

**Coalition shows no sign of relenting so it's...  
 Time to campaign like an Egyptian**

Cameron and Clegg are not for turning so, in the face of a Tsunami of cuts, it must be long past the time unions responded with a storm of protest and action.

We are told that schools are exempt from the cuts but the facts on the ground tell a completely different story. Let's take some examples

The first and obvious cuts teachers face are the attack on our pensions and a pay freeze. Teachers will be asked to pay upwards of £100 per month in additional pension contributions, have to work until they are 65 to gain half a salary as pension and end up with a lower, career-average pension than that which they could currently expect.

Inflation is rising and set to rise further. Petrol and diesel prices are going through the roof but for the next two years teachers and any public sector work earning over 20,000 will have their pay frozen. Add this to your additional pension contributions and your take home pay will be cut.

A further threat to teachers and all school based workers comes from the headlong rush of secondary schools for academy status. Apart from the potential for educational apartheid, the likely result of this will be to lower pay and worsen conditions. The government itself has stated clearly that a key freedom of academy status is the freedom of school managements to regulate their own pay and conditions. This same freedom was given to FE colleges some 15 years ago. The numbers tell the story. 15 years ago FE lecturers were paid more than teachers, now they are paid less. It is no exaggeration to say that school staff supporting the drive of heads and governors for academy status is the equivalent of turkeys voting for Christmas.

Meanwhile across the rest of the public sector the Coalition is attacking the very fabric of civil society.

Increased competition in the NHS will lead to the rationing of health services and hospital care, with the poor and vulnerable taking the biggest hit.

Higher Education will soon become the preserve of the rich as poorer students are priced out of a degree by higher tuition fees and the end of the Educational Maintenance Allowance.

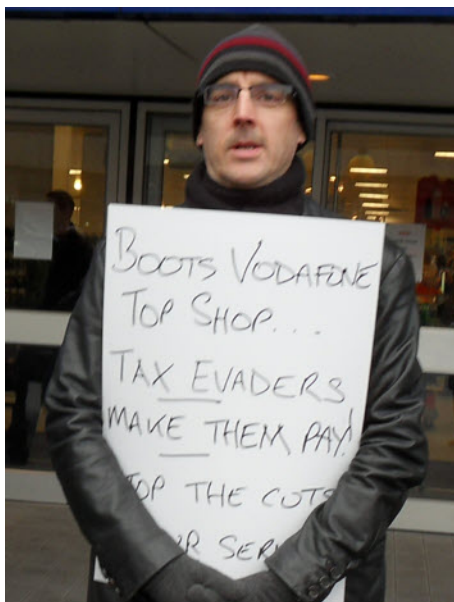
At Local Authority level, councils like Notts, are cutting their central services by upwards of 25%, leading to thousands of job cuts in this county alone. Notts NUT fully backs Unison's current strike ballot and we will be building for their lobby of the council on February 25th.

This is just a short precis of the cuts proposed by the government. But, as the people of Egypt and Tunisia have shown, we don't have to take this economic oppression lying down. The trade union movement in the UK have been sleeping for too long. On March 26th the NUT in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire will be taking two coaches to London to join the TUC march and rally against the cuts. We urge every member of Notts NUT to join



**JOIN THE NUT**  
 Phone 0845 300 1669

**Join the TUC rally against the cuts on March 26th**



created by greedy bankers and you would be right. Over the next 4 years the government's cuts programme is planned to save more than £80 billion. During that same period the corporations and rich individuals will evade tax to the tune of £168 billion. The Maths teachers amongst you will know that such figures show the cuts are not necessary. Chasing up the unpaid tax of rich corporations and individuals alongside increasing higher-rate tax on those earning more than £100,000 more than covers the hole in public

finances and makes it possible to expand public services, saving jobs, improving the quality of life and reinvigorating the economy to boot.

This newsletter is repetitive. It gives out one clear message to all teachers - the time has come to fight for your job, your pension and your public services against an ideologically driven government intent on taking us back to the dark ages.

Liam Conway, Editor

us on that day. Travel is free and we will book more coaches if demand is there.

The demo should be the start of a mass campaign that elevates the current piecemeal resistance to the cuts, heroically led by students fighting increased tuition fees, into a mass campaign to take on and defeat the government's cuts programme.

As has been written here before many times, teachers and other public sector workers did not play dangerous financial games in the housing market or on the stock exchange. It is indeed a cruel irony that the people who did exactly that are now enjoying fat bonuses once again, whilst millions of workers, teachers included, face pay cuts, job cuts, a pension freeze, inferior work conditions and the privatisation of schools and services.

