

**an  
action  
programme  
for  
britain**

*a workers power pamphlet ★ £2*

©2014

Workers Power  
British section of  
The League for the Fifth International

BCM 7750  
London  
WC1N 3XX

[contact@workerspower.co.uk](mailto:contact@workerspower.co.uk)

[www.workerspower.co.uk](http://www.workerspower.co.uk)  
[www.fifthinternational.org](http://www.fifthinternational.org)

# Contents

Tory Britain – a land of poverty and inequality	4
Tory economic policy – make the poor pay for the crisis	6
Tory ideology – “there is no alternative”	8
The fightback against austerity – potential squandered	10
A crisis of leadership	13
For a rank and file movement in the trade unions	15
A programme of action	18
Beyond Labour	24
Revolution – the capitalists will never give up without a fight	26

# Tory Britain – a land of poverty and inequality

THE TORIES are pointing to Britain's shallow 'economic recovery' as proof their austerity is working. But for most the Great Recession's effects are still blighting our lives.

Official figures admit 2.3 million people are still out of work. One in five young people are jobless.

But these government numbers only tell half the story. The Trades Union Congress says more than four million people can't get a job.

When you add benefit cuts, soaring rents and low pay, you get plummeting living standards across the country.

One in three children now lives in poverty. So do one in five working age adults without children. With college fees beyond reach for hundreds of thousands, many young people have no prospect of work or education. A recent report warns that 750,000 young people feel they have nothing to live for and that one in three has "suicidal thoughts".

For those in work, real wages have been falling for seven years. Public sec-

tor wages were frozen for three years and pegged to one per cent since – much less than inflation. The TUC says “the average worker will lose around £6,000 by 2014 as a result of wages failing to keep pace with rising prices”. Public sector wages have lost around 20 per cent of their purchasing power; many private sector workers suffered pay freezes and short hours.

No wonder more than five million people are now classed as low paid, on less than £13,600 a year (60 per cent of the national average).

Sex discrimination means women already earned less than men before the crisis. Today more than one in four working women earns less than the living wage.

The government’s Business Department admits “about one in 10 of the UK’s entire private sector workforce – 2.3m people – is in ‘precarious employment’”. This includes a million people on zero hours contracts, with no guaranteed work or pay.

Preying on the poor, payday loan companies, pawnbrokers, and bookmakers are spreading like a rash.

Meanwhile some have not suffered at all – they’ve profited at the poor’s expense. Last year 18,000 people in Britain earned £1 million or more. Only two years earlier the figure was 10,000.

Twenty-three of these millionaires are sitting in David Cameron and Nick Clegg’s cabinet. Whether in recovery or recession, they press on with policies that make the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Tory austerity is a distribution of wealth from the poor to the rich. It is a policy we can and must resist.

# Tory economic policy – make the poor pay for the crisis

HERE'S HOW the Tories are trying to make the working class pay for the recession.

- Slashing state spending on services. Osborne told a meeting of businessmen in January 2014: “We’ve got to make more cuts – £17 billion this coming year, £20 billion next year, and over £25 billion further across the two years after. That’s more than £60 billion in total.” That’s on top of the £46 billion of cuts already made and the £20 billion “savings” being extracted from the NHS.
- The privatisation and break-up of the health service is well under way. Since competition regulations were imposed on the NHS last year, some 70 per cent of the £5 billion worth of contracts to run or manage clinical services have gone to private companies. The NHS is being turned into a cash cow for the profiteers.

- Benefits for the disabled and the long-term sick have been cut. Degrading fit-for-work tests conducted by Atos have driven people to suicide.
- 50,000 people face eviction from their homes via the bedroom tax. Claimants are to be forced onto workfare or community work if they are unemployed for six months.
- Free Schools and academies are spreading inequality in primary and secondary education, while Gove is changing the national curriculum to promote right-wing ideas. Courses in Further Education have been slashed and the Education Maintenance Allowance to FE students has been abolished. Students in higher education are now paying £9,000 tuition fees and the non-elite universities are facing a choice of wide-ranging cuts or bankruptcy.
- The government has raided pension funds and raised the retirement age.
- Despite the impact of climate change in widespread flooding, the Tories have cut investment in renewable energy and clean technologies by 70 per cent. And they've reduced funding to the Environment Agency, weakening flood defences.
- If the Tories are returned to power in 2015, they will abolish Housing Benefit for 350,000 under-25s, half of them families or single parents with children. A plan is being discussed to cut benefits worth £3.1 billion from families with more than two children.

