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the Socialist

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ACTION TO STOP ALL CUTS



As we go to press, the heroic working class in Greece is in the middle of its 21st general strike since the start of the world economic crisis. Workers in Spain, Portugal and Italy are preparing their historic coordinated strike action for 14 November. The determination and courage of striking miners in South Africa inspires workers in every country. With increased warnings now of a 'triple-dip' recession the need to step up preparations for a 24-hour general strike in Britain was a major theme of the Socialism 2012 weekend of discussion and debate on 3 and 4 November. Here, and on pages 6 and 7, Sarah Sachs-Eldridge gives a taste of a fantastic event.

Opening the Saturday night rally Paula Mitchell, London Socialist Party secretary, declared that "we are in the fight of our lives". The bosses at Britain's biggest companies have seen their average earnings increase by more than a quarter this year while average household spending, reflecting the impact of auster-

ity, is down 3%. So it was fitting that the entire event was imbued with a serious and determined approach to planning the next steps and ideas necessary to fight austerity and kick out the Con-Dems.

Bob Crow, RMT transport union general secretary, was the first speaker in the rally. Using the example of his beloved Millwall football club he showed the difference confidence can make to a team's performance and applied this to the working class in Britain.

Following the magnificent trade union demonstration on 20 October, when he and two other union general secretaries called for general strike action, Bob said he felt the "confidence of the trade unions is rising".

Bob called for a mass campaign of workplace meetings and a rallying demand for "a general strike in 2013".

The POA prison officers' union took the general strike motion to the TUC in September. Joe Simpson, the union's assistant general secretary, like Bob, took the opportunity to attack the right-wing trade union leaders whose preferred strategy is to wait for a Labour government rather than organising a determined

campaign of workers' action.

Joe said he'd seen Labour leader Ed Miliband speak twice - at the Durham Miners' Gala and on 20 October when Miliband confirmed to 150,000 anti-cuts marchers that Labour is firmly for cuts. Joe called on members in the unions affiliated to Labour to take motions to their branches calling on their unions to stop funding Labour.

Turn anger into action

Claire Laker-Mansfield powerfully illustrated 'them and us' Britain - comparing the pampered privilege of a young David Cameron at Eton and Oxbridge to the experience of the majority of young people. With the abolition of EMA student payments, up to £9,000 annual university fees, sky-rocketing unemployment and a constant demonisation by right-wing politicians and the media, how can young people be anything but angry?

But, Claire said, organisation around clear demands can turn that anger into a movement. The student

demo on 21 November must only be the start of a determined resistance by young people, including joining with workers in struggle.

Peter Taaffe was the final speaker of the night. He left us in no doubt that a 24-hour general strike would terrify the government. He explained how the Portuguese working class, assumed to be a 'docile' poster-child for workers accepting austerity, rose up with a million on the streets and inflicted a defeat on the government.

"Even the most brutal and seemingly determined government can be compelled to step back if the labour movement uses effective power. This is what the one-day general strike means."

Peter explained that there must also be a political strategy - to build a new mass party of the working class. He reminded us that Tory axeman Osborne was, rightly, booed at the Paralympics - but that Miliband

was also booed on 20 October.

"Capitalism is already bankrupt and will be seen as such by more and more workers." The only people, Peter pointed out, who seem to have confidence in capitalism are Ed Miliband and the Labour front bench, arguing the case for so-called 'responsible capitalism'.

"Hand-in-hand with this goes the need to advance a socialist alternative. Now no meeting, demonstration, trade union branch, gathering of workers should go by without us arguing the socialist case."

Continued on pages 6 and 7

See www.socialistworld.net for reports and analysis of the general strike action in Europe

photo Senan



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Rotherham needs a workers' MP instead of New Labour frauds

Alistair Tice
Yorkshire Socialist Party

On Friday 2 November, Blairite Denis MacShane resigned as Labour MP for Rotherham, following a damning report exposing his fraudulent expenses claims.

He made 19 false claims, totalling £12,900, which were "plainly intended to deceive". Parliament's cross-party Standards and Privileges Committee called the case the "gravest" it had dealt with that had not ended up in court.

MacShane submitted 19 claims for "research and translation work" with an organisation called the European Policy Institute between January 2005 and January 2008.

But the EPI had no office or salaried staff and names given on a letterhead were old friends of MacShane, who was signing the invoices and controlled the bank account.

"The bills were signed with a 'nom de plume' purporting to come from a General Manager who did not in fact exist," the report said.

"In effect, he was sending the invoice to himself and writing his own

cheque."

Despite, in his resignation statement, MacShane's declaration of love for Rotherham and his "beloved" Labour Party, this supporter of war, Israel's right-wing government, the neoliberal EU and nuclear energy, as well as the neo-con Henry Jackson society, will not be missed by many.

There will now be a byelection



TUSC stands for the 99% photo London SP

in Rotherham where Labour had a 10,000-vote majority at the last election. This is sure to be contested by the racist British National Party - which made the complaint about MacShane's expenses that led to his resignation - and probably other far-right parties. Far-right groups have targeted Rotherham in recent weeks with demonstrations against the alleged cover up of Asian child-sex

grooming, a pretext for spreading racist lies, hate and division.

Socialist Party believes it is essential that there is a Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition candidate in the byelection to offer workers a real alternative to corruption, racism and austerity, especially to campaign against the £50 million local NHS cuts recently announced by the trust chief executive.

Heseltine's economy report is no solution

Alex Davidson
Manchester Central TUSC candidate

The end of October saw the publication of a report by former Tory minister Michael Heseltine on the economy.

Heseltine is infamous throughout the labour movement for his role in the 1980s Thatcher government. He oversaw an assault on social housing when environment minister, and was the man responsible for the final massacre of the coal industry as president of the Board of Trade in the early 1990s (see page 11).

Heseltine's recent report stated that the government "does not have a strategy for growth and wealth creation", reflecting a growing panic among the ruling class.

The recent, heavily doctored 'growth' figures confirm that the government is desperately casting

around for some 'good news'. Heseltine's report recommends that the government uses £49 billion to "stimulate growth in the regions". He also recommends that the government act as a stimulator for growth.

This echoes much of what Chancellor George Osborne himself said about the "march of the makers" to replace lost jobs in the public sector. In reality, manufacturing has continued its long-term decline throughout the Con-Dems' two years in power.

Areas like Manchester have never recovered from the deindustrialisation carried out by Thatcher and Heseltine's government.

The current government has no commitment to saving skilled manufacturing jobs, as shown by their attitude to mass layoffs proposed by Ford in Southampton and Dagenham.

Disgracefully, the Heseltine re-

port was embraced by the Trades Union Congress and the New Labour front bench.

If New Labour was serious about tackling the economic crisis, they would adopt the policy that has been embraced by unions like the Fire Brigades Union: nationalisation of the banks and the use of those resources to fund a meaningful programme of public works, such as the building of social housing and the upgrading of transport infrastructure.

But Labour will not put forward anything like this. That is why I am standing in the Manchester Central byelection. As a Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition candidate, I am supported by trade union militants who recognise that the working class needs their own party with a socialist programme - not one that embraces an anti-working class Tory Lord.



photo Yorkshire Socialist Party

Save our NHS - scrap the act!

Tom Baldwin
Bristol TUSC mayoral candidate

£20 billion, according to corporate advisers Catalyst, is the size of the "opportunity" for private health firms in the NHS over the next few years thanks to the Con-Dems' Health and Social Care Act.

The act allows private companies to control GP surgeries and commission services from "any willing provider". Big business vultures don't care about our health, only the profits they can make.

Figures show a 10% rise in the number of non-emergency operations paid for by the NHS but carried out by profit-making companies in the last year. These totalled 345,200.

In February, Hinchingsbrooke Hospital in Cambridgeshire became the first NHS hospital to be run by a private company, Circle Health, which has cut 46 nursing posts.

Hospital cleaning services were privatised from 1983. Since then the number of cleaners has been cut in half. The subsequent disaster has led some trusts to take cleaning back in house but the government has not heeded the warning.

Private Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes, hugely expanded under Labour, mean hospitals are built by private companies and leased back by the taxpayer at many times the original cost.

For example, the expansion of Southmead hospital in Bristol will cost taxpayers £2.1 billion, more

than three times the project's original cost.

These debts are now driving other cuts including a risk to the A&E at Bristol Royal Infirmary. Kicking out PFI contracts would save the NHS billions of pounds.

The government has no mandate for this profiteers' charter. The Tories dishonestly claimed they would make no top-down reorganisations of the NHS.

I am standing as the Trade Unionists and Socialists Against Cuts candidate for Bristol mayor on a programme of protecting public services including the NHS. We would organise a referendum on the Health and Social Care Act as part of the on-going campaign against NHS cuts and privatisation.

TUSC AGAINST CUTS

TUSC councillor's 'defy cuts' challenge to Labour

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition-backed Walsall councillor Pete Smith has made a public appeal to the West Midlands borough's 28 Labour councillors:

"Instead of shedding crocodile tears and then moving an amendment at the February council meeting to restore just a few of the cuts yet, by implication, going along with millions of pounds of other cuts, take a much bolder approach. Refuse to vote for any budget that entails cuts to jobs or services. The people of Walsall need to be made aware that given the present balance on Walsall council, where 31 councillors are not part of the controlling group of 29, a cuts budget can only get through if 28 Labour councillors allow it to go through."

Councillor Pete Smith
Democratic Labour,
Blakenall ward

Read the complete letter at www.tusc.org.uk

TUSC is an electoral alliance that stands against all cuts. It involves fighting trade unionists such as RMT transport union leader Bob Crow and socialists such as the Socialist Party.

