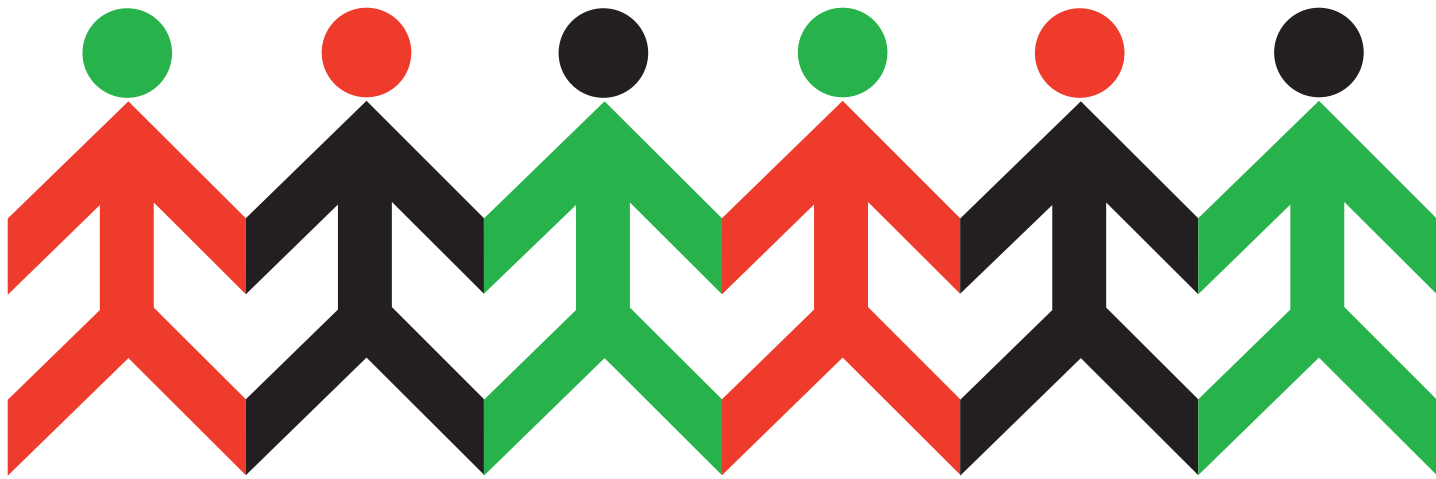




COALITION OF RESISTANCE



Broadsheet 4 November 2011

**From Athens to
London, from
New York to
Berlin, the
people say:**

NO CUTS

MAKE THE RICH PAY FOR THE CRISIS

Four years after the financial crash of 2008, the world economy is mired in the worst crisis since the 1930s. Growth is close to zero across the Eurozone. Youth unemployment is 29% in Italy, 43% in Greece, and 46% in Spain.

In Britain, almost a million 16 to 24 year-olds are in neither education nor employment: one in four.

Rising youth unemployment is one measure of the social crisis now engulfing Europe as tens of millions are impoverished by the slump.

This disaster is not some natural cataclysm. The financial crash was caused by speculation and greed in a deregulated casino-economy run by multi-millionaires. The ever-deepening crisis since is also the result of deliberate policy.

First, private banks were bailed out by the state. Then, bankrupt states were bailed out by international bodies like the IMF, the EU, and the European Central Bank. Now, even these are running out of money.

The debt has not gone away. It is simply being moved around. Worse, the debts are increasing as the European economy nose-dives.

An economic death-spiral

The neoliberal bankers and politicians who caused the crisis are imposing savage programmes of cuts and privatisation. They are deflating the economy, deepening the crisis, and causing more debts to go bad. It is a repeating pattern of cuts leading to bankruptcies leading to bailouts. They have locked us into an economic death-spiral.

They are using the crisis and the cuts as an opportunity to complete the destruction of public services and the welfare state begun in the 1980s. Their vision is of a world in which everything is privatised and commodified, everything at a price and for profit.

Council housing was an early target. They sold off most of the existing stock and then blocked virtually all new building. The result has been soaring housing costs for all – now averaging £600 a month if you pay a mortgage, more than £700 a month if you rent.