Some of you may think the money has to come from somewhere to cover the debt

TUC march and rally against the cuts - London, March 26th

# National Demo to fight the cuts



## March 26th

To secure your ticket for the coach contact one of the following Notts Officers.....

**Ivan Wels** 07739 357026 **Louise Regan** 07739 489609 **Liam Conway** 07746 620779

**Book your free coach ticket now!**



Young, old, and not so old join together in the fight to save our services. Will you join them?

An essay question for sociology students

*“New Labour dumbed down the curriculum and the Tory model of education is elitist”.*

Discuss

# NUT members at Rawmarsh School show how to fight cuts

If you want an example of how to fight cuts and academies exit a short distance north across the Notts border to Rawmarsh Community School in Rotherham.

There, in early January, NUT members voted 24-0 in favour of strike action against redundancies. And the cuts they faced were truly savage with an estimated 30 staff facing the sack. Since then the NUT has recruited 10 new members and held 5 days of strike action. Parents have also been outraged by the cuts and rightly claimed that the loss of staff on such a scale will lead to plummeting standards at the school.

On 12th and 13th January 40 pickets assembled at the school gates.

Passing traffic hooted in support

whilst the strikers were bolstered by the presence of teachers who had left other non-striking unions (NASUWT, ATL) to join the NUT and the strike.

Sadly, though the NASUWT rep at the school is down to lose her job, the NASUWT divisional secretary stood with the Head inside the school gates to "make sure [his] members were not intimidated by NUT strikers"!

Negotiations between the NUT, the school and the LA have now resulted in the employer withdrawing the last remaining redundancy which was to have been implemented this April. As a result NUT members at the school voted to temporarily suspend any further strike action for the remainder of this school term.

However if the School continues with the redundancies planned for August NUT members will resume strike action after Easter, at the start of the summer term.

Ian Stevenson Regional Secretary for the NUT Yorkshire Midland Region said, "significant progress was made... by the NUT in ensuring that no teacher at

Rawmarsh Community School is now to be made compulsory redundant in April. It remains the case however that a number of teachers jobs remain at risk for September. The agreement reached today provides time for the employer to find a way to avoid further job cuts."

"NUT members at the School remain determined to continue the fight against these cuts. I have no doubt that if the School continues with its plans for redundancies in August then members will resume strike action after Easter. There has been considerable support for NUT members involved in this dispute from the local community and parents, who are just as opposed to making almost one third of the teaching staff at Rawmarsh Community School redundant."

In leading this campaign to defend jobs and education, the NUT at Rawmarsh School and Rotherham NUT Association are showing the way to the whole public sector how to fight the cuts. Let's hope our national officers and National Executive are taking heed and preparing the ground to generalise the fight against the cuts. Well done to Rawmarsh NUT.



## Workers in Egypt start to move

While the situation in Egypt is headline news, the mainstream media do not tell us much about workers' involvement. Despite repression, workers have been building organisation and action in Egypt over the last ten years, and are now playing an increasingly important role in the post Mubarak era. Suez Canal Company workers have been holding an open-ended sit-in strike. 6,000+ agreed not to go home at the end of their shift, but to hold the workplace until their demands against poor wages and worsening health and working conditions were met. Railway technicians in Beni Suef have been striking, and other cities railworkers have blocked tracks in support. Bus, oil, telecoms, textiles, chemicals, printing, pharmaceuticals and other workers are striking, walking out or sitting in. Some workers have taken over their workplaces, kicked out the bosses, and begun to manage production themselves. On the day Mubarak resigned, there was in effect a general strike involving Cairo

transport workers, doctors and nurses, steel workers, the 25,000 textile workers at Egypt's largest factory in the town of Mehalla alKubra, and many others.

### A NEW UNION FEDERATION

As the Mubarak regime entered free fall a new independent trade union movement has emerged and has been welcomed by the NUT and TUC here. The dictator is gone, but Egypt's future is not yet decided. The Muslim Brotherhood is strong, and will try to steer Egypt towards becoming an Islamic state. In Iran in 1979, a hated dictator was driven out by a mass uprising. Democrats and workers' organisations were central to that uprising, but the Islamists took power afterwards with disastrous consequences for working-class organisation, democracy, women's rights and sexual freedom. Egypt's revolution can have a better outcome if the workers' movement prevails. We must support it.

# Resist book thief of Downing Street. Yes to libraries, no to academies!



This is Eton College Library. Eton College is the £25,000 plus a year public school that many a British Prime Minister attended. Eton College Library is not a library used by local people. Eton College Library is not threatened with closure by our current public school prime minister. But Cameron's cuts could see the closure of hundreds of libraries across the country.