Liverpool: Standing against 'death by cuts'

Socialist Party member Charley Cosgrove is standing for TUSC in the Knotty Ash ward in the Liverpool city council byelection on Thursday 15 November.

The byelection follows the resignation of a Labour councillor. Like all TUSC candidates, Charley would vote against the cuts and privatisation.

Liverpool's Labour mayor, Joe Anderson, said the cuts would mean: "that people will die - end of." But Anderson and the Labour council are continuing their cuts drive. School uniform grants are one of the latest victims.

Campaigners are leafleting and canvassing the ward, particularly around the Dovecot and Broad Green Hospital areas, building support for TUSC by promoting the anti 'death by cuts' message across the city.

Alec Price
Merseyside Socialist Party

When is a living wage not a living wage?

James Ivens

Labour backs the living wage! No more will workers have to eat own-brand cardboard! The Milibands will politely ask that bosses pay us enough to stay alive!

The living wage for 2012 was announced on Monday. The Greater London Authority sets the capital's rate at £8.55 an hour. Loughborough University calls for the rate for the rest of Britain to be £7.45. The National Minimum Wage (NMW) was upgraded in October to £6.19 for over-21s, with tiers down to £2.65 for those 'lucky' enough to be in apprenticeships.

That means a serious shortfall between the NMW and even the lowest living wage. Workers aged 16 to 18 can earn less than half of the national rate. So what would Labour do?

Washed-up Blairite David Miliband wrote jointly with Unison general secretary Dave Prentis last weekend. The pair came behind Labour leader Ed Miliband's 'commitment' to the living wage - sort of. There will be no legislation, no compulsion to pay a fair rate. There will be no industrial action for an increase.

Instead there will be "incentives" for councils and companies, and naughty low payers could be "named and shamed". Prentis and the Milibands, backed by Tory television personality and London mayor Boris Johnson, foresee an approaching "tipping point".

If we wag our fingers long enough



Cleaners striking for a living wage photo Newcastle Socialist Party

a few more bosses will pay the living wage. Then the rest will magically fall in line as well. What hopeless fantasy.

Action needed

Few bosses grant even small concessions willingly. History shows again and again that the bully bourgeoisie will not share unless workers make it. Talk of capitalists raising wages "voluntarily after seeing the economic and employment benefits" cuts no ice. The economy benefits them quite nicely as is. Today's gap between rich and poor is as steep as the 1930s.

The Socialist Party calls for an immediate rise in the NMW to £8 an

hour, as a step towards a minimum wage of £10 an hour. Open the account books of firms that claim they cannot afford it. Then, if this is genuinely the case, or they refuse to pay it, big companies should be nationalised under democratic workers' control and small ones supported if necessary with cheap loans and subsidies to meet the gap.

Trade unions should lead the charge against poverty pay and job cuts by pushing the TUC to name the date for a general strike against austerity.

It is outrageous that the minimum wage and living wage are distinct notions. If we cannot live decently on the minimum wage, what is the point of it?

Hospitals suffer from privatisation debt

Sherwood Forest

I read with alarm that the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) debts at King's Mill Hospital, part of Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, have now doubled from £1.26 billion to £2.05 billion over the 38 years of the 'mortgage'. That said, it doesn't come as much of a surprise.

The Socialist Party has repeatedly warned that PFI, heralded by Tory and Labour governments as the only way to get these kinds of projects built, would, in the long term, be a recipe for worse patient care, job losses and service cuts, with profit the sole motivation for those delivering PFI.

Here's a thought: how about collecting the £120 billion a year in avoided and evaded taxes from the wealthy and big businesses? Surely this is a much better way to fund projects such as hospitals, schools and our vital public services?

A BBC News article from 2 November quoted a public finance expert from Nottingham Trent University, Malcolm Prowle. He said that in the early 2000s, when PFI was 'the name of the game': "There was a lot of enthusiasm to make sure the PFI got through, if that meant understating some of the costs perhaps that tended to happen."

I think that's quite revealing. The books of the Trust must be opened,

so it can be seen exactly why it is in such a poor financial state, and likely to run out of money early next year. It's unacceptable that patient care and health workers' jobs are being put at risk because of the need of private companies to maximise their profits. The people of Mansfield and Ashfield, as well as ordinary people working for and served by NHS trusts throughout the country, deserve better.

Karen Seymour

South London

The accident and emergency department in Lewisham hospital, south London, is threatened with being downgraded to a non-admitting urgent care centre. Also at risk are maternity services and other vital functions. Lewisham people are furious and thousands have signed opposition petitions already.

The cuts follow recommendations of the government appointed administrator for the failed South London Healthcare Trust (SLHT) which was taken into administration due to huge debts.

Financial problems were overwhelmingly caused by Private Finance Initiative (PFI) building schemes agreed under both the Tories and Labour governments. These plans have totally warped

health service spending and priorities in the area as well as throughout the country.

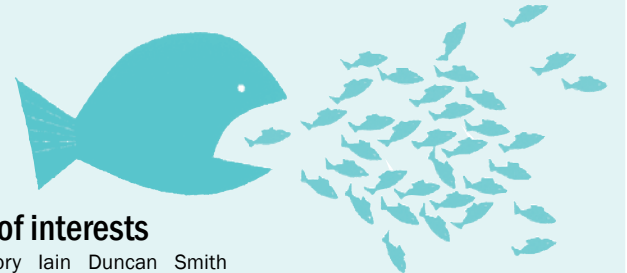
SLHT ran hospitals in Woolwich, Bromley and Sidcup. The administrator pulled Lewisham hospital into the situation to spread the misery but people oppose all NHS cuts! If Lewisham A&E closes, local people will be taken to Kings College hospital or Bromley - and traffic in London is already a nightmare for ambulances.

A campaign is being set up, largely centred at present around Labour MPs who helped cause this crisis - they even tried to close the A&E themselves a few years back! Nonetheless socialists will be to the forefront in building a massive campaign in the community and in the trade unions against all attacks on our NHS.

Roger Shrives



Them...



Conflict of interests

In 2004 Tory Iain Duncan Smith launched the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) - a right-wing lobby group. Flash forward eight years and Duncan Smith is now minister for work and pensions - a department regularly lobbied by the CSJ. Don't worry though, he cut 'active ties' with the group in 2010. Unless you count his policy special advisor working for it, that is. Philippa Stroud, who used to be the executive director of the CSJ, is now its co-chair of board of advisors and is paid a wage by the group, while also paid to advise Duncan Smith.

Cameron says we have to respect the "different pathways" of different countries.

Worth every penny?

On Wednesday 31 October the Evening Standard ran two articles. On one page was an article titled "worth every penny". It glowingly quoted comedian David Walliams who said at the latest Jubilee love-in that this year's festivities had "made everyone realise just how much she [the Queen] does for us" and that she is the "unsung heroine of the nation". Unsung!? Guess the rest of this year's Jubilee celebration has passed him by.

The rank anti-working class prejudice of this paper was bought home by an article on the very next page that carried a report by the Tax Payers (Tax Dodgers?) Alliance. This article bemoaned the fact that trade union facility time was "costing" the tax payer in London £9 million a year. Meanwhile the ribbon-snipping monarchy comes at a snip - only £202.4 million a year.

Paul Callanan

Sent away

While Osborne continues to protect his rich mates at the top by blocking calls for a mansion tax it's a different story for ordinary people who are being forced out of their homes and com-

17

London boroughs are already sending homeless families outside the capital

munities as housing benefit is stripped to the bone and rents soar. Already 17 out of 33 London boroughs are sending homeless families outside the capital, and that's before the biggest changes to housing benefit are introduced in April.

They label claimants as 'scroungers' while their brutal cuts and soaring prices actually mean that since 2009 85% of the rise in housing benefit claims was by working families!

Suzanne Beishon

27% pay increase

It seems the 'shareholder spring' was short lived. Pay and benefits of top executives in FTSE 100 companies rose by 27% last year to an average of £4 million. Under massive public and shareholder pressures, basic salary and bonuses have fallen. But they've made up for it with big increases in 'long term incentive plans'. Obviously the bosses are missing the point that we don't care what scheme they manage to get the cash from. What makes us angry is their ever-growing pay packets while the rest of us suffer pay cuts and freezes and soaring prices as a result of a crisis they caused!

Sales

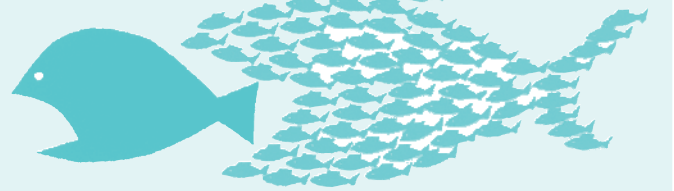
David Cameron - prime minister, conservative...salesman? Cameron has been touring the Middle East hoping to "strengthen the UK's defence, security and commercial" ties in the region. Apparently he hopes to sell about 100 Typhoon jets while he's away.

Who will be cheering any success? Workers here in Britain who wonder why the government can't invest in jobs when it can in destructive weapons? Or workers in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, who suffer regular human rights abuses by their governments?

'Those' texts

The first round of texts between David Cameron and Rebekah Brooks has been published, exposing again just how close they were. Brooks gave her approval for a speech by Cameron in 2010: "Brilliant speech. I cried twice. Will love 'working together'." And Cameron expressed his gratitude for Brooks' husband Charlie lending him a horse: "The horse CB put me on. Fast, unpredictable and hard to control but fun. DC" Yuck!

