to pay a high price for this failure and we are already in a recession. How 'normal' are such crises for capitalism - and can Modern Monetary Theory provide a solution? Former MP Chris Williamson believes that MMT "offers us an achievable way forward", while Marxist economist Michael Roberts thinks that MMT "is neither modern, nor is it a theory". [watch](#)



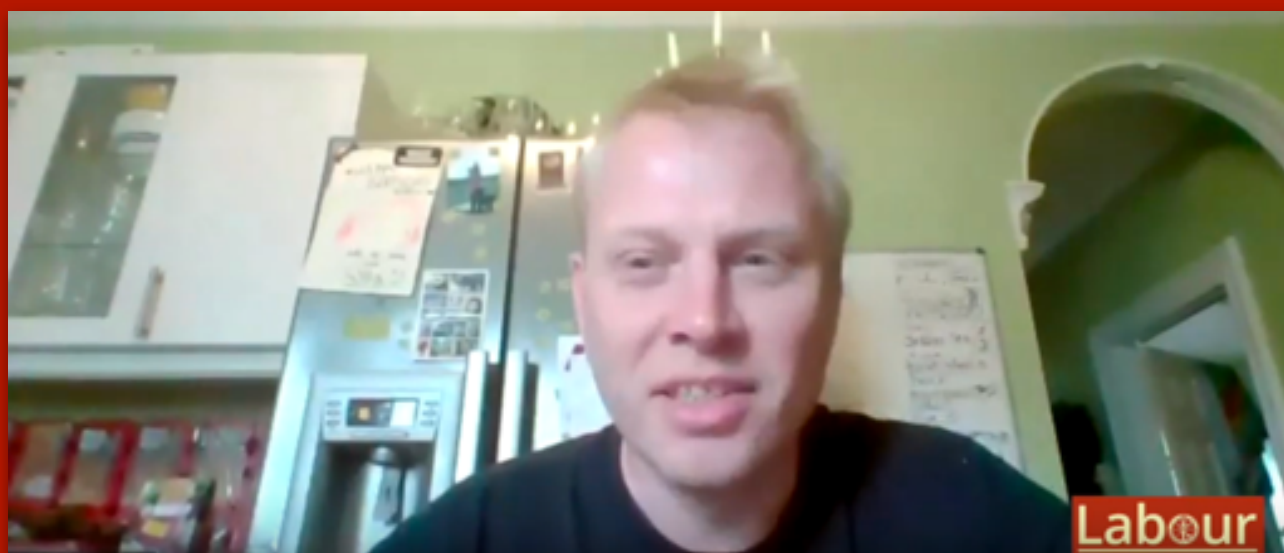
Michael Roberts

Join the Labour Left Alliance: [here](#)

WEBINARS ABOUT LABOUR

NEC ELECTIONS? PHIL POPE

The Labour Left Alliance is conducting an open and democratic hustings and ballot campaign of left-wing candidates standing in the 2020 NEC elections, which start in October. In this short clip, LLA chair Phil Pope explains why we are not "splitting the left vote" by encouraging comrades to vote for candidates in addition to the six chosen by the Centre-Left Grassroots Alliance (in an utterly undemocratic, untransparent and apolitical process) [watch](#)



NEC ELECTIONS 2020 - HUSTINGS OF LEFT-WING CANDIDATES

We invited all left candidates, including the six standing on the slate put forward by the Centre-Left Grassroots Alliance (sadly, they didn't reply to our invite). We asked all left-wingers to comment on the political platform we have put together. [read here](#)

NEC candidates in attendance: Roger Silverman, Crispin Flintoff, Chaudhry Qamer Iqbal, Alec Price, Carol Taylor-Spedding, Mark McDonald, Ahmad Wattoo, Ekua Bayunu, Steve Maggs, Joyce Jasmin Reid, Iram Woolley [watch](#)



WHAT'S LEFT OF LABOUR?

What has Starmer's Labour got to offer politically in addressing domestic and international issues? Poverty and Covid-19, Black Lives Matter, Palestine, and Kashmir? Anything? [watch](#)

Kerry-Anne Mendoza, David Miller, Katherine Connelly



LABOUR AFTER CORBYN

The election of Keir Starmer and Angela Rayner as leader and deputy leader of the Labour Party is a serious setback for the left. [watch](#)

Jo Bird, Moshe Machover, Ian Hodson, Lee Rock



SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?

