

## Corbyn's "Jobs for the Boys". Anti-Trident Resolution Opposed by Britain's Trade Unions

By [William Bowles](#)

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*So 'socialist' Jeremy Corbyn, after pressure from the trade union boys agreed not to make Trident an issue. After all, making nuclear weapons and the submarines that carry them, are jobs for the boys.*

Earlier Mr McCluskey said [the] Unite [trade union] was sympathetic to the argument that Trident nuclear weapons were expensive but added that not renewing the multi-billion pound system would cost some workers their jobs.

He told a fringe meeting in Brighton: "We won't be voting in favour of any anti-Trident resolution. The unions who were opposed to Trident are likely to carry the day and that is the way it is, that is the reality." – ['Jeremy Corbyn loses the battle on Trident after trade unionists side with Labour MPs to block the move'](#), the Independent, 27 September 2015

Corbyn has done the same 'deal' over bombing Syria. And note that it was his 'fellow' Labour MPs wot done it.

A yet more significant concession is his promise of a free vote on whether to back air strikes against Syria if the Conservatives call one. Given his appointment of a shadow cabinet dominated by pro-war figures such as Hilary Benn, this would all but guarantee a "yes" vote. – ['UK Labour Party conference begins under leadership of Corbyn'](#), WSWS, 28 September 2015

So, just how socialist is Jeremy Corbyn?

OK, he's anti-austerity, he's against the privatisation of the NHS, key issues that got him elected and importantly, especially on the NHS and renationalising the railways, he knows he has widespread support and these are not issues that are likely to split the Labour Party (especially ironic as how it was a Labour government under Blair/Brown that began the gutting of the NHS in the first place).

Tellingly, well at least as far as I'm concerned, his capitulation over Trident and Syria, indicate that he is yet another imperialist-socialist, that is to say, some aspects of socialism for us but imperialism for the exploited and downtrodden of the world. For proof of this look to his resignation as chair of the Stop the War coalition and,

...[h]e also announced that he will not be speaking at a conference fringe

meeting alongside representatives of Sinn Féin, but will be speaking at a Labour Friends of Israel event. ([ibid](#))

Gulp! This, in spite of the fact that Constituency Labour Party members (as opposed to Corbyn's useless fellow Labour MPS) are opposed to us bombing Syria,

Jeremy Corbyn has a huge mandate from Labour members to oppose British bombing in the Middle East, a new poll showed yesterday.

Results of a Labour List survey of 2,453 supporters found that 63 per cent support the party leader's opposition to air strikes in Syria.

– '[Labour Party Backs Jeremy Corbyn against British Air Strikes in the Middle East](#)', The Morning Star, 26 September 2015.

I suppose it just shows how desperate we are for an alternative to the sociopaths in power that we pin our hope on a single individual who, on the surface at least, is closer to our progressive ideals than most. But just how close is he in reality and just how realistic is it to pin our hopes not so much on Corbyn *per se* but on a revitalized Labour Party as an alternative?

Already, on several of his key election promises, he has had to back down. Won't the lefties here get real and accept the fact that more than 90% of the Parliamentary Labour Party are opposed to Corbyn's policies? He leads but by and large, in name only.

By the time he has finished negotiating his way through the minefield that is Labour Party politics, he's going to look like that cat in the MGM cartoons after the Road Runner has finished with him, with very little of his campaign promises, or his hide, left.

On reading those lefty/liberal commentators who have jumped to Corbyn's defence, or rather defence of their misty-eyed view of the Labour Party as a vehicle for change, it strikes me that there is an awful lot of wishful thinking going on judging by the central issue that crops up again and again, namely returning the Labour Party to its allegedly socialist roots by one means or another.

Here's an example of this kind of thinking from the progressive journalist Anthony Barnett,

If Labour is to challenge the individualism, corporatism and privatisation of society overseen by today's monstrous elite it has to do so with a different political culture: with intelligent, deliberative democracy, not collectivism; through voice, liberty and collaboration based on human rights, citizenship and self-determination. There can be no return to public values unless they are grounded in such active participation of the public. Now that the traditional establishment has abandoned conservative patriotism for global profiteering we need to see elite sovereignty replaced by popular sovereignty." – '[Open Labour: the only way for Corbyn to replace Blatcherism](#)', By Anthony Barnett, *Our Kingdom*, 28 September 2015

Now no doubt Barnett is a decent individual as well as being an excellent journalist but does he really believe that the Labour Party can be redirected to "challenge the individualism, corporatism and privatisation of society overseen by today's monstrous elite"? Is it any more likely to happen than it is to try and recreate the Labour Party of the 1940s?

This is wishful thinking on a grand scale and hinges on the central issue; can the kind of society Barnett, Corbyn, that many of us want to see, be achieved through our Parliament and specifically, through a Labour government?

Our current Tory government is more accurately described as a regime as it governs with only 24% of the vote, less than a quarter of the electorate due to our rigged voting system. What is the likelihood of Parliament restructuring itself, by itself? Look at how it handled the exposure of the many MPs' criminal activities in defrauding the public by fiddling their expenses. Yes, some reforms were enacted, a couple of MPs even did some time but the whole farce is still overseen by Parliament. The fox is still in charge of the henhouse. The British state has been around so long, even if most of its history is fake eg, being the 'first democracy', that genuine reform is impossible, and more importantly, irrelevant.

'Changing the conversation'?

Barnett talks about 'digital democracy' and embracing all those single issue, grassroots activities and in some way, changing the conversation and folding it all into a revitalized and reconstructed Labour Party or Open Labour Party ('we're all invited'). He talks of 'forks' or choices we need to make in order to achieve this,

The first fork points towards a classic attempt to capture the British state by electoral means and use it to carry through his programme, with him and his team as a kind of elitist anti-elite boosted into orbit by the enlarged Labour membership. This is what the mainstream media expects, as it is a form of politics which however extreme they can understand, it being full of splits and purges. The other fork points to building and encouraging the British public to democratize the state and take it away from elite control as we have known it; a form of politics beyond the ken of mediocrats whose idea of 'the people' is a focus group not a force. (my emph. WB) ([ibid](#))

So, what he seems to be saying here that the way to 'democratize the state' is through extra-Parliamentary means which if true, means that the Labour Party is pretty much surplus to requirement anyway. What Barnett and many like him refuse to accept is that the Labour Party is part of the state and essentially, has been so since it accepted the Parliamentary road to- well whatever, socialism if you like, back in 1910 or whenever it was. But why spend all that energy on trying to 'reform' the Labour Party when such vital energies would be better spent creating this new 'Open Party' that he talks of. Let Corbyn resign and head up this new party, he has such overwhelming support. Or does he?

Thus there's a fundamental contradiction at the heart of Barnett's argument, namely that it sees the state, in the guise of a Labour Party or indeed a Labour government, reforming itself in order to abolish capitalism? It's a fantasy. Any future Labour government, just like Syriza in Greece or Podemos in Spain, will have to contend with an all powerful international capitalist elite, that thinks nothing of destroying entire economies let alone entire countries. How many, do you think, of Corbyn's 'reforms' can survive into this mythical future?

At best, it's just a rehash of the old 'lesser of two evils' position that many on the left have been conned into supporting, including myself. At worst, and this I think is crucial, it could well lead to an even more cynical public when they see that this new Emperor too has no clothes.

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