



nationalshop stewardsnetwork

October 2011

All out together on 30 November Vote YES in pension strike ballot!



The very successful NSSN lobby of the TUC on 11 September photo Paul Mattsson

The battle lines have finally been drawn – on 30 November (N30), between two and three million public sector workers will be on strike to defend their pensions. More workers will be out than on the first day of the 1926 general strike.

This is the answer to all those who claim that workers in Britain are incapable of fighting like our brothers and sisters in Greece, many other countries in Europe and around the world.

The NSSN is proud of the role that we've

played in building the idea of the public sector unions co-ordinating strike action against the attacks of the Con-Dem Coalition. On 11 September, we lobbied the TUC Congress and held a rally under the slogan of a 24-hour public sector general strike. Over 700 shop stewards and trade unionists listened to speakers such as Mark Serwotka of the PCS and Bob Crow of the RMT. This year, the NSSN has given out over 100,000 leaflets putting forward the arguments that this cabinet of millionaires can be defeated by co-ordinated strike action. And if one day is not enough to force

a u-turn, the unions should be prepared to escalate the action.

In all the workplace meetings, shop stewards' committees and branch committees, the message has to be hammered home that workers shouldn't pay the price for the bankers' crisis. As well as hundreds of thousands of workers in both the public and private sectors losing their jobs, millions have seen their income hammered by pay freezes and changes to contracts. Now Cameron and Co want public sector workers to take another pay cut by increasing pension contributions!



nationalshopstewardsnetwork

Workers have shown their determination to fight on every opportunity they've been given this year. Over 500,000 marched in London on 26 March against the cuts and over 750,000 civil servants, teachers and lecturers went on strike against the pension attacks on 30 June.

The mood was shown by unions not taking action recruiting members because workers thought that they were striking! Many other members of these unions thought that they were on strike and were angry when they found out that they weren't.

Thousands of Unison, Unite and GMB members have been striking this year in councils like Southampton to defend their contracts. Now all the grievances against the attacks on jobs, pay and terms and conditions are being directed on to the pensions struggle because workers realise that this is the best chance to win a victory.

Nothing can be taken for granted. The first job is to win the ballots with an overwhelming vote. Mass meetings have to be organised in

every workplace. Where there is more than one union these should be joint meetings.

Members of PCS, NUT, UCU and ATL unions that were out on 30 June and have live strike mandates should be invited to speak, giving confidence to the many workers who haven't been on strike before.

These can be supplemented by public meetings and rallies in towns and cities and on estates to draw in other working-class people, particularly workers in the private sector, who also face job losses and slashes to their pensions and pay.

Where the unions are unable to do so, these events can be organised by the trades councils, anti-cuts campaigns and organisations such as the NSSN. These events should also begin the debate about what happens after N30 to ensure that the mood is built on rather than dissipated after one day. The government should be warned that further co-ordinated action is planned if they don't back off.

On 30 November every town and city should

be filled with mass pickets and huge strike demonstrations, like 30 June but with the potential to be much bigger. These should reach out to all workers and their families, friends and their communities, including young people and pensioners.

The NSSN encourages all private sector workers involved in current disputes to consider co-ordinating their industrial action with the strike on 30 November. As Mark Serwotka said at the NSSN rally on 11 September: "Low paid workers in the private sector are exploited by shareholders and executives, not by fellow low-paid workers in the public sector".

A victory for public sector workers, forcing a retreat or even the downfall of this government, would raise the confidence of all workers, including those in the private sector that it's possible to challenge and indeed win against the employers.

The NSSN welcomes the ballots for strike action on 30 November and offers its assistance to all the unions in the dispute.

What you can do:

If your union is balloting, organise a mass workplace meeting, if applicable jointly with other unions. This should form the basis for democratic control of the strike.

Organise a public meeting in your town or city via the unions in dispute or trades council, anti-cuts campaign or NSSN. Explain the need to prepare for further action if

necessary.

Make sure that there is a demonstration in your town or city on the day.

All workers united – invite private sector workers, young people, pensioners etc to any public meetings, rallies and demonstrations.

Support the Jarrow march!

Young people face unemployment and poverty today. 75 years after the first Jarrow march against unemployment, Youth Fight for Jobs is marching from Jarrow to London from 1 October - 5 November.

To support the march or to get involved, see: www.jarrowmarch11.com or email youthfightforjobs@gmail.com

Affiliations

Affiliations are accepted from individuals (£5 a year), trade union branches or committees and trades councils (£25 a year). We also accept donations of larger amounts. Please give your name, organisation and position, address, phone and email. Pay via paypal at: www.stopcuts.net/affiliate.htm or by post at the address below.

The National Shop Stewards Network
PO Box 54498,
London E10 9DE
07816 134690
www.shopstewards.net
info@shopstewards.net

The NSSN is supported by

