

# Scottish Socialist Party

Media  
Workers  
Voice



## VICTORY TO BBC STAFF - save our pensions

## UNITE & DEFY DEMOLITION COALITION CUTS demand Holyrood & Councils set 'No-Cuts' Defiance Budgets

The Scottish Socialist Party extends warm, unqualified support and solidarity to BBC workers striking to defend pensions from the profit-hungry, axe-wielding, over-paid BBC bosses - and the brutal assaults described by sneering millionaire Cameron as “delicious cuts to the BBC”.

Your struggle is part of the broader fight to defend public services, jobs, salaries and pensions from the butchery of the Twin Tories in Westminster - who want workers and communities to pay a terrible price for the crisis created by the bankers, billionaires and their political puppets.

**SSP members in the various unions are campaigning for united action to stop the cuts** - which are entirely unnecessary. **We are proposing a mass lobby of the Scottish parliament on Budget day** (probably 18 Nov) to demand the

Scottish government stands up for Scotland by refusing to pass on Westminster's £1.3bn cuts to this year's block grant. **We are demanding they set a No-Cuts defiance budget and help the unions build a mass rebellion of the Scottish people to demand back our £1.3bn, stolen by the Westminster thieves to bail out the bankers and billionaires.**

No cuts are acceptable - or necessary. Neither Coalition cuts, nor lesser, slower Labour or SNP cuts. The unions should lay plans for a **united one-day strike of the entire 600,000-strong public sector in early 2011** - to force back the Scottish butchers, before the council budgets are set in stone. To build a rebellion in the workplaces that would embolden communities too.

**Stand firm, united, proud to be part of a wider struggle.**

## WHY WE ARE STRIKING BACK

by Pete Murray, BBC worker & NUJ national president (*personal capacity*)

“Thousands of BBC journalists are striking to defend the staff pension. Despite two overwhelming votes against the BBC's proposals, management are now preparing to impose a cocktail of arrangements which will destroy the Final Salary Pension Scheme (FSPS) and replace it with one that requires staff to work longer and pay far more into a riskier scheme in return for substantially less in benefits. Under the current plan staff will lose more than 20% of the value of their pension. They will also be robbed of a string of voluntary benefits which had been available to staff working overtime and anti-social hours.

The BBC is attempting to use the existence of a deficit in the existing scheme as an excuse to close down the long-running FSPS. **It is a politically-driven attack, running in parallel with wider attempts to dismantle final salary schemes across the public sector and civil service.**

**The BBC's figures for the deficit have been exposed as a sham.** When they first launched their assault on staff pensions, we were told the deficit was £2bn - in large part due to the 13 years of “pension holidays” when the employer cut millions from the amount it should have paid into the scheme in a tax avoidance ploy. Then - under pressure as 12,000 staff balloted and voted by 90% to strike - Mark Thompson said the deficit would be nearer £1.5bn. Now, estimates suggest it could be as low as £1bn.

Some unions in the BBC say staff should wait until the final figures are known officially, in Spring 2011, but by then it will be too late - the pension cuts will have been imposed and management will be preparing further cuts: this time to jobs, programmes and services.

**NUJ members no longer trust the BBC management.**

We have no choice but to take action to defend the benefits we were promised and to fight to defend the country's national broadcaster from those in government and in the boardroom who want to break up the universal TV, radio and on-line public services which the BBC provides...including our ability to question and scrutinise those in power in Scotland and the UK.

**The political agenda has become even clearer since October's Comprehensive Spending Review, when the ConDem government took the unprecedented step of imposing 16% cuts on the BBC, by freezing the TV licence fee and changing the way the BBC World Service and S4C are funded.**

The BBC is not part of the public sector, but for many years it has behaved as if it is. **Now the £800,000 a year BBC boss Mark Thompson is behaving as if he is a ConDem government minister** - accepting the need for punitive cuts in his “department”, preparing the ground for a wave of sackings, and preparing the public for “inevitable” cuts to services.

The November strikes and indefinite work-to-rule will coincide with action on 5th November by London firefighters and other struggles to resist the ConDem cuts from Westminster, as well as projected cuts by the SNP government at Holyrood”

for more material on community and trade union struggles - and socialist policies to combat public service cuts, mass unemployment, low pay, rent rises, privatisation, and the attempts to make workers pay for the bosses' crisis, visit:

**[www.scottishsocialistparty.org](http://www.scottishsocialistparty.org) & [www.comparethecounciltax.com](http://www.comparethecounciltax.com)**

# build lobby of Scottish parliament - demand People's Budgets that defy Westminster & Holyrood cuts - give us back the stolen millions

The butchers' Coalition - with 23 millionaires and 4 ex-bankers in a Cabinet of 29 - spew out the monstrous lie that cuts are "unavoidable and necessary".