...& Us



Have you got news for the 'fishes'? Email: editors@socialistparty.org.uk

What I'd like to hear

The demonstrations I have been on have been too quiet, not enough clear slogans and lively chants. So here is my suggestion, to the tune of Lord of the Dance:

Strike, Strike, wherever you may be,
We are the makers of wealth are we,
And we'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
'Cos we're striking against austerity

Pete, Worcester Socialist Party



Join the fightback! Join the Socialists!

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United action to save all Ford jobs!

National Shop Stewards Network and Socialist Party members have been producing regular bulletins supporting the Ford workers fighting the closure of the Ford plants in Dagenham and Southampton. These are extracts from the latest Southampton edition.

Unity is strength. Over 400 contract workers at Southampton will not receive Ford redundancy terms and could receive statutory redundancy. Workers at the 81 suppliers to the Transit also face job cuts. A united campaign to involve all those affected can ensure the strongest opposition. It is vital that the unions, especially Unite, act decisively and speedily to mobilise against the closures.

General secretary Len McCluskey has said the union will fight the closure plans. Leading reps in the Transit plant see the need to fight.

Unite policy is for a national strike ballot to be called in the event of a plant closure threat. A battle on this scale would petrify Ford and the government. Such a campaign should link up with Ford workers in Belgium at Genk, who organised mass walkouts and protests at their factory last week.

The scandalous truth is Ford wants to shift production from

Southampton to Turkey, with the use of subsidies from the European Union. The company wants to make even bigger profits by exploiting cheaper labour there. Union links with Turkey must be built.

While Fords plead poverty and take hard pressed tax payers' subsidies, Ford UK bosses in 2008 took enough in bonuses to finance the retooling of Southampton.

Since 24 October, the day management announced the closure of the plant by the end of 2013, Ford workers in Genk have blocked the site. Nothing comes in, or goes out. Although they plan to go back to work from 13 November, the blockade will not be lifted. Finished cars will be stocked inside and used as a bargaining treasure.

On 11 November a big solidarity demonstration will be held in Genk. Ford workers from Southampton and Dagenham, from Blanquefort and other plants in Europe intend to be there.



Ford Visteon pensioners leaflet the Dagenham plant photo VPAG



Visteon pensioners at Bridgend photo VPAG

Ford stole our pensions

On 5 and 6 November, two weeks after 1,400 Ford workers were told that they face the dole, ex-Ford Visteon pensioners with Socialist Party members and NSSN supporters, leafleted the Ford plants in Bridgend, Southampton and Dagenham. Unite is preparing for legal action to win back the full value of their pensions from Ford.

In 2000, Ford created Visteon as a so-called independent component manufacturer, with the guarantee that jobs, pay, terms and conditions would be given 'life-time protection'. However, in 2009 Visteon was put into administration, the three remaining plants - Basildon, Belfast and Enfield

- were closed with 600 workers sacked with minutes' notice.

Through occupations and pickets, including the threat to blockade Bridgend, they were able to win a decent pay-off.

But over 3,000 sacked workers and pensioners from these plants, and the factory in Swansea that was sold to Linamar in 2008 and closed in 2010, have had their pensions slashed because it was put into the Pension Protection Fund. However, the pensioners got organised and have conducted a campaign of protests and lobbies which will continue up to the court date next spring.

Rail cleaners fight low pay



Steve Hedley joins the Newcastle picket photo Elaine Brunskill

RMT cleaners from across four railway networks have been taking strike action against unscrupulous employers.

At Newcastle Central station a lively picket line handed out leaflets calling on transport users to support cleaners fighting for decent pay and conditions.

Steve Hedley, RMT assistant general secretary, told the Socialist: "These workers are on appalling wages of just £6.19 an hour, which isn't a liv-

ing wage. They have no free travel, no pension scheme, no sick pay."

One of the strikers from Churchill's told us that: "Our bosses have sent out a letter to all of us trying to undermine the strike and the union. In the letter they say they are concerned that any strike in the run-up to Christmas will cause financial hardship. To offset this they'll give time and a half to anyone who comes in and breaks the strike."

Elaine Brunskill

The scandal of death at work

Two fatal incidents on separate construction sites in London have again cast the spotlight on safety in the construction industry.

On 29 October, carpenter Justinas Kopickas died at a site in Putney. Reports suggest that he was leaning against a metal barrier on the sixth floor of the development when he fell, colliding with two builders on the way.

On the same day, a man died after apparently being crushed at a demolition site on Tottenham High Road. The 25 year old victim suffered multiple injuries and died in hospital two days later.

The incidents occurred just days before the HSE issued its latest injury and ill-health statistics. The construction industry sec-

tor recorded 2,230 major injuries in 2011/12, down from 2,307 in 2010/11. In response to the figures, the HSE's chief inspector of construction, Philip White, said: "Year after year, construction continues to be one of the most dangerous sectors in British industry. Though the numbers are down in the long term, thousands of workers are being seriously injured, or made unwell by their work."

This is happening at the same time as construction companies like those involved in the Crossrail project, continue to sack and blacklist safety reps and trade unionists.

• Construction Safety Campaign AGM is on Saturday 24 November, 11am to 3pm, Frenchgate Centre, Doncaster, DN1 1LL.

Strike threat pays off

As well as customers paying more for energy while companies make huge profits, in London, Unite has noticed an increasingly hard line taken by EDF energy when dealing with disciplinary matters against its workers. But the union has scored two important victories over recent weeks.

In the first case, the disciplinary action taken against a worker was to move him to a new role where his wages would fall by £700 a month. The union pursued the case with the result that an "Independent Person" was brought in, via ACAS to make a ruling. The result, announced this week is that the punishment has been overturned and the union appeal was upheld.

The second case has more far-reaching consequences. This involved a worker with over 36 years

honest service and a clean disciplinary record. It was alleged that he asked for cash from a client in return for completing a job. Despite his denial of the charge and the fact that there was no evidence to show why he would lie, he was dismissed.

Unite organised a consultative strike ballot. This returned a huge yes vote. The worker was reinstated, all charges were dropped and his pay was restored from the date of dismissal.

Unite regional officer Onay Kasab represented both workers and together with the stewards organised the campaign. He stated: "This is a great victory for workers at EDF and sends a clear message to the employer - we will not limit ourselves to relying on hearings and tribunals to defend our members. We will organise and we will take action."

In brief

Black cabs

Workers at Coventry black cab maker LTI, staged a sit-in on 31 October before entering talks with administrators, PWC. The sit-in was in response to the ruthless sacking of over 150 highly skilled workers. Manganese Bronze is the last car manufacturer left in Coventry, a city once famed for its vast car industry. Unite has called for the workers to be reinstated and demanded the government steps in to save the firm.

Socialist Party members quickly went down to the factory, when news of the occupation broke. We give full support and solidarity to the LTI workers and will be supporting any further action that is taken to defend jobs, conditions and to save production at the factory.

The unions must demand that if Manganese Bronze is unwilling to maintain production in Coventry and protect skilled jobs and manufacturing, it should be nationalised.

Lenny Shail

NHS strike

On 1 November admin and clerical workers at the three hospitals making up the Mid Yorkshire NHS Trust took strike action in defence of pay.

Management at the hospital want to foist the massive debt from a rip-off PFI deal that built a new hospital at Pinderfields onto the backs of low-paid staff. They want to move them down a grade, which will see staff lose between £1,700 and £2,800 a year.

The workers are also threatened with compulsory redundancies. Newly elected shop steward for medical secretaries, Andrea Busfield, explained: "We've been pushed to the absolute limit with these proposals.

"The Trust is spending hundreds of thousands of pounds on an outside management consultancy, while wanting to cut our pay by up to 20%.

"The new PFI hospitals have put the trust in massive debt and we're the ones that are paying the cost for that.

"They are reducing staffing levels by such an extent you wonder who's actually going to be there to staff these buildings and provide patient care."

Iain Dalton

Tesco drivers

Unite members waved union placards on the picket line saying 'Tesco - every sacking helps'. This was as 186 Tesco drivers in Doncaster started a three-day strike on 31 October against job losses and wage cuts.

Tesco, not content with £3.8 billion profit last year, transferred their Doncaster transport workforce in August to Eddie Stobart Ltd (ESL) to cut costs.

Then ESL, whose own drivers are on £2.50 an hour less than the Tesco drivers, issued notice of termination of employment on 5 September, with no promise that the drivers will be re-employed once the 90 days are up.

Alistair Tice

Website

More details of these and other industrial stories can be found on the Socialist Party's website: www.socialistparty.org.uk

Support the national student demonstration Exeter Socialist Students leads campaign to victory

Carlus Hudson
Exeter Socialist Students

Socialist Students recently won a major victory in the University of Exeter Students' Guild (the local student union).

Exeter students voted on a motion submitted by Socialist Students to have the Guild support the National Union of Students (NUS) demonstration on 21 November against

to raise awareness of the NUS demonstration and win the support of students.

By developing a coalition between a number of political student groups on-campus, and by reaching out to students in general, Socialist Students has built the basis in Exeter for a student fightback against the cuts which has delivered this victory in the Students' Guild.

The 'no' campaign

There was a bloc of opposition to the Guild supporting the NUS demo led by the Liberal Democrats, Conservative Future, and the far-right religiously free-market Freedom Association. Their counter-campaign was limited to a Facebook group which principally argued that money spent by the Guild on the demonstration could be better spent subsidising the bar.

On top of their total misreading of what Exeter students care about, the campaign completely ignored the fact that money spent on the student bar and money spent on demonstrations are drawn from entirely separate sections of the Guild's budget!