# Tory ideology – “there is no alternative”

THESE TORY policies are more than just Etonian hatred for the poor. Governments all over the world are forcing through austerity programmes like this.

This is the capitalist class's solution to an historic crisis of their system.

The worldwide downturn that began in 2007 will not disappear through a short-lived credit-fuelled recovery or a pre-election boom.

The world is going backwards because of an overall decline in rates of return for investment. The whole system is run for profit and profit alone, so if the capitalists do not get sufficient profit per pound invested, they will not invest.

The bankers and corporations believe they can only escape from stagnation by cutting their “unnecessary overheads” – like staffing levels, workers' pay, and corporate taxes that fund public health, welfare and education – and by privatising public services. If this means closing down “failing” industries and services (which just means failing to make sufficient profits), if it means sacking hundreds of thousands of workers, freez-



ing wages, pushing millions into temporary and insecure employment and zero hours contracts, then so be it. That is their solution to the crisis.

Yet politicians of all the main parties say there is no alternative to austerity. Even Labour says austerity is inevitable (though maybe it could be done a little more ‘slowly’ and ‘fairly’). Across the media commentators and politicians hammer home the message that we simply can’t afford to pay for services any more and that cutting public spending is the only way. In Margaret Thatcher’s infamous phrase, “there is no alternative” to making the poor pay for the crisis.

But it just isn’t true. There is an alternative. We could make the rich pay to rebuild our society.

- Eliminate the deficit by taxing the rich, taking over the banks and corporations and cancelling state debt and interest payments to billionaire bondholders.
- Put millions back to work by drawing up a democratic plan of production, expanding health care, affordable house-building, education, flood defences and sustainable energy.

# The fight against austerity – potential squandered

INEVITABLY THE Credit Crunch of 2008 and the Great Recession of 2009 led to resistance. In France and then Greece, a series of one-day general strikes brought right wing governments to the brink of collapse. In Spain and the US occupations filled the city centres. In Tunisia and then Egypt general strikes, with mass demonstrations on the streets and in the squares, erupted into outright revolution and brought brutal regimes crashing down.

Resistance flared up in Britain too. Students rebelled against tuition fee hikes and benefit cuts, trashed the Tories' offices and fought the police on the steps of parliament. Millions struck and hundreds of thousands marched in one-day protests against the Tories' pension robbery.

The student protests of 2010, the summer riots in 2011, the rash of local demonstrations against hospital closures and other cuts show that even

where no official lead is given, anger boils over, and people start organising struggles themselves, from below. Examples of such grassroots leadership are the successful strikes by electricians on construction sites (Sparks), and most recently by the bakers at Hovis and the Tres Cosas migrant cleaners.

But overall in the UK resistance simply did not match the scale of the Tory attack.

The biggest scandal is that the Coalition announced its intention to break up the National Health Service back in 2010, and then started to roll out its cuts and privatisations without nationwide industrial action being called. Only in September 2013 – two and a half years down the line – did the TUC or the principal health unions call a mass national demonstration. And since then, they have done nothing.

For all their talk of coordinated action, the union leaders have failed to coordinate and unite resistance. The pensions struggle of 2011 was sold out after only one day of mass action.

Since then union leaders, whether on the right or the left wing of the TUC, have tamely allowed the anti-union laws to prevent a class-wide response to a political attack on the entire welfare state.

Despite being led by supposedly left-wing general secretaries, the Communications Workers Union has avoided any decisive action while the Royal Mail has been sold off, and the Fire Brigades Union has launched only occasional strikes for a few hours – yes, hours – at a time, while London fire services have been decimated.

Then came the crisis at the Grangemouth plant, where Unite, which is the biggest union in Britain and led by supposedly militant General Secretary Len McCluskey, accepted the most humiliating terms of surrender from Ineos, including a no-strike deal, when they could have occupied the plant and raised a call for solidarity action across the country.

When the chips are down the ‘militant’ left-wing union leaders hardly behave any differently to the ‘moderate’ right wing union leaders. This is because none of them have an alternative to the status quo – neither fighting tactics nor a political solution. It’s the same story every time: symbolic but impotent protests, fear of breaking the anti-union laws, and then just waiting for a Labour government that will not reverse the cuts, tax the rich, or abolish the anti-union laws anyway.

If we want to resist effectively, we will need to be willing to break the law, as the Tolpuddle Martyrs did. Today’s union leaders are too comfortable, too scared to follow the example of their great predecessors. We need to fight for mass strike action, culminating in an all-out united strike against the cuts, in defiance of the law. And we will need to do it without the union leaders if necessary.

