

Fed up with cuts, closures, privatisation and war? Want a party for the millions not the millionaires?

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campaign for a **new workers' party**

Local details:

In 1997, millions of people voted for New Labour hoping for an end to the years of Tory rule. There were high hopes that 'things would only get better' but the government of Tony Blair has shown in devastating fashion that this has not and will not be the case whilst they are in power.

The gap between the richest and poorest in society is growing. 1 in 3 children in the UK are born into poverty and 12.5 million people live below the poverty line. In the meantime, many corporations are experiencing record profits, particularly companies in energy, oil and banking. Despite such declarations constantly appearing in the media, not one mainstream political voice has spoken out against these blatant examples of the rich getting richer and the rest of us having to pay the price.

Attacks on our public services are intensifying. Thousands of jobs cuts and dozens of ward closures have been announced in the NHS despite "record investment". Why? Because much of the money goes to drug companies, business consultants and building firms who profit from ill health.

Although some of the money has gone on wage increases, this has often been at the expense of the lower paid. Whereas the government is happy to hand out huge subsidies to private companies in financial trouble, such as British Energy, no extra money has been made available to stop this butchering of the health service. Instead the government is demanding that health trusts balance their books – resulting in major cuts.

At the same time, Labour does not lift a finger to save jobs and stem rising unemployment. Manufacturing industry in the UK is declining at an alarming rate with factory closures being announced across the country. Labour no longer stands for public ownership, or even government intervention, so that workers can control these resources and use them to improve people's living standards.

The recent 'cash for honours' scandal and the suggestion that Tessa Jowell's mortgage was paid by money from Berlusconi show where New Labour's loyalties really lie – with big business and the rich, not with ordinary people. The fact that Jowell claimed she had not noticed that her mortgage had been paid just shows how far removed government ministers are from the lives of the majority of people!

No to war, terror and racism

Despite huge levels of opposition, the war and occupation in Iraq continue and have now cost £5 billion of public money in the UK alone.

It is estimated that over 100,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed since the invasion in 2003 and thousands of troops have died.

However, private companies are not shying away from the potential for profit-making in Iraq - over 60 British companies have gained from at least £1 billion worth of contracts and investment since Saddam was overthrown.

To increase support for their wars, and to distract attention from crumbling services, Labour has attempted to divide working class communities with racist policies directed particularly against asylum seekers and Muslims. The far-right, racist British National Party (BNP) is using the situation to claim that it is on the side of working people, though nothing could be further from the truth! All mainstream politicians claim to oppose the BNP but it is their policies that are allowing the BNP to grow.

**> www.cnwp.org.uk > info@cnwp.org.uk > 020 8588 7947
> PO Box 858, London E11 1YG**

Pensions under attack

Our pensions are under attack and public sector workers are currently fighting back against the government's plans to increase the age they can retire. Council workers' pensions average less than £4,000 a year but MPs receive occupational pensions of about £40,000 a year, ten times that amount. Yet these are the people saying that there is no money available to pay for existing workers' pension agreements!

Big business is destroying the environment

Global warming and climate change are threatening our future. Although Tony Blair has said that reducing carbon dioxide emissions is a priority, he is devoted to the interests of big business leaders who only have the aim of making profit and will do so at any cost.

Alarming, Blair is turning towards the idea of a new generation of nuclear power stations to meet the country's energy needs and obligations under the international climate change agreements. But nuclear power is potentially devastating to the environment and there is no known safe method of disposing of, or even storing, nuclear waste.

To develop alternative forms of energy – such as wind, wave, geothermal or solar power – requires cooperation and planning. It means putting the needs of humanity and the planet before profit, something that capitalism is completely incapable of achieving.

Break the link with Labour

Given the constant attacks on public services, pensions, jobs and working conditions, trade union members are increasingly questioning why trade unions continue to donate funds to the Labour Party. For the millions of pounds of their members' money that the local government unions, UNISON, TGWU, GMB and Amicus, have given to the Labour Party, what has been gained in return? An endless succession of cuts and privatisation!

Between 1979 and 1997, trade unions donated £200 million to the Labour Party. Since then, a further £100 million has been donated.

Some hope that Gordon Brown would be different if he became prime minister but he has shown time and again that he has the same political agenda as Blair.

It is also clear that the Liberal Democrats do not pose a real alternative to New Labour as they have a track record of privatising services and making cuts where they control local councils.

The time has come for the trade unions to stop funding the Labour Party and work towards the establishment of a new party that genuinely represents the interests of the working class.

Towards a new party

A new party of the working class is needed to stand up for the millions, not the millionaires, and to take up issues such as cuts in hospital services, school closures, attacks on

working conditions, reductions in pensions rights and other such matters that affect our every day lives. A new workers' party could put forward a programme that properly takes account of environmental issues, fights racism, opposes war, withdraws troops from Iraq and Afghanistan and does not give in to the profit motive of the fat cats!

It is vital for such a party to be open, democratic and socialist to allow those from different movements to have their voices heard whilst at the same time uniting together to fight cuts, privatisation, war and low pay.

The Campaign for a New Workers' Party aims to bring together workers, trade unionists, socialists, young people and environment and community activists to work towards establishing such a party in England and Wales.

The formation of a new mass workers' party would increase the level of confidence to fight for improvements in our day-to-day lives and against policies we believe would reduce the quality of life for ourselves and others.

This would represent an enormous step forward in the struggles of working class people against exploitation by big business and its supporters in the government and would enable us to have a louder voice by bringing together people from different areas and movements to resist the neo-liberal capitalist agenda and fight for a socialist programme.

Sign up in support of the campaign and get involved with your local group today.

I would like to find out more about the CNWP:

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> PO Box 858, London E11 1YG**