

the Socialist

www.socialistparty.org.uk

16-22 September 2010

Issue 638

price: 70p (Solidarity £2)

Battle lines are drawn JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST CUTS

ANYONE OPPOSING cuts must think they've fallen through the rabbit hole to 'Wonderland' if they've been watching the television this week. Pro-cuts propaganda voiced by Con-Dem politicians, ministers and supportive 'experts' is everywhere.

Sean Figg

The BBC served up a textbook case of 'debate rigging' in a series of regional programmes called Spending Review: the Debates. In London the title was 50% accurate. The programme was about the impact of the upcoming spending review, but it certainly was not a debate!

We were treated to an hour of almost exclusively pro-cuts arguments. The presenter asked the carefully hand-picked audience "what should be cut? And what should be saved?" Hang on a minute! So now it is no longer a question of *if* there should be cuts but *how* they should be done.

In reality the reason cuts are being made is because the last Labour government, supported by the Conservatives and Lib Dems, used billions of pounds of public money to bail out the banks that had just plunged the economy into the worst recession since the 1930s. But the Wonderland version of events is that we were too greedy, demanding money for wages, benefits and public services.

Participating in the 'debate' we had James Caan, the Dragon's Den millionaire. He supports cuts. We had spokespeople from the Taxpayers' Alliance and the right-wing Reform think-tank. They support



Lobbying the TUC on 12 September.

photo Paul Mattsson

cuts. We had Tory and Lib Dem politicians. Maybe with one eye on their electorate they will only support 'fair' cuts. We had renowned economists, the commissioner for Transport for London and the editor of the right-wing Evening Standard. They all told us how we should take our cuts medicine.

The only dissenting voice present was from the London Health Emergency campaign who pointed out that 6,000 hospital beds across London are being cut in the so-called ring-fenced NHS.

Where were the trade unionists? The London Underground workers had been on strike just two days before to stop the cutting of 800 jobs. All of London was brought to a standstill by thousands of militant workers fighting against cuts. Did the producers not think that they might have something to say about cuts?

It won't work. When the spending review is announced and the cuts really hit home no amount of pro-cuts propaganda will wash. Workers, young people, pensioners and

service users will see the brutal reality of this pro-big business government of millionaires. People will see that our living standards are being sacrificed to the benefit of big business and the banks. Our justified anger will turn on the super-rich elite and their politicians who got us into this mess. Our 'propaganda' will be that of organised workers' action as we build a mass movement that can turn back these attacks and stop all cuts.

See page 2.

TUC backs youth jobs demo

The TUC has committed itself to a national demonstration against youth unemployment by the end of the year. This important resolution was first discussed by the youth TUC and was carried at the main Congress on 14 September.

The resolution recognises the fact that trade unions and trades councils nationwide are already supporting a mass mobilisation of young people through the Youth Fight for Jobs campaign. Helen Flanagan from the PCS spoke in support of the resolution. She said: "The key to the resolution is point eight, which calls for a national demonstration against youth unemployment to be built for by the trade union movement before the end of 2010. Actually I think the TUC should have had a national demonstration against all cuts in October."

TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said the general council supported the resolution.

• www.youthfightforjobs.com

Women and socialism

The struggle against oppression

pages 6&7



Royal Mail

Con-Demned to history?

page 3



India

General strike

page 9



PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD • telephone: 020 8988 8777 • email: info@socialistparty.org.uk