

# George Galloway backs “Left Leave” and urges alliance with UK Independence Party

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George Galloway, the former anti-war Respect MP, has been given a platform to defend his alliance with Nigel Farage, the leader of the xenophobic UK Independence Party (UKIP), by the Communist Party of Britain (CPB).

The CPB sits alongside the Socialist Workers Party and Counterfire in the “Left Leave” campaign, which claims to offer a progressive argument for the UK exiting the European Union in the June 23 referendum.

Aware of the nakedly right-wing character of the official “Leave” campaign, the pseudo-left groups have distanced themselves from Galloway, stating that they will not share platforms with UKIP and right-wing Tories. However, the interview in the May 19 edition of the CPB’s *Morning Star* disproves all claims of a political separation between the politics of Left Leave and Galloway, and confirms that Left Leave is part of the same nationalist spectrum as UKIP, et al.

*Morning Star* political editor John Haylett writes that Galloway “is supportive of the Left Leave initiative (Lexit),” after which Galloway is given free rein to expound his nationalist opposition to the EU.

“The British people are not some tribe of people painting their faces blue, living in the forest and requiring a Roman empire of sorts to come and show us how to dig a bath,” Galloway declares.

Haylett acknowledges that Galloway has “drawn criticism from within the labour movement” for interviewing Farage on his Sputnik programme on RT—the pro-Vladimir Putin Russian news channel. Galloway responds by insisting that Farage “represents nearly 4 million voters as UKIP leader and winning this referendum can’t be won by turning our backs on people that we don’t like.”

Speaking to someone he views as a fellow thinker, Galloway continues, “If Nigel Farage had pitched up with his 4 [million] supporters in support of the anti-war movement, we wouldn’t have turned him away. We wouldn’t have turned away people with whom we disagreed on other things. Indeed, we implored such support. ... *Our approach to politics* is to build the broadest coalitions possible to achieve things that we believe are right”

(emphasis added).

The “our” referred to by Galloway is the politics of Stalinism that he shares with Haylett. The history of the Stalinist parties in every country is characterised by political alliances with bourgeois parties, justified as building “popular fronts” in defence of democracy, etc. But there are many examples of alliances entered into by Stalinist parties with overtly right-wing bourgeois tendencies in pursuit of Stalinism’s nationalist and pro-capitalist political agenda.

Warning of the political implications of Galloway’s bonding with Farage, the Socialist Equality Party has drawn attention to the support extended to the 1931 referendum initiated by Hitler’s Nazi Party by the Stalinised Communist Party (KPD). Claiming a common goal with the Nazis of using the “Red Referendum” to remove the Social Democrats from power in Prussia, the KPD asserted this would be a step towards a “people’s revolution.” Instead, the end result was the victory of fascism.

Clearly stung by such comparisons, Galloway attempts a defence that, in fact, only confirms the prescience of the warnings issued by the *World Socialist Web Site* and the International Committee of the Fourth International. According to Haylett, Galloway rejects “the jibe by some on the left that Farage is a fascist” and characterises him as “a Poujadist, a populist right-winger who uses issues like immigration in the way that right-wing politicians do.”

Galloway’s analogy is more correct than he might wish. Poujadism came to prominence in the 1950s. As a youth in the 1930s, its founder, Pierre Poujade, joined the fascistic Parti Populaire Français (PPF) set up by the ex-Stalinist Jacques Doriot, and between 1940 and 1942 supported the Révolution Nationale of Marshal Philippe Pétain, who went on to become head of state in the Nazi collaborationist Vichy regime.

In 1953, Poujade initiated a right-wing populist movement against tax collectors, the Defence Union of Shopkeepers and Craftsmen (UDCA), which attracted hundreds of thousands of supporters. The movement was not fascist and professed sympathy for working people, but it employed

violence against its political opponents and became increasingly overt in its anti-Semitism. A leading role in such violent attacks was played by Jean Marie Le Pen, who went on to found the fascist National Front. At age 28, he became the youngest UDCA deputy of the 53 elected to the National Assembly in 1956, when the party secured 2.5 million votes.

For the first two years of its existence, the Poujadist movement worked closely with the Communist Party (PCF), which provided favourable commentary and even leading cadre for Poujade, in the name of advancing an “anti-monopoly alliance.” The PCF’s support for Poujadism played a significant role in shifting politics in France to the right, so that when the Fourth Republic collapsed in 1958, General Charles de Gaulle came to power as the head of a “government of national safety,” with emergency powers granted to him for six months. He was backed by Poujade, who disbanded his party.

Support for Farage and the invocation of a common national interest in securing an exit from the EU has the same essential political significance.

Galloway treats Farage’s xenophobia as if it were an unfortunate mistake on his part, declaring at one point, “He has some views that are worse than the Tories and some that are better.”

But anti-immigrant rhetoric is not a secondary feature of the Leave campaign. It is an essential mechanism for transmitting the most degraded and right-wing nationalist sentiments into the working class in order to line up support for measures aimed at securing freedom for the City of London and big business from any form of regulation or restraint.

This week, Farage gave an interview to the BBC in which he deliberately echoed former Conservative MP Enoch Powell’s infamous “Rivers of Blood” speech regarding the implications of immigration. “I think it’s legitimate to say that if people feel they have lost control completely—and we have lost control of our borders completely as members of the European Union—and if people feel that voting doesn’t change anything, then violence is the next step,” he declared.

Days later, the official Vote Leave campaign and one of its leading figures, Michael Gove, MP, issued a statement asserting that Turkey is about to join the EU and its citizens pose a threat to national security and public services. A newly launched Vote Leave poster features the slogan: “Turkey (population 76 million) is joining the EU. Vote Leave, take back control.”

Right-wing Labour MP Jon Cruddas has been commissioned by the party to head an inquiry into “Why Labour lost in 2015 and how it can win again.” His report,

shown to the *Observer*, uses the “4 million UKIP voters” cited by Galloway to argue that Labour must “stop patronising socially conservative UKIP voters and recognise the ways in which UKIP appeals to former Labour voters.”

Turning reality on its head, it describes Labour as a “toxic brand” for not unreservedly adopting UKIP’s policies and instead pursuing an “open door” approach to immigration and being a “soft touch” on welfare spending. Labour’s appeal is confined to “progressive, social liberals who value principles such as equality, sustainability and social justice,” Cruddas complains.

The Left Leave campaign, for which Galloway is now an advocate, lines up sections of workers behind a right-wing nationalist agenda shared by all the main parties, for which Farage acts as a stalking horse. As the WSWS warned in its February 23 article on Galloway’s appearance with Farage on the platform of Grassroots Out, which played a role in the decision of the ICFI to call for an active boycott of the referendum:

The first responsibility of a socialist is to oppose the mixing of class banners. In the referendum, this means rejecting all appeals for working people to fall in behind one or another faction of the bourgeoisie who are fighting between themselves solely over which strategy best upholds the interests of British imperialism.

To do otherwise and to in any way endorse the nationalist and pro-capitalist agendas espoused by both the “remain” and “leave” campaigns sows dangerous political confusion, weakening the political defences of the working class at a time when the noxious fumes of nationalism, anti-migrant xenophobia and militarism are polluting the UK, Europe and the entire world.



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