The 'no' campaign made zero effort to make their case to the student body or to understand the issues students care about. They decided to restrict their campaigning to channels where people already opposed to the demonstration simply talked among themselves.

In these circumstances, it hardly seems surprising that there was so much enthusiasm for the demonstration. With a strong popular mandate, Socialist Students met with the Guild the Tuesday following the victory to begin talks about how the Guild is going to support the demonstration.

The Guild has set aside enough money to offer free transportation to London on 21 November to students and is seeking financial support from local trade unions to put on additional coaches. The Guild



photo Senan

has offered a generous publicity budget to make sure students are aware of the demonstration and the availability of transport.

Socialist Students is looking forward to the next few weeks of organising to get students to the demonstration. We are organising a meeting a few days before 21 November about student and youth issues and continuing our year-round activities of regular meetings, stalls, socials and other events.

Future campaigning

There is now a strong network of socialists and other left-leaning people in the Guild and other student societies who can be called on to support Socialist Students'

campaigns.

The campaign coalition will also be extremely helpful in campaign-

By developing a coalition and by reaching out to students, Socialist Students has built the basis in Exeter for a fightback against the cuts

ing against Devon County Council's cuts to street lighting across Exeter

- including almost all of campus - which will make Exeter unsafe at night. Additionally, Socialist Students is seeking to launch the Rape Is No Joke campaign within the Students' Guild.

There is a great deal of potential in Exeter University for students to be radicalised not only by the continuing economic crisis nationally and globally, but by a strong and growing socialist organisation that students can get involved in.

The open and democratic nature of the meetings and the society as a whole make it inviting to anyone interested in fighting the cuts and working towards socialist alternatives.

See www.socialiststudents.org.uk for updates on the demo

75%
of Exeter students
voted for the
student union to
back the NUS
demo

high fees and youth unemployment. Hundreds of students voted on the motion, and the result was overwhelmingly - by a three to one margin - in favour of supporting the demo.

Winning support

Socialist Students ran two stalls every day throughout the voting period and found no lack of anger against austerity or lack of enthusiasm for fighting the attacks on students, and cuts in general. By addressing concerns and offering constructive socialist alternatives, many students were won over to supporting the demonstration.

This seriously challenges the reputation of students at Exeter as right-wing or apathetic. When a means of fighting the cuts and building for alternatives is provided, many students responded positively.

Extensive use of social media and the student press was made

Attendance Policy campaign launched at UEL

Ian Pattison

On 31 October 33 students came to the University of East London (UEL) Socialist Students meeting - Scrap the Unfair Attendance Policy. On the initiative of UEL Socialist Students a campaign has been launched to stop this attack by university management. If you are more than ten minutes late three times, you are kicked off your module, no excuses.

Some students with children can't get in on time after they drop their children off at school. Many of the card readers are faulty, marking students as absent who have arrived on time. Many students are worried about how the university's mistakes may affect their student loans and finance.

The first meeting of the campaign voted to change the attendance policy rather than scrap it. Socialist Students will build the campaign, including any democratic decisions made. But we think the attendance policy should be scrapped altogether. It's our education, we should decide how we

spend our time studying. We don't need to be policed by university management.

Tactics

Whether we want to change the attendance policy or scrap it, we need to get organised. The campaign will meet every week. UEL student union is discussing how to support us.

The student union is holding an Emergency General Meeting and a Student Council on the attendance policy and the campaign against it.

Everyone should sign the petition, but we need protests and boycotts to make the card reader system unworkable. Socialist Students demands that anybody who has so far been kicked off their modules should be immediately re-instated, and there should be no repercussions for any student who is late or misses a lecture.

The unfair attendance policy is part of a wider agenda of attacks by UEL management and the ConDem government. Working class students are paying £9,000 a year in fees - paying more, but getting less.



Management at UEL claims we need a draconian attendance policy to prevent a repeat of what is happening at London Met. There 2,600 international students could face deportation. London Met university management has embarked on a massive process of privatisation, to the point where it

is in partnership with dodgy private colleges.

If UEL management genuinely want to prevent a repeat of London Met, they should reverse their privatisation programme (which includes clauses to ban trade unions), and kick private vultures off campus.

Teacher bashing season continues

Unfortunately the 'teacher bashing' season isn't finished yet. A salvo was launched by Ofqual last week, when most teachers were on a well-deserved break, accusing them of fiddling coursework marks.

What an absolute disgrace from an organisation that changed the grade boundaries unfairly causing disappointment and heartache for as many as 67,000 GCSE students.

When schools are faced with horrendous consequences if they fail to reach certain targets of course there is pressure on schools and teachers but to accuse teachers of fiddling is insulting. Now is the time to re-launch the campaign to scrap league tables and floor targets and allow teachers to teach.

Jane Nellist, Coventry NUT

Teachers at Stratford Academy in east London took two days of strike action on 6 and 7 October. This followed a one-day strike the previous week. The action is over a pay cut and bullying, anti-union management. See www.socialistparty.org.uk for a report.

SOCIALISM 2012

SOCIALISM 2012

SOCIALISM 2012

A socialist alternative to rotten, bankrupt capitalism

An inspirational weekend of socialist rallies, discussion and debate took place over the weekend 3-4 November, organised by the Socialist Party. Despite the fact that Socialist Party members were out in force just two weeks before for the national TUC 20 October anti-austerity demonstration, Socialism 2012 was very well attended with around 1,000 people taking part over the weekend. Two large rallies took place in Friends Meeting House, Euston, on the Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon and there were three sets of smaller sessions giving an opportunity for everyone present to discuss and express points of view.

"Did nobody see this coming?" At the opening rally for Socialism 2012 Socialist Party general secretary Peter Taaffe quoted the Queen's question in the aftermath of the immense banking and economic crisis. "No they didn't" Peter explained, referring to the legion of economic commentators. "But we did."

In the wake of the worst crisis for over 80 years in mass and rising unemployment and mass poverty. Peter reminded us of the child who starved to death in Westminster while millions of tonnes of food go into landfills. "This shows the character of capitalism - a system based upon production for profit and not social need. It pays them to destroy food, profits maintained, and hold back industry."

As capitalism continues to face its worst crisis since the 1930s Cameron has claimed a 'recovery'. Peter challenged this saying the PM is "whistling in the dark as he waves the figures for 1% quarterly growth". "In fact Cameron has promised ten years of brutal austerity, of mass privatisation - the biggest in history - and mass unemployment, used, as Marx said, as the "reserve army" - holding down of wages while the cost of living skyrockets."

"Even if capitalism could stage a remarkable recovery," Peter warned, "it will be on the bones of the working class. Will the working class tolerate this? Absolutely not."

"We demand - the whole situation in Britain demands - at least a one-day strike. It will draw behind it all the oppressed layers - the youth denied job opportunities on slave or no wages, etc. It can draw in behind it the middle class - 30 shops are closing each day, 1,000 over the last six months with an avalanche of redundancies in the last week alone."

"But this cannot just be an industrial struggle - there is a crying need now for a new mass party of the working class... Five million voters, many of them workers, have abandoned Labour". Peter recounted how, in reality, New Labour prepared the ground for the Tories' attacks - in driving through the privatisation of the NHS and introducing tuition fees.

Socialist alternative

Fran Heathcote, Department for Work and Pensions group president in the PCS civil service union, made the point in the Sunday rally that Labour was the instigator of enormous cuts in the civil service - even before the crisis.

Explaining what fuelled the militancy in her union and her department she explained that while £30 billion was being gouged out of the welfare budget by the Con-Dems, £30 billion had been awarded to the rich in tax breaks. "If", Fran explained, "the main political parties are incapable of standing for us, we need to do it ourselves."

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) is valuable in standing election candidates in an attempt to build a political voice for workers. Steve Hedley, RMT assistant general secretary, spoke at the Sunday rally and reported

on the big number of disputes RMT members are involved in as privatised transport means attacks on workers. The union officially supports TUSC because as Steve said: "the working class needs an alternative and socialists fighting for that alternative".

Speaking about the campaign to build a new mass workers' party, Peter said that a clear programme will be vital. Syriza in Greece may create a 'left government'. But its leader Tsipras is not prepared to go the whole way - Xekinima, our sister party in Greece, pushes for this. But the programme we have campaigned around since the onset of the crisis: cancel the debt; nationalise the banks and commanding heights of the economy with democratic workers' control and management; and make an international class appeal, initially to the working



Peter Taaffe photo Senan

class in Spain, Portugal, and even France which is wracked with crisis, is increasingly supported.

This is shown in the fact that notice has now been given for the coordinated action on 14 November. Peter called on trade unionists to emulate that here - starting with solidarity lunchtime meetings on the day to discuss preparations for a 24-hour general strike.

Rob Williams, national chair of the National Shop Stewards Network, made a powerful speech in the Sunday rally showing how the working class is on the road back to struggle after suffering some defeats over the last decades. He, as others had, gave a taste of what an alternative could look like. Instead of closing Ford factories they could be turned to alternative production under democratic working class control and management to make socially useful and environmentally friendly transport.

The Socialist Party's deputy general secretary, Hannah Sell, spoke at the Sunday rally. She pointed to the growing rage at the capitalist system where even Occupy's '99% and 1%' can't illustrate the gross inequality. The Economist pointed out that in America the share of national income going to the top 0.01% (some

16,000 families) has risen from just over 1% in 1980 to almost 5% now.

In Britain that rage is fuelled by every utterance of the Tories. Hannah reminded us of the salivating at Tory conference over 'hurting the feckless poor'.

Ed Miliband is terrified that this rage, channelled into a mass movement, could bring down the Con-Dems and sweep Labour to power. His 'One Nation' speech at Labour's conference was an attempt to convince big business that he is not 'Red Ed' but a safe pair of hands for British capitalism.

