

# STOP THE 'SLIPPERY SLOPE' TO TWO-TIER EDUCATION

**U**NIVERSITIES UK (UUK), the vice-chancellor's organisation, has issued a warning that the Con-Dem 'reforms' to higher education will lead to a two-tier education system.

**Paul Callanan**

The UUK report said that a clear social divide will be created if only the rich are able to attend university in the traditional way. Those from poorer backgrounds who decide to go, in spite of the fees, cuts and poor job prospects, will only be able to do so using distance or part time learning.

Students already face leaving university with crippling debts - an average of £25,000 for those leaving university this year.

And now leaks in anticipation of the Browne Review into university funding suggest it will recommend that fees are raised to at least £7,000 a year.

This is despite the fact that a National Union of Students (NUS) survey showed that more than half of all students would have been put off going to university if fees were £5,000 a year.

This year's university places shortfall has left 150,000 students without a university place at all and many scrambling around trying to find alternatives to a degree.

There is also the prospect of

more funding cuts in the October spending review.

As £2.5 billion has already been chopped from the higher education budget, further cuts will be devastating to the quality of education most universities are able to provide.

The Con-Dem coalition has already revealed its intentions for higher education in Britain by giving the go ahead for the first private university to be opened in 30 years.

This is again enforcing the prospect of one type of education for the rich and another for the rest of us. The lecturer's University and College Union (UCU) has warned that the move represents the beginning of a "slippery slope for academic provision in this country."

This government is turning education into a privilege for the minority who can afford it rather than a right for all.

These plans must be opposed. Socialist Students and Youth Fight for Jobs will be organising students who want to fight for the right to a decent education at every university and college.

On 20 October we will be holding a day of action across the country to oppose all cuts and fees. If you refuse to be part of a lost generation and want to fight for your future then join us in building the fightback against the government's savage onslaught.



Join the day of action on 20 October to demand free education and an end to cuts.

photo Paul Mattsson

## whatwestandfor

**The Socialist Party fights for socialist change – a democratic society run for the needs of all and not the profits of a few. We also fight, in our day-to-day campaigning, for every possible improvement for working-class people.**

**As capitalism dominates the globe, the struggle for genuine socialism must be international.**

**The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), a democratic, socialist international that organises in over 40 countries.**

### Our demands include:

#### Work & Income

- Trade union struggle to increase the minimum wage to £8 an hour without exemptions as an immediate step towards £10 an hour. For an annual increase in the minimum wage linked to average earnings.
- All workers, including part-timers, temps, casual and migrant workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, and sickness and holiday rights from day one of employment.
- An immediate 50% increase in the state retire-

ment pension, as a step towards a living pension. Reinstatement the link with average earnings now.

- Reject 'Welfare to Work'. For the right to decent benefits, education, training, or a job, without compulsion.
- Scrap the anti-trade union laws! For fighting trade unions, democratically controlled by their members. Full-time union officials to be regularly elected and receive no more than a worker's wage.
- A maximum 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

#### Public services

- No to privatisation and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Renationalise all privatised utilities and services, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need.
- Fully fund all services and run them under accountable, democratic committees that include representatives of service workers and users.
- Free, publicly run, good quality education, available to all at any age. Abolish university tuition fees now and introduce a living grant. No to academies!
- A socialist NHS to provide for everyone's health needs – free at the point of use and under democratic control. Kick out private contractors!

- Keep council housing publicly owned. For a massive building programme of publicly owned housing, on an environmentally sustainable basis, to provide good quality homes with low rents.

#### Environment

- Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy and into ending the problems of early obsolescence and unrecycled waste.
- Public ownership of the energy generating industries. No to nuclear power. No to Trident.
- A democratically planned, low fare, publicly-owned transport system, as part of an overall plan against environmental pollution.

#### Rights

- Oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, disability, sexuality, age, and all other forms of prejudice.
- Repeal all laws that trample over civil liberties. For the right to protest! End police harassment.
- Defend abortion rights. For a woman's right to choose when and whether to have children.
- For the right to asylum. No to racist immigration laws.

#### New workers' party

- For a new mass workers' party drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplace, community, environmental and anti-war campaigns, to provide a fighting, political alternative to the pro-big business parties.
- Trade unions to disaffiliate from the Labour Party now and aid the building of a new workers' party!

#### Socialism and Internationalism

- No to imperialist wars and occupations. Withdraw the troops immediately from Iraq and Afghanistan!
- Tax the super-rich! For a socialist government to take into public ownership the top 150 companies and banks that dominate the British economy, and run them under democratic working-class control and management. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need.
- A democratic socialist plan of production based on the interests of the overwhelming majority of people, and in a way that safeguards the environment.
- No to the bosses' neo-liberal European Union! For a socialist Europe and a socialist world!