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A weekend of inspiration and fighting back

Huge support for Jarrow marchers as they finish their 330-mile protest

See pages 6 and 7

Solidarity and confidence in abundance at Socialism 2011 weekend

See pages 8 and 9

Build for 30 Nov strike

THE FIGHT OF ALL OUR LIVES!

Rob Williams
National Shop Stewards
Network chair

One year ago over 50,000 students marched through the streets of London. That march set off a mass movement of hundreds of thousands of young people against the rises in tuition fees and the abolition of the EMA allowance for college students.

Then we had the 26 March TUC mass demonstration and the fantastic strike of 750,000 civil servants, teachers and lecturers on 30 June.

Now we're just days away from 30 November (N30), when up to three million public sector workers will be striking to defend their pensions.

This will be an overwhelmingly popular strike because all those who have suffered from these cuts want someone to stand up for them. A Guardian poll found 77% of respondents thought public sector workers were justified in going on strike.

The grievances about all the cuts and attacks, the anger and frustrations, have been transferred into the battle over pensions. From the 250,000 job losses in the public sector this year to the thousands of pounds lost by many because

councils of all pro-big business parties have attacked contracts. Workers are very practical. They'll say: "We might not have stopped all the cuts and saved all the jobs but on pensions we can win!"

The National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) was initiated in 2006 by the transport union RMT but we were created for times like this. The NSSN will always give support and solidarity to workers in struggle.

We'll always bring together rank and file stewards and activists to learn from each other. But in times like this, we act as a lever on the official union structures and leaders to push them to act, popularising the idea of coordinated strike action.

I estimate that we've given out well over 100,000 leaflets this year, with "For a 24-hour public sector general strike" on them. Isn't that what we've got on 30 November?

We lobbied the TUC last year, calling for a national demonstration against the cuts, which we think played a part in getting the 26 March demo organised.

And on 11 September over 700 shop stewards came to our rally and then marched and lobbied the TUC, calling for a coordinated strike against the Con-Dems' attacks on pensions.

The NSSN appeals to everyone to make sure that on N30 there's a demonstration in your town that



reaches out to everyone who has suffered from this government's attacks.

We also need to involve workers in the private sector. The magnificent protests of the construction electricians at 6.30am every Wednesday for the last three

months show that a united front of all workers can be built against the government and the employers.

The Jarrow March for Jobs has re-tied the knot of history. Now we're writing our own history with one of the biggest workers' marches this year and the biggest strike

for 85 years on N30. We can succeed in the present by defeating the attacks on pensions and forcing this government out.

This is based on a speech made by Rob Williams at the closing rally of the Socialism weekend. See pages 8 and 9



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