General strikes

Socialism terrifies the ruling class, Hannah explained. They try to convince us to accept the 'new normal' which they call 'muted growth' - in reality factory closures, more unemployment and more people forced to sleep in the streets while £800 billion lies idle in the bank accounts of the big corporations because they can see no profitable way to invest it. This will not be accepted.

Trying to play down the impact of a 48-hour general strike in Greece, where workers face up to 80% cuts in living standards, a spokesperson for one of the government parties said: "My own personal feeling is that social reaction will not correspond to the weight of the measures and will be much less than anticipated because people can see there is no alternative."

Part of our role, Hannah explained, is to show there is an alternative. There is no lack of wealth - £20 trillion is stashed in tax havens by the super-rich, more than the entire combined debt of the OECD countries.

She commended Matt Wrack, general secretary of the firefighters' union FBU, for taking a motion on nationalisation of the banks to the TUC where it is now official policy. Matt had already spoken from the platform of the rally making the case for taking this demand out into the trade union movement.

Hannah added that this has to be extended to taking the big corporations that dominate the economy out of the hands of a tiny elite and into the democratic ownership and control of the working class so the economy can be planned to meet the needs of the 99%.

Hannah pointed to how the ideas of socialism were, in the course of the struggle in South Africa, being heard by tens, if not hundreds of thousands of workers. This shows how such ideas can become a material force. She invited everyone to join the Socialist Party to play a part in this process.

Over the course of the weekend a number of those attending who were not already members of the Socialist Party said they would join. This included the assistant general secretary of the RMT, Steve Hedley, who announced his decision at the rally. He said he agreed with 90% of what the Socialist Party stands for and was willing to discuss the other 10%.

Sean Figg, organiser of the whole event, closed the rally, inviting others to do the same.

I'm looking forward to Socialism 2013 already. I found it difficult to decide which discussion to attend because there was such a great selection.

Rhiannon Wright, Leeds

Peter Taaffe and Bob Crow's speeches impressed me, the rallies really gave off a feeling that you're part of something not only worthwhile but that also could really change things.

Ash Cawton, FE student, Sheffield

The discussion on Scotland and the referendum was detailed, lively, informative and well-presented. As socialists 'we are always learning' while being prepared to listen.

Pat Atkinson, Hackney

Hearing the eye-witness account of the struggle of our comrades in South Africa was a particular highlight and I will further my efforts to spread the ideas of the CWI.

Matt Whale, Hull

As I have only been a member a year this was my first Socialism event and I found the weekend truly inspirational. My message to people who attended the event and are not yet members themselves, is to join us in solidarity because you are not alone in the class struggle.

David Williams, Peterborough

An excellent opportunity to listen to discussions that affect us at a grass-roots level. The rallies were inspirational.

Bridget Gilbert, Sheffield Social Work student



Images from top: London Socialist Party secretary Paula Mitchell chairs Saturday's rally; debating the relevance of Marxist economics; RMT general secretary Bob Crow gives a barnstorming speech; listening intently to the discussion photos Paul Mattsson and Senan

Young people and comrades with decades of experience took time to come from across the UK and overseas to discuss and plan action around many of the most pertinent issues of our time.

Meryl Jordan, Cumbria

Speakers were good, able to answer and clarify every question and weren't afraid to debate their point of view.

Andy Williamson, college student, York

Was an amazing weekend, I met some amazing people. So pleased I joined the party!

Serena Cheung, Brighton

I received lots of tips on what to say to people to convince them that socialism can make a difference to the world.

Dave Crane, Hastings

The session on Marxist Economics was particularly good as it was 'interactive' and allowed for questions throughout.

Michael Docherty, PCS rep at British Library, Boston Spa, North Yorks

The session on 'how to combat the far right' was eye-opening. Thanks to the contributions from comrades from Waltham Forest, Newcastle, and Leicester, and an update on the situation on Greece I learnt lessons that I can apply to a situation in my area.

Gareth Bromhall, Lanelli and West Wales Branch



A video showing highlights of Socialism 2012 will be available on www.socialistparty.org.uk photo Paul Mattsson

Help fund the fight for socialism - here and internationally

Bob Severn

Everyone at the rally was disappointed that Hoshoko Letshoba, a Lonmin miner and member of the strike coordinating committee, was stopped, by the visa agencies, from speaking at Socialism 2012. Letshoba, along with many other miners, recently joined the Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM), the Socialist Party's sister party in South Africa.

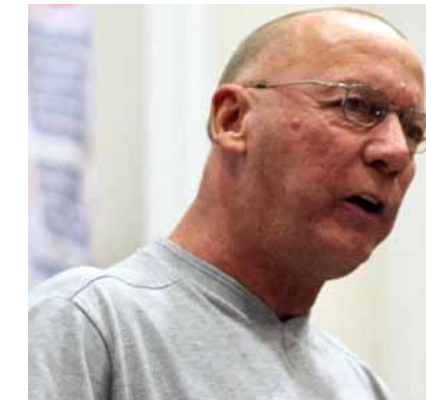
But Alec Thraves, from Socialist Party Wales, gave a report of his visit to South Africa when making the financial appeal at the Saturday rally.

A video compilation showed the Marikana massacre, Alec speaking to miners, media coverage of DSM's involvement in the miners' strike wave sweeping across Rustenburg, and interviews with leading miner and DSM member, Mametlwe Sebei.

The Marikana massacre on 16 August shocked South Africa and the world, including DSM members. But Alec described how the DSM, having a branch based in a miners' squatter camp, knew that major clashes could occur in the Rustenburg region. DSM aided the spreading of strikes across Rustenburg and beyond, and helped the formation of the joint strike coordinating committee.

The massacre has exposed, globally, the African National Congress (ANC) government, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the leadership of the National Union of Mine-workers (NUM). All three have backed the attempt to crush the strike.

As the Socialist has reported, Alec made it clear that the Marikana massacre was premeditated murder. But the attempt to drown the strike in blood didn't work. Marikana miners continued the dispute and won a 28% pay increase. Other mine strikes followed - not only over wages, but also in protest over Marikana and the horrendous social conditions which miners and other South African workers suffer.



Alec Thraves photo Senan

In making the appeal for finance to fund the struggle for socialism Alec said that as well as helping with the campaigns in England and Wales this money would make a difference in South Africa, where DSM membership has more than doubled this year and may yet triple! Illustrating the urgent need for support for the DSM he reported that £40 a day is being spent on mobile phone calls and texts to communicate with miners in different mine shafts.

The appeal raised £17,310, with more donated at the closing rally. £550 was raised by disabled trade unionist Andrew Price's cycling fundraiser (see page 8). Isla Windsor gave £1,000 in memory of former Socialist Party councillor Rob Windsor. £200 was donated by Sue and Alan Hardman.

£320 was donated by the Southampton Socialist Party including £100 from the city's rebel councillors Keith Morrell (who could not attend due to illness) and Don Thomas, who were suspended, then expelled from the Labour Party for voting against cuts. This appeal was in addition to the £11,500 given to the Socialist Party computer server appeal over the last three months.

Can you support the Socialism 2012 appeal? Phone 020 8988 8777 or go to www.socialistparty.org.uk/donate and mark your donation 'Socialism 2012'

● Can your trade union branch or community organisation donate to the Rustenburg Joint Strike Coordinating Committee?

See www.shopstewards.net for appeal letters.

Deposits can be made into the account below - Rustenburg Joint Strike Coordinating Committee

Bank: Standard Bank, South Africa
Account: Workers Defence Fund
Account No. 300495986
Branch: East Gate,
Branch Code: 018 505
Swift Code: SBZAZJ

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Hull Socialist policies needed for a real recovery

Matt Whale
Hull Socialist Party

The recent announcement that we're out of recession is laughable for most people. The reported 1% growth must be a misprint as the only growth working class people can see is in the income of the 1%!

The government's annihilation of public services continues. The claim made by the Con-Dems and their backers in big business that the private sector will pick up the slack is simply untrue, especially for workers in Hull and the surrounding areas.

The BAE plant at Brough faces closure with over 900 jobs going. The caravan industry has shed hundreds of jobs in the past year or so. The Seven Seas factory, in the city for over 80 years, is facing closure with a reported 250 jobs to go. The McCain foods plant is to axe 50 jobs. The Kimberly-Clark factory is to be closed with 500 workers facing the prospect of unemployment.

Kimberly-Clark opened the fac-

tory, which makes Huggies nappies, 20 years ago following a £12 million grant. The American owners have cited an unfavorable exchange rate and greater competition as the reasons for the closure. So the company made big profits as a result of a grant and is now going to leave hundreds of people without a future. Hull Socialist Party says return the grant to the workers, with interest, and let them invest the money in the plant.

Earlier this year 284 people were made redundant when Hull-based Comet closed its call centre. Now the firm is in administration, which could lead to another 200 job cuts locally and 6,500 nationally.

Whistling in the wind?

The one 'hope' from the private sector is investment by Siemens in the Humber region as a centre of renewable energy. But there are rumours of the council looking to 'sweeten' the deal. Surely if the money's there to hand out grants to 'encourage' businesses to invest in Hull then the money is there to

invest in public services?

£99 million pounds, 300 beds and ten wards, are to go from the local NHS trust and a reported £100 million is being cut over the next three years by the council. But not one local MP has spoken out against these cuts.

However, the Labour council was elected on an anti-cuts, no compulsory redundancies promise. But council leader Steve Brady has stated that Hull 'won't do a Liverpool' - ie defy the cuts and invest in the communities in the city.