This is the pattern for everything else. They are now charging students almost the whole cost of university education. The result is falling applications, especially from working class youngsters, and students

(continued on page 4)

Appeal from Tony Benn, President of the Coalition of Resistance



Dear Friends and Comrades

I write, at this critical time, to urge you to become an individual member of CoR, to affiliate your organisation to it, and to make a regular monthly donation by standing order.

The Coalition of Resistance emerged from an appeal I made in August 2010 for a broad movement against the Con-Dem government's malicious attempts to dismantle the welfare state. The CoR Founding Conference of over 1,200 people was held on 27 November 2010. In recognition of the international nature of the crisis, we also hosted a European-wide Conference Against Austerity of over 600 on 1 October 2011.

We are seeking to develop and sustain an umbrella organisation to bring together the local and national campaigns to defend education, the NHS, pensions, housing, and the welfare state.

We have seen many demonstrations, including three magnificent student demonstrations, culminating in a TUC march of half-a-million on 26 March 2011. We are also witnessing an unprecedented outbreak of occupations across the globe.

A new phase began with the co-ordinated pensions strike by UCU, NUT, PCS, and ATL on 30 June. With 3 million workers being balloted, we are now heading for the biggest nationally co-ordinated strike since the 1926 General Strike on 30 November. Whilst the formal dispute is over public-sector pensions, it is clear that 30 November also represents a fundamental challenge to this relatively unstable Con-Dem government.

We will need to be ready to sustain the fight beyond that date – for example, to organise a common day of protest across Europe. To do this we need to consolidate the affiliations and increase funds for the Coalition of Resistance.

Yours in comradeship

Tony Benn
President of the Coalition of Resistance

WELFARE STATE WRECKERS

Privatising the NHS

'The NHS has not only worked well, providing high-quality, equal care for everyone, free of charge, at low cost: it is also the historic achievement of millions of people ... Its founding principles of comprehensiveness and equal access for all have been core values of modern British society. Working to marketise it, and finally privatising it, without any democratic mandate ... is as close as it gets to being not just unscrupulous, but actually unconstitutional.'

Colin Leys and Stewart Player

Authors of *The Plot Against the NHS*

CUTTING BENEFITS

'Here's a small insight into hardship that Dr Eoin Clarke unearthed from the Centre for Retail Research. Shoplifting is rising, as it does in recessions. What are the most stolen items? Not luxuries. Cheese comes a long way top, meat second, then fish, and baby milk only just behind alcohol. Baby milk!'

Polly Toynbee

The Guardian

MARKETISING OUR SCHOOLS

'One of the principal aims of the Tory-dominated Coalition is dramatically to dismantle the role of local authorities in relation to education. A democratically accountable public service, nationally directed but locally administered, is fast being replaced by a state-subsidised and centrally controlled quasi-market.'

Melissa Benn

Author of *School Wars: the battle for Britain's education*

IMPOVERISHING THE DISABLED

'In terms of the numbers affected and the scale and severity of the impact, the reforms to incapacity benefits that are underway are probably the most far-reaching changes to the benefits system for at least a generation. They will impoverish vast numbers of households and cause untold distress to countless more.'

Professor Steve Forthergill

Sheffield Hallam University

THE ECONOMICS OF THE MADHOUSE

'Bailouts have been put together on an ad hoc basis for those countries where financial pressures have become intolerable, yet the conditions placed on this support have made the underlying problem worse, not better... The Eurozone will sink back into recession as the banks stop lending, exports dry up, confidence shrivels, unemployment rises, and public spending cuts bite.'

Larry Elliott

Economics Editor, The Guardian

Play 'Rise Up!', new song from FIRST OF MAY BAND at rallies and meetings:

See video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIXWa5Vm0pw> ; Download the track at <http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/1stofmayband>.

'This song for November 30 is brilliant. We should make it Xmas No 1!'

Paul Mackney, Vice-Chair, Coalition of Resistance

Paul Mackney

Vice-Chair, Coalition of Resistance

CAMERON! RETREAT! THE YOUTH CONTROL THE STREETS!

