

# Scottish Socialist

# Party

## CIVIL SERVICE WORKERS VOICE



## 400,000 on strike against poverty pay UNITY IS OUR STRENGTH!

**The Scottish Socialist Party salutes the strength and courage of all 100,000 PCS union members striking in opposition to brutal pay cuts - alongside 230,000 teachers in the NUT and 30,000 UCU college lecturers in England and Wales.**

Inflation is officially around 4.5%, and roaring ahead. Food prices have risen by their largest leap in 14 years. Fuel prices rocket whilst oil, gas and electricity companies - all of them privatised capitalist multi-nationals - announce obscene levels of profit. The New Labour government is up to its neck in defending these big business sharks - at terrible cost to the working class who produce the wealth and services that make for a decent, civilised society.

**Gordon Brown has cut Corporation Tax on big business to an all-time low, but doubled the 10% tax band for 5 million of the lowest paid workers.**

The government, through the Bank of England, are pouring £50billion down the bankers' throats, whilst the big 5 banks enjoy combined profits of £37billion. New Labour has squandered £6billion on a bloody war of occupation, aimed at seizing Iraq's massive oilfields for western oil companies - but claim we 'can't afford' to protect workers' pensions.

The bosses of Grangemouth oil refinery have launched a blood-curdling attack on workers' pensions, their right to strike and their trade union - trying to panic and alienate the wider public by shutting down supplies a week before the 2-day strike is due.

**Labour's generalised assault on the public sector is best illustrated by their attempt to hold down ALL public sector wages to below 2% in 3-year deals - in the vain hope they can thereby also avoid trade union resistance this side of a Westminster election.**

**"All civil servants in 10 depts/agencies taking action together is exactly what is required, to step up the pressure on New Labour to end low pay in the Civil Service and bring us closer to a National Pay Framework. Some members say we can't afford to strike, I say we can't afford not to strike.**

To give up now will mean no increase this year for huge numbers and result in a cut in real terms of around 10% for DWP staff over the 3 years of the deal.

I work in Glasgow city centre. There are loads of Govt offices: DWP, HMRC, DCA, DSA and Registers of

New Labour's war on the public sector and workers in general is meeting stiff resistance. PCS members do not stand alone in taking strike action.

**Teachers** in England/Wales are striking for the first time in 21 years on the same day. **Grangemouth workers** are not going to be bullied and smeared into submission. **Shelter staff** are on a series of strikes against pay cuts, longer working hours (3 weeks extra work a year without a penny extra pay!), downgrading of their jobs and a radical shift to funding by government sources instead of voluntary public donations - which would compromise their entire role as independent campaigners for the homeless and those in poor housing.

And 220,000 **Scottish local government workers** in 3 trade unions have rejected the 2.5% a year pay deal, for 3 years, which their employers (a combination of SNP, New Labour and Lib-Dem councils in CoSLA) tried to foist on them.

Outbursts of resistance by workers in various unions to the generalised assault by employers and governments are growing - and welcome. The SSP, which has members in all of these different unions, calls for unified action to defeat New Labour's war on workers, aided and abetted by an unholy coalition of parties in Scotland's councils. **Common strike dates across the board, with joint rallies and marches, would vastly boost the fighting morale of all the hundreds of thousands facing slave labour under New Labour.**

Stand united and strong. **Join the SSP** in calling for united action across unions and workplaces. **Join the SSP** to help build a working class socialist party that puts people before profit, services before shareholders, the millions before the millionaires.

Scotland to name just a few. All with different pay arrangements. Today's action highlights this nonsense and build pressure on New Labour to end this farce.

**We must continue to unite.** Taking action on the same day as the teachers is the way forward. Unity is strength. **We need a living wage and adequate staffing to deliver the services the public demand.** Why can the government spend billions bailing out Northern Rock but peanuts on low pay and public services?"