However, a group of councillors within the Labour group has come out and said they will not vote for the cuts. Four spoke at a recent joint trade union lobby of the council.

As with the 1983-87 Liverpool council, we could see major concessions if the rest of the Labour group took the same line. But if the other Labour Party councillors aren't prepared to fight, then they should move aside and allow real anti-cuts representatives to take their place.

Instead of relying on multinational corporations, the Socialist



The 2011 Jarrow March for Jobs and Brough BAE workers protesting in Hull photo P Callanan

Party calls on the local council to fight every cut in the public sector and to campaign for huge investment in public works in the city. Big business has £800 billion locked in its vaults. Instead of 'enticing' them

with more cash, a 50% levy should be put on this fortune. That money, along with stopping the annual tax avoidance of £130 billion, could create jobs and stop all cuts in Hull and nationwide.

Bradford's Hardest Hit lobby council



Around 25 people, mostly from the Bradford Disabled Peoples Forum, held a Hardest Hit protest in Centenary Square, Bradford on Friday 2 November. Paul Anderson, a member of the forum, said they were there to hand over Hardest Hit's new report, 'The Tipping Point', to leaders of the council's party groups, but also to oppose "disabled people and their families paying for an economic crisis they didn't cause" photo I Dalton

Neath Port Talbot needs fighting unions

Unison local government member
Wales

Recently I read a headline in the South Wales Evening Post - "Strike fears over council budget" - about Neath Port Talbot council.

This Labour council, in 2010, pioneered the use of '188' (redundancy risk) notices to drive through reductions in terms and conditions.

Incredibly, the local authority unions, with Unison in the lead, agreed to pay cuts that followed a pay freeze, the loss of unsocial hour allowances and the introduction of car parking charges.

As if to show there was no hard feelings, Unison provided Labour

councillors with transport to the March 2011 TUC anti-cuts demo!

Wales Socialist Party members warned that unions' concession bargaining would simply mean councils coming back for more each year.

NPT council is now trying to identify a further £2 million of 'savings' from the staffing budget in redundancies (although the authority claims not compulsory) and further attacks on conditions. This is alongside cuts in services and increased council tax.

Union members have already seen a drastic 13% real-terms decline in take-home pay in recent years.

So what of the headline? Have

Unison leaders finally learned that weakness in the face of aggression just invites more attacks?

Sadly no. While admitting that angry union members might want strike action, the union branch chair said that "the union accepted Neath Port Talbot had to make the savings because of the austerity measures filtering down from the UK government".

Unison local government members need a fighting leadership in the union as well as councillors who will fight the Con-Dems.

We should be linking with service users angry at cut services and supporting candidates committed to fighting all cuts, like the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition.

Inspiring cycle ride raises £550

The finance appeal at the Socialism 2012 rally was kicked off by a donation of £550 from Andrew Price, from Cardiff South Socialist Party. Andrew has donated to every Socialist Party finance appeal, as well as raising fighting fund himself, and now retired he is still putting in a huge effort to raise money.

He raised £384 by doing a sponsored bike ride, cycling 12 miles from Cardiff to Castell Coch on a bike adapted for disabled people. This was followed by a social event featuring Cardiff folk singer Dave Burns which raised an additional £66.

Together with a personal donation of £100 from his pension, Andrew showed that, with deter-



Andrew Price photo SP Wales

mination, you can still make a big contribution to the fighting fund to assist the struggle for socialism.

Ken Douglas
Socialist Party national treasurer

Save our server! Total raised so far: £10,863

Can you donate to our appeal? The Socialist is aiming to raise £12,000 to enable us to buy a new computer server and is asking all members and supporters to contribute.

We are continuing to get a great response from members and readers. Thanks this week to: Richard Newton £20; Andy Reed £10; a reader of the Socialist £100; members in Liverpool £60; Mr W M Harper £25; Mrs C Mooney £25; Roger Ingham £100; Luke Tibbits

£10; Katrine Williams £50.

Please consider donating to the appeal. We have just over £1,000 to go to reach our target. Every donation, no matter how big or how small, is very welcome and will take us nearer to our goal.

You can pay via the Socialist Party website at www.socialistparty.org.uk/donate and mark your donation 'server appeal' or telephone 020 8988 8777.



Socialism Today

The Socialist Party's magazine
November 2012 issue includes:

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More militant action is required to fight back against and defeat the Con-Dem coalition's savage cut-backs argues Peter Taaffe.
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Lessons of Clay Cross council defiance

Chesterfield Socialist Party public meeting - Friday 9 November, 7pm
Clay Cross Social Centre, Market Street, Clay Cross, near Chesterfield.

40 years since Clay Cross council defied the Tory government, this meeting will discuss the lessons for the battle against cuts today

Speakers: A former Clay Cross councillor; Alex Gordon, RMT president; Peter Taaffe, Socialist Party general secretary; Becci Heagney, Youth Fight for Jobs

USA: 'Frankenstorm' leaves massive trail of destruction

End the era of 'disaster capitalism'

Pete Ikeler
Socialist Alternative, New York

The gigantic 'Frankenstorm' hurricane Sandy has put thousands out of their homes, left millions without power, and claimed more than 100 lives across north eastern USA. Preliminary estimates of the damage reach up to \$50 billion, which would make Sandy the most expensive storm in US history.

While both presidential candidates - Barack Obama and Mitt Romney - avoid any mention of climate change, millions correctly see this hurricane as another dire warning. Violent and extreme weather is on the rise, and unless we overcome corporate resistance to transforming our energy economy, working people will pay an ever-growing price of death and destruction.

Like Hurricane Katrina, responsibility for this disaster must be clearly placed on the big business

Working people face a dire future of unnecessary disasters brought on by capitalist dependence on climate changing fossil fuels

politicians and the capitalist system. In 2005, when Katrina ravaged working class communities in New Orleans, the shockingly slow response was rightly seen as evidence of Bush's total incompetence and, as Kanye West (rapper and film director) put it, that he "does not care about black people."

This time, under the pressure of the neck-and-neck presidential race, Obama's response has been quicker. Even New Jersey governor Chris Christie, the notorious Republican blow-hard, thanked Obama for his "excellence" and "service."

Yet a serious look at the Democrats' record tells a different story. In the last two years, Congress has cut primary grants for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (Fema) by 43% (New York Times 27/8/12).

This was justified by the bipartisan drive to reduce the federal deficit. Both parties look to balance the budget through cuts to vital services, but the deficit was caused primarily by the bailouts of Wall Street and auto companies and the wars

in Iraq and Afghanistan, which cost taxpayers trillions.

Let's consider for a second just what this means: money is denied to a vital programme whose purpose is to save the lives and restore the living standards of working people during a natural disaster or crisis. Instead, this money is handed over to corporate executives and military contractors!

Funding cuts

Some on the left will argue that this is all the fault of Republicans. While it is true that the Romney/Ryan budget proposal would cut up to 40% from Fema in 2013, Obama also proposed to cut Fema funding by another 3% (on top of the huge cuts already imposed since 2010).

This is the logic of 'lesser-evilism', or what some call a 'good-cop/bad-cop' strategy. Republicans propose monstrous cuts to vital services, and then the Democrats propose fewer cuts, and are therefore painted as the 'progressive' choice.

The same logic was forced down the throats of working people when Democrats, heeding the demands of their campaign contributors in the insurance industry, abandoned plans for an enormously popular 'public option' in the healthcare bill, hiding behind allegedly "intractable" Republican resistance.

In an era of rising temperatures and sea levels, with increasingly violent weather patterns (including

●Global warming is causing climate change, leading to an increased frequency of extreme weather events. For New York City this has meant that three out of the top ten high water marks at the Battery, south Manhattan, since 1900 have occurred in the last two years, namely: Hurricanes Irene and Sandy and the 2010 spring flood.

a series of recent tornadoes in New York—of all places!) an organisation such as Fema should not be cut at all, but instead dramatically expanded and improved!

Working people face a dire future of unnecessary disasters brought on by capitalist dependence on climate changing fossil fuels, threatening our safety and livelihoods. An effective, fully funded and democratically controlled emergency response agency is the very least that is necessary.

Beyond this, however, the dilapidated infrastructure of vulnerable coastal regions needs to be rebuilt to prevent this kind of damage and loss of life - a point made by New



Distraught residents in the ruins of their hurricane wrecked homes

York governor Cuomo but unlikely to be acted upon.

In New York City, the lack of investment in the city infrastructure including water, sewerage, energy, mass transit, roads, and bridges is reaching a critical point. Like in New Orleans, the effects of this lack of investment will disproportionately fall on the poor and working class of the city.

Climate scientists have been issu-

ing warnings for decades now but the same profit-driven politics that starves our public services and underfunds our infrastructure stands in the way of urgently needed investment in renewable energy. Real sustainable investments on the scale needed could only be achieved by breaking with capitalism, and replacing this economic system with democratic planning over the use of world resources and technology.

Capitalist politicians, be they Republican or Democrat, have proved themselves wholly incapable of addressing these issues. They are beholden to the banks and private corporations, including energy companies, for campaign funding.

They are the mouthpieces for these big business interests. The New York Times recently estimated that this year's presidential race will cost a record-breaking \$2 billion, roughly evenly split between Republicans and Democrats, with most of this coming from corporate donors.

Capitalist presidential candidates require nearly \$1 billion to be "electable" now, just so that - if they do get elected - they can enact cuts to vital programmes such as Fema!

The answer to this tortured logic is not to 'hold our nose' and continue to elect pro-cuts Democrats. Instead, it is to use all means at our disposal to challenge both capitalist parties. This means organising mass protests, direct action and forming an independent, anti-cuts mass party that challenges the dictatorship of Wall Street and big business.

