

NOVEMBER 30 :

Two million trade unionists take united action against pensions robbery

CONTINUE THE FIGHT TILL WE WIN !

UNITED STRIKE ANSWERS THE MINISTERS' LIES

ON NOVEMBER 30, two million trade unionists took part in one of the biggest joint strike actions that has been seen for generations.

Cameron had decided in advance to try and brush it off as a 'damp squib' - but even he had to admit the next day that it was a 'big strike'. It most certainly was!

30 different unions took part in hundreds of different local and regional protests and rallies, a big step-up from the action in June.

For example, on June 30 about 5,000 marched in Manchester. On November 30, the numbers on the demonstration were over 30,000!

In cities like Leeds and Belfast, demos of 10,000 were reported. In other places like Hull and Truro around 3,000 marched. Lots of other small towns - including some reported in this issue of Classroom Teacher - saw hundreds at rallies.

Behind their bluster, Ministers are starting to worry. The deep-seated anger against this government of millionaires is now welling to the surface. The public sees how jobs, pensions and services are being slashed while the wealthy continue to prosper. That's why the opinion polls showed support for the strike.

After the June and November joint action, the pressure is mounting. **We have to continue until we win.**



LEICESTER

5,000 marched to a rally addressed by Kevin Courtney, the NUT Deputy General Secretary who explained:

"Yesterday, the Government gave us the clearest message it could in the Autumn Statement ... freezing tax credits, an additional 300,000 public sector workers to be sacked, bringing forward the changes so that anyone less than 52 now has a pension age of 67, an additional two years of pay being held back - which will make the crisis in the economy worse ... they intend to do away with national pay bargaining and to remove TUPE protection ... When they say 'we are all in it together' they are liars !

... Now we have to be really serious about what we do next. We can't let them take our pensions away. In the NUT we're saying more strike action in the New Year, rolling regional strikes and more national strike action".

BRISTOL

John McNally, PCS Vice-President, spoke to 20,000 rallying in Bristol:

"Our slogan is 'fair pensions for all'. When ministers talk about 'fairness' between private and public sector pensions what they mean is a race to the bottom. We must get even more unions on board, including private sector workers fighting for their pensions too... Let's stick together. We can win!"

HORSHAM

November 30 saw the first major demonstration in Horsham, West Sussex, since the repeal of the Corn Laws! 300 marched to put our questions to the local MP, millionaire Francis Maude - the minister for cutting pensions - but Maude wouldn't come into the garden to talk to us.



Drivers were hooting in support. Pensioners supported us for emphasising that this was a government attack on all pensions.

Now we need to press home our advantage.



LONDON



Over 50,000 gathered in London at Lincoln's Inn Fields to march to the Embankment. The crowds took well over two hours to leave the square. In Lewisham, the day started early with a school picket-line of NUT and GMB members starting at 6.30 am, accompanied by the local LBC radio. The reporter tried to find a passer-by who was against the strikes - but couldn't find a single one! The toots of encouragement from passing cars made very clear the mood of the public - it's time someone stood up to this millionaires government!



CARMARTHEN

Over 400 trade unionists came to the march and rally in the county town of Carmarthen in West Wales. UNISON, NUT, UNITE, NASUWT and PCS banners were prominent among others. Caroline Butchers from Carmarthenshire NUT called on the TUC to step up the action and name the day for the next co-ordinated action in the New Year.

BURY



WORCESTER

Worcester's response to Osborne's six more years of austerity was to mount a magnificent march through the streets of the city. The message was clear: we will not work longer, we will not accept a worse pension on retirement and we certainly will not pay more in contributions for the privilege.

700 people filled the hall literally to the rafters. They heard a speech from Max Hyde, NUT Junior Vice President, who started by asking a series of questions: if there were any public sector employees in the crowd - a resounding yes; if there were any present opposed to the Con-Dem pension plans - another resounding yes; if there was anyone present responsible for the present economic crisis - silence. Max went on to attack Milliband's opposition to the strike, criticism echoed by speakers from other unions as well.

BRIGHTON



UNION-BUSTING AT LANGDON SCHOOL: Support your colleagues

The recruitment of supply staff to break teachers' strike-action at the Langdon School in East Ham, Newham, is an unprecedented attack on union organisation and a threat to every single teacher.

Unions have always advised that it is illegal for agencies to recruit staff to break strike action. But, in the run-up to the November 30 national action, the DfE issued new advice to get around the law - that a school could directly employ staff directed to them by an agency. As Langdon is a community school, this implies that Newham's Labour Council have issued the contracts. The strike was called after the breakdown of talks to resolve a dispute over excessive workload and oppressive management - issues that will be only too familiar to many teachers. The response of the management - bringing in dozens of supply staff who are strangers to the pupils - shows what the teachers are up against. But the strike-busting tactic must not be allowed to succeed - or it could spread across the country.

The discontinuous strike action has been solid and is getting support from both parents and from trade unionists. A Newham NUT meeting voted by a magnificent 90 - 0 for a ballot for borough-wide action.

Send messages of support to nutlangdon@aol.co.uk

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