

The coalition's public sector offensive has begun...

There is an alternative to cuts! How should the unions respond?

Brendan Barber, speaking at the TUC Conference, says we face a Demolition rather than a Coalition Government - he's right. The coalition aims to demolish jobs, services, pensions and good working conditions.

They will do all this in the name of reducing the budget deficit caused by the Government having to spend billions bailing out the people who had created havoc with the banking system.

Now those very people are once again creaming off the bonuses, stacking up the profits, avoiding their tax obligations and basically laughing all the way to the bank. But will taking an axe to public spending save the economy? Will the private sector fill the jobs hole as the coalition says it will?

Government debt is not like household debt

The government and the media make great play comparing household and government debt. There is no comparison!

When the families get into debt there is no pot of gold in the attic to get them out of the crisis - only unsympathetic banks. Governments, on the other hand, are rock solid financial systems - that is why greedy bankers turn to governments when they are in trouble. Governments can borrow to fund economic expansion until the debt shrinks as the economy recovers.

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Keep Gedling School Open!

Any illusion that schools will be exempt from the cuts was quickly dispelled by Notts County Council's announcement on November 1st that they intend to close the Gedling School. If they get away with it Gedling parents will be denied a local community school for their children - so much for parental choice.

The council probably wasn't expecting a campaign to save the Gedling School to begin so soon but a big protest outside the school was held on Wednesday, November 3rd, hitting the front page of the Evening Post the following day. Notts NUT will be linking up with this campaign and we urge staff, parents and students to fight to keep the school open. We can and will defeat these proposals. You can play your part. If you live in Gedling contact your MP Vernon Coaker and local councillors to voice your opposition. Gedling children should not have to pay the price for the ruthless cuts planned by the Tory County Council. The NUT will stand by parents, staff and students at the school.



Gedling School NUT on strike, October 20th

JOIN THE NUT
Phone 0845 300 1669

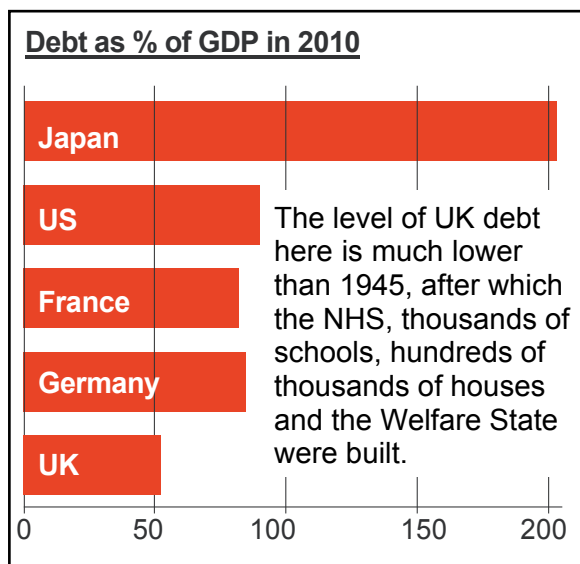
For more information go to www.nottsnut.co.uk

Better still Governments can increase taxes as an alternative to cuts. Governments can employ more people to collect the £120 billion uncollected taxes, mostly owed by the rich. Governments can cap the profits of corporations or use one-off windfall taxes. Governments can cap the wealth of the super-rich.

Tax the rich!

Last year the richest 1,000 people in Britain increased their personal wealth by a staggering £77 billion, from a filthy rich £258 billion to an even filthier rich £335 billion.

In a sane and just world these 1,000 people should be relieved of the vast bulk of that wealth. If you just left them with £100 billion and



divided it between them they would each have £100,000,000. Most household calculators only go up to £10,000,000 - that's how much money these people have got. The bonus for the rest of us would be that £235 billion would be more than enough not only to save all the public sector jobs and services threatened by the coalition but those services could all be quite rightly expanded and expanded significantly.