We live in an era of disaster capitalism. The aftermath of Sandy will only further expose the corporate domination of our governing institutions. Imagine the impact if working people had a party campaigning alongside the trade unions to fully fund the emergency response, to build safe infrastructure, and to squarely address the catastrophic march of capitalism towards irreversible climate change and the social collapse it will leave in its wake. The urgency to begin organising such a movement could not be clearer.

Kazakhstan: Vadim Kuramshin facing arrest and new trial

Campaign Kazakhstan reporters

Well-known human rights activist, Vadim Kuramshin, has been arrested and now faces a lengthy prison sentence.

Campaign Kazakhstan reported that the Appeal Court of the Zhambul region of Kazakhstan has decided to revoke the decision of a jury at Vadim Kuramshin's previous court trial. The Appeal Court has now decided to re-open the case following further investigations.

Vadim Kuramshin was arrested on 23 January this year. He was falsely charged with extorting money from the public prosecu-

tor, Mukhtar Uderbaev, who Vadim himself wanted to take legal action against. The whole trial clearly violated the country's criminal procedure code and was constantly postponed, causing Vadim to declare a hunger strike in order to get the court to reconvene.

On 28 August, the Taraz city court pronounced sentence on Vadim. Rather than condemn Vadim to 14 years imprisonment in a special regime colony as the state prosecutor asked, the court judge decided to release him, with just one year of conditional bail.

However, the Appeal Court has now revoked that decision.

On 31 October armed police raid-

ed Vadim's flat. They had no valid arrest warrant but he was taken to prison in Petropavlovsk where conditions are horrendous. Having cut his own veins, he was given emergency treatment. Then he was put on the road, under escort, to travel the nearly 2,000 kilometres to Taraz for his retrial.

●Send urgent protests to the Kazakhstan embassy: Ambassador Kairat Abusseitov, 33 Thurloe Square, London, SW7 2SD. london@kazembassy.org.uk with copies to: kazakhstansolidarity@gmail.com

For updates see: www.campaignkazakhstan.org

●The Kazakhstan trade union and opposition leader, Esenbek Ukteshbayev, is returning to the country after a year in exile.

Despite the continuing threats to his life and liberty from the Kazakhstan regime, Esenbek is determined to continue the work of building his union federation, Zhanartu, and the Socialist Movement Kazakhstan.

The CWI emphasises that if anything untoward happens to Esenbek or threatens the safety of his family, it will hold the Kazakhstan authorities responsible. **See website for solidarity action**

The Committee for a Workers' International

The Committee for a Workers' International (CWI) is the socialist international organisation to which the Socialist Party is affiliated.

The CWI is organised in 45 countries and works to unite the working class and oppressed peoples against global capitalism and to fight for a socialist world.

For more details including CWI publications write to: CWI, PO Box 3688, London E11 1YE. email cwi@worldsoc.co.uk

www.socialistworld.net

The CWI website contains news, reports and analysis from around the world. Recent articles include:



Europe: 14 November international action - a potential turning point

For a southern European-wide general strike on 14 November.

CWI statement



Spain/Catalonia: Capitalist crisis, the struggle for self-determination and workers' unity

Growth in support for independence as early elections loom.

Socialismo Revolucionario (CWI Spain) declaration



Russia: CWI wins seat in opposition organised elections...

But is deprived by head of electoral Commission.

Rob Jones (CWI Russia), Moscow

Football: Showing racism the red card

Newspaper sports pages are filled with debate about racism in the 'beautiful game' or the 'ugly game' as the Sunday Mirror (4 November) now

calls football. The paper published a ComRes opinion poll that says 76% of football fans want tougher

punishments for racist behaviour though 57% think it is impossible to remove racism from football. Manny Dominguez comments.

The case surrounding Chelsea and England footballer John Terry shows how serious an issue racism is at the game's highest level and among the best-paid stars. This case also shows that the game's top brass is unable to deal with the problem.

On 27 July, a Football Association (FA) disciplinary hearing found John Terry guilty of "using abusive language" towards QPR's Anton Ferdinand last October, which "included a reference to colour and/or race".

The FA Independent Regulatory Commission ruled on 27 September that Terry, the Chelsea captain, would serve a four-game ban and pay a £220,000 fine. On hearing that the FA was keeping on with its own charges, Terry stepped down from international football.

Last December the Crown Prosecution Service charged Terry, who was dropped as England captain. However England's former manager Fabio Capello made the questionable decision to drop Rio Ferdinand (Anton's brother) from the England team for John Terry for the Euro 2012 matches.

Terry's court appearance, postponed until after the Euros, found Terry not guilty beyond reasonable doubt. With court proceedings finished, the FA then charged Terry with using abusive language.

Too lenient

But many players and fans feel these penalties are too lenient. A bad tackle can earn a player a three-match ban. Other players have faced harsher penalties for equally abhorrent racist jibes. In the Luis Suarez/Patrice Evra incident last October, Suarez was fined £40,000 and faced an eight-match ban.

Most fans worry less about the fines than the bans from playing in the team - these guilty players cost their clubs results on the pitch. This divided fans' opinions of the likes of Terry and Suarez. It sticks in the throat when clubs defend their players' irresponsible actions. This inevitably fuels the unthinking loyalty many fans have in vocally defending their club's guilty heroes as victims.

The football authorities encourage players to simply shake hands and hope racism will disappear. Many black players were so incensed by what happened in the



John Terry arriving in court



Jason Roberts



Anton Ferdinand

past year and by the ineffectiveness of the 'Kick it Out' campaign that many chose not to wear the campaign's shirts on the Kick it Out Day of Action, embarrassing their respective clubs.

The England under-21 team's recent away victory over Serbia, overshadowed by the home crowd's racial abuse of monkey chants towards Danny Rose, added to the fury. Such chants were also heard from the visiting Lazio ultras this September, victimising black Spurs players in their Europa League draw.

Reading striker Jason Roberts

rightly lead the move, along with Anton and Rio Ferdinand, not to wear the 'Kick it out' shirts. They wanted to 'call to arms' the PFA (the players' union) and the football authorities who have dragged their feet on the issue.

PFA action plan

The PFA responded by producing a six-point action plan that included speeding up dealing with complaints of racism; consideration of stiffer penalties for racist abuse; monitoring the proportion of black

coaches and managers with moves to ensure black candidates make interview shortlists.

They also talked of making racial abuse gross misconduct and so potentially a sackable offence. PFA chief executive, Gordon Taylor also called for football to deal with other equality issues such as gender, sexual orientation, disability, anti-semitism, anti-Muslim prejudice and the small number of Asians in football.

Then it was alleged that Mark Clattenburg, the referee in Chelsea's defeat by Manchester United on 28 October, racially insulted Chelsea's Mikel John Obi during the game.

In a separate incident in the same game a match-day steward was injured in a surge from Chelsea fans. Coins and other missiles were thrown from the stands. This came days after a Leeds fan ran onto the pitch to assault Sheffield Wednes-



Rio Ferdinand

day's keeper Chris Kirkland.

These are wake-up calls to fans, and to the FA and the Premier League, who merely view racism and hooliganism in football as damaging their shiny happy-clappy image.

The anti-racist message in football must be campaigned for boldly. The PFA, Football Supporters Federation (FSF) and Kick Racism Out Of Football must also clearly explain that racism is a wider problem in society.

Clubs cannot simply say that racism comes from lack of education or 'multicultural' awareness, but must probe deeper.

Large layers of society feel stuck in a rut; long working hours, the threat of redundancy, mass unemployment, poverty and a general feeling of hopelessness all fuel resentment. In towns that are in great decline where mass resignation is rife, football becomes the only beacon of hope for some.

EDL and others

Racist organisations such as the English Defence League can take advantage where the traditional party of the working class, the Labour Party, has failed to channel that anger at those responsible for the attacks on working class living conditions.

Racism, homophobia and sexism, all prevalent in football, are products of the unequal society we live in. If we want to kick racism or any other prejudice out of football we must fight for a more equal society - a socialist society.

This means fighting for jobs, fair pay, affordable homes for all and accessible decent services, so we need industrial action to stop the Con-Dem government's crippling austerity policies. We should also fight for the unions to break with Labour and build a new political party to represent the working class.

Far right attack Socialist sellers

Two members of the Socialist Party successfully defended themselves against a violent attack by a far-right thug as they were leafleting and selling the Socialist outside Blackhorse Road tube station in Walthamstow, east London last week.

This was an unprovoked attack which took place after an exchange of words, culminating in the thug intimidating that he was a member of the far-right English Defence League (EDL) and then launching his assault.

This attack followed two unsuccessful attempts by the EDL to march and rally in Walthamstow. They were only able to march on 1 September due to massive police protection but they still got chased away and were unable to hold their rally.

Their second attempt on 27 October, was banned in the face of a

huge likely counter-demonstration and following the arrest of the EDL's leader, with a mob, on his way to 'protest' outside a mosque in Whitechapel.

We won't be intimidated by the EDL and the far right - we will continue our public sales at the tube and bus stations and workplaces in Walthamstow. We get a great response, regularly selling between five and ten papers on each sale and spreading the message that the Con-Dems' austerity can be fought and defeated.

We have to physically resist the thugs when necessary. But it is the Socialist Party's strategy to build a movement in both the trade unions and our communities and a working class political alternative to fight the cuts that will ultimately undermine support for the far-right.

