

## Labour: Resist the Cuts

The Coalition government has declared war on the welfare state. Along with their big business friends, they intend to make the working class pay for the crisis that we had no role in causing.

There are many other ways in which the deficit could be cut:

- Tax Justice: focusing on the £120 billion in evaded, avoided and uncollected taxes;
- Creating one million 'climate jobs' to tackle unemployment and the environmental crisis;
- Scrapping Trident and withdrawing UK troops from Afghanistan;
- A 20% wealth tax on the richest 10% pays off the national debt.

Instead, the coalition chooses to attack the NHS, education, local services and benefits. Study after study has shown these measures will hit women, the disabled and the poorest in society hardest.

The Labour Shadow cabinet's "alternative" – slower and 'more shallow' cuts is merely a different version of the same medicine. Instead of arguing over the detail, the Labour leadership should be joining with every protest and direct action against the cuts. Labour Party members have to be part of the local campaigns which are springing up everywhere.

Tenants, pensioners, students, trades unionists all have a common interest in defeating these cuts. If we are divided, arguing "don't cut my service, cut something else" it only helps the government.

We have to argue for action to stop cuts: strike action by trade unionists against job losses and worsening of terms and conditions; occupation of libraries and other facilities threatened with closure; resistance to eviction of tenants. It is only by such action that the cuts can be defeated. We cannot wait until the next general election to stop the coalition. By then many services will have been destroyed and lives ruined.

## Councillors should refuse to make cuts

What should Labour councils do in the face of government demands to cut?

LRC conference stated unequivocally:

***"Labour councillors have a clear political duty to resist these unprecedented attacks on working people. They cannot allow themselves to become the local agents of this anti-working class coalition government."***

It called for councillors to:

***"work with representatives of community groups, local authority workers and trade unions, trades councils, Labour Party members and other political activists ... [so that] ... a national movement can be forged to defeat and bring down the coalition government."***

Labour councils are being put in an invidious position by the government. They want councils to act as their bailiffs, carrying out part of their attack on welfare provision. This is not what most Labour councillors wanted to do when they stood for election.

Many councillors believe they can mitigate the effects of the government's attacks, but the scale of the attack makes this impossible: councils carrying through the cuts are having to cut front-line services.

There is a compelling argument for Labour councils to refuse to do the coalition's dirty work, as doing so brings them into conflict with their supporters. We are seeing the occupation of libraries, day centres etc against their closure. Where do the councillors stand then? Do they call on the police and courts to evict the occupiers? And trade unions will inevitably be taking industrial action against attacks on their members. Will councillors urge the breaking of strikes so they can continue to carry out the cuts?

Yes, councillors should protest at the decisions the government is forcing them to make; and yes, we need to build a mass movement against the cuts. But councillors could contribute massively to such a movement if they refused to do the government's bidding.

If we are to defeat this government we need our movement united in opposing the cuts, not hamstrung by feeling that they are obliged to administer them.

**Chair: John McDonnell MP**

**Vice-Chairs:** Jenny Lennox  
Susan Press

**Secretary:** Pete Firmin /  
Andrew Fisher

**Treasurer:** Graham Bash



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# LRC membership form 2011

*The LRC is a democratic organisation committed to fighting for a socialist future.*

There has never been a more important time to join the LRC - we are continuing to grow rapidly as Labour supporters, trade unionists and other socialists look to develop a radical agenda around which the movement can unite in the face of the attacks by the government.

We have local LRC groups right across the country bringing together socialists and trade unionists. Six national trade unions are affiliated to the LRC: ASLEF, BFAWU, CWU, FBU, NUM and RMT.

Membership is open both the Labour Party and non-Labour Party members. However, you cannot be a member of a party that stands candidates against the Labour Party.

**I would like to *join/renew my membership* to the LRC**

☐

£10 waged

☐

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☐

£500–National Unions

☐

£250–Union regions

☐

£50–TU branch/CLP/other

☐

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☐ I would also like to be added to the Left Women's Network

☐ I would also like to be added to the LRC's LGBT Network

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I/We include a supporting donation of £\_\_\_\_

**I/We enclose a cheque for a TOTAL of £\_\_\_\_**

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**Please return to: LRC, PO Box 2378, London E5 9QU**