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We can win

Student struggle must escalate
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Ireland demo

Huge show of defiance
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Len McCluskey

Union leader speaks to the Socialist
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Join the national education shutdown on 'Day X'

YOUNG PEOPLE LEAD FIGHT AGAINST CUTS

THERE IS now no doubting the opposition to education cuts amongst young people. Over 50,000 marched in London on the 10 November National Union of Students (NUS) demo. But, students were not willing to leave it at that.

Becci Heagney
Leicester Youth Fight for Education

On 24 November, 130,000 school, college and university students took part in walkouts, protests and occupations up and down the country and the movement is still growing.

What are we demanding? The right to education and a future. The plan to increase tuition fees to £9,000 a year will mean that millions will be blocked from going to university. But it is not just this. The billions of pounds that are due to be cut from our teaching budgets, massive job losses and the complete scrapping of Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) in England will inevitably mean students will have to drop out of college and university.

With benefits being

slashed, mass youth unemployment and cuts to services like Connexions, young people are being given no future.

The slogans of the protests have made it clear: "No ifs, no buts, no education cuts!" The argument that cuts are necessary is wearing thin as more and more students are starting to realise that this government wants to create an education system that benefits the rich and 'Con-Dems' the poor.

The cabinet of multi-millionaires who enjoyed free education themselves keep telling us that "we're all in this together". But we are seeing cuts to our public services while investment bankers are receiving £7 billion in bonuses. We should not have to pay for a crisis that we did not cause!

The huge number of young people taking part in action so far has shocked the government, but it is not over and we can win! EMA has been saved in both Scotland and Wales which is a victory for the protest movement.

The NUS president has been forced by the action of thousands of students to apologise for 'dithering' after not supporting the 24 November protests.

The government is trying to force the decision on tuition fees through before Christmas but it hasn't been made yet. We need to increase the pressure.

On the day that parliament votes - 'Day X' - we should have a complete education shutdown! In order for this to be effective, we need to be organised locally and nationally. Youth Fight for Education is calling for students to be brought together from different areas to take part in coordinated action.

Imagine the effect it would have if there were mass walkouts of every school, college and university at the same time involving students and education workers!

We should be holding Youth Fight for Education meetings in every town to democratically organise for 'Day X'. We should be leafletting and campaigning to get everyone involved and be putting pressure on local student unions to organise transport to London for a mass demonstration outside parliament.

We should be linking up with anti-cuts groups that exist locally to call on trade unionists and community activists to support us. We can win on this, but not alone.

See pages 6 and 7 for information on Youth Fight for Jobs' Student Defence Campaign.

Come to the launch of Youth Fight for Education, Sunday 5 December, 2pm, Christopher Ingold Building, University College London, Gordon Street, London WC1H 0AJ.

STOP PRESS: Tuesday 30 November day of action updates

- 3,000 in London, keen to avoid being 'kettled'!
- 2,000 in Bristol
- 150 occupying in Nottingham
- 400 in Leeds
- 400 in Liverpool
- 400 in Sheffield
- 50 in Hull, excellent mood
- 100 marching in Southampton shopping centre!
- 500-strong Newcastle demonstration 'kettled' by police
- 1,000 in Manchester
- Oxford council building occupied
- Lloyds TSB occupied in Cardiff



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