**Gerry McMahon, DWP and PCS Scottish Committee**

**JOIN SSP** 0141 221 7470 text 07899 732068 email [ssp.glasgow@btconnect.com](mailto:ssp.glasgow@btconnect.com)

# Scottish Socialist Party - PCS members VOICE

"The Department for Transport staff are striking for equal pay. We are furious at the fact an Admin Assistant in the DVLA is paid £1,750 less than the AVERAGE Admin Assistant in the overall DfT department. Our members in **Maritime & Coastguard Services** are also out; they recently held the first strike in their history. **These workers make instant decisions that can save lives, they are the country's 4th emergency service, yet some grades are on 6 or 7pence above the minimum wage!** That's a disgrace. They are striking for pay parity with the other emergency services. The strikes and overtime bans will have a massive impact, including cancellation of all driving tests and the impact on maritime services - for the second time in 6

weeks. We have been forced into this by the government's complete failure to respond. We wrote to Transport Minister Ruth Kelly, offering to suspend the strikes if she instructed DfT bosses to respond to our case. She is held up as the model woman who balances work and family life. **Yet she cares so much for women workers facing gross inequality in pay that she has not even replied to the union; not even a reply saying 'NO', just NO reply!** And the government has failed to even uphold its legal duties to conduct a Gender Equal Pay Audit, forcing the PCS union to go the courts to enforce the law on this." **Willie Telfer, Dept for Transport PCS assistant national secretary**



"We're on strike because we have tens of thousands of members looking at a 2 year on year pay cut. **And this is at a time when the DWP Permanent Secretary is getting a £14,000 year pay rise, which is more than some of our members earn in a years wage!!**

We're on strike because we need a living wage, not more DWP staff claiming benefits to pay bills.

We're on strike because our workload in real terms is increasing but our wages are in real terms decreasing." **Mairtin Gardner, Glasgow Benefit Centre PCS Branch Executive (Personal Capacity)**

"We are striking at the way pay is kept down at such low levels when inflation is over 4%. With the rising cost of food people simply can't afford a zero pay rise. **The fact we are striking alongside teachers in England is a big boost**, with so many public sector workers taking joint action against

the way the whole public sector is under attack from New Labour. Over the last few days we're told that whilst we have to hold down our wages to curb inflation, the government is spending another £50billion to bail out the private, profiteering banks. That makes us even angier."

**George Doherty, PCS rep, Bridgeton JobCentrePlus**

"I'm on strike because the **pay settlement is disgraceful - what more can I say?** It's going to put a lot of employees into hardship before the 3 years runs its course. I'm one of those who will reach the maximum in the 3 years, but when I reach it, it won't be worth a hoot. With mortgages, fuel and everything else running way above inflation, this so-called 'socialist' government should take a good look at itself. And I hope it'll be shown in the ballot box next time round." **Billy Crayton, Easterhouse JobCentre Plus**

## THEM AND US

Bosses' pay rose 37% last year - to an average of £2,875,000 for the fat cats of the FTSE 100 top firms. They wallow in incomes 99 times that of their workers! **This obscene class divide is further highlighted by two recent reports.** One in four Scottish children live in poverty - but Forbes magazine Rich List declared Britain now has 49 billionaires - headed up by the Duke of Westminster, 'worth' £7billion!

**The latest assault on DWP staff is designed to enrich the rich even more.** The Business Plan is based on the Freud Report, which stated "JobCentrePlus is a model of public service delivery" - but then went on to recommend privatisation! Why? Because, as he let slip in the same Freud Report, **"Welfare is a £4billion market."**

Poverty and welfare is increasingly becoming a source of enrichment for the rich, who are already engorged from privatisation of huge chunks of the public sector.

**The SSP has consistently stood with PCS members** in resistance to Labour's crazed drive to slash the public sector and workers' conditions. We will campaign on the streets and workplaces alongside workers to defeat Labour's reckless vandalism of public services, and continue to champion a different kind of society. One where people come before profit - where well-paid, secure jobs and expanded public services are funded by taking the ill-gotten wealth of the billionaires into public ownership.

**We will sustain our fight for an £8 minimum wage, instead of the public subsidy given to employers to keep paying low wages, through Tax Credit.** Rather than drive people back to the Dark Ages of the workhouse, of reliance on charities for handouts, or of vultures from the private sector growing fat on benefits delivery, the SSP stands for a society where the safety net of a decent welfare state is funded from taxation of the wealthy and public ownership and control of the vast natural, industrial, financial and land resources of the country. **For a socialist future. And we appeal to all PCS strikers to join us and fight for that future.**

**Join the SSP - the party of public ownership, solidarity and socialism**  
name..... phone .....  
address.....  
.....email.....  
**contact: SSP, Suite 308, 93 Hope St, Glasgow G2 6LD 0141 221 7470**  
**text 07899 732 068 email: ssp.glasgow@btconnect.com** pcsssp24April08