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www.socialistparty.org.uk

Tuition fees increase spells misery for students

Build a united fightback!

THOUSANDS OF young people have had their hopes and aspirations dashed as more and more universities declare their intention to charge the full £9,000 a year tuition fees.

Claire Laker-Mansfield
Youth Fight for Education

The vice chancellor of Leeds, chair of the elite Russell Group, told students this week that they should expect maximum tuition fees to be charged by most of the groups' member universities with £9,000 a year likely to become the 'norm'.

In response to this the Lib Dems, already irreconcilably damaged by their betrayal on fees and the mass movement built against this attack, attempted 'damage control'.

They claim that they will be able to mitigate the effect of tripling the cap on fees by requiring universities to make agreements on so-called 'fair access'. In reality, this gesture is a smokescreen.

The idea that young people, other than those from extremely wealthy backgrounds, will not find the prospect of £50,000 worth of debt off-putting is ludicrous. Even more ridiculous is the fact that despite all this talk about more 'outreach', Aim Higher, a scheme specifically designed to help widen participation in higher education is another victim of the Con-Dem axe.

Young people will not be fooled by this kind of posturing from the Lib Dems. Nor will they find any sympathy for the vice chancellors who claim they have no choice but to hike up tuition fees and make brutal cuts. The student movement has already demonstrated the mass anger that young people feel towards these attacks and the willingness of ordinary people to fight.

When, on 24 February, vice chancellors and other senior university managers meet for the Universities UK conference, the demands of students protesting outside and around the country will be clear. It is not for the managements of universities to carry out the dirty work of the brutal Con-Dem government.

Rather than increasing fees and cutting jobs, institutions should set 'needs' or 'no-cuts' budgets, even if this means temporarily increasing their debt. They should then join students to demand that the government funds education properly.

Youth Fight for Education will be there to make the message loud and clear to the government too. It they think that they have got away with these attacks then they can think again.

Young people will be joining in solidarity with lecturers on a budget day education shut down and on the 26 March TUC demonstration, demanding that the austerity agenda is scrapped and that young people are given the chance of a decent future.

24 February day of action

- Say no to the tripling of tuition fees
- Call for university managements to refuse to carry out Con-Dem cuts.

Assemble 12.00 Tavistock Square in London - or see www.youthfightforeducation.com for events where you are!

Sky-high tuition fees will lock thousands of young people out of higher education. *photo Senan*

Finance appeal: Help the Socialist Party to change the world

HUNDREDS OF Socialist Party members will be coming together on 26-28 February from every corner of England and Wales for our Congress. We will discuss the latest political developments worldwide and the way forward for the anti-cuts movement in Britain.

Ken Douglas
Socialist Party national treasurer

The first discussion will be about the inspiring events in Egypt where ordinary working class and poor people have overthrown the hated dictator Mubarak. They have shown that despite the might of a modern state with all its repressive apparatus and the tenth largest army in the world, a determined mass movement can win.

The revolution must continue but it is an overwhelming endorsement of the position of the Socialist Party. It shows that a mass movement in Britain of workers and young people against the cuts can defeat this rotten Con-Dem government of millionaires. "We're coming for you!" - that will be our message to the Tories and Lib Dems on the 26 March TUC demo. But we will also have a message for the leaders of the trade unions and the TUC – "either prepare to fight or stand aside!"

Protesters in Tahrir Square, Cairo.

Our programme, whether in Egypt or in Britain, maps a way forward for the working class – not just how to fight the system but how to win. But it's not enough to have the correct ideas, we need to have the finance to put them into the hundreds of thousands of leaflets, onto placards, into pamphlets and over the internet to get our ideas out to the mass of the working class and youth. We need to have this material on every demo, every protest, strike and occupation.

Above all we need to promote the idea of a socialist alternative, without which there will be more Mubaraks, more rotten and corrupt Tory, Lib Dem and New Labour governments attacking our jobs and services on behalf of big business and the rich bankers. This is a struggle for our future.

That's why we will be having a finance appeal at the congress, asking our members and supporters if they can make a financial sacrifice to help build the Socialist Party. Can you help?

Can you make a donation of £5, £10, £50, £100 or more? We can promise you that every penny will be spent on our struggle to change the world.

Yorkshire meeting reports

Regional LGBTQ day school

THE SOCIALIST Party's Yorkshire region held its first Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) day school in Leeds with 17 people in attendance from across the region.

It was part of a series of events for LGBTQ history month. Greg Randall, convener for the party's national LGBT group, which holds its caucus in London in March, spoke on the history of LGBTQ struggle. Dave Younger, LGBTQ organiser for Leeds district led a session on Marxism and queer theory.

Steve Williams from Doncaster branch then spoke on the effects of public spending cuts on LGBTQ people across the UK.

Another key part of the discussion was the alarming rise of homophobic and transphobic attacks regionally, nationally and internationally, despite the gains made in recent years, and the need to provide a political alternative for LGBTQ people.

See www.socialistparty.org.uk for other events planned for LGBTQ history month.

Dave Younger

Leeds district AGM

THE LEEDS Socialist Party annual general meeting (AGM) was attended by 23 people who discussed the struggle for socialism around the world and the way forward for the Socialist Party in Leeds. Reflecting the growth of the Socialist Party, 15 people present hadn't been members a year ago.

Steve Score, East Midlands regional organiser of the Socialist Party reported back from the world congress of the CWI, the international organisation that the Socialist Party is affiliated to.

In the next few weeks and months the Socialist Party will help build the movement against all cuts in jobs and services. We will support Leeds Unison in their dispute as the Labour council attempts to force through 3,000 redundancies.

Socialist Party members at Leeds and Leeds Trinity universities will be standing as part of anti-cuts slates in the student union elections, as well as building for student strikes if the lecturers' union, UCU, strikes in March.

Ian Pattison, Leeds District Socialist Party youth organiser

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SOCIALIST PARTY FIGHTING FUND

January-March 2011 — deadline: 8 April

	£ target	£ received
Southern	1,200	1,278
East Midlands	1,550	679
Wales	2,300	989
North West	1,200	418
Northern	600	188
South West	1,400	405
London	6,100	1,716
Eastern	1,200	305
Yorkshire	2,900	692
South East	1,000	211
West Midlands	2,100	333
England & Wales	3,450	106
TOTAL	25,000	7,325