# A crisis of leadership

A SUCCESSION of defeats since the 1980s has weakened the labour movement. There are major obstacles that have to be overcome. But these defeats were not a result of unstoppable objective processes. They were a result of the action or inaction of real people, with names and faces, whose false strategies led to defeat.

Of course we live in a changed world from the '70s and '80s. We've seen the anti-union laws, a halving of union numbers since 1980, the weakening of workplace organisation, a switch to precarious employment in new industries where unions are virtually unknown, and a decline in strike figures since the "golden age" of the 1970s. The absence of a mass socialist party means too often the capitalists' ideas go unchallenged.

But these changes demand that we recover the militant tactics and forms of organisation of the 1970s and of earlier periods of resistance - lost for a long while, but recoverable by a new generation of fighters who are not daunted by defeats, whose horizons have not been narrowed and whose imaginations have not been dulled.

Just as it would be wrong to suggest that workers are simply straining at the bit for action, held back only by a thin layer of leaders at the top, so it would fly in the face of recent experience to say workers would not re-

spond to a fighting lead.

From the pension strikes to the student revolt, not one of the actions against the Tories over the last three years failed because of a lack of support from below.

In each case, it was the failure of the union leaders to act that delivered defeat. That is why we must combine campaigning for united action with an initiative to build a rank and file alternative, independent of the leaders.

# For a rank and file movement in the trade unions

WE'VE HEARD more than enough from do-nothing top-table speakers at annual rallies. The initiative needs to come from below, from the rank and file, from the local forces actually fighting the cuts and closures, day to day.

We need the union membership at grassroots level to debate and decide on a plan of action to stop the retreat and re-launch a national fight back. We need an assembly of their delegates to decide on action and set out to implement it.

This would mean defying the Tory anti-trade union laws, the most savage and undemocratic in Europe. If we all acted together as a mass force they could be made unenforceable, just like Heath's anti-union laws were in the 1970s.

On the other hand to wait passively for an election in 2015, as the Labour Party leaders urge us and as the union leaders hope in secret, would be to let the bosses inflict yet another historic defeat on the working class, like those of the 1980s. Then it was a matter shutting down industries where

the unions were strong. Now Cameron is out to destroy the public sector, the remaining bastion of strong trade unionism.

When employers threaten closures, we need to occupy workplaces to save our jobs. If we link militant trade union action to a mass social movement on the streets – in defence of the NHS, pensions, education, wages and jobs – if we strike together as one, we could force Cameron and the employers to back down, weakening their government potentially fatally.

When their officials have refused to sanction action or actually sabotaged it, workers have recently have created new ‘pop-up unions’ or joined independent unions like the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) or the Independent Workers Union of Great Britain (IWGB), to carry on their struggle. This is a completely justified tactic. But “dual carding” or “pop up unions” will not prove effective as the strategy for reclaiming the unions from the bureaucrats. It would still leave six million workers in their hands. To transform the unions into fighting and democratic bodies a rank and file movement is needed; in every union and across all the unions. It should fight for workers control of all disputes, negotiations and settlements – by mass meetings and elected strike committees.

A rank and file movement in every union, coordinated nationally across the unions, could take control of all disputes and negotiations.

It could make union officials subject to regular election, fully accountable and recallable, and put them on the average pay of their members.

Our watchword would be: fight with the union leaders where possible, without them where necessary.

We need a massive campaign to organise the huge number not in unions – especially those in precarious and low paid jobs. The Tres Cosas campaign among University of London cleaners and the Sparks’ campaign against de-skilling on construction sites showed what could be done. Unite’s community branches and the bakers’ union BFAWU’s campaign to unionise fast food workers could provide the basis for future victories.



All these show that workers will join unions that fight for them and that encourage them to control their own struggles democratically.

‘People’s Assemblies’ have been held in cities across the country. Together with them, trades councils, union branches, student unions and community campaigns and organisations should send delegates to local councils of action. These can become organising centres against the cuts and deliver active solidarity for all those fighting back. They could draw in delegates from all anticuts, antiracist and women’s rights campaigns, from workplaces, estates, schools and colleges.

With strong grassroots organisations – brought together in a national structure – we would be able to coordinate struggles without relying on the union leaders. We’d be able to move towards the mass strikes we need, without them being constantly called off or sold out.

