

THEY ARE 1% WE ARE 99%

Come to Socialism 2011 - join the fightback

Banks continue to demand government bailouts; an ever-deepening sovereign debt crisis in Europe and the USA; mass unemployment and cuts in services on a level not seen since the 1930s; a widening gulf between rich and poor... the capitalist profit system is in a massive hole and the capitalists can't stop digging!

But, as Robin Clapp explains, it is clear that the super-rich and their political representatives have no solution to these problems, blinkered as they are by the drive for short-term profit. But all over the world anger is growing and resistance is being organised.

In preparing to leave his plush Frankfurt office, with a jaw-dropping pension, outgoing president of the European Central Bank (ECB) Jean Claude-Trichet warned last week that "we are experiencing the worst crisis since 1945".

Mervyn King, his counterpart at the Bank of England, added that "this is the most serious financial crisis at least since the 1930s, if not ever".

The illusion that the Great Recession of 2008-2009 had been vanquished has been brutally exposed in recent months as the world moves towards a double-dip recession.

Then, the private debt crisis saw Lehman Brothers tumble, banks nationalised and unemployment soar. It was triggered by the bursting of the US sub-prime housing bubble and the reliance on the fictitious derivatives market as an alternative to investment in real production.

Governments initially responded to this potential meltdown by carrying through massive bailouts in an attempt to rescue their economies.

Yet three years later it is apparent that the 'cure' did not work, with the

crisis mutating into a full-blown sovereign debt crisis in Greece, Portugal, Ireland and now Spain and Italy.

No worldwide consensus exists among governments as to what measures should be applied to try to avert years of stagnation, a return to recession or even the threat of a full-blown 1930s-type depression.

The prevailing capitalist view has been to make the working class pay for the previous stimulus packages and the \$14 trillion worldwide bank bailout. But savage attacks on living standards have led to a growing paralysis in consumer demand which in turn means that the deepest recession since the 1930s has been followed by the feeblest recovery.

Capitalism is anarchic and can never be an economically cohesive system. It is a victim of its own limitations - the constraints of both private ownership and competing nation states clash repeatedly with the necessity for an international harmonisation of production, rational planning, science and technology.

But increasingly the viability of capitalism as a system is being ques-



photo Paul Mattsson

tioned. The Occupy Wall Street movement has raised the slogan: "They are 1%, we are 99%".

This slogan not only exposes the savage inequality and rottenness of the system, but reveals the huge potential power of working class and poor people to change the system.

In this battle ideas - increasingly including socialist ideas - will come to the fore.

More on the world economy on page 9

Socialism 2011 is a weekend of discussion and debate which will take place in London on 5 and 6 November. See www.socialism2011.net to buy tickets, see full programme of workshops and rallies and for all the details on accommodation, crèche and accessibility, and the party for socialism after the Saturday rally.

World in crisis: fight for socialism The Saturday rally is the centrepiece of Socialism 2011. It takes place from 6.30-8.30pm on Saturday 5 November at Euston Friends Meeting House, 173 Euston Road, NW1 2BJ. Speakers include: **Clare Daly MP**, Socialist Party Ireland; **Peter Taaffe**, Socialist Party general secretary; **a Tunisian trade unionist** and **Jarrow marchers**.

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 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. Reinstate 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 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.

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!