

# Britain: The crisis is only just beginning

Thursday 1 September 2022, by [Anti\\*Capitalist Resistance](#) (Date first published: 27 August 2022).

**People are already being forced to make difficult choices about putting food on the table or preparing now for massive energy bill increases. This leaderless Tory government has sat on its hands, out of ideas, an embarrassment. The country has had enough. We need action now! An anti\*capitalist resistance statement on the rising cost of living.**

The cost of living crisis will define politics for years to come. Prices are spiralling on essentials like food and energy with no end in sight. Malnutrition is spreading. In work poverty is deepening. Foodbanks proliferate across the country. After a decade of stagnant wages, workers are being plunged into an even deeper crisis with fewer resources. This is the biggest fall in living standards in any single financial year since Office for National Statistics (ONS) records began in 1956-57."

In anticipation of our resistance to this, democratic rights have been curtailed and unions have been further shackled by the Conservative government. This raises the stakes even higher. What happens in the coming months and years will set the tone for further resistance and anti-capitalist struggles in the future.

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Now companies are boasting of record profits but claiming that they cannot afford to increase wages properly.

Despite these huge profits in some sectors the economy itself is stalling, with a potential global recession on the horizon. The nightmare of stagflation - a stagnant economy with soaring prices - is looming.

But we are fighting back. The Tories don't have the support of the population. A majority in Britain want the renationalisation of water, progressive taxation on the rich and so on. Organisations and coalitions are being launched. Protests have been organised and national strikes not seen since the 1980s are happening.

More and more unions are being forced to take a stand - union leaders like Mick Lynch have become household names representing a class struggle fight back. The resistance is about wages but also about consumer prices - non-payment campaigns are being launched and the liberal media is being thrown into a tailspin about it. The response from 'responsible economists' is to beg workers not to

fight for higher wages in case it triggers an inflationary spiral and deepens the crisis. We utterly reject this argument, we should not be the ones sacrificing our lives and living standards to maintain capitalism as a system.

The Tory party is in flux, wounded from the ousting of Boris Johnson, but now with a leadership contest characterised by a race to the bottom by the two leadership hopefuls. They have little specific to say on the cost of living crisis, their faith in the free market to right itself, in the end, is not simply naïve; it will prove downright fatal for many.

Some say it shows they are shockingly out of touch. Perhaps. But they also believe their own lies about tax cuts. Trickle-down economics – debunked, laughed out of the arena, has become standard orthodoxy for a Tory right bereft of any political ideas beyond authoritarianism and culture wars.

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Meanwhile, Labour dawdles, often outflanked to their left by the Lib Dems who are much bolder in the calls for actions against CEOs of water and energy companies. Labour response has swung between the void and dangerous complacency. The silence recalls Hemingway's "Hail nothing full of nothing, nothing is with thee." When Starmer finally offers a policy on energy bills it is so meek and uninteresting that it will help almost no one. Their manifest failings recall their non-opposition to the Poll Tax in the 1980s.

The energy price crisis is particularly acute. It will represent a transfer of billions from workers' wages to the monopoly energy companies. The proposed alternative is to give billions to the energy companies to subsidise their profits – either way, the energy companies are protected and their shareholders are happy.

And the cost of living crisis intersects with the environmental crisis. We are entering late stage capitalism increasingly defined by the degradation of the environment – 200 years of capitalism has proven to be too much for the Earth and not the blunt choice between moving beyond capitalism to a more harmonious socio-economic system that is in balance with the needs of people and planet or hurtling towards disaster under the capitalism death cult.

Inflation is also in part being driven by climate change which is why it is unlikely to simply go away in a few years. We are presented with what Andrew Sayer calls a Diabolical Crisis, you cannot improve one thing without making another issue worse. How do we combat the crisis of living without exacerbating the environmental crisis? Labour ignores this contradiction, it rushes to embrace the diabolical crisis. They argue that economic growth is the only answer at a time when many are challenging the mantra of growth as the only solution. Those who reach for 1970s solutions in the 2020s are doomed to dig their own graves.

The socialist goal is to support strikes, help build mass social movements and propose bold demands

that move from the defensive onto the offensive. As such we endorse and actively support the following policies

- Immediate living wage and all state benefits to rise to help the working-class cope with rising prices of food and necessary consumer goods, rent and energy prices.
- Price controls on consumer goods including food are set by workers and consumer committees.
- Rent Controls now! Cap rental prices and index them to social rent levels.
- Reintroduce the cap on energy bills to the April 2022 level.
- An end to higher prices for those on prepayment meters
- Take the energy, water and transport companies Into public ownership and rapidly move them toward renewable energy sources
- A progressive wealth tax on Individuals and a significant increase in corporation tax.
- Companies that cannot afford to pay wages in line with inflation should be nationalised and placed under workers' control.
- Reject and resist attacks on our civil liberties, right to protest and attempts to shackle our trade unions - fight for a charter of democratic and workers' rights
- For democratic assemblies of the social movements, socialist organisations and trade unions to coordinate our fight back.

3. We actively support mass protests and demonstrations, direct action campaigns and all strikes by workers around wages. We support anyone taking action including non-payment of energy bills. We need collective solidarity and to turn our social crisis into a political crisis for the Conservative Party and the bosses.

## **Anti\*Capitalist Resistance**

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### **Draft Motion**

1. This [trade union/CLP/Labour branch, etc] agrees to contact local trade unions, campaigning organisations and progressive organisations to establish a local cost of living assembly/campaign
2. We endorse and support the following demands and initiatives  
Immediate wage and state benefits rise to beat inflation  
Price controls on consumer goods including food, to be set by workers and consumer committees.
  - Rent Controls now! Cap rental prices and index them to social rent levels.
  - Reintroduce the cap on energy bills to the April 2022 level.
  - An end to higher prices for those on prepayment meters
  - Take the energy, water and transport companies Into public ownership and rapidly move them

toward renewable energy sources

- A progressive wealth tax on Individuals and a significant increase in corporation tax.
- Companies that cannot afford to pay wages in line with inflation should be nationalised and placed under workers' control.
- Reject and resist attacks on our civil liberties, right to protest and attempts to shackle our trade unions – fight for a charter of democratic and workers' rights
- For democratic assemblies of the social movements, socialist organisations and trade unions to coordinate our fight back.

3. We actively support mass protests and demonstrations, direct action campaigns and all strikes by workers for higher wages and against cuts. We support anyone taking action including non-payment of energy bills. We need collective solidarity and to turn our social crisis into a political crisis for the Conservative Party and the bosses

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**P.S.**

- Anti\*Capitalist Resistance. 27 Aug 2022:  
<https://anticapitalistresistance.org/the-crisis-is-only-just-beginning/>