# A programme of action

THE TASK is twofold. First is to defend the system of public services and welfare that the workers' movement wrenched from an unwilling ruling class. Second is to renew the ideal that inspired them: a society based on production for the needs of millions, not the greed of the millionaires; a society of full employment; a society of equality and freedom; a society without exploitation; a socialist society.

- The TUC and the unions should organise the midweek day of action they promised in Bournemouth in 2013 and make it a full-scale political mass strike, using this mass mobilisation to initiate industrial and direct action up to and including an all-out general strike to bring down the Tories and force the abandonment and reversal of all the cuts and the privatisations.
- Save our NHS from the privatisers and the profiteers. Where services are under immediate threat, prevent their closure by occupying them and rallying the whole community to their defence, and raising the call for industrial action not only from the health unions but from all unions locally. Demand the reversal of all the privatisations, with no compensation to the profiteers who bought them for a song. Tear up the Public Private Partnership (PPP) and PFI deals. Repeal Andrew Lansley's Health and Social Care Act; nationalise the private health sector; bring

all foundation hospitals back into a fully nationally owned system under the control of service providers and service users. Nationalise the drugs companies.

- Solidarity between all the wage struggles in the private and public sectors, for an increase in pay to compensate fully for the loss of real wages over the past years, fully indexed against inflation. Raise the minimum wage to a living wage agreed by the trade unions. End the scandal of zero hours contracts and grant full-time, permanent contracts for all who want them. Raise pensions and social security payments to a level everyone can live on decently. Eliminate the gender gap by raising women's wages to the level of men's.
- Work for all – shorten the working week to a maximum of 35 hours, with no loss of pay; share the work to end mass unemployment and under-employment. End compulsory workfare, unpaid internships and zero hours contracts.
- Launch a programme of public works to give the unemployed and underemployed socially useful employment. This programme must be drawn up, planned and carried out under workers' and users' control
- Tax the rich, not the poor: confiscate the wealth and the profits of the banks and big corporations. Raise income tax on the millionaires and impose a tax on unearned wealth; scrap council tax, VAT and income tax for low paid workers.
- Protect against inflation: a 1% pay rise for every 1% increase in the cost of living, as calculated by a workers' commission of delegates from workplaces and domestic workers from every region of Britain
- Nationalise the banks, insurance companies and finance houses without compensation and under working class control. Merge them into a state investment bank which will decide democratically where to allocate resources, in the interests of the millions, not for profit.

- All nationalised, publicly owned enterprises to be managed and controlled democratically by the workers themselves
- Nationalise all firms declaring redundancies, or refusing to pay the minimum wage or respect a maximum 35-hour working week
- End the housing crisis. Build millions of new homes – not just social housing but socially owned housing with security for tenants and democratic management of estates by tenants. Occupy empty properties. Impose strict rent controls and maintenance standards on the private rented sector. Scrap the bedroom tax, stop evictions.
- For 24-hour free childcare. Build neighbourhood and workplace crèches and nurseries, new schools, and local 24-hour health clinics.
- Restore benefits to the disabled and scrap testing. Benefits for those who cannot work, set at least at the level of the living wage. Full accessibility for the disabled in buildings, public spaces, leisure facilities and transport.
- Defy the anti-union laws whenever they are used to hamper our fight back and fight for their total repeal. Repeal all laws restricting the right to demonstrate or to occupy workplaces, and all laws punishing whistleblowers that expose the misdeeds of those in power in business and government. Fight for the complete restoration of Legal Aid.
- Save the comprehensive system. Open education at every level to all. Abolish academy and free school status, nationalise private schools, restore EMA at a living level. For the right of all to further and higher education. Make this effective by abolishing tuition fees, reinstating full maintenance grants and cancelling student debt.
- Fight climate catastrophe. Nationalise the energy companies without compensation and slash utility bills. Phase out nuclear power and end the reliance on both nuclear power and fossil fuels with a massive investment in sustainable energy and integrated transport policy. For a major programme of spending on flood defences.

