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FRONTLINE OF ATTACK

JUNIOR DOCTORS AND TEACHERS are currently on the frontline of attacks on the public sector. The junior doctors' strike action - the first time in 40 years - has inspired workers and communities. Their fight against the Hunt contract is widely recognised to be a fight for the NHS as a whole, and is extremely popular with the public.

Teachers are fighting on a number of fronts to defend education from Tory plans to force every single school in the country to become an academy, to do away with national collective bargaining for teachers, and to slash schools' funding.

The NUT is balloting for national action to defend national pay and conditions across all schools, academies and non-academies, and aims to take a first day of strike action in early July. This would be followed with further action in the autumn.

The student nurses' 'Bursaries or Bust' campaign is one indication of the determination of other health workers to fight. It follows the strike of midwives in 2014 and the special conference of GPs in December 2015.

The NHS is in financial crisis with massive Private Finance Initiative debts and a £22 billion 'black hole'. They must fight!

UNITED ACTION

The joint trade union demo of doctors and teachers is taking place in London on 26 April, at the same time as the conference of the health section of public sector union Unison. Delegates to the conference should place the demand clearly on their union leaders to oppose pay restraint and cuts, and for united action with the junior doctors.

There are a million workers in the NHS - united action would be an extremely powerful step, and would harness the support of millions in their communities who have marched and protested in town after town to defend their local hospitals and A&Es.

GET THE TORIES OUT!

On 16 April, when tens of thousands marched through London a major demand of the protesters was 'Tories Out'. And this is possible. The Tories are hated - only elected with 24% of the electorate - and are now riven from top to bottom in a historic crisis over the EU referendum - they could be out of office in a matter of weeks.

A mass movement has the potential to bring down the government. Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell have pledged to back the junior doctors and teachers. Those important words need to be turned into action.

The trade union leaders and anti-austerity forces around Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell should organise a serious national campaign to do that.

Unfortunately, John and Jeremy have made a major mistake in campaigning for a Remain vote in the EU referendum alongside Cameron and the majority of the establishment politicians and big business. This is wasting the major opportunity there is at the moment for a left Exit campaign to force Cameron to resign and call a general election.

The fight will be made up of a myriad of issues, different sections of society and a range of types of action. But the Socialist Party argues that it is the working class, organised in trade unions, that has the greatest power to challenge the government and bosses, and should be at the heart of the struggle.

This is why joint BMA and NUT action is important, and why Socialist Party members in the unions and the National Shop Stewards Network are working to help it happen.

Mass strike action is the most powerful and unifying weapon the anti-cuts movement has, bringing behind it the support of millions in communities. The Socialist Party calls for coordinating the strike action of all those workers in dispute as preparation for a 24-hour general strike.

NO CUTS!

We also call on Labour councillors to stop passing on Tory cuts now, and instead help to build a mass movement to defeat austerity - a councillors' revolt could be a key part of bringing this government down. The Socialist Party is part of TUSC, the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, whose challenge in this May's council elections makes that call.

The huge surge for Bernie Sanders in the US is an indication of the openness to a socialist alternative to the austerity, misery and crises of capitalism. A clear socialist programme could help to mobilise and unify working class people in the fight against austerity.

The Socialist Party says: Stop academies, cuts and attacks on teachers. Stop the Hunt contract and end cuts and privatisation in the NHS. Long-lasting, democratic nationalisation of steel. Nationalise the banks, rail, energy companies and the main planks of the economy under democratic workers' control and management, so that we can begin to create a society in the interests of the millions not the super-rich tax-dodging billionaires.

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