Closing libraries is another example of the philistine nature of the current government. But libraries should not close without a fight and teachers should be in the forefront of that fight. This fight is too important to be left to celebrity authors like Philip Pullman, important though their contributions are.

Many teachers will be rightly alarmed by public libraries closing. Across the country local councils are toeing the ConDem line. In Oxfordshire nearly half the local libraries - 20 in all - are threatened with closure. Here in Notts, Carlton Road Library faces the axe and many others face reduced opening hours.

Bulwell Library is rightly described by the council as "a bustling community library", which offers "a wide range of books for children and adults as well as free internet." It is, says the council, "well used by local community groups." But now the council is undermining this provision by threatening closure, reducing hours and introducing charges for services like the internet.

Our councils have been canvassing the public on what cuts should be made. **Philip Pullman** derided such a perversion of democracy. "*It's not our job to cut services*", he said. "*Nor do I think we should respond to the fatuous idea that libraries can stay open if they're staffed by volunteers. Is the job of a librarian so empty that anyone can step up and do it for a thank you and a cup of tea? And who are these volunteers? Who are these people whose time spreads out in front of them like the limitless steppes of central Asia, who have no families to look after, no jobs*

*to do, no responsibilities, and yet are so wealthy they can commit hours every week to working for nothing?"*

*"But there's a prize being dangled in front of these imaginary volunteers. People who want to save their library are going to be "allowed to bid" for money from a central pot. This bidding culture sets one community, one group, one school, against another. If one wins, the other loses. It's imported the worst excesses of market fundamentalism into the one part of our public and social life that used to be free of the commercial pressure to win or to lose, to survive or to die, which is the very essence of the religion of the market."*

It is quite depressing to see this "commercial pressure to win" now invading Notts Schools in the shape of the academies programme. In particular we have a Viking-like invasion from the North in the form of Outward Grange, whose motto, worryingly for staff, is 'students first'. Alarm bells have not yet started ringing at the schools in North Notts which Outward

Grange aims to gobble up. Perhaps this will change now that they have interfered in redundancy procedures that are none of their business.

It is long past the time that teachers lifted their heads above the political machinations of their own school and recognised that the government is setting about dismantling public services that millions depend on. The closing of libraries and the opening of academies and free schools are one and the same policy - teachers should oppose both.

So if you work in Worksop or Retford or Tuxford or Gedling or West Bridgford, don't let the Government or the local executive head privatise your schools. Say no to library closures and no to academies. Defend the public provision of education - a local school and a local library for all our children and adults.



# Superhead and the Great Academy Scam



Ha! At last the window of opportunity has been opened which will enable me, Superhead, to achieve my destiny – the ultimate goal of total educational domination of this area is almost within my grasp along with absolute power and untold riches. And it's no more than I deserve after all the years of brown-nosing, bullying and machinating my way to the top. Thank you, wonderful Mr Gove, thank you, thank you; I'll pursue your policies ruthlessly and will not disappoint you. Oh yes! Within a matter of a few weeks I will be principal of my very own academy, Superprincipal – Oh, how good that sounds, and will then be in a position to annex the two underachieving neighbourhood community schools, along with the family primaries, for my educational empire, Eduscam. A few years on a hundred-grand-plus salary, then a massive golden handshake, an obscenely large pension and a nice, cosy, well-paid consultancy with my parent company, Eduripoff, will set me up for life.

But first things first, Superhead! I'll need to hoodwink the staff of my present school into believing that becoming an academy can only be good for them and their precious pupils, and that they have nothing whatever to fear (not that easy a task, taking into account the way I've treated them up till now). I know..... I'll start by appealing to their wishy-washy liberal principles, which I so heartily despise, with the old "It's all in the best interests of the students" guff. Yes, tell them there'll be no selection; of course students of all abilities will be able to attend and those with special needs will be catered for. And that's not actually a lie, because I'll stick to the promise for at least a month or so before my new governors and I start driving up standards by

weeding out the trouble makers, slackers and potential failures and passing them on to the sink school in the neighbouring authority. Then we can start manipulating exam performance by changing to more user friendly exam boards (such as the one which employs one of my governor cronies as a consultant) and entering the students early and frequently for the hard subjects, along with lots of those vocational courses that are worth three or four GCSEs. Brilliant, Superhead, brilliant!