- Halt the attacks on women's jobs, services and rights. Equal pay. Raise wages in the retail and caring industries, which account for much of the once again rising inequality in wages between men and women. Free high quality 24-hour childcare provision for all. Fight for access to jobs, pay and conditions fully equal to those of men. Public provision of subsidised restaurants, laundries and domestic cleaning to reduce women's unpaid labour in the home.
- Free abortion on demand.
- Show zero tolerance for rape and domestic violence. Automatic prosecution of those accused, no humiliation of complainants by the police or the courts. Women-only caucuses in all mixed workplaces and in the labour and social movements, with legally guaranteed rights to publicise complaints of discrimination and harassment not dealt with satisfactorily by management or by labour movement structures. Expand the number of fully funded, secure rape crisis and domestic violence refuge centres, run under the management of those who use or work in them.
- Confront all expressions of homophobia, transphobia and the bullying, physical and mental violence and hate crime against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people they lead to. Fight for a right of reply in the media for victims of these attacks, with equal prominence and circulation.
- Abolish all remaining legal inequalities of LGBT people: equalise pension inheritance rights in same sex marriages; equalise the grounds for annulment and divorce; equalise the conditions for conduct of ceremonies; restore any forcibly annulled marriages of transgender people.
- Fight racism: end the police harassment of black and ethnic minority people; end stop and search. For the right of all refugees and migrant workers to come, live and work here with full citizenship rights. Migrant workers to be drawn into the labour movement and their struggles, like that of the Tres Cosas cleaners, supported fully.
- End impunity for police murderers and bring all those responsible for the

recent series of killings to justice. Disarm the police and disband the riot police units like the Territorial Support Group, firearms divisions like CO19 and spy rings like the Special Demonstration Squad, sent in to report on, entrap and smear the left and victims of police violence. Disband the toothless and corrupt Independent Police Complaints Commission.

- Demand labour movement solidarity with Muslims and ethnic minorities against violence and abuse. Stop the marches of the English Defence League and other fascist groups through mass labour movement and community mobilisation, linked to militant self-defence of communities and meeting places. Build antifascist defence squads.
- Repeal all immigration controls and open the borders to asylum seekers, including refugees from Syria. End the racist media and police harassment of Roma and Travellers, and the abuse of those from Eastern Europe who seek work here.
- Demand international solidarity action with struggles by workers in Greece and other countries against austerity, unemployment and racism. Mobilise material support for all those fighting for political freedom in Syria, Egypt and Palestine.
- Oppose all attempts to take Britain into new imperialist wars and invasions, including on false humanitarian or human rights pretexts. Not a penny, not a person for the defence of British capitalism.
- All British Troops, naval and air forces should be withdrawn from overseas bases, including in the Gulf and Afghanistan, and also from Ireland, Britain's oldest colony. Defend the right of the people of Ireland as a whole to decide by simple majority on the unity of their country. Oppose all moves towards a new cold war with Russia. No to all sanctions and expansion of western forces into eastern Europe. Dissolve Nato and dismantle all nuclear weapons and bases.
- Oppose all austerity imposed from Brussels as well as Westminster. Cancel the debts of Greece and other countries deeply indebted to Britain's

bankers and bondholders. Reject UKIP and Tory Europhobia as well as any labour movement capitulation to English/British chauvinism, like the No2EU election campaigns. Solidarity with European workers' resistance, joining in a common struggle for a Socialist United States of Europe.

- Oppose weakening the working class of Britain by dividing into separate states; campaign against a vote for Scotland separating and for a joint struggle of Scottish, Welsh and English workers against the British ruling class. Defend the right of the Scottish people to decide whether to be independent or not, free from Westminster or EU blackmail, threats and intimidation. If the Scottish people vote for independence, for the immediate recognition and implementation of their democratic decision.
- Abolish the Monarchy, House of Lords, Privy Council, and all antidemocratic institutions. Elect the judiciary. Proportional representation on a party list system.
- For a new party of the working class – a mass, revolutionary, socialist party. Its key goal should be to get a workers' government into power to implement these policies in full.

# Beyond Labour

DESPITE ED Miliband's 2013 conference pledges to abolish the bedroom tax, freeze fuel bills and build 200,000 affordable homes a year by 2020, over the past three years the Labour Party has:

- Backed the Tories' public sector pay freeze
- Denounced the 30 November 2011 pensions strike
- Said it would not reverse the Coalition's cuts and would keep to its spending levels for two years
- Supported the Tories' benefits cap
- Attacked unions who demanded policies in their members' interest in return for the millions they contribute to Labour
- Joined the Tories' attacks on claimants.

The Old Labour "socialism" of reducing social inequality has disappeared without a trace; the identification with the unions and the working class has been all but abandoned; the domination of openly pro-capitalist ideas in Labour is near total. The representation of the Labour left in parliament, in local government, in the constituencies has shrunk to an all-time low.

Labour cannot be converted into an instrument of socialist transition. That is why we need a new party of the working class, a party of struggle against capitalism, based on those fighting capitalism in the here and now. A party that can win working people to the only real solution that is in their interests



– a socialist solution.

