the Socialist
25 November - 1 December 2010
www.socialistparty.org.uk

We can stop the cuts

Local protest and meeting reports

1,200 in Nottingham

AROUND 1,200 protesters marched through Nottingham on Saturday 20 November to a town centre rally organised by Notts Save Our Services (SOS).

This was the largest protest in Nottingham for many years and was led by pupils, staff and parents from Gedling school which is faced with closure as a result of cuts.

Local trade unions were represented with banners from the GMB, Ucatt and Unison as well as the NUT, along with an array of home-made banners.

The speakers showed their determination to fight the cuts all the way, and to oppose all cuts in services.

Local government worker and Unison member Jean Thorpe said: "We do not accept the Tory dogma that says that our jobs, our services and our benefits have to pay for their crisis. It's economic madness that will increase unemployment by 1.5 million.

"It's also ideological – the Tories want to shrink the state, hand over the rich pickings in health, education and so on to their friends in the private sector to boost their profits."

"But it's also Tory ideology to divide, to make us less effective in fighting the cuts, with comments like 'claiming benefits is a lifestyle choice' or 'public sector workers are on gold plated pay and pensions' and we must not let them divide us in this way."

Socialist Party members sold 93 copies of The Socialist paper and raised over £50 that will help with the production of more anti-cuts material including leaflets and posters.

The SOS group meets every Monday and will be present at the protest at Gedling school on 25 November.

Charlie Taylor
Nottingham Socialist Party

Local government worker Jean Thorpe speaks to the Nottingham demonstration. *photo Nottingham SP*

'No Lewisham cuts!'

NEW LABOUR Mayor for Lewisham Steve Bullock faced angry protestors and chants of "no ifs, no buts, no Lewisham cuts" as he met with his handpicked cabinet to agree the first phase of cuts to local services on 17 November.

A lobby, organised by Lewisham Anti-Cuts Alliance (LACA), of 200 people heard speakers from local public sector unions, anti-academies campaigns and college students fighting against EMA cuts.

Martin Powell-Davies, NUT branch secretary and one of the organisers of LACA described the threat to public services that Labour's cuts posed and warned that the council's 'phase two' cuts next year were to go even deeper.

Martin also appealed to the union members present to help pressure union leaders to coordinate strike action.

We heard days before the meeting that the council had been forced to delay a decision on the closure of five libraries after community campaigns mobilised against the council.

Inside the meeting Bullock faced constant heckling and chanting and the meeting was adjourned for 40 minutes. The cabinet waved through the cuts, which included the closure of the 'Opening Doors' service to help unemployed people back to work.

The proposals go to a meeting of the full council on Monday 29 November where LACA and the Socialist Party will be calling for councillors to refuse to make the cuts and instead unite with the local community in fighting for decent services and jobs in the borough.

James Kerr
Lewisham Socialist Party

For the latest reports on meetings, protests and industrial action taking place against cuts, go to: **www.socialistparty.org.uk**

150 at Portsmouth launch

OVER 150 trade unionists, students and community activists packed into a university lecture theatre on 18 November to officially launch the Portsmouth anti-cuts campaign.

The meeting, hosted by Portsmouth trades council, sought to use the momentum generated by recent local anti-cuts marches and public meetings to build a community wide campaign prepared to take on every single proposed cut.

The first speaker, Laurie Heselden from the Trades Union Congress, read out the cuts which the public sector will be facing, before outlining the limited TUC strategy of training union reps, lobbying local politicians and building for a national demonstration in March.

In contrast, Ben Norman from Youth Fight for Jobs South proposed that the campaign should back the call for a national trade union demonstration sooner than March, a proposal greeted by the first round of applause of the evening.

Ben also called for the campaign to be committed to fighting all cuts and proposed standing anti-cuts candidates in the upcoming local elections.

Contributions from the floor included discussion on the need to link to regional anti-cuts campaigns, and accounts of the NUS demo by students from Portsmouth University.

The meeting also elected a steering committee that includes trade union reps, students' union officers, school students from the Portsmouth Save Our Schools campaign and delegates from the Pensioners Association.

The campaign will next meet on Monday 29 November.

Portsmouth Socialist Party

Doncaster demo

AROUND 200 people attended a Doncaster demonstration against the cuts on 13 November.

The demonstration tapped into the growing anger against the Con-Dem government and the local Labour council that will administer the cuts in Doncaster.

Doncaster council has already issued 91 redundancy notices to front line staff in children's services. Yet in Doncaster there have been seven children killed who were on the 'at risk' register and under the 'watchful eye' of Doncaster social services.

