

PCS INDEPENDENT Left

A New Voice For
The Members

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL ACTION BALLOT

VOTE YES

Why We Must Move Beyond The NEC's Protest Action

The *Independent Left* in PCS calls on all members to Vote Yes in the current ballot against job cuts, poverty pay and privatisation.

Gordon Brown and New Labour have picked up the baton from the Tories in their campaign to destroy public services and undermine worker's rights.

Members know what the problems are: cuts in staff, below inflation pay offers and a drive to privatise key areas of the civil and public services. Members have also shown a willingness to fight the attacks and have supported the strike action organised by the National Executive Committee (NEC).



Because the stakes are so big, it is vital that activists and members have an honest appraisal of the campaign of the union so far as led by the Left Unity leadership. Only through that discussion can we hope to move on from where we are now.

Job Cuts

The facts are that the employer has not stopped making the cuts. The strike strategy employed has not made the bosses even temporarily halt the jobs slaughter. In DWP, the largest department, the Government has made its target of 30,000 job cuts with ease. In DWP we have most of the LU architects of the campaign strategy. They have patently failed to defend jobs in their own backyard. It is no surprise that there has been a similar picture on a national scale.

Token Action?

The strike 'strategy' has consisted of isolated one day strikes followed by minimal two week overtime bans in order to maximize the impact of the one day action. The reality is that the employer can overcome the impact of a one day strike comfortably, in particular in the knowledge that there will not be another for some months! Members, loyal to the Union, support the action and the overtime ban. Thereafter, they are permitted to work unlimited overtime according to the Left Unity leadership. In doing so, members prop up the employer as they wield the axe.

This is not the fault of the members. The blame lies at the door of the Left Unity leadership who falsely claim that the "strategy" is delivering when our members know the truth.

What happened to national pay?

A Left Unity NEC member recently admitted that the Cabinet Office had been stringing the Union along in its talks on so-called pay coherence. What took him so long to realise?

The truth is that the Left Unit NEC has no idea how to make the national pay campaign a reality for members. For the most part, it is business as usual for Left Unity leaders on GECs with next to no co-ordination across the Union in terms of action.

What kind of action?

Independent Left is clear that there are no easy solutions for workers under New Labour. For the most part, the leaders of the biggest unions in Britain prefer to bow before Brown rather than lead a fight. Public Sector Unity against Brown's cuts would massively increase the confidence of members. Activists should get involved in their Trades Councils and the National Shop Stewards Movement to build at the grassroots.

However, it is vital that PCS develops a strategy that goes beyond protect to one that has a lasting industrial impact.

PCS *Independent Left*

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 24 November
from 12 noon

For this reason *Independent Left* stands for:

- a permanent ban on overtime. No overtime working while jobs are cut! All overtime to be picketed;
- selective strike action in key areas (eg Passport Offices; Courts; Airports and Ports) in support of our national demands;
- a National Levy to be launched to help support selective action;
- longer term and more frequent national action.

Sustained selective action may well be necessary to build the platform for longer term national action. Over the past five years, the leadership should have been building a war chest of funds for the fight we knew was coming.

If the NEC says that the Union cannot afford selective action as part of a strategy, then that is a fundamental error. Under the Left Unity leadership's reign, the Union bureaucracy, the percentage of funds spent on full-timers wages, has exploded to over 36% of subs income.

Members need a Union run in their interests and able to fund a serious fight in defence of job cuts and against low pay.

The Left Unity leadership may say that this is not a legitimate debate to be had in public. But the fact is the employer knows already whether or not the Union's campaign is forcing them to think again.

Long standing activists in *Independent Left* believe that it is critical that we have this debate on strategy, an honest appraisal of the limitations of the campaign so far.

We can then move on and develop the tactics necessary to defend jobs and services to fight poverty pay.

JOIN THE PCS INDEPENDENT LEFT

If you are tired of the spin and same old strategy of Left Unit. If you are opposed to deals that offer new members worse terms on entry. You should join the ***Independent Left*** – a new socialist voice for members in the Union.

To join simply write to: pcsindependentleft@hotmail.co.uk

or complete this tear-off .

Name: _____

Address: _____

Branch: _____

Email: _____

Return to: PCS Independent Left, 112 Findon Street, Sheffield S6 4QP

Visit our website at www.independentleft.org.uk