

# Workers power

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weekly

## Protest against the Tory cuts!

THOUSANDS of trade unionists, community groups and ordinary people furious at Con-Dem plans to wreck our welfare state will take to the streets on 20 October, when George Osborne announces his new spending cuts.

The demonstration in London will be followed by a rally organised by the Coalition of Resistance where Tony Benn, and a range of trade union and other movement leaders will speak.

Anti-cuts groups have also organised local protests across the UK.

# 20 Oct

4pm ULU, Malet Street

5pm Lincoln's Inn Fields

Or your local town

For more details:  
[coalitionofresistance.org.uk](http://coalitionofresistance.org.uk)



The Reverend Jesse Jackson will speak at the protest

## Ex-oil Boss' plan for education...

# FEES TO ROCKET – ARTS AND HUMANITIES DEPTS DESTROYED

By John Bowman

AS LORD BROWNE unveiled his plans to remove the cap on tuition fees this week, hundreds of angry students took protest action around the country.

Browne's plans, the most vicious attack on universal education in a decade, could see some students end up with debts of over £100,000. Many more will simply choose not to take up a degree course.

By introducing different tuition fees for different universities, the review introduces a market into education – if a student can't pay – they won't get educated.

But perhaps most brutally of all, the review aims to hammer arts and humanities subjects. All government funding will be withdrawn from these areas, and with Vice Chancellors also told to prepare for 35 per cent cuts, these departments will be obliterated. The Browne review is adamant – higher education is to prepare an elite few for business and profit – not learning.

Sally Hunt, UCU general secretary called the review "savage". She said if it was imple-

mented, "we would see departments and universities close and a devastating effect on the curriculum as only so-called priority courses survive."

No wonder it was released in secret in the early hours of Tuesday – with the location and time kept strictly under-wraps. Even MPs and national trade union offices were unable to gain access to the review release. It was written and researched in secret with no student, trade union or teacher involvement, and it was released in darkness too.

Lib Dem business secretary Vince Cable called the review "fair and progressive"! But party leader Nick Clegg had to write a letter to all Lib Dem MPs urging them not to rebel against the plans, with some, such as Sir Menzies Campbell threatening to rebel after signing an NUS pledge to vote against tuition fee rises.

Richard, a student at Leeds University said the review had no democratic legitimacy and "we should fight it every step of the way – with protests, walkouts and occupations."

## Student campaign calls for walkout

"THE ACTION we call now has to be swift and radical", declared the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts at a regional meeting this week.

Students from at least seven universities met at University College in London to debate the response to Lord Browne's review.

The campaign called for:

- A Protest at the Lib Dem HQ in Westminster, 25 Oct, 4pm
- A huge turnout to the student feeder march against the Spending Review on 20 Oct, 4pm, University London Union
- A 'Free Education' bloc on the NUS & UCU demo, 10 Nov, 11.30am, Horseguards Ave.
- A mass, national university, school and college student walkout to be organised in late November

# Manchester fights to defend law centres

By Alex Kirby

A HARD FOUGHT campaign in Manchester has been launched to stop attacks on the city's law centres.

Several centres – that provide free legal advice for housing, employment, benefits and immigration – are to be closed. They have given support to local campaigns against racist deportations and domestic violence. But now the Labour council is trying to shut them down.

Sonia from South Manchester told Workers Power: "I found out that the South Manchester centre could close from a friend of mine – we used to volunteer there. Lots of us have used their services and they do a great job. Some of the advisers have been there from the beginning. They've helped our community out so much over the years – now it's our turn to help them."

In an attempt to drive free-market competition into the centres, new regulations have forced law centres to bid for contracts against other "service providers", where the cheapest, not the best, win. Despite a great reputation, Manchester City Council have now withdrawn their funding from the South Manchester centre by



£40,000 a month – 80 per cent of the money it needs to run.

Packed meetings of several hundred people have taken place against law centre closures, and several demonstrations have taken place. South Manchester Law Centre is now its self launching a legal battle.

Many campaigners realise that attacks on legal aid, and community law centres like those in Manchester come at a time when employers, including City Councils are laying off workers who are soon to receive far

less help as a result of Tory cuts. Attacks on legal aid, and community centres are not just about cost-cutting, they are a political attack on working class communities too.

Law Centres based on local communities offer us a form of defence against increased harassment of those on benefits, and increased victimisation by cost-cutting employers. That's why no tactic should be ruled out in defence of the centres and legal aid – including strikes and occupations.

For more info go to: [WWW.SMLC.ORG.UK](http://WWW.SMLC.ORG.UK)

## Chilean President: no friend of miners

By Billy McKean

MILLIONS watched as 33 Chilean miners were released from their underground hell last Wednesday night.

Billionaire President Sebastián Piñera hugged each miner in emotional scenes and later challenged them to a football match against officials involved in the rescue.

The winners, he joked, could live in the Presidential Palace, while the losers could return down the mine.

Meanwhile Piñera returns to his palace and the massive personal fortune he has accumulated from his stakes in the lucrative Chilean copper mining industry.

His brother José was the Minister of Labour under General Pinochet's dictatorship who privatised the mining industry. He also crushed the trade unions and did away with state pensions.

Today Sebastián Piñera waxes lyrical about safety reviews he knows will never happen... till the day the miners beat him and tell him where to sleep at night.

## Ken Loach and Jerry Hicks speak at packed rally

By Billy McKean

THE CAMPAIGN for rank and file candidate Jerry Hicks to become Unite General Secretary, is continuing to pick up steam, with 75 packing out a London rally on Monday night.

Radical film director Ken Loach built on the ribbing he gave Michael Heseltine on Newsnight a week before with a rousing speech, reminding an audience of bus drivers, construction workers, cleaners, students and others why we need a trade union movement that fights for workers' interests, and a Unite general secretary in Jerry Hicks.

Hicks – a proven fighter against Unite's army of unelected officials and 'company men' – gave his usual barnstorming best alongside a platform of workers from all of the union's key sectors.

Meanwhile the campaign continues to grow in strength as Monday morning saw a tremendous joint effort in London to

simultaneously flier at least 29 of the 33 bus depots inside the North and South Circular, as well as other large workplaces.

Workers from all across London have contacted the campaign to offer their help and support, from bus depots and hospitals to banks and Heathrow Airport.



Jerry Hicks for Unite General Secretary!