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**Communist Party  
of Great Britain  
(Marxist-Leninist)**



**'Fair' cuts? NO cuts!**

**Take the fight  
to capitalism!**

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Capitalism is embarking on a major class war offensive against living standards in Britain. This needs to be met by a determined counter-offensive from the working class.

## To be snatched from the pockets of the poor

There are to be £113 billion of spending cuts and tax increases over the next four years, with £11 billion coming off state welfare alone. The 7 percent cut in housing benefit will leave 750,000 under threat of homelessness, and the inflation index by which state benefits are calculated will now exclude housing costs. VAT, a tax on the poor, is going up to 20 percent whilst Child Benefit is to be frozen. The vaunted “ring-fencing” of the health budget is more about guaranteeing repayment of the staggering debts run up through the construction of PFI hospitals than about defending essential services, which in fact face £20 billion worth of “efficiency savings”. Meanwhile, as an estimated 750,000 jobs are to go in the public sector and many public sector workers face a wage freeze, there is to be a drive to push single parents back into the labour market as soon as all the children are in school and 1.8 million disabled people are to be required to present themselves for fresh medical examination.

Shocking as such cuts are, they represent only the first fumbling efforts of our rulers to make ordinary people pay for a crisis triggered by money-lenders, bankers and financiers and rooted in a long-developing capitalist overproduction crisis which will not go away. Unless the working class are able to go back onto the offensive, the future is bleak. British workers, however, are kept in check by the belief that capitalism is the best of all possible economic systems, and that it is possible to manoeuvre in such a way to ensure capitalism serves the interests of workers, even while they are being made redundant en masse and their benefits are being slashed.

## Social democracy – the biggest enemy of the fight back

What mainly gets in the way of workers who want to take the fight back to the bankers is the continuing stranglehold of social democracy over the trade-union and labour movement, at its most blatant in the continuing link between organised labour and the Labour party.

Whilst the ConDem government squabbles over the detail of how best to make workers pay for capitalist failure, Labour apologists preside over a debate in the working class over “how better to implement the cuts” which “all of us” must face together, all the while wailing about how much “better” it would have been to cleave to Labour’s more “sensible” timetable for cuts.

While most workers have lost any illusions in Labour, strenuous efforts to revive these illusions are being made by supposed ‘left’-wingers in the working-class movement. The most recent effort by the SWP, Respect and the Communist Party of Britain to find common cause in face of the crisis, the “Convention of the Left”, carries the Labour millstone around its neck from the outset. Not only do the Trots and the revisionists share a common tradition of grovelling before the Labour “left”, they are joined in this “Convention” by the Labour Representation Committee, whose only purpose in life is to revive the Labour party.

In the absence of united political leadership, workers struggle on regardless, with the best of them being drawn into the Na-

tional Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) and the various anti-cuts alliances emerging around the country. The NSSN’s decision to lobby the TUC, demanding that it call a national demonstration against the cuts “to kick-start a mass campaign to stop this government in its tracks”, is very welcome. But pigs will fly before Barber and his ilk lead any serious resistance to capitalism, and no trusted leadership can be expected from a trade union bureaucracy so intimately intertwined with the Labour Party. It will be through the struggle to decouple organised labour from the Labour Party that workers can win the political unity necessary to resist the class-war assaults being launched against it.

## How Labourism disorganises resistance

The futile search for “fair” cuts opens the door wide for the divide-and-rule tactics employed by the capitalists and their apologists. They tell us it is unfair that some folk have to get up and go to work whilst their neighbours slumber on with curtains closed, planting enmity between the employed and the unemployed and “forgetting” the wholesale destruction of jobs, care of the overproduction crisis. They tell us that the collapse of pensions provision is a consequence of our inconvenient tendency to live longer, planting enmity between young and old and “forgetting” how pensions security fell prey to markets anarchy. They tell us that “foreigners” are pushing “Brits” out of the queue for jobs and social provision, planting enmity between different races and cultures and “forgetting” that the origin of those lengthening queues lies in the crisis of their beloved capitalist system.

They even dare tell workers that “we” have overindulged in our consumption of resources and must now teach “our” children to love frugality. Yet as the current issue (Number 37) of *Proletarian* explains, “the problem is not the unaffordably luxurious lives of British pensioners, but the unaffordably luxurious lives of British and foreign bloodsuckers – moneylenders, bankers, financiers – who are so positioned as to be able to suck the life-blood not only of future generations but above all of the current one.” Whilst middle-class journalists invite workers to blame themselves for failing their children and government stooges berate the feckless poor, the thousand richest people in the UK can slumber on behind closed curtains in undisputed possession of their £300 billion of wealth.

## Greece

We should learn some lessons from Greece. Over there workers are with great militancy challenging the attacks launched upon pay, pensions and the social wage, attacks which it fell to the lot of the social democratic PASOK to instigate. A growing cross-union popular front movement, PAME, under strong communist influence, has made considerable headway in exposing and overcoming the opportunism of the dominant trade union leaderships and explaining how that opportunism is sustained by the link with PASOK. PAME welcomes all workers, from any union or none, who refuse to choose “reasonable, fair” cuts as against “bad, unfair” cuts and instead demand that capitalism answer for the disaster it has inflicted on society at large.

Labour’s well-earned expulsion from power in this country, so far from rendering less urgent the fight to sever the trade unions’ link with that party, in fact offers the working class an opportunity to root out this ideological parasite upon the labour movement once and for all – an opportunity which should not be missed.

## Break the link with Labour!

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