



30 June public sector pension strike

Special 16-page issue

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24-hour public sector general strike as next step to beat the Con-Dems

OUR FIGHTBACK CAN WIN!

Just over a year ago, the Tory/Liberal coalition took power, promising to 'fix' the country. How have they done? Unemployment figures of 2.5 million and rising on the basis of cuts; dire results on the high streets showing no good news for the economy. Only a handful of rich fat cats have benefited.

The Con-Dems provoked the biggest trade union demo in generations in March; the biggest strike in decades on 30 June and the potential for a mass movement to develop, even the BMA doctors' organisation voted 87% to consider strike action.

Government minister Francis Maude had said nobody would support the 30 June strikes. But at the London strike rally Mark Serwotka, PCS civil service union general secretary, described the strike's massive impact. 85% of PCS members were on strike. A picket line was mounted on Maude's own department.

Before 30 June, education minister Michael Gove said the strike would damage 'respect' for teachers. But teachers were out in force because of the disrespect being shown them by this government.

Scabby Gove had called on head teachers to keep schools open and for them to be staffed by parents. But head teachers could now also ballot for action to defend pensions and the idea that it is wrong to ex-

pect teachers to work until they're 68 is widely supported.

Countrywide, trade union reps describe the best turnouts on picket lines, recruitment of new members wanting to join the strike action, and a serious and determined mood that this must be the start of a sustained campaign.

Some government ministers seem to see their folly in hitting the entire public sector at once. Trying to divide the movement, Maude and Co have hinted at some concessions for local government workers.

But they have not won that argument either. On picket lines, at rallies, on demos and at meetings in every area, members of Unison, Unite and the GMB, the three big public sector unions, and other unions expressed solidarity with the strike and a wish to be involved next time.

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A 30 June score board would put a zero beside Labour. Many Labour Party members probably felt like punching the screen when they

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watched Ed Miliband denounce the strikers, calling the strike "wrong" six times in a single interview. More than ever we need a new party that actually stands up and fights in the interests of working class people.

A window fitter at a Southampton post-strike meeting said: "When I heard Miliband attack the strikes, my head blew up. I knew I had to contact the Socialist Party!" This points to another achievement of the Con-Dems and their class.

In response to the unprecedented attack on the living conditions of working and middle class people there is a growing questioning, not just about whether cuts are necessary or inevitable, but about the type of society we live in.

If you agree that we need an alternative based on socialist planning to meet the needs of all, join the Socialist Party. See page 12.