The youth-led resistance to austerity

Cat Boyd PCS young members officer (pc)

When active as a student in the anti-war movement, I learnt about the lengths to which governments would go to further their capitalist agendas. I learnt about economic policies inimical to workers, students, families, and all who relied on the welfare state. And I learnt about policies to divide us, based on religion, race, and gender.

But I also learnt about resistance. It is now ten years since I began the learning process. In that time, the economic attacks on ordinary people have intensified. Now, though, due to the Con-Dem government's cuts to jobs, education, and public services, there also been an intensification of resistance.

The youth movement especially has continued to grow. One of the most inspiring things is that young people are making the political links between the austerity programme and the government's ideology. The demonstration at Millbank in November last year made this link and gave many young people the confidence to take on the government.

Young people face an increasingly bleak future.

For this reason, we need to increase our resistance – and ensure we do not become another 'lost generation'.

We are facing an assault on several fronts. Cuts to EMA, the imposition of fees, cuts to FE courses, and the Academies Bill all herald an education system geared to the interests of the rich. At the same time, youth unemployment is on the rise and funding to youth services is being slashed.

Our options are increasingly limited – enter higher education and face a lifetime of debt and precarious work, or seek worthwhile employment and end up working for a slave-wage. Even if you find a job, the security it brings will be minimal: low wages, fixed-term appointments, and, of course, a negligible or non-existent pension.

There is a multi-fronted attack on the youth of Britain. We did not create this crisis, and we should refuse to pay for it.

We have been without a voice for so long. We are being increasingly criminalised by the state, demoralised by the economic prospects, and demonised by the media.

But we are not defeated: more and more young people are taking their place in the resistance movement against cuts and privatisation. There are students supporting striking workers on the picket lines; young workers marching against youth unemployment.

N30 is a chance for young people to express their anger, and harness it by getting behind the largest mobilisation of organised labour in a generation. We want to see the trade unions, the unemployed, students, and community activists standing together on picket lines and demos on the day.

'We want to see the trade unions, the unemployed, students, and community activists standing together on picket lines and demos on the day'

The movement against austerity hinges on the ability of young people across Europe to rise up together. CoR is a vehicle by which we can co-ordinate our actions and amplify our collective voice, so that we can drown out the privately-educated, multi-millionaire politicians who want to see us resigned to a life of poverty – in education, in employment, and in our communities.



OCCUPYLSX

The grievances and demands are as diverse as can be expected, but the large banner reading 'Capitalism Is Crisis' offers a succinct summary of what the OccupyLSX protesters think is wrong with our society.

Huge profits for the elite, austerity for the rest of us, gaping inequality. The system has not worked, and what we need is a radical alternative. 'We need to be able to control our own lives,' says a young protester. 'We need to reclaim our democracy.'

The protest camp is located on the edge of one of the biggest obstacles to a truly democratic system: the banking system and its neoliberal defenders. 'People are suffering from economic policy based on ideology,' says one young woman. It is, of course, the ideology which for 30-odd years has been forcefully advocated by the financial services

industry in the City of London.

But the protest camp has shown that the power of the City, unshakable as it might have seemed only a few weeks back, is not immune to pressure. Calls for a more equal distribution of wealth through measures such as the Robin Hood tax are gaining support. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury has spoken in its favour!

What the protesters want, however, are not minor adjustments to the capitalist order, but systemic change. 'We want structural change towards authentic global equality. The world's resources must go towards caring for people and the planet, not the military, corporate profits, or the rich,' reads a statement by OccupyLSX.

And the success of the global Occupy movement in mobilising thousands of young people and inspiring millions of others suggests that the demands of the protesters are not as fanciful as our rulers might wish.

THE ATTACK ON PENSIONS

Paying more, waiting longer, getting less
Alex Kenny East London NUT (pc)

The joint public-sector strike on 30 November is a major step in the campaign against the government's austerity drive and their attempts to make working people pay for the crisis.

Following the historic demonstration on 26 March, we now see up to three million public-sector workers taking strike action together, with marches, rallies, and demonstrations all over the country.

