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STOP THE CUTS

THINGS HAVE got to be bad when the governor of the Bank of England, Mervyn King, warns that living standards may never recover from the financial crisis. "It is not like an ordinary recession where you lose output and get it back quickly," he cautioned. He went on to say: "The cost of this crisis is only now being felt. I'm surprised that the degree of anger hasn't been greater."

For the capitalist commentators the revolutionary movements in the Middle East were a 'surprise' and seemed to come from nowhere. Such was their inability to see the enormous subterranean volcano of anger that was fed by

mass unemployment, low wages and poor living standards.

But Mr King and his Con-Dem collaborators won't have to wait long for workers to take to the streets in Britain. The TUC demonstration on 26 March will provide workers and young people, public service users and benefit claimants, pensioners, parents and students with an opportunity to express the enormous 'degree of anger' they feel. The council chamber lobbies, occupations and local demonstrations have provided a foretaste of this.

But this demonstration must be only the beginning. The Con-Dems have the welfare state,

trade union rights and everything the working class has fought for over generations in their sights.

Such an onslaught requires a serious and determined response. The trade union leaders must act, coordinating national strike action - the only language pro-big business politicians understand.

Just as mass action of working class people, through an organised 18 million-strong non-payment campaign, made Thatcher's hated poll tax unworkable, these cuts can be stopped. Just as that movement led to Thatcher's removal, we can get rid of the Con-Dems too!

Fantastic results in Irish election: Socialists and lefts gain five seats



Joe Higgins

The general election in Ireland took place in the context of a profound crisis in society, with the Irish working class confronted by brutal austerity measures which threaten jobs, public services and living standards.

The clearest voice of opposition to this came from the brand new United Left Alliance (ULA) which gained five TDs (MPs). The Socialist Party (CWI Ireland), which initiated the process that led to the formation of the ULA in 2010, got two TDs elected.

Socialist Party councillor Clare Daly was elected as a TD for the first time in Dublin North (7,513 first preference votes or 15.2%). Joe Higgins, a TD from 1997 to 2007 was returned to the Dáil (parliament), representing Dublin West (8,084 or 19%).

Both excellent results also represent the outlook of many working class people throughout the country, who see Socialist Party TDs as representatives of the working class generally not just for their particular constituencies.

See page 2 for more and socialistworld.net

We need action:

Demonstrate!

The demonstration against cuts on 26 March is going to be huge. It will be a key step in building the confidence of workers to fight back, as the 10 November demo showed students their potential strength. (See www.tuc.org.uk)

Strike!

But marching is not enough. It was the strike action in Egypt that finally made it clear to Mubarak that he would have to go. Strike action by workers in councils and across the public sector to defend the public sector is needed here. The next step should be a one-day public sector general strike.

Occupy!

Public buildings, services and resources belong to us and future generations. It is not for politicians to hand them over to private profiteers. Occupations to defend our public property, liaising with the trade unions, are necessary.

'Needs budget'

Instead of weeping and hand-wringing we need councillors to stand up and vote against cuts. They should set needs budgets, based on the services and jobs required. We need public representatives who will stand up for us, who will fight for us and who we can trust. If councillors won't do this they must stand aside and allow those who will to represent us. The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition is calling for anti-cuts campaigns to stand candidates. (See www.tusc.org.uk)

