

# the Socialist

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# We need action against the cuts

# ... and a socialist political alternative

**A**LMOST EVERY report of Tory chancellor George Osborne's impending cuts assumes that "of course, everyone knows cuts are necessary". The discussion then centres on "how to" carry out those cuts, not "whether to". That suits the three main parties who all stand for the interests of big business and the defence of capitalism. But it certainly does not suit us!

**Dave Nellist**  
Socialist Party councillor  
Chair, Campaign for a  
New Workers' Party

On 20 October Osborne is due to announce much wider and deeper cuts to a degree not seen in this country since the 1920s. The recession of the last two years was caused by deep-rooted features in the market economy and triggered by the bankers and their gambling. But it's not the bankers who are being asked to pay - they're getting back to 'business as usual'.

The Royal Bank of Scotland, bailed out by £45 billion of our money and 84% owned by the government, paid £1.3 billion in bonuses earlier this year to 17,000 market traders.

Yes, those rich bankers and others should be higher taxed to make them pay their fair share of society's costs. But that is not enough. Ordinary people did not cause this crisis; we refuse to pay for it! The

banking industry should be fully nationalised under democratic workers' control and planned to serve ordinary people's needs. Compensation should be paid only on the basis of proven need. We need action taken against the culprits, not the victims.

We can beat the Tories and their Lib Dem sidekicks. Determined and well-organised action by trade unionists and anti-cuts campaigns can win. But resistance is only half the battle.

If the overall cuts agenda is left largely unanswered, success by one strong group in one area will only move the cuts around. We need a political alternative.

By the narrowest of margins Miliband E has beaten Miliband D as the new leader of the Labour Party. Despite calling for an end to the 'Blair-Brown era', Ed Miliband's election provides no fundamental alternative to the anti-working class policies of that period.

In his first interviews he has said he would accept some of the Tory cuts and take Labour's pre-election £72 billion cuts package as "a starting point". His only deviation so far seems to be that £2 billion of those cuts be raised by tax increases instead of spending cuts.

In next year's elections we need independent trade union, socialist and community-based candidates standing on an anti-cuts platform to challenge the big three parties.

It's been done in a limited way before. In Kidderminster, health campaigners battling to save a local hospital not only won council seats but twice won the town's MP.

In Huddersfield NHS-SOS campaigners won a council seat and independents and working class alternative candidates have been elected in Wigan, Walsall, Wellingborough - and quite a few other places, not beginning with W! Now we need to repeat that with hundreds of candidates next May.

On 15 January 2011 the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition intends to host a national conference to help shift the political terrain by encouraging the widest possible challenge of anti-cuts candidates in the May 2011 elections.

I urge trade unionists and socialists in every town and city in the country to start making plans now, not only to fight the cuts, but to prepare for a political alternative to the big three cuts parties at the ballot box.

**Fighting fund - 63% of target raised so far with just one week to go until the end of the quarter on 8 October!**  
Can you make a donation to help us reach our target?  
Telephone 0208 988 8777 or see details on page 8.



photo Suzanne Beishon