Chris Williamson and Jackie Walker have been the most prominent victims of the witch-hunt in the Labour Party. [watch](#)

Chris Williamson, Jackie Walker



CAN MOMENTUM BE REFORMED?

Momentum has just called elections to their National Coordinating Group. But with Jon Lansman having abolished pretty much all democratic structures while imposing a new constitution on the organisation back in 2017, can Momentum be wrestled from his control? [watch](#)

Alec Price, Alan Gibbons, Shona Jemphrey



LABOUR HISTORY WEBINARS

Learning from Labour's History: A series of webinars looking at the history of the Labour party and considering a number of key historical issues which remain relevant today: the relationship between Labour and the organised working-class movement, how serious a challenge did the party present to capitalism and imperialism, and the nature of the Labour left and its understanding of socialism.



1. Origins and formation of the Labour Party [watch](#)
2. Clause 4 and the impact of the Russian Revolution [watch](#)
3. Labour in government but not in power 1923-24 and 1929-31 [watch](#)
4. 1945 - The Socialist moment? [watch](#)
5. Harold Wilson and the white heat of technology [watch](#)
6. The party is over? The rise of the Labour Left 1974 to 1987 [watch](#)
7. The rise of New Labour: A Blairite counter-revolution [watch](#)
8. The General Strike of 1926 [watch](#)
9. Colston and Churchill - Why we're tearing down statues [watch](#)
10. Churchill, Imperialism and the Second World War [watch](#)
11. Is there a local road to socialism? [watch](#)

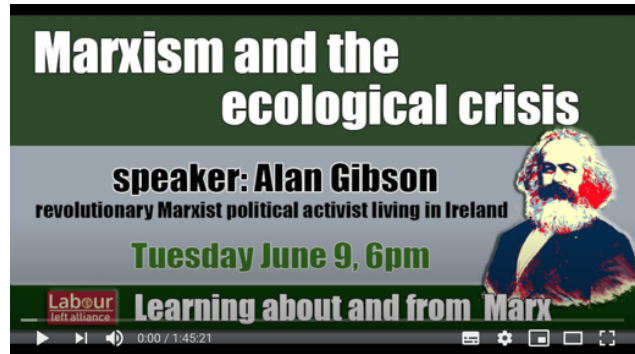
Each session will include a reading list, brief outline notes and some primary historical documents for discussion. With time for questions and comments.

Marxism and the ecological crisis

Speaker: Alan Gibson is a revolutionary Marxist political activist living in Ireland. He is currently primarily active in the environmental movement but has in the past few years played a leading regional role in both the pro-choice movement that won repeal of the restrictions on abortion access contained in Ireland's constitution and before that in the

movement against water charges and meter installations. Alan is a supporter of the Bolshevik Tendency. Alan outline how environmental concerns were integral to the political thinking of Marx and Engels and what that should mean for socialists today.

[watch](#)



Climate change, Covid-19 and Labour Green New Deal

A discussion kicked off by Simon Pirani, environmental campaigner, author of Burning Up: a Global History of Fossil Fuel Consumption and Senior Research Fellow at the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies. Simon is a writer and researcher of fossil fuels, a socialist and former editor of the mineworkers' union journal, The Miner. [see more](#)



Will the COVID emergency make it easier, or harder, to tackle global warming? With our ruling class intent on paying for the pandemic on the back of the working class, what sort of world will the upcoming battles take place in? The multinational energy companies see the current crisis as a way of getting rid of smaller competitors and emerging stronger. Is the Labour Party's Green New Deal fit for purpose in these changing circumstances? [watch](#)



LABOUR FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

"We must work collectively to demand a bold solution to this crisis. An economic system serving the one percent has taken us to the brink; now a Green New Deal can set us free."

[Read](#)

LENIN AT 150 watch

The legacy of Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov

150 years ago this month, Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov was born. But are 'dead Russians' like Lenin still relevant to today's Labour movement? What, if anything, can we learn from the man who led the Russian Revolution? And didn't Lenin inevitably lead to Stalin and the dictatorship in the Soviet Union?

Webinar was recorded on May Day 2020.