The main reason given for the very poor service these vulnerable children received was the lack of experienced staff and heavy workloads. 91 less workers will certainly not improve this.

Mary Jackson
Barnsley and Doncaster Socialist Party

Building the Socialist Party

Join the Christmas Collectathon!

THE ANNUAL Socialist Party Christmas Collectathon begins on 1 December. Socialist Party members are at the forefront of organising action against the Con-Dem cuts, helping to establish and build anti-cuts unions in their local areas and campaigning to show that it is possible to stop the decimation of our public services.

Often it is only Socialist Party members out in the town centres and shopping arcades who are putting forward any kind of alternative and ordinary working class people recognise that - many times people donate £5, £10 or even £20 when we ask for financial support. The party depends on these donations to help fund its campaigning.

All Socialist Party branches should organise extra fundraising activities in the run-up to Christmas. All Socialist Party members can help by dedicating some of their time to do as much campaigning among the Christmas shoppers as possible or by organising a fundraising party or raffle.

photo North East SP

Campaigning reports and fundraising ideas can be emailed to editors@socialistparty.org.uk.

You can also support the Socialist Party by donating via our website at www.socialistparty.org.uk/donate or by telephoning 020 8988 8777.

Ken Douglas, Socialist Party national treasurer

National Committee

THE SOCIALIST Party's national committee met on Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 November. The first discussion, on the world economy and perspectives for struggle in Britain, was introduced by the party's general secretary, Peter Taaffe.

The second discussion, introduced by deputy general secretary Hannah Sell, looked at anti-cuts campaigning. The first day finished with a review of the Socialism 2010 weekend and planning ahead for Socialism 2011.

On Sunday the meeting discussed the possibilities for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition election platform, youth and student campaigning, and building the Socialist Party. Socialist Party branches should get a full report of the meeting from a national committee member in their area.

datesforyourdiary

Leeds Socialist Party meeting
Liverpool - A city that dared to fight
Monday 29 November, 7.30pm
The Adelphi, 1-3 Hunslet Road, Leeds

Mansfield/North Derbyshire Socialist Party meeting
Coalition punishes the poor - the fight for decent pay and benefits
Wednesday 1 December, 7.30pm
Ladybrook Community Centre, Ladybrook Lane, Mansfield NG18 5JJ

Stevenage TUC public meeting
Stop the cuts – join the fightback
Thursday 2 December, 7.30pm
Speakers: Billy Hayes, CWU general secretary; Chris Baugh, PCS deputy general secretary; Martin Powell-Davies, NUT national executive

Huddersfield Socialist Party
The 1984-85 miners' strike
Thursday 2 December, 7.30pm
The Irish Centre, 86 Fitzwilliam St, Huddersfield, HD1 5BB

Chester TUC
Chester anti-cuts public meeting
Thursday 2 December, 7.30pm
Guildhall, Watergate Street, Chester, CH1 2LA

Coventry Against the Cuts demonstration
Saturday 4 December, 11am
Assemble outside Council House, Earl Street

Nuneaton Socialist Party meeting
The Spanish revolution
Wednesday 8 December, 7pm
Hatters Space community centre, Upper Abbey Street, Nuneaton

Manchester
NSSN-initiated anti-cuts demo
Wednesday 8 December
7.30-10am lobby before council meets
4-6pm demonstration after council meets
Outside Manchester Town Hall, Albert Square

www.socialistparty.org.uk/whatson
Your area not listed?
Phone 020 8988 8777

Get involved I'd like to join the Socialist Party ☐ I'd like more information about the Socialist Party ☐
Donate I'd like to donate £ to the Socialist Party **please make cheques payable to Socialist Party**
Subscribe 12 issues £9 ☐ 6 months £18 ☐ 1 year £36 ☐ **please make cheques payable to Socialist Publications Ltd**
Western Europe: 12 issues £16, half year £32, year £50 **Rest of world:** 12 issues £25, half year £50, year £90
Return slip or pay at www.socialistparty.org.uk/subscribe
Name
Address and postcode
tel/email
Return to: Socialist Party, PO Box 24697, London E11 1YD or phone 020 8988 8777 to pay by card, to arrange a direct debit, or to join.
Credit card No:
Name: Start Date: Expiry Date: Security Code: Issue No:

SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND

October-December 2010 — deadline: 7 January

	£ target	£ received
Eastern	1,200	1,408
London	6,100	5,512
Yorkshire	2,900	2,304
East Midlands	1,550	965
Wales	2,300	1,299
North West	1,200	643
South East	1,000	524
Southern	1,200	628
West Midlands	2,100	989
South West	1,400	485
Northern	600	109
England & Wales	3,450	5,851
TOTAL	25,000	20,723