The public debt is mainly the result of the £1.3trillion bankers' bailout, mass unemployment, loss of taxes. But it is still only 70% of GDP - whereas it never fell below 100% of GDP from 1918 'til 1961. Job cuts will massively add to the debt.

There are numerous "better ways" - without a penny cut in pay, benefits, pensions, or the loss of a single job or service - with vast scope to improve the shoddy system we endure already:

■ scrapping the unfair, regressive Council Tax and replacing it with a Scottish Service Tax based on income would raise an extra £1.6bn next year - more than Osborne has slashed off the Scottish budget!

■ £120bn A YEAR in taxes on the rich and big business are avoided, evaded or uncollected - that's 75% of the 2009 deficit!

■ a modest 10% wealth tax on the richest 1,000 fatcats would raise £35bn a year - enough to create 1.4 million jobs on a £25,000 wage.

■ restoration of tax on the richest elite and Corporations to pre-

Thatcher levels (a policy the SSP shares with the PCS union) would raise up to £250bn a year extra.

■ scrapping Trident (whilst guaranteeing Faslane workers' jobs through diversification into peaceful, socially useful work) would save £100bn.

■ full and democratic public ownership of the banks would give us access to £560bn in liquid cash and £5trillion in assets.

**There is nothing unavoidable or necessary about this Coalition's butchery.** The cuts are driven by ideological hatred of public services, a ruthless intent to reverse the gains made by past working class struggles - a mission to use the whip of mass unemployment and starvation-level benefits to drive wages down even further, boosting profits even higher.

**The ultimate 'better way' is a socialist Scotland, independent of the Westminster butchers,** with democratic public ownership and control of the vast wealth and resources; an end to war and Trident; and a plan of clean, green production and services, based on people not profit.

**Join Scotland's genuine socialist alternative, the SSP, to build that future.**

## BUILD & DEMAND DEFIANCE

"Any council or Scottish government worth its salt would defy the cuts being imposed by a Westminster junta without a mandate in Scotland.

They would set People's Budgets - No Cuts budgets - and mobilise a rebellion of the Scottish people alongside trade unions, pensioners', students' and community groups - demanding the necessary funding off Westminster and Holyrood to save every job, service and salary.

On top of that, if the SNP government was serious about stopping the ConDem cuts, they would introduce an emergency Bill to abolish the Council Tax and replace it with a Scottish Service Tax, based on ability to pay, with sliding scales of tax according to income. The SSP's latest research proves this would raise an additional £1.6bn a year - removing all excuses for cuts.

**Trade unionists and community activists need to build resistance on the ground to pressurise the Labour and SNP politicians into turning fine words of criticism of Westminster's butchery into real action.**

■ Build a mass lobby of the Scottish parliament to demand they defy Westminster's Budget cuts

■ Demand the councils and Holyrood government set No Cuts budgets and fight for the funding to stop ALL cuts."

**JIM BOLLAN, Scottish Socialist Party councillor, West Dunbartonshire**

**JOIN the SSP: the only party that has fought all cuts by all parties since 1998**



**COMPARE the council tax**

**Labour:**  
Higher council tax, more cuts & poorer services

**SNP:**  
Same council tax, more cuts & poorer services

**Scottish Socialist Party:**  
Under SSP proposals for a Scottish Service Tax, 70% pay less & the well-off pay their fair share, creating a £1.5bn surplus = no cuts, & better services for all. Simple!

[www.comparethecounciltax.com](http://www.comparethecounciltax.com)

## A council worker's appeal

"It's time to get the gloves off to fight plans at every level of government to decimate the public sector. We need to follow the lead of the French workers.

**Councillors have no mandate to implement this catastrophe. Instead, they should set No Cuts budgets, needs budgets.**

The likelihood of them agreeing to set defiance budgets are slim unless they know there is a fire

beneath them that will leave them with no choice but to stand up for the people they claim to serve.

Public sector trade unionists and service users can stand together and win - it happened in Poplar and Vale of Leven in the 1920s and in Liverpool in the 1980s. Those prepared to make a stand then were isolated, but today we must ensure that the fight-back is general."

**COLIN TURBETT, Chairperson, North Ayrshire UNISON (personal capacity)**

**JOIN THE SSP TODAY - the party of workers' unity, public ownership and socialism**

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