I suppose there'll be the usual whinging, from some of the usual staffroom malcontents, about worsening pay and conditions of service. That should be fairly easy to overcome though..... just need to fob them off with the well-used but still effective "TUPE will ensure that you're properly

protected so you know that you're be able to trust me" line. And so it will.....

for a while; who needs to worry about TUPE when I have a letter from that progressive, forward-looking, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools, Lord Hill of Oareford, telling me I can do exactly as I please when I become Superprincipal. All that remains to be done after that is to finally see off the unions. Of course I'll involve the unions in my decision making; I'll make all the decisions along with my new, tame governors and then tell the unions what they are..... job done. Superhead will rule, OK! The future belongs to me!

*Andy Parsons*

## **School Reps Training**

If you are a school rep there are two great training opportunities coming your way. Don't delay, apply today.

### **Notts Reps Training Day**

## **Thursday March 17th**

### **EMFEC , Robins Wood Road, Aspley**

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### **Regional Reps Training Course**

## **Thursday 23 - Friday 24 June**

### **Park Inn, Nottingham**

#### **296 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG5**

This is a free residential course that will cover issues like dealing with management, equal opportunities and conditions of service.

NUT reps have a statutory entitlement to time off with pay for training related to their role. So don't miss out! No rep in your school, why not take up the role and take up the training. Contact a local officer for further advice.

# Well done to NASUWT in Derbys

Hats off to our NASUWT colleagues in across the Notts/Derbys border who have now managed to hold strike action in three schools where academy status was or is threatened.

Who can forget the magnificent fight to stop Sinfin School becoming an academy. NUT members were on strike there too, but there can be no doubt that the strike action was led by the NASUWT and their local secretary Dave Wilkinson.

Whilst the NUT here in Notts has been trying to encourage strike action amongst members at schools threatened with Tory-style academies, the NASUWT across the border has held strikes at two schools - Ecclesbourne and John Port. John Port is the biggest

secondary school in Derbyshire and shows what can be achieved if teachers are determined enough to act.

The actions of Ecclesbourne and John Port NASUWT members gives the lie to the notion that the academy route is the only game in town.

Chris Lines, local president of the NASUWT, hit the nail on the head in saying, *"We are doing this to protect state education - which we believe should be democratically responsible to the community where the school is."*

*"We are showing the community and the governors that the staff are firmly in favour of remaining within the local authority family of schools."*

Chris has got this absolutely right, but there are at least two other reasons for opposing academies - they will destroy comprehensive schooling and smash up pay and conditions.

And this is exactly what the government intends. Everyone knows that public school Tory politicians favour the grammar school system. But now they have

come clean about attacking our pay and conditions.

Writing in response to an enquiry from a headteacher about agreeing to national pay and conditions, Lord Hill, understudy to Gove, said, *"there is absolutely no requirement on you to enter such agreement"*, and that the Government considers "the ability to set pay and conditions to be one of the key freedoms of academy status."

Over fifteen years ago FE colleges went through a process called "incorporation" – where they were removed from local authorities and became independent. This is very similar to the process schools go through if they convert to academy status. At the time Principals told their teachers, as some headteachers are telling you now, *"we will be freed from the shackles of the local authority"*.

But what's the reality? Many FE colleges now ignore the national pay and conditions for FE lecturers and support staff. FE lecturers are now one of the most casualised of all professions and many of our FE colleagues cannot get permanent contracts at all. All lecturers have seen their pay levels fall further and further behind school teachers.



In the midst of a tidal wave of cuts you find out who your real friends are...

## 'Axe' public sector trade union rights say bosses

The Institute of Directors (IoD) published a set of recommendations on 7<sup>th</sup> Feb stating that employment and planning laws should be overhauled in favour of the bosses. Why? To kick-start the economy they say. They say the proposals, which would include the scrapping of negotiating rights for teachers, would cost the government nothing but would benefit growth, particularly in the private sector.

Supposedly in the interests of increased productivity the IoD wants the scrapping of rights to flexible working and demand that workers should pay a £500 deposit when taking their employers to industrial tribunals to deter what the IoD describes as "vexatious claims". As well as these, the IoD wants to abolish the right to request time off for training. All of which – according to the IoD – creates red tape for firms.

The paper suggests the government should drop plans to abolish the default retirement age, asking "Why does the government want to make it harder to remove staff who are no longer effective?"

Miles Templeman, director general of the IoD, said that the government needed to "reform the supply side of the economy to boost the private sector" and that "many of the measures proposed are long overdue and would improve the UK's infrastructure and the functioning of its labour market."

It is obvious from these Thatcherite proposals that the IoD's real aim was to make life easy for directors at the expense of their lower paid workforce – the majority of whom are women. I agree with Brendan Barber, TUC General Secretary, when he says that the IoD are living in a "fantasy world". Unfortunately, these fantasists are more likely to have the ear of the current government than trade unionists.

