

JOBS EDUCATION PEACE

Demand a new direction

A coalition of trade unions and pressure groups have teamed up to lobby the Labour Party Conference and call for a change in direction over proposals to cut public expenditure.

The government have announced that public spending growth will be cut from 1.1% next year to 0.7% from 2011-12. Alongside this real term spending cut, the government also announced further 'efficiency savings' of £9 billion across the public sector in addition to the £5 billion announced in November. Past so-called 'efficiency programmes' have had a disastrous impact on all public services.

It is against this backdrop that the media and some politicians are trying to create a division between the public and private sectors. Divisive myths about job security, pay and pensions in civil and public services have been voiced in an attempt to portray the public sector as 'having it easy' compared to the private sector.

We oppose false divisions between public and private sector workers. The real issue is the injustice of making the low paid, wherever they work, pay for a crisis not of their making.

We call on the government to defend both public and private sector jobs, and invest in public services, not cut them.

3 DEMANDS 1 VOICE

■ **Jobs** Spending should be targeted at generating employment and strengthening public services not cutting public services in a time of economic crisis. This will simply lead to a further spiral down and a worsening recession.

There is no doubt that the economy is in trouble but this is no time to be cutting public services. Billions were found to prop up the banking system. There is a tax gap of £25 billion owed in unpaid taxes, while tax avoidance is estimated at £100 billion by experts. Closing the loopholes and collecting what's owed could and should fund decent jobs, public services and education for all.

■ **Education** The prime minister has rightly said that education is the key driver to get Britain out of recession. Yet further and higher education are being asked to make £400m of cuts, ie thousands of lost jobs and student places.

Even before these cuts were announced over 100 institutions around the UK had announced staff cuts with an impact upon provision. So far over 100,000 students have been affected, with many courses closing completely next term.

Meanwhile 30,000 prospective students were left without university places as a result of government failure to invest in expansion, and FE colleges have also been left stunned by the withdrawal of funds for new buildings following mismanagement of the fund put aside to modernise college infrastructure.

We call on the government to stop this act of academic vandalism and invest in our colleges and universities rather than make cuts.

■ **Peace and justice** The continued deployment of troops in Afghanistan together with the proposed replacement Trident nuclear programme cost billions of pounds that could be spent on jobs, education and public services for the most vulnerable in society.

We call on the government to prioritise spending on public services rather than war or weaponry.

Lobby of Labour Party Conference, Brighton

Sunday 27 September from 12.30

Assemble Madeira Drive

Contact your union to find out about transport to the lobby