The government wants public-sector workers to pay 50% more towards their pensions – to help pay off the deficit. They also want us to work up to eight years longer to get a smaller pension on retirement.

They have offered no figures to support the changes. In fact, the actual figures show that previous changes, agreed in 2006, are having the planned effect of reducing costs and building in long-term sustainability.

The government is trying to divide us by presenting public-sector workers as greedy and acting purely out of self-interest – in

doing so, they shed crocodile tears for private-sector workers with inadequate pensions.

We are in favour of pensions justice for everyone, but this will not be achieved in a 'race to the bottom'. Not one private-sector worker will benefit from the worsening of public-sector pensions.

If the government was serious about pensions injustice, they would improve the basic state pension and reform private-sector pensions, where fewer than 50% of workers have access to an employer-based scheme.

The government has started making concessions to the unions. These concessions are nowhere near enough, but should give us confidence that we are having an impact, and now is the time to pile on the pressure.

In order to win, the unions must prepare their members for a long battle and further strike action. But we must also win widespread support from beyond the public sector, reaching out to all those seeking to defend their communities from the government's cuts agenda.

Not one private-sector worker will benefit from the worsening of public-sector pensions

A democratic voice in
the heartland of the bankers

Radical journalist **Peter Staeuber** reports from
the St Pauls campsite.

'We need to be able to control our own lives.
We need to reclaim our democracy'



UNIVERSITIES UNDER ATTACK

Michael Bailey University of Essex Co-editor, The
Assault on Universities: a manifesto for resistance

N30's strike action is not just about defending public-sector pensions. The government's attack on pension schemes is only one element of a wider offensive against ordinary working people and the welfare state.

Since coming to power in May 2010, the Con-Dem coalition has pushed through a raft of austerity measures in response to the financial crisis, resulting in growing levels of unemployment, poverty, and inequality of opportunity. Meanwhile, the banks, the root-cause of the sudden increase

in national debt, have been allowed to resume business as usual.

One of the many victims of this political sleight of hand and social injustice is the idea of the university as a common good. The decision to withdraw 80% of state funding for university teaching from 2012 represents an unprecedented attack on universities as public institutions, not least because future generations of students will have to pay annual tuition fees of up to £9,000 to make up the shortfall. In spite of reassurances that scholarships and fee waivers will be available to students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, the likelihood is that higher education

will once again become an exclusive preserve for the privileged few.

The government claims the new fees regime will empower students by placing them 'at the heart of the system' as consumers. The reality is that the majority of universities will be forced to 'rationalise' their programmes to make savings, with the likely result that entire departments and institutions will close.

'The union estimates that government cuts could lead to 40,000 lecturers and researchers being made redundant'

The University and College Union estimates that cuts in government spending could lead to 40,000 lecturers and researchers being made redundant, greatly diminishing the teaching-learning experience for both students and staff.

With our backs to the wall, a growing number of academics and students are uniting to oppose the marketisation of higher education. Defending the idea of higher education as a cornerstone for the realisation of an educated democracy will require more than critique and indignation. Also needed is a much broader social movement comprising students, university workers, other public-sector employees, and the trade unions.

N30 is an opportunity to make our voices heard and to start building a coalition of resistance.

MAKE THE RICH PAY FOR THE CRISIS

(continued from page 1)

plunging deeper into debt as unemployment skyrockets.

Demolishing the welfare state

They are handing over our hospitals to private corporations. As The Observer reports: 'The first private company to take over an NHS hospital has admitted ... that patient care could suffer under its plans to expand its empire and seek profit from the health service.'

The corporate sharks are also circling our schools. 'According to some estimates,' reports education campaigner Melissa Benn, 'the education market is worth over £100 billion.'

Meantime, the rich get richer. The directors of Britain's top 100 companies have given themselves an average 49% pay increase over the last year. This at a time when the incomes of most working people are falling in real terms as inflation picks up, pay is frozen, and benefits slashed.

