

# **RIC-EDINBURGH HUSTINGS FOR THE WESTMINSTER GENERAL ELECTION, 27.11.19**

- 1. Kate Nevins, Scottish Green Party candidate, Edinburgh South**
- 2. Mike Cowley, Labour Party, chair of Campaign for Socialism in Midlothian,  
FELA/EIS union rep, and national committee**
- 3. Tommy Sheppard, SNP, MP, Edinburgh East**

**Facilitator – Pat Smith**

## **1. Kate Nevins**

Had been a member of the Young Greens and worked for 10 years on international development, human rights and peace building, part of the tome in the Middle East. Since moving from Norwich to Edinburgh has been a facilitator for charities and community groups

Urged radical action on the climate crisis She had witnessed some of the worst effects at first hand in the Middle East.

Was committed to working with others, including trade unions  
Was involved in the campaign against Brexit and for the Peoples Vote and supported IndyRed2

We need a New Green Deal and a transition to a new green economy with an accelerated transition to a zero carbon economy.

We need to maximise investment in;=

Renewables

Tidal power

Bring energy suppliers and National Grid into public ownership

Skills used in weapons manufacture and carbon fuels need to be transferred to the new green economy

Publicly owned bank

Oppose the arms trade

Free bus travel for youth

A new bill of rights is needed

The right to vote should be extended to all those living here, including asylum seekers

The 2 child benefit cap needs to be ended and the 'rape clause'

Close down immigration detention centres

New safe channels for asylum seekers

## 2. Mike Cowley

Had been an activist for 30 years

Jeremy Corbyn's Labour leadership victory and validated his continuing party membership

Whilst there had been some gains under New Labour, e.g. decline in poverty levels, including for children, these were offset by the losses, including deregulation of the economy and the Iraq war

Since being elected Corbyn had faced unprecedented smears and subterfuges

But the 2019 Labour manifesto is a beacon of hope. It is not a retreat of the 1945 manifesto.

It is far more radical, with new forms of public ownership and greater empowerment of workers increasing their leverage

Back in the 1970s the 'Chicago Boys' had moved against the post-war economic and social gains, first in Chile, then to the UK and USA. This disempowered labour and empowered capital. This had led to the fragmentation of working class communities, and the irresponsible power of the individual

Labour's Green New Deal would inject £200B into the economy

A Just Transition will require the involvement of the trade unions

A £10 an hour minimum wage would be introduced and the benefit cap would be scrapped

A 32 hour week would be introduced

The anti-trade union laws would be repealed

Private schools would be abolished

There would be a massive house-building programme

Rail, water, energy and broadband would be nationalised

Attacked the SNP for promoting a grievance culture and wanting to erect walls

## 3. Tommy Sheppard, SNP, MP, Edinburgh East

This general election is being held at the least auspicious time of year

This was the first hustings he had been elected to. Nevertheless this was an extremely important election.

The Hard Right could get a UK majority

Brexit would restructure the UK economy and re-orientate it to the US economy. Even the shield of devolution would come under attack. The Hard Right would roll back remaining economic and social provision

There is a range of election options. This does not include the likelihood of a Corbyn majority government. The SNP's aim is to:-

Lock the Tories out of power

Escape the chaos of Brexit

Assert the right of the people of Scotland to choose its own government

The SNP manifesto includes:-

An end to Tory austerity

An increase in public spending

An increase (of £34B spending on the NHS (at UK level with its automatic knock effect for Scotland)

An NHS Protection Bill with no sell-offs to the US

In the event of a hung parliament, support for a Corbyn government would depend on Labour recognising the Scottish Parliament's right to hold an independence referendum. This is not a demand that Westminster organises and finances a referendum, nor a demand that Corbyn supports Scottish independence, by a recognition of the right of self-determination.

The other things that would be at the table are:

The scrapping of Trident

The abolition of the House Lords

Tommy considered himself to be a socialist. Other might call him a Left social democrat. He wasn't a Scottish nationalist but a Scottish internationalist. Government can improve the position of the individual within a socially responsible civic society. Any new borders that are likely to be erected will be by a right wing Westminster government.

If Johnson is to be elected at a UK level, it is vital that his government has no mandate in Scotland.

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This was followed by questions and discussion. The RIC leaflet was given to everyone who attended and some were taken away.

There were 47 people at the meeting and £41 was collected