The Irish Question

Ireland shows how cutting public spending can damage the economy. The crisis in Ireland, as here in the UK, was caused by the collapse of its banking sector. The massive cuts in spending and public sector pay



that followed have increased unemployment and sapped demand, causing the economy to shrink further. A Guardian editorial says, ***“the floor has been pulled out from under the housing market. The banks are as busted as anywhere in the world and up to a fifth of national income has disappeared in a puff of smoke.***

This outcome should come as no surprise. Historical research clearly demonstrates that budget cuts suck demand out of the economy which increases the debt still further leading to calls for even more drastic action.

Sadly the Irish unions have so far not put up a credible fight to defend jobs, services and the standard of living of working class people. How will the NUT and other union's respond to the Demolition Government?

The choices are clear

One way we could fight the demolition is the Les Baylis way. Les is the Assistant General Secretary of Unite and a leading contender in the election for General Secretary of that union. He recently said “Public sector strikes will only deprive the

vulnerable of services the Tories want to cut”. If the strikes happen Bayliss argues: “The story will get changed from government savagery to union militancy. The Tories will hit us with even more restrictive laws and working people will look away in disgust.”. He then lays into the BA Cabin Crew “They had a good case — but the public and many of our members were so horrified they lost sympathy. If I am general secretary of Unite there will NEVER be any strikes called over Christmas.”

Well Les's way is the route taken by the Irish unions and so far it has delivered nothing but misery for the Irish people.

Another way we could campaign against cuts is to follow the advice given to members by the PCS civil service union. The PCS says, “we must resist this government's policy of savage cuts, and reject their flawed arguments. We need a new economic strategy based on public investment, job creation, and tax justice. There does not need to be a single penny taken away from any public service, or a single job lost.”



Save our services campaign launched



Over 130 people attended a public meeting in Nottingham on September 22 to launch a trade union and community based campaign against the cuts. Trade Unionists and campaigners from service user groups spoke about the need to make the case against the cuts and organise opposition across the county.

The Tory controlled county council has already begun sacking people and plans to cut 25% of the workforce. Not to be out done, the Labour controlled Nottingham City Council is re-writing the contracts of all teaching assistants and catering staff in schools. The effect, if they get away with it, would see workers lose both pay and holiday entitlement, though many are so badly paid they can't afford a holiday.

These cuts have been generated by the Government's determination to solve the debt crisis at the expense of the poorest people in our society whilst the rich continue to trouser a fortune in 'legal' tax avoidance and illegal tax evasion at the expense of the rest of us. A new website has already been created for the campaign and can be found at www.nottssos.org.uk.

"We are facing cuts of £150 million plus in the County Council. That means cuts to day and social care, welfare rights advice, youth support, the play service and it means the closure of mental health centres and old people's homes," said **Branch Secretary of Notts Unison Martin Sleath**. "And the Council is proposing turning old people's homes, cleaning, catering and its trading services over to the private sector, without allowing any in-house tenders."

Liz Silver from Nottinghamshire Disabled People's Movement said "These cuts will have a devastating impact on disabled people locally and nationally – for example people with mental health issues, people with learning difficulties and people who rely on Disability Living Allowance."

And **Lynn Stables**, a parent who is campaigning for funding for school refurbishment, said: "The scrapping of the

Building Schools for the Future programme, which was done without any consultation, has taken millions of pounds for urgent and essential repairs away from local schools."

Notts SOS will be taking action to fight these cuts and is putting forward alternatives based on making those who can afford to pay cough up for the services we all need. Notts NUT is fully behind this new broad based campaign and urges members to get involved and join the demonstration in Nottingham called by Notts SOS on November 20th. See you there!

Liam Conway, Editor



Some of the 1,000 protesters at County Hall on October 21st. The council is planning to make 3,000 job cuts.

Are Academies really like this?

On Tuesday 21st September, BBC2 broadcast a drama entitled "Excluded" as part of its Schools Season.

The drama involved many issues currently associated with education. As the title suggests, challenging behaviour, its management and the ultimate sanction of permanent exclusion were touched upon as were the causes of such disaffection. The influence of targets leading to the expediency of rote learning as a way of achieving those targets as schools attempted to claw their way up the league tables was presented as a reason why some (many?) pupils could be turned off learning. The challenging circumstances in which some young people live were also shown as being of relevance to a lack of educational attainment.

And then there was the Academy! A steel and plastic palace designed to contrast with the dishevelled heap of a "failing" school.