Lee Probert, Sutton Centre

# Scrap tuition fees! Restore the EMA!

From September 2012, universities in England will be allowed to start charging higher fees to undergraduates. The upper limit on university fees will be raised from £3,290 to £9,000.

In an attempt to sweeten the pill of the fees increase, the government had said that the top rate of £9,000 fees would only be charged “in exceptional circumstances”, but some universities have/are already considering the maximum charge. However, the BBC reports that education experts, NUS President Aaron Porter, and Cambridge University management all expect most universities to charge the full amount.

A briefing on the BBC website calculates that “a middle-earning graduate would need to earn, for example, an average of £48,850 a year for 26 years to pay off their debt.”

Read that figure again. Ask yourself how many university graduates you know who earn anything like that amount. In a climate in which jobs and wages are also under attack, how many graduates are likely to earn an average of nearly £50,000 a year for nearly 30 years? The government’s plans will literally consign students to a lifetime of debt.

Alongside that, the government plans to abolish the paltry student support that currently exists at



Further Education and 6th form level, scrapping entirely the Education Maintenance Allowance (which, even at its highest rate after means-testing, is only £30 a week).

That cut is a miserly, swingeing attack on a sum that, while meagre, still represents an important source of income and a modicum of financial independence for working-class, further-education and 6th form students, enough to have seen the number of year 11 students continuing into the 6th form increase significantly.

Although student protest has subsided in recent weeks, new demonstrations are planned soon and we can expect a big student contingent on the TUC national demonstration against the cuts.

It is likely that Vice Chancellors of English universities will announce the new level of fees they plan to charge over the next few weeks. The government has set a deadline of 31 March for university managements to submit their plans for new funding and access schemes.

The student movement needs to put pressure on Vice Chancellors not to raise tuition fees in this period — and if VCs announce increased fees, they should keep up the pressure through the next academic year to prevent their implementation.

The National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts has called a national day of mobilisation on 24 February, to coincide with the Universities UK Conference, a get-together for Vice Chancellors. There will be a demonstration outside the conference in Woburn Place, London, and universities outside London will take action on their campuses.

The NUT must give its full backing to the student protests and fight education cuts across the board. The government attack on our pensions must look pretty sick to school students considering teaching - no EMA, increased fees, a pay freeze, huge fee and loan repayment costs, additional pension contributions, a longer worker life and a reduced pension. So much for the burden of the crisis being shared equally.

**Support the students and join the TUC demo in London on March 26th.**

**“We trained hard, but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form up into teams, we would be reorganised. I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet any new situation by reorganising; and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency, and demoralisation.”**

# Defend your pension

Teachers' pensions are under serious threat. This is an attack on teachers and lecturers in schools and further and higher education. All of the UK teacher organisations are united in opposing unnecessary pension cuts which will make our members poorer in retirement.

## Pay more, work longer, get less

- The Coalition Government wants to increase members' pension contributions from 6.4% of pay to 9.5% or more.
- It may also propose higher retirement ages and a change to pension based on final salary.
- Without consultation, it is also threatening to change pension indexation from RPI to CPI, cutting the value of pensions by 15%.

## Our pensions are affordable

- Together in 2006 we negotiated agreements which have already cut the long term cost of our pensions.

- The planned cost savings are on course and are being achieved.
- There is no need for further change.

## Say no to imposed change

- Pensions are deferred wages and are part of our pay.
- We are committed to working together to defend our pensions.
- We will work together to protect members if the Government proceeds with its threat to impose pension cuts.

## What you can do

- Find out more detail about the NUT's campaign on pensions – talk to your school rep or a local NUT officer as listed below.
- Join the national rally in London on Saturday 26 March, supported by a wide range of organisations and organised by the TUC. Coaches are booked from Notts and it is free for

teachers and their families to travel.

- Write to your member of Parliament by email or mail. Impress upon them your determination to defend your pension and the pensions of all public sector workers and that you are prepared to take action to defend decent pensions.
- Reject the arguments of those who say our pensions are too expensive.
- Tell your friends and colleagues that teachers' pensions are fair and affordable.
- Join the campaign to protect your pension. Together we are stronger.

In the coming weeks and months the campaign to defend public sector pensions will intensify. Most teaching unions, including the NAHT, are considering strike action against the Government's proposals. Remember your pension is deferred wages - you have earned it through your contributions, now its time to fight to protect it.

### We can be contacted on any of the following numbers:

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Signed articles are in a personal capacity and not necessarily the views of Notts NUT