Shutting down democracy

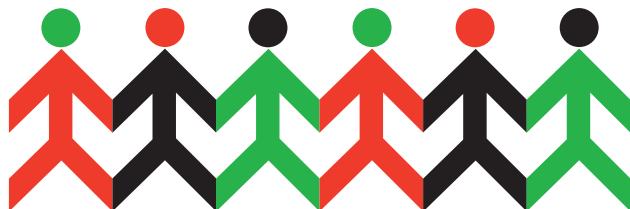
Little wonder that democracy itself is now under attack from the global elite. The Greek

prime minister was told he could not hold a referendum on whether to accept austerity: it was to be imposed on the Greek people without discussion. Neoliberal technocrats elected by no-one have been appointed to head austerity governments in Greece and Italy: the bankers' policy of cuts and privatisation is to be steamrolled in.

In Britain, too, the entire Con-Dem programme – from student fees to NHS privatisation – is without any democratic mandate. Yet protest is criminalised – the police threaten students with plastic bullets, the courts bang up demonstrators for a year or more, and politicians propose new anti-union laws.

A class war across Europe

The battle lines have been drawn all over Europe. The political elite, backed by the bankers, cheered on by the media, are committed to a policy of cuts and bailouts designed to shore up finance capital at the expense of working people everywhere. The result will be a second great depression, mass impoverishment, and the destruction of the welfare state.



COALITION OF RESISTANCE

We have no choice but to organise mass resistance to stop the austerity programmes and impose a programme of public investment for jobs, sustainable growth, and a green transition. The resistance needs to be united into a Europe-wide movement of revolt from below.

We have made a start. The Coalition of Resistance conference against austerity and privatisation on 1 October this year was attended by delegates from all over Europe. International co-ordination has begun.

Here in Britain, the TUC demonstration on 26 March, the public-sector pensions strike on 30 June, and now the far larger strike on 30 November represent stepping-stones in ramping up resistance and building a movement.

Join us. Join the Coalition of Resistance. Join the united national campaign to beat the Con-Dem cuts and save the welfare state.

JOIN THE COALITION OF RESISTANCE

To build a mass movement against cuts and privatisation, we need thousands of activists united in a single campaign and dedicated to building local groups, organising meetings, street stalls, and local protests, and supporting national calls for demonstrations, strikes, and direct action.

The Coalition of Resistance has thousands of supporters, individual members, and affiliated organisations. We are linked to no political party, but work with all organisations and local groups seeking to co-ordinate resistance to cuts and privatisation.

Join us. Join the Coalition of Resistance. And affiliate your local union branch, party branch, student union, or campaign group.

To join, fill in and send off the form below, including cheque or completed standing order form.

To affiliate a group, propose the following model motion:

Model motion for affiliations

We, [name of organisation], oppose all Con-Dem cuts and privatisation, and resolve to affiliate to the national Coalition of Resistance and support its campaigns and calls to action.

Contact us

Web: www.coalitionofresistance.org.uk **Email:** coalitionofresistance@mail.com

Registration for email list: <http://eepurl.com/PHID>

Tel: Andrew on 07939 242229 or Sam on 07872 481769

Postal address: Coalition of Resistance, c/o Housman's Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, Kings Cross, London, N1 9DX

I want to support CoR with a monthly donation ☐ and/or become a member of CoR ☐

I want to affiliate a local organisation/union branch - £25pa ☐ or £15pa if small ☐ I want to affiliate a national organisation - £100pa ☐
(Affiliation fees cover July 2011 to August 2012)

Name: _____ Email: _____

Organisation (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Post code: _____

Complete this part if you wish to support us with a standing order donation

To (bank name): _____ Sort code: _____

Bank address: _____

Account name: _____ Account number: _____

Please pay the sum of £ _____ on the _____ day of _____ (month), and on the same date every month thereafter, unless cancelled or amended by me in writing, to the 'Coalition of Resistance' account at Unity Trust Bank, Blaise Pascal House, 100 Pavillion Drive, Northampton, NN4 7WS.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Return this form, with cheque made payable to Coalition of Resistance, to:

CoR Membership, c/o Housman's Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, Kings Cross, London, N1 9DX