Sadly, the head teacher of the failing school that had just been rejected for a new-build by Gove, was keen to gain academy status so that the new school could be built. Like so many heads, she was being asked to prostitute educational principles in return for satisfactory buildings for her needy pupils.

To aid her in her quest, the excellent head teacher was mentored by an existing excellent academy head teacher, who gave her excellent advice. What she needed to do was attract better parents because that would immediately improve the school's standing in the league tables. By moving up the league

tables she would be more likely to be granted academy status.

But how would better parents be attracted? Why, she was excellently told by her excellent mentor, by excluding pupils who caused problems of course. Better teachers would also be attracted to the school when they knew that the head teacher was getting rid of trouble-makers. It was obvious to the excellent head teacher that fewer challenging pupils would lead to better parents, better children, better teachers, better results, higher league status and more funding. In fact, Gove in a nutshell!

Now we know that playwrights expect us to suspend our disbelief but, surely, academy head teachers can't really be like this. Can they?

Roger Tollervey



History Lesson - Why are there so many teachers' unions?

It's that time again when NUT Officers get to meet NQT's. This year a common question was 'Why are there so many teachers' unions?'. A good question! In Nottinghamshire, there are several teaching unions. The two largest unions are the NUT and the NAS-UWT. Originally we were one union until the NAS split in opposition to equal pay for women!

The NUT was established on 25th June 1870. The NAS (National Association of Schoolmasters) began life as the National Association of Men Teachers in 1919 in protest at the NUT adopting a policy of 'Equal Pay for Women'. The NAMT changed its name in 1920 to the NAS and left the NUT in 1922. The NAS aimed to recruit every schoolmaster and 'to promote the interests of male teachers'. The NAS argued that all boys over the age of seven should be taught mainly by men and that schoolmasters should not serve under women heads. This led to disagreements with the NUT who maintained a policy of equal pay and conditions for all.

The Sex Discrimination Act of 1975, made it unlawful to exclude people from membership on the grounds of gender. In 1976, the NAS merged with the small Union of Women Teachers to comply with the law and became the NAS-UWT.

Since then there have been attempts to end division and move towards 'One union for all teachers'. This has been NUT policy for many years and hopefully we will be able to convince others in the near future! In the meantime, Notts NUT will promote unity and argue that teachers' have the same interests.

Nick Raine, South Notts NUT

Notts Save Our Services Demonstration against the cuts



Bring banners and placards - unite against the cuts!

There is an alternative - make the rich pay for the crisis...

- Collect the £120 billion of unpaid tax
- Raise higher rate tax
- Cap the profits of corporations
- Top slice the Times Rich List's £80 billion surplus
- Sequester bankers bonuses

No job cuts, no benefit cuts, scrap tuition fees, increase spending on education, health and housing.



Sat Nov 20th

**Assemble Forest Recreation Ground 11.30am
March to Market Square 12.30pm**

Supported by Mansfield and Nottingham Trades Union Council

www.nottssos.org.uk

The Government wants you to pay more, work longer and receive less. The NUT says...

Reject Hutton's pensions robbery

Pensions are important. They stand between us and poverty in old age. Pensions need protecting, especially during times of economic crisis.

The Hutton Enquiry will form the basis of another assault on public sector pensions. The Government has already decided to change the annual up-rating of pensions from April 2011, index-linking them to the Consumer Price Index, rather than the Retail Price Index which is much more favourable to pensioners.

The key recommendations of Hutton are:-

- ❖ The ending of final salary pensions in favour of career average. This could hugely reduce teachers' pensions.
- ❖ Increasing the retirement age of public sector workers, though this has already happened for new entrants to teaching.
- ❖ Increasing the employee contributions to their pension so we will have to work longer, pay more and for a worse pension.

These proposed changes cannot go unchallenged by the Unions. We must first challenge the whole notion that our pensions are unaffordable. Opponents of our pensions say they are unaffordable, threatening costs of up to £1.2

trillion and bills of £47,000 for every household. These figures are based on selective and unfair methodology that ignores current and past contributions, inflates the total cost and pretends that it all has to be paid now.

