

# STOP THE EDUCATION LOCK-OUT!

**“**IF WE have a highly educated and idle population, we may possibly anticipate more serious social conflict. People must be educated once more to know their place.”

This was reportedly said by a senior civil servant in an interview in 1984. But you might be forgiven for thinking it had been said just yesterday by David Cameron, Michael Gove or any of the other government ministers who seem so intent on dismantling our education system.

And they may well be worried about ‘social conflict’. The attacks on young people are becoming unbearable.

Universities are being run into the ground by continual cuts to the higher education budget - currently totalling £2.5 billion. These are already starting to hit students hard. Manchester University alone is cutting 90 courses this year. And going to university doesn't even guarantee a job - one in ten graduates are unemployed.

But despite all of this, young people are still desperate to have the opportunity to go to university, as shown by the scramble to avoid disappointment after this summer's A-level results.

Why have 150,000 been locked out of university by the government's cap on places?

Why will the Browne Review into university funding recommend that fees are raised to £7,000 a year even though two thirds of students say this would put them off going?

It's an attack on our right to receive an education at all. This government wants university to be an option only for the rich. Approval has just been given for the second private university in the UK to open. It will be able to charge whatever fees it likes.

We are quickly heading for a situation where the best universities charge extortionate fees and students from poorer backgrounds either go to a second rate institution or just head straight for the dole queue.

Two thirds of students already have to work to fund themselves through university and as more and more of their parents lose their jobs, this will only increase.

Only 6% of children who receive free school meals go on to do A-levels and only 45 go to Oxbridge (as opposed to 82 from just one of the top private schools in London). It's an ‘us-and-them’ system.

But the coalition government

should be warned. We have been ‘educated to know our place’ and it's not on the scrapheap of unemployment and debt fuelled poverty.

The need for a mass campaign to fight for the right to education and a decent future for all young people is more urgent than ever.

Join the Youth Fight for Jobs day of action on 20 October when further cuts will undoubtedly be announced in the spending review. Visit [www.youthfightforjobs.com](http://www.youthfightforjobs.com) or email [youthfightforjobs@googlemail.com](mailto:youthfightforjobs@googlemail.com) to get involved in your area.

At Socialism 2010, Socialist Students and Youth Fight for Jobs will host ‘Youth Fight for a Future’ to discuss the way forward. Previously, we have debated with NUS, the young Conservatives and Labour youth. Visit [www.socialism2010.net](http://www.socialism2010.net).

## what we stand for

The Socialist Party fights for socialist change – a democratic society run for the needs of all and not the profits of a few. We also fight, in our day-to-day campaigning, for every possible improvement for working-class people.

As capitalism dominates the globe, the struggle for genuine socialism must be international.

The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), a democratic, socialist international that organises in over 40 countries.

### Our demands include:

#### Work & 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 retire-

ment pension, as a step towards a living pension. Reinstatement the link with average earnings now.

- Reject ‘Welfare to Work’. For the right to decent benefits, education, training, or a job, without compulsion.
- Scrap the anti-trade union laws! For fighting trade unions, democratically controlled by their members. Full-time union officials to be regularly elected and receive no more than a worker's wage.
- A maximum 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

#### Public services

- No to privatisation and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Renationalise all privatised utilities and services, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need.
- Fully fund all services and run them under accountable, democratic committees that include representatives of service workers and users.
- Free, publicly run, good quality education, available to all at any age. Abolish university tuition fees now and introduce a living grant. No to academies!
- A socialist NHS to provide for everyone's health needs – free at the point of use and under democratic control. Kick out private contractors!

- Keep council housing publicly owned. For a massive building programme of publicly owned housing, on an environmentally sustainable basis, to provide good quality homes with low rents.

#### Environment

- Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy and into ending the problems of early obsolescence and unrecycled waste.
- Public ownership of the energy generating industries. No to nuclear power. No to Trident.
- A democratically planned, low fare, publicly-owned transport system, as part of an overall plan against environmental pollution.

#### Rights

- Oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, disability, sexuality, age, and all other forms of prejudice.
- Repeal all laws that trample over civil liberties. For the right to protest! End police harassment.
- Defend abortion rights. For a woman's right to choose when and whether to have children.
- For the right to asylum. No to racist immigration laws.

#### New workers' party

- For a new mass workers' party drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplace, community, environmental and anti-war campaigns, to provide a fighting, political alternative to the pro-big business parties.
- Trade unions to disaffiliate from the Labour Party now and aid the building of a new workers' party!

#### Socialism and Internationalism

- No to imperialist wars and occupations. Withdraw the troops immediately from Iraq and Afghanistan!
- Tax the super-rich! For a socialist government to take into public ownership the top 150 companies and banks that dominate the British economy, and run them under democratic working-class control and management. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need.
- A democratic socialist plan of production based on the interests of the overwhelming majority of people, and in a way that safeguards the environment.
- No to the bosses' neo-liberal European Union! For a socialist Europe and a socialist world!