This party should focus on today's struggles: defending the NHS, opposing the bedroom tax, making the rich pay to save our services, fighting for jobs, for a future for the young and a decent retirement for the elderly.

At the same time this new party should connect these struggles to the fight for a socialist transformation of society.

The party will oppose the pro-capitalist ideas that are spread by the media, and that foment a pathological individualism that glorifies selfishness, status and celebrity and denigrates collectivity and solidarity.

It will fight the denigration and persecution of benefit claimants and the long-term unemployed, which portray them as scroungers when the rich dodge far more in taxes than is lost through invalid benefit claims.

Our party will fight the British nationalism that blames unemployment, bad housing and stretched health and social services on fictional "floods" of East European migrants, Roma and others. Our party should protest against racism in all its many forms, from the merely "casual" to attacks and abuse in the streets and communities.

A new workers' party can fight this by exposure, by mockery, and by stimulating the creation of a combative counterculture, based on giving working people, youth and women a voice.

In short a new workers' party must put socialism back on the agenda for millions. And this is not primarily a question of winning elections; this must be a do-it-yourself solution, carried out by the direct action of millions and not just voted for. In the words of Karl Marx, "the emancipation of the working class is the task of the working class itself".

# Revolution – the capitalists will never give up without a fight

ANY SERIOUS reforms we can force out of the ruling class will be short-lived if the working class does not take the power.

No matter how many MPs we get into Westminster, the capitalists and their unelected servants in the state machinery – the judges, police chiefs, senior civil servants and so on – would still rule us; their media would still fool us, and the bosses would still exploit us.

As long as the real power of the state – the police, the army, and the judiciary – remains firmly in the hands of the billionaires and their agents, then their ownership of the banks, industry, commerce and the media is safe. Even if a government of workers' parties had mass support on the streets and in the workplaces, nothing would decisively change, as long as this support remained disarmed, relying on its deadly enemies to enforce its decisions.

Observe how the police have behaved in recent times: kettling teenagers in the snow for hours; arresting demonstrators en masse without evidence; beating peaceful protesters; killing black prisoners with impunity.

In Iraq and Afghanistan the army have tortured detainees and executed unarmed prisoners; at home, police spies infiltrate peaceful protest movements.

Imagine what these forces would be ordered to do, when the system they defend is really threatened. If we want to overthrow this system we need to be ready.

When riot police break up our demonstrations then we should organise defence guards for each march. This happens spontaneously anyway; revolutionaries only seek to make it more determined, disciplined and far-sighted. If fascists terrorise Muslim communities and threaten to attack mosques then we organise multi-ethnic defence teams to stop them.

In the end only a revolution that breaks up the machinery of repression, undermining the discipline of the army, winning over the rank and file soldiers, arming the people and creating a workers' militia, will be able to impose its will.

At the same time the immense economic power of the bosses will be used to undermine any workers' government, unless and until workers seize control of the factories, banks, supermarkets and offices.

To expropriate the banks and big corporations, and resist the inevitable violence of the ruling class, a workers' government would need the armed force to make its decisions count. To carry out measures in the interests of the majority, and not become an elite in its own right, the government would need to be made up of recallable delegates from councils of action representing all working people, without privileges for anyone.

On this basis it will finally be possible to democratically plan the economy, taking giant steps to abolish poverty, exploitation and social inequality.

With power in the hands of the millions we will raise the call to the workers of the world to take British-owned enterprises abroad into their own hands, and extend the revolution across the globe -- to eradicate the exploitation of the working class, the oppression of women, racism and war, and to open the road to a classless and stateless society.



## League for the Fifth International

Britain needs a revolution. The great crash of 2008 and the great depression that followed were caused by a systemic failure of capitalism.

The austerity that followed was not the fault of Labour's overspending, but because a trillion pounds of taxpayers' money was handed over to the banks. Now we are paying for the bosses' crisis.

Unemployment has soared to 2.3 million. Benefits and pensions have been slashed. The NHS, the state education system and public services have been cut to the bone or privatised.

Workers, benefit claimants, young people, the disabled and pensioners have fought back, sometimes heroically. But time and again, our leaders in the Labour Party, the trade unions and even social movements have suspended action or signed away our rights.

It doesn't have to be this way. Thousands of people are looking for an alternative to a system which provides for the few, not the many.

AN ACTION PROGRAMME FOR BRITAIN is Workers Power's contribution to the debate about how to achieve the revolutionary transformation we need. But it is also a guide to struggle now.

We encourage every socialist and activist to discuss the ideas in these pages – and to put them into practice.