Speakers: **Bob Arnott** and **Lars T. Lih**

Lars T. Lih is an independent scholar who has written widely on Soviet history. His books include *Bread and Authority in Russia, 1914-1921* (1990), the English-language edition of *The Stalin-Molotov Letters, 1925-1936* (1995) and *Lenin Rediscovered: 'What is to be Done?' In Context* (2006).

Professor Robert Arnott is a Fellow of Green Templeton College, Oxford. His academic speciality is the archaeology of medicine, although he is also involved in research in health policy and global health. Between 1966 and 1991 (when it was dissolved) he was an member of the CPGB and is now Secretary of Cheltenham CLP. [watch](#)



Background reading materials, more info about this webinar and other educational materials are available [here](#)

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Where did it all go wrong?

How did one of the greatest events in our history turn into its opposite and the horrors of the Soviet Union? What were the objective factors that contributed to the revolution's degeneration? Which avoidable mistakes made were?

Introduction by Pat Byrne, political education officer, Labour International CLP.

[here](#):



BACKGROUND READING

Three excellent accounts of the Russian Revolution:

'The Russian Revolution 1917' N. N. Sukhanov (a left Menshevik)

'Ten Days That Shook The World' by John Reed

'A History of the Bolshevik Party' by Alan Woods

Some Useful References for the aftermath of the Revolution:

Lenin's Collected Works

'The Russian Tragedy' by Rosa Luxemburg (1918 article)

'The Bolsheviks in Power' by Alexander Rabinowitch

'Speech on the Immediate Tasks of Party Development' by V. I. Lenin

'Bolshevik Opposition to Lenin: G. T. Miasnikov and the Workers' Group' by Paul Avrich

'The Paths of the Russian Revolution' 1922 pamphlet by Karl Radek

'Memoirs of a Revolutionary 1901-1941' by Victor Serge

'Once More: Kronstadt' (1938) by Victor Serge

'New Light on the Origins of the Stalinist Bureaucracy' by Alexander Podsheldolkin

'The Origin of the 'Slate System' used in elections for the leadership of Leninist & Trotskyist Groups' by Pat Byrne

ROSA LUXEMBURG AND THE GERMAN REVOLUTION

with introductions by Pat Byrne and Ben Lewis

While Pat will discuss the background to the German Revolution 1895-1921, Ben will concentrate on some general observations and problems with the left's narrative on what happened in 1918-1919.



[Watch](#)

Ben Lewis is a translator and historian whose main area of research is the disputed legacy of 'Second International Marxism' and its main theoretician, Karl Kautsky. His expertise also extends to political thought during the German Revolution and the Weimar Republic, with his PhD discussing the outlook of the rightwing nationalist philosopher Oswald Spengler. He has written a range of books and articles on the German socialist movement, the latest of which is Karl Kautsky on Democracy and Republicanism (2019). Together with Lars T. Lih, he also co-produced a book on socialist debates during the German Revolution entitled Martov and Zinoviev: Head to Head in Halle (2011). His article commemorating the centenary of the German Revolution can be read **[here](#)**:

Pat Byrne has been Labour Party activist since 1972. Currently, Political Education Officer for Labour International, labour history researcher for 25 years. Author of 'A History of Socialists and the Mass Organisations'

Recommended background reading:

W. Pelz, A People's History of the German Revolution

P. Broue, The German Revolution 1917-23

J. Riddell, The German Revolution and the Debate on Soviet Power

P. Nettl, Rosa Luxemburg

B. Lewis and L.T. Lih, Head to Head in Halle

WHY DID THE SOVIET UNION COLLAPSE?

The fate of the Soviet Union still weighs heavily on the left. For liberals and the right the Soviet Union supposedly provides definitive proof that attempts to replace the 'natural order' of capitalism are bound to produce, not only horrendous suffering, but ultimate failure. The left must fully explain the Soviet Union if it is to develop a viable programme. Marxism alone provides the necessary method of analysis. [watch](#)

Speaker: **Jack Conrad**, author [The Place of the Soviet Union in History](#)



Other recommended background reading: -

- Hillel Ticktin: Origins of the crisis in the USSR
- Marcel van der Linden: Western Marxism and the Soviet Union
- Leon Trotsky: The revolution betrayed