Hutton says the pension pot is simply not big enough to meet the needs of future pensioners, yet in previous years, when contributions exceeded pension payments, the Government simply kept that money - they stole it.

The idea of 'gold-plated public sector pensions is a lie. Over half of public sector workers receive an annual pension of less than £5,600 and the average for teachers is only £10,000.

Public sector pensions are affordable. Official projections by the National Audit Office confirm that the reforms already made to public sector pensions will ensure the cost falls back over time to their current level of just over 1.5 per cent of GDP.

We should not accept that public sector pensions should be levelled down to those in the



private sector. We should argue for levelling up of all pensions.

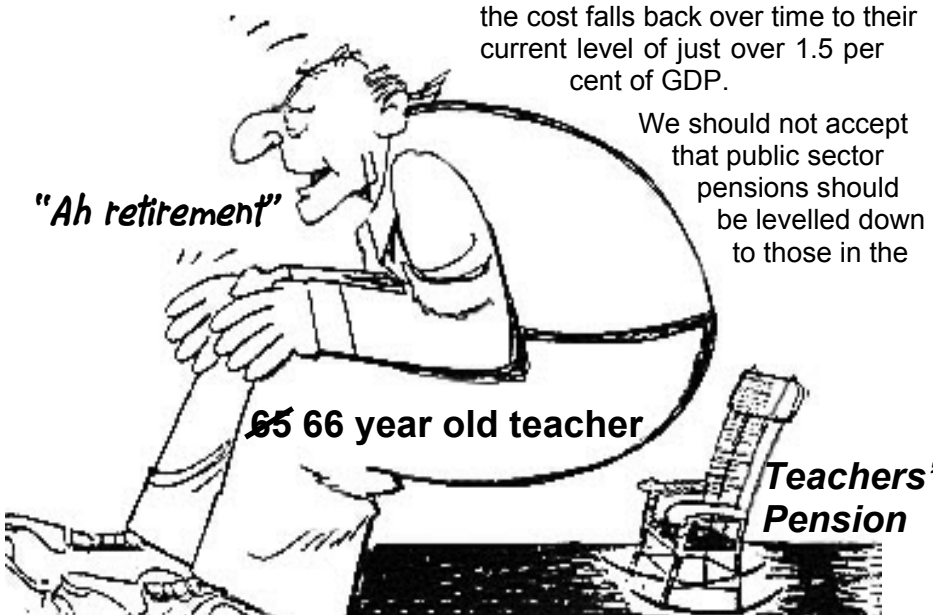
The real pension problem

The real pension problem is in the private sector. Employers have used the recession as cover for abandoning their obligations to their workers. Schemes have been closed. Contributions have been slashed. Society faces the extra cost of supporting workers who have been made poorer in retirement. Cutting public sector pension schemes will not improve pensions for private sector workers; it will just lead to low pensions for everyone. We need to provide decent pensions for all.

What you can do

- Write to your local MP and ask them to support the Teachers' Pension Scheme, and to work to defend public sector pensions.
- Take an active part in the NUT and wider TUC campaigns to protect your pension.
- Make sure your colleagues and friends know the truth - that public sector pensions are affordable and worth protecting.

Remember, In 2005-6 the NUT and other unions saw off Government threats to slash our pensions. We succeeded by standing together and being prepared to take strike action. We may need to stand together once again to defend our pensions.



Superhead learns to walk!



It is Friday morning. Superhead is, as always, hard at work deep and secure in the recesses of his newly (and expensively) refurbished office, seeking yet more ways to further his burgeoning career.

Enter Dobbin. (For those who are new to this serial, Dobbin is Superhead's sycophantic but slow-witted deputy).

S: *Ah Dobbin, I've been reading the Times Superhead Supplement and it appears that flavour of the month with LA consultants, improvement advisors, OFSTED inspectors and The DCSF is something called 'learning walks'. We must start doing them immediately.*

D: But Superhead, we don't have time for another initiative just now; those seventeen formal absence monitoring procedures you started last month have turned out to be incredibly time consuming. Progress has slowed right down since Finn McCool, that interfering local NUT officer, got involved and insisted that we follow the procedure properly. We've even had to drop several of the cases, and there are appeals pending in most of the others.

