



ANARCHIST FEDERATION

ORGANISING FOR RESISTANCE

AREN'T LABOUR AS MUCH TO BLAME AS THE TORIES?

Since the election there's been an anti-Tory rhetoric about the cuts that is misplaced and neglects the fact that much of the cuts agenda was set in motion by the Labour Party. It's Labour that bailed out the banks with billions of pounds of public money; it is Labour that allowed the profit motive to be introduced to public services. And it is Labour that is also implementing cuts right now. In Salford for example, the Labour controlled council decided it could save £4.4m a year, with no loss of productivity, by making its 11,000 staff work a 36-hour week but receiving only 35 hours pay!

What did Labour do to important sectors?

- **In health**, the widespread use of GP consortia in the Coalition's new NHS White Paper GP is being talked about by the unions as if they were something brand new. But a quarter of GP surgeries in England are *already* run by consortia! In Nottingham and Notts many GP services are already run by private companies like NEMS Community Benefit Services Limited and procured by the respective NHS Primary Care Trusts. In addition Labour instigated Transforming Community Services, which will see 3000 health care staff becoming part of private social enterprises or put out to tender. This is part of the process that has seen the New Treatment Centre at the QMC, out of hours care and the Walk in Centre all run by private companies.
- **In social care**, it's sickening to see County Council Labour MPs like Vernon Coaker bleating on about care home and day centre closures by the now Tory-controlled authority, when Labour was happily trying to privatise them when in power, with several campaigns mounted by local people to save them.



- Under Labour's **welfare reform** private contractors were brought in to do the training or job placements with a huge incentive to take only people who are most likely to result in a 'Job Outcome', to ensure the company will get its money under the 'payment by results' scheme, whilst keeping the rest at arms' length. People being shoved off IB/ESA on to JSA will be prime candidates for this treatment.
- **In education**, local authority procurement has been in the hands of capitalist consortia for years. The disastrous 30-year Private Finance Initiative contracts awarded by Labour for school building will guarantee income to private concerns, irrespective of the current state of public sector finances. Whilst it's terrible to see schools in such dire need of development, the lamented Building Schools for the Future programme would have involved a heavy degree of PFI because the City Council's Local Education Partnership was with construction giant Carillion's InspiredSpaces Ltd.



What we could do about the cuts instead

Obviously we need to fight against cuts and for continued access to the necessities of life, but not in a way that allows any political party to score political points and mask the mess that a capitalist system has got us into. Any action taken against the cuts must be led by those who are directly affected. We can't allow Labour to play a part or take any credit.

Instead we think there should be:

- Grassroots action by workers against cuts. This should not involve the Labour Party.
- Sustained activity to connect with the unemployed and others threatened with welfare reforms.
- Build to involve coordinated unofficial actions that are not constrained by anti-union laws. Examples include workplace occupations such as the Vestas struggle against factory closure on the Isle of Wight.
- Defence of services by users as well as workers. Examples include parent-led school occupations in Scotland and university occupations across the UK, supported by students as well as workers.
- Encourage community direct action, like the anti-poll tax campaign, that was won by a mass movement of non-cooperation. The labour movement must accept that workplace action played only a small part in its defeat, and that the community revolt made no distinction whether it was a Conservative or Labour-led council that was attempting to collect the tax.

This leaflet was written by the Nottingham & Notts group of the Anarchist Federation

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