

CAPITALISM IS CRISIS

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The titanic strike of 30 November will display the colossal power of the working class. It will show how workers, through the trade unions, can resist the savage cuts demanded by the capitalists and their political representatives, the Con-Dem austerity coalition.

It also presents a unique opportunity that must not be lost for the leaders and ranks of the trade unions to reach big audiences of working people.

Many will be involved in mass action for the first time and therefore can be receptive to discussion and debate about a real alternative to the future of unrelieved misery, 'planned poverty', promised by Osborne and Cameron with Clegg and Co in tow.

The PCS civil service union has proposed an immediate alternative to Osborne's £81 billion of cuts over four years. It demands the collection of the massive £120 billion unpaid tax of big business which, if implemented, would render the cuts completely unnecessary. The Socialist Party and the whole labour movement support this demand.

However, the speed and depth of the present crisis of capitalism and its devastating effect on the lives of millions of workers in Britain and worldwide, poses sharply the issue not just of immediate measures that offer some relief for working people, but of more profound solutions, of 'system change'. This means outlining and fighting for a democratic socialist alternative.

The powerful and inspirational mass movements of the Greek workers have heroically battered away at the foundations of rotten Greek capitalism. Their counterparts in Spain, Portugal, Italy and here in Britain, in this decisive movement of 30 November, seek to emulate them.

It is also articulated in the tre-

mendous 'Occupy' movement, which in the last months has swept through 1,000 cities worldwide and touched every continent.

Moreover, this first breeze of the class struggle - which foreshadows the storms and hurricanes to come - has even touched the summits of capitalism. A founder of the far from radical Independent newspaper, Andreas Whittam Smith, recently stunned readers by telling them that "Western nations are now ripe for revolution".

However, this was not the death-bed repentance and repudiation of a former stalwart of capitalism but a warning to the capitalists themselves of the need for 'change' in the structure and organisation of their system in order to avoid such a 'nightmare'. Whittam Smith favours a 'political revolution' aimed at renovating and legitimising capitalism.

The Egyptian revolutionaries show that the system needs to be fundamentally challenged. They have correctly characterised the post-Mubarak regime - dominated still by the army and the security apparatus - as a 'change of the curtains' rather than complete dismantling of all remnants of the Mubarak regime, which would involve a social revolution.

Immoral markets

Not one of the leaders of the main political parties in Britain is proposing serious change. David Cameron is pressed on all sides by the increasing unpopularity of the venal system over which he presides. He poses mythical 'moral markets'

as an alternative. This is a contradiction in terms.

Obscene bankers' bonuses, eye-watering and growing inequality, sky-rocketing poverty and unemployment are to be underpinned by the cement of a new capitalist 'morality'. This represents an attempt by the apostles of capitalist slavery to reconcile us to the perpetuation of this failing system.

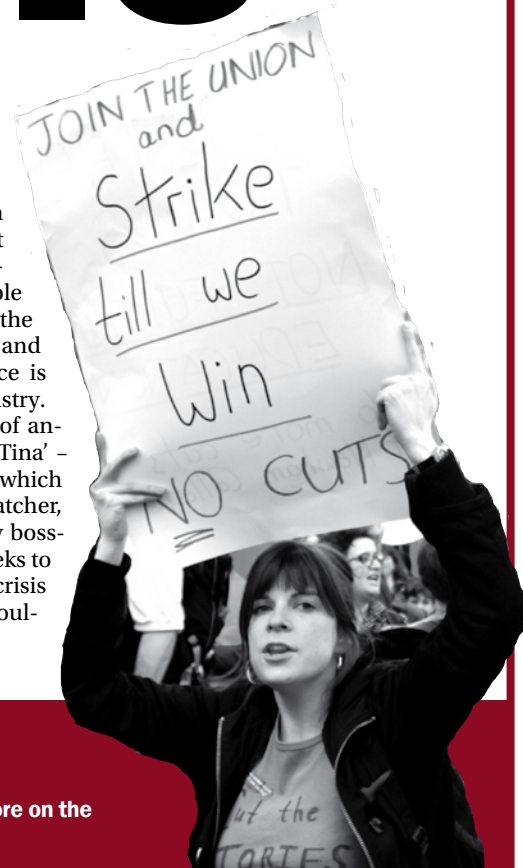
We can imagine Cameron's reply: "The talent and ability of bankers and the chief execs of top companies should receive their due rewards. Without them, we are doomed."

Ed Miliband, the New Labour leader, fares no better with his appeal for a "better capitalism". He counterposes "productive" capitalism, which is 'good' to "predator" capital-

ism, which is 'bad'.

In reality, these are just different wings of the brutal profit system and are linked together in perpetuating the current deadly paralysis of society. Manufacturers gamble in the finance sector at the cost of building factories and creating jobs, and finance is organically linked to industry.

Miliband is incapable of answering the doctrine of 'Tina' - there is no alternative - which has, from the time of Thatcher, been the mantra of every bosses' government which seeks to unload the burden of the crisis of capitalism onto the shoulders of the working class.



fight for socialism

See pages 6 and 7 for more on the socialist alternative

What we stand for

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 and 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

retirement pension, as a step towards a living pension. Reinstate 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 and 'Free schools'!
- 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!