S: *Well, just leave all that to Beryl Bluffer, our new assistant head, to sort out; she seems pretty keen to follow my example and rise, meteorically, up the promotion ladder. Now – I was thinking of starting our 'learning walks' on Monday morning. I've just skimmed through the National Strategy document, 'Tools and Templates for Getting Started' and it looks like pretty simple stuff for managers of our, er, well, at least, MY ability Dobbin.*

D: Monday?! You mean next Monday Superhead?

S: *Of course Dobbin. I didn't get where I am today by procrastinating when it comes to implementing initiatives which could further enhance my already superhuman CV.*

D: But Superhead, it's Friday. How on earth can we make the necessary preparations in time for Monday morning?

S: *Well, we've got all this afternoon. And anyway, what's to prepare? We'll just pick out a few lessons at random and drop in unannounced after we've informed the staff about the general idea at Monday's pre-school briefing. That will also prevent the usual, stropky suspects from asking awkward questions and complaining about lack of adequate notice, agreed focus, advanced planning, consultation and all that unnecessary twaddle.*

We'll just walk into lessons holding clipboards, ask the teachers in charge why some pupils are still wearing outdoor coats, baseball caps and ties at half mast, make a few notes then walk out. It will be almost as intimidating as a proper observation, but without any of the hassles. And here's an idea of mine that isn't contained in the guidance; we could even send the teacher out of the room for a couple of minutes and ask the pupils what they really think of the lesson. That should provide us with a bit more ammunition.

D: Superhead.....what do we do if there's a problem with pupil behaviour in one of the lessons we're walking through?

S: *For goodness sake Dobbin! We simply follow the recommended practice for Superheads, and for those who aspire to such lofty heights.*

We leave the room as surreptitiously as possible and remind the teacher in question, via email next day, that discipline in the classroom is the sole responsibility of the class teacher, and that if lesson

planning had encompassed sufficient rigour, challenge, pace and differentiation there would have been no disciplinary problems whatsoever.

D: I suppose that's all very well, if you say so Superhead, but aren't we meant to give feedback after we've been into a lesson?

S: *A mere technicality, Dobbin. We can easily get round it by giving the teacher a quick verbal debrief in the corridor before we nip back into my office for coffee and those petit fours you're so partial to. The whole thing should only take an hour or so and we'll be able to present it to OFSTED as part of our rigorous quality assurance programme.*

It is Monday morning. Having already completed what could only be described as a 'learning jog' Dobbin looks up aghast, a petit four suspended halfway to his mouth, as Superhead staggers into the office. His Italian suit is stained with blood and patches of mud, his face is bruised and his designer vari-focals are askew on the end of his nose.

D: Good grief Superhead! What on earth happened?

S: *Well everything was going according to plan Dobbin, until I decided to ignore the National Strategy advice and tried to write on my clipboard while I walked.....*

Andy Parsons



The fight for women's rights and all workers

One hundred years ago 800 chain-making women in Cradley Heath withdrew their labour to fight for a minimum wage for their sector and for the right to join the National Federation of Women Workers (later it became part of the GMB union). 90% of British chain was made there including the chains for the Titanic.

These women had no vote, were largely illiterate, worked a 54 hour week for a pittance and had to take their children to work with them. Led by the charismatic figure of Mary Macarthur, the women struck for 10 weeks and – despite the underhand tactics of the employers who stockpiled chain and exploited low literacy levels - won a doubling of their pay. The bosses had not counted on the strength of the strike leader and the women she ably led.

During the strike, the women spoke to reporters, appeared in a film Macarthur had made about their conditions and marched through the streets singing a chainmaker's version of the Marseillaise.

Their titanic struggle for woman's rights and trade union rights was commemorated on Saturday 18th September at the Black Country Museum in Dudley. The day included re-enactments of Mary's 'call to arms' and 'victory' speeches; a trades union banner procession led by Mary and the women chainworkers; music by the Nottingham Clarion Choir, Rosa's Lovely Daughters and Stacey Blythe to name but a few. Speeches were given by Sylvia Heal (past Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons), Bill Hayes (General Secretary, CWU), Mary Turner (GMB President) and Eleanor Smith (Unison Vice President). The headline speaker was Tony Benn. Billy Bragg and Diane Abbott were also there to lend their support.