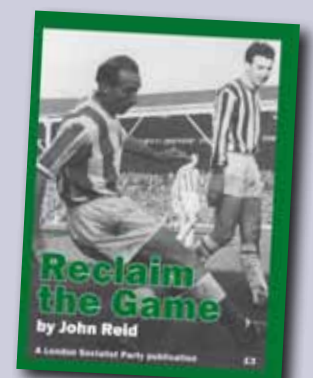


Marching against the EDL photo Sarah Wrack

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October 1992 battle against pit closures

Hundreds of thousands march against vicious Tory government

Mike Forster

On 13 October 1992, the then Tory trade secretary, Michael Heseltine, announced the closure of 31 of the 50 deep coal mines that remained in the UK after Thatcher's closures in the 1980s. He committed £1 billion for redundancy payments which would see the workforce decimated by 30,000.

An explosion of anger erupted, taking the newly elected smug Tory government by complete surprise. Within eight days, a mid-week protest demo, initiated by the miners' union NUM, attracted 100,000 to London.

Even the normally hostile Tory media reflected the mood of anger: The Sun described a "mighty army of miners" whose march for coal and jobs "won the support of Britain's diehard Tories".

To the paper's evident surprise, "Sloane rangers left their tables at swanky eateries and customers poured from posh boutiques to wave them on".

The government was thrown into disarray. An emergency debate was held in the House of Commons where Heseltine was forced to pledge a 'review' of 21 pits before any final decision was taken.

The following weekend, a monster demo of a quarter of a million, called by the TUC, marched through London in pouring rain.

This rapid mobilisation in the space of two weeks was a reflection of the huge distrust working people felt towards the government. But



Durham miners march through London photo Militant

representatives from the CBI and the Lib Dems were invited to speak on the platform!

Arthur Scargill, president of the NUM who had led the 1984-85 strike, had always maintained that the Tories had a secret hit-list of pits they wanted to close.

But Heseltine's closure programme actually went much further than Scargill had predicted.

But, instead of launching a new stage of the struggle, the London demos were the TUC's final attempt to halt the Tories.

The so-called review took place and reported back to parliament in December.

This announced the closure of

19 pits on top of the ten pits which had already shut. Others were to be 'mothballed'.

The miners had fought a battle to save the pits in 1984-85, and lost. The mobilisation of the wider trade union movement in general strike action could have forced the Tories back then, and in 1992.

But the TUC was more afraid of the NUM's militancy than the government's alternative energy plan. There was no call issued for any general strike action after the demo at the end of October 1992, despite demands by the NUM.

The TUC had left miners to fight alone in 1984-85 and they repeated the same betrayal in 1992.



Alan Hardman's cartoon from Militant in October 1992

Interview with Mary Jackson, Women Against Pit Closures

Within a week of Heseltine's announcement, Women Against Pit Closures had set up three permanent camps at Markham Main, Grimethorpe and outside the Department of Trade which became a rallying point for the resistance. Mike Forster spoke to Mary Jackson, one of the activists.

What impact did the pit closure announcement have?

I can still remember the Heseltine announcement. It had an instant impact on workers everywhere.

My husband was working at Drax power station at the time where there was an atmosphere of fear and intimidation. But after the call went out to go to London, the workforce lost their fear. There was no strike action, they just didn't go into work and instead they all went to London. That was the feeling everywhere: they have gone too far and we can't let this happen.

How did the pit camps come to be set up?

The first pit camp was set up by Brenda Nixon and Anne Scargill at Markham Main pit in Armthorpe village.

The village had a great militant tradition; they had been cordoned off by the police in the strike but never buckled. The camp was just a tarpaulin and a brazier. There was a hard-core of us of about eight to ten women but we had supporters visiting all the time.

Every day people visited with food, wood, coal and messages of support. There was a woman who lived at the end of the lane who opened up her toilet to the camp and kept it clean for us all to use. We camped out every night in some of the coldest weather British winters had to throw at us.



Mary Jackson photo Alison Hill

Why was it mainly women who got involved?

Women had gained a lot of confidence through their role in the 1984-85 miners' strike and the camp came as a natural extension of the struggle to save the pits. The camps motivated more women to get active and became a symbol of resistance.

Women were more frightened than the men about the impact pit closures would have on their communities and children. They were frightened of

losing their way of life. Look at pit villages today - we were right.

Tell us about the demos in London

The first demo was amazing. There was a lot of middle class people and folk from down south where they had no pits.

I was surprised at the accents and the chanting which was all very 'correct'. It was an uprising of middle and working class Britain.

The second demo was electric and everyone was buzzing. The whole country wanted to save the pits and there was a feeling we were going to win.

So why did the pits still close?

In reality the Tories didn't shut the pits. In the strike they bribed the police and the judiciary with huge pay rises and special treatment. This time, they dangled a lifetime's salary as a redundancy pay-off.

The men had been battered in the strike and felt even worse for taking the money, but they had been left to fight alone again. They felt they had no choice. Most of them just walked away.

I remember one miner at Markham Main, Buck, who refused to be bribed and turned up for work on his own every day. He signed on at the pit, was sent away and came for a cup of tea with us.

By December when the review was finished, most of the miners had already gone.

How could the pits have stayed open then?

There was a mood for a fight all over the country. If the TUC had called a 24-hour general strike straight after the demo and threatened more if that didn't work, we would have won.

The Militant [the Socialist's predecessor] urged the NUM to name the day for a strike if the TUC were not prepared to. The Tories were on the ropes and they knew it. The TUC let them off the hook.

What lessons are there for today's struggles?

Thatcher took us on one by one and beefed up the state to smash us when we fought back. When she took us all on in the poll tax, she got beaten. This lot haven't learned that lesson and are trying to take us all

on, including the police and even the armed forces.

The poll tax attack united great swathes of people who had no obvious things in common 20 years ago. In 1992, there was one broadcast, the mood changed and workers everywhere said we've had enough.

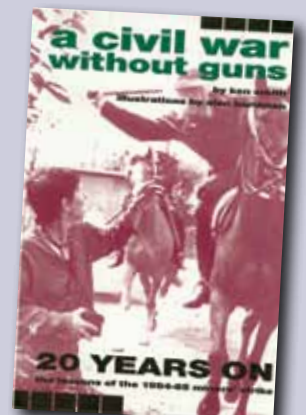
Now they are attacking teachers, civil servants, the sick and disabled, the unemployed, council workers - and they are making a huge mistake. We've already forced the TUC to vote for general strike action - even if it's the last thing they want!

Times are clearly changing. People are getting ready to fight back. We have to force the TUC to call a 24-hour general strike, with the threat of more to come, and this lot will crumble. I can't wait to see it.

A Civil War Without Guns

the lessons of the 1984-85 miners' strike
by Ken Smith

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Student demo 21 November

MARCH FOR JOBS AND EDUCATION



Chaz Lockett
Sheffield Socialist Students

In the winter of 2010, by the skin of their teeth, Cameron, Clegg and their rich mates managed to weather the storm of student protest, college walk-outs and university occupations and forced through the most draconian raft of education 'reforms' ever enacted in Britain.

These 'improvements' included the tripling of tuition fees from an already unaffordable £3,000 to a sky-high £9,000, the removal of vital EMA for college

students, and the slashing of education budgets by up to 80% in some departments.

The face of our education has visibly changed – university applications have already fallen by 15% in my native Sheffield. Entire groups of friends who were at Sheffield's colleges now languish on the dole, unable to afford to go to university and unable to get jobs.

The neoliberal slash-and-burn of our education has had chilling effects.

But though the student movement was set back by the passing of these vicious assaults on

working class people's right to education, we're still here and we certainly haven't forgotten. The 50,000-strong demonstration in November 2010, the storming of Millbank Tower and the subsequent mass student uprising against the Tories still loom large in the minds of students.

This year, the 'Class of 2010' comes of age – some of the students who walked out of their colleges, who took part in the biggest demonstration of college students ever, are now at university, forced to pay £9,000 a year. The need to kick out this shambolic government is becoming clear.

The National Union of Students demonstration 'Educate, Employ, Empower', on 21 November, could open the floodgates to this simmering anger.

This tide can be a storm surge, made unstoppable and irresistible by Socialist Students' ever-present slogan: 'students and workers – unite and fight!' Only the union between the dynamism and energy of the students with the industrial muscle of the organised working class can lead to success.

If the NUS does its job and campaigns energetically over the next few weeks for a good turn out,

students will return home from London on the evening of the 21st having seen the mass TUC rally on 20 October, the Southern European general strike on 14 November, and now a show of strength from their classmates all over the UK. The task is clear – taking forward the demands of Socialist Students beyond this demonstration and into the new year: free education, no budget cuts, fair pay for teaching and support staff, and to lend all support possible to workers in the coming struggles.

We'll kick out this shower of posh boys and we'll fight for a socialist future.

photo Senan

What we stand for

The Socialist Party fights for socialism – a democratic society run for the needs of all and not the profits of a few. We also oppose every cut, fighting in our day-to-day campaigning for every possible improvement for working class people. The organised working class has the potential power to stop the cuts and transform society.

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 socialist international that organises in over 40 countries.

Our demands include:

PUBLIC SERVICES

- No to ALL cuts in jobs, public services and benefits. Defend our pensions.
- 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.

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.
- Reject 'Workfare'. 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. Support the National Shop Stewards Network.

- A maximum 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

ENVIRONMENT

- Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy and into ending the problems of early obsolescence and un-recycled 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! Support the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition as an important step towards this.

SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

- No to imperialist wars and occupations. Withdraw the troops immediately from Afghanistan!
- Tax the super-rich! For a socialist government to take into public ownership the top 150 companies and the banking system 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' neoliberal European Union! For a socialist Europe and a socialist world!