

FIGHT THE CUTS!



- Make the bankers & the rich pay
- No unity with NI Executive and bosses
- For a UK-wide 1 day public sector strike

The cuts to be announced by the Tory / Lib Dem government in October will have a devastating impact on workers, working class communities and the poor if they are not resisted by the entire working class movement.

It is estimated 30,000 jobs in Northern Ireland could be lost in the public sector, plus another 10,000 private sector jobs as a result of these austere cuts. The effect of these cuts will further plunge the economy in the North into a deep recession which could last many years. Mass unemployment already plagues many working class communities. Youth unemployment stands above 20%. The real unemployment figure in Northern Ireland is currently close to 14%.

For proof that cuts will not lead to economic recovery, we don't have to look very far - just look at the South. After three years of wage cuts and public services slashed, the Irish economy is headed towards a double-dip recession. The Irish economy is facing into the abyss, with disastrous consequences for ordinary people, especially young people who are being forced to emigrate in search of work.

How can we fight the cuts?

Working class and also middle class people cannot afford not to fight these cuts. Neither can we afford to rely on the right-wing parties in the Assembly Executive to oppose the cuts. All the parties in the Executive have been making cuts of 3-5% for the past three years leading to a crisis in the health service, job losses through

'natural wastage', closures of college courses, accident and emergency units, women's refuges, community childcare service, libraries... the list is long.

The NI Executive has carried out £500million in cuts (the politicians prefer to call these "efficiency savings") since 2007. None of the parties in the Assembly are opposed to cuts, despite the grandstanding of some politicians, conscious of ominous elections next May. Sinn Fein has admitted they are prepared to carry out cuts together with the Tory / Lib Dem government. Writing in the Andersonstown News in September, Sinn Fein MLA Jennifer McCann stated "the Executive is forced to reduce spending in accordance with London's cuts" and continued to state that cuts



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will have to be managed “to ensure that the impact of public expenditure is maximised and the most vulnerable people in society are not forced to cope with any further financial hardship.”

The SNP in Scotland have appointed a committee to look at how cuts can be made to public services, while the Labour Party and Ed Miliband have made clear they are not opposed to cuts. The strategy outlined by NIC-ICTU of uniting with the right-wing parties in Stormont and the mini-Tories in the Scottish and Welsh Executives is utopian. Instead of outlining how the trade union movement together with local communities can independently prepare to fight the cuts, NIC-ICTU has instead called for unity with “large businesses” (who have exploited the recession to hammer workers through job losses and wage cuts) and the disgraced church leaders.

The trade union leaders should prepare the ground for a one-day public sector strike across Britain and the North to mobilise hundreds of thousands of workers against the cuts from Westminster and Stormont. Only the mass action of the working class can respond effectively to the tsunami of cuts being planned by the Tory / Lib Dem government. The parties in Stormont should be told that they have a decision to make – they can either take the side of working people and refuse to carry out cuts or implement the cuts on behalf of the Tories and Lib Dems.

Stop the Cuts Alliance

The opposition to the cuts must be organised in every workplace, college, school and community, involving all those affected by the cuts. The Stop the Cuts Alliance has been formed in order to unite trade unionists, socialists, community activists and anti-cuts campaigners to organise resistance to the cuts. It is necessary to link up all local campaigns against specific cuts to build a mass movement against the cuts. This will only be built if there is democratic accountability and full involvement of all those opposed to cuts, not by top-down bureaucratic methods. It is also crucial that a principled and solid opposition is built against all cuts. Unfortunately, NIC-ICTU has refused to op-

We need a new working class party

The Socialist Party agrees with recent comments made by NIC-ICTU Assistant General Secretary Peter Bunting when he posed “perhaps it’s time, comrades, that we got back to building a working class political movement.” All the parties in the Assembly are committed to right-wing pro-capitalist policies. They have all introduced cuts. They also have a vested interest in maintaining sectarian division.

Working class people are deprived of a mass political voice, which would be a major assistance in fighting the cuts. The Socialist Party is campaigning for the trade union movement to return to the need for a political party for workers. This could be done by supporting the launching of a new working class party which can unite workers against the cuts agenda of all the sectarian parties in Stormont.

pose all cuts, instead opting to “making the case for a more sensible timescale for deficit reduction”. Working class people should not have to pay the price for a huge deficit and recession caused by the super-rich bankers and capitalists. The trade union movement must say no to ALL cuts – make those responsible for the crisis pay, not workers and public services!

No capitalist solution to capitalist crisis - for socialist policies

The Socialist Party supports and calls for an increase in taxation of the rich. We would also support the introduction of a ‘Robin Hood’ tax on financial transactions and other progressive fiscal policies. However, the capitalist class will not simply go along with such reforms. They would be vigorously opposed. Big business and the super-rich would not tolerate even mild reforms which eat into their profits.

Capitalism is a system incapable of delivering decent jobs, homes and services for all. Only by re-organising society via socialist policies such as the nationalisation of the major financial companies, banks and companies which dominate the economy, under democratic workers control and management so that the wealth which working people create can be planned to meet the needs of people and the environment.

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