I felt very privileged to be there to witness this commemoration both as a trade unionist and as a woman.

For more information go to <http://chainmakersstrike.co.uk>

Lee Probert, President, Notts Division

Nottingham Teaching Assistants show the way

In the city of Nottingham recently the authority proposed to pay their Teaching Assistants term time only. Nottingham City NUT supported Unison, the union that negotiates for TAs, in resisting this change. The TAs were determined not to have their pay cut and their teacher colleagues supported them. Within a week the LA had postponed the proposed changes.

Most of the TA's are women workers like the chain-makers and this case shows that cuts are only inevitable if we roll over and die. In the bigger battles to come we will have to decide whether to meekly complain and let the coalition government destroy our services or fight to defend workers and service users alike. 1,000 TA's demonstrating outside city hall on October 18th, many demonstrating for the first time, sent a clear message to Nottingham City Council that they intend to fight.

Sheena Wheatly, Nottingham City NUT



The film, 'Made in Dagenham', shows how women fought for equal pay in the 1960's.... and won!

Central Notts NUT

Members Meeting

Weds 19th January 2011

4.45pm White Post Pub, A614

Best chips in Notts - yum, yum!

Stories from the frontline

Upper Pay Scale Progression

Locally the NUT has found an increase in casework related to upper pay scale progression. We advise all members to check their annual pay statements and to contact the union immediately if they feel that their pay progression is being withheld.

If you do not receive a salary statement by 31 October then ask your headteacher for a copy of it. If you still do not receive one then contact us.

Summary of the statutory requirements

- ☑ **Governing bodies are required to carry out pay assessments for UPS teachers – there is no requirement for applications or evidence.**
- ☑ **Decisions should be taken by no later than 31 October each year. Teachers should be notified in writing at the earliest opportunity and within one month. Any pay increase is effective from the preceding 1 September.**
- ☑ **When taking decisions on UPS progression, governing bodies are required to apply the statutory criterion; and to “have regard” to any recommendation on pay progression made during the**

most recent performance management review.

- ☑ **Governing bodies must have pay appeal procedures against UPS decisions.**

Further NUT advice can be found on the Notts NUT website at www.nottsnut.co.uk.

Assaults in School

The NUT locally has raised concerns about the increase in assaults, verbal and physical, in schools and settings.

All assaults should be reported and recorded.

If your school has a school specific recording system you should ensure that incidents are also recorded on the ‘well worker’ system so that the local authority health and safety team can also monitor what is happening.

The reported cases in secondary schools are particularly low with no reported incidents of verbal abuse or threat in the period April 2009-September 2010.

Please ensure that your school is reporting incidents appropriately. If you require any further advice or support or would like an NUT officer to come and talk to a

members’ meeting in the school please contact us.

Local NUT member supporting teacher training in Ethiopia

NUT member Shelagh Hubbard flew out to Ethiopia on 11 September to begin a year working with trainee teachers in Woldia, Ethiopia.

Shelagh will be sending regular updates about her work there and we will post these on the NUT website at www.nottsnut.co.uk for anyone who is interested in reading more.

Shelagh is working with the VSO and has set up a Just Giving site for anyone interested in making a small donation to support the work VSO does world-wide. Go to: <http://www.justgiving.com/Shelagh-Hubbard>

Louise Regan
Deputy Division Secretary

South Notts NUT

Members Meeting

Thurs January 20th 2011

4.45pm Notts NUT Office

571a Mansfield Road, Sherwood

Legendary Veggie Lasagne - yum yum!

We can be contacted on any of the following numbers:

- ◆ Ivan Wels, Joint-Secretary: 0773 9357026
- ◆ Liam Conway, Joint-Secretary/Editor: 0774 6620779
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- ◆ Nick Raine, Recruitment enquiries - 0797 4258229
- ◆ Chris Gibbon, Equal Opps Officer: 0774 2678857
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Signed articles are in a personal capacity and not necessarily the views of Notts NUT