



campaign for a new workers' party

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Dear Friend,

We are writing to you as a supporter of the Campaign for a New Workers Party (CNWP) to ask if you could organise a discussion or debate in your trade union branch around the question of working class political representation, with a speaker from the CNWP.

The CNWP was launched in March of 2006. So far, more than 2,500 trade union and community representatives have signed our declaration for a new party.

Since 1997 the trade union leaders have given more than £100 million of their member's money to New Labour. In 2006 alone, almost £12 million of trade unionists' money went into the coffers of the Labour Party. But this money hasn't bought us a fivers worth of influence. While the billionaires get knighthoods and cut-price public services in return for their 'dodgy loans' trade unionists get kicked in the teeth.

Around the country Tony Blair's New Labour have overseen massive cuts in the NHS, further privatisation of council housing and attacks on our public services: They have supported a brutal war & occupation in Afghanistan & Iraq. Blair is now one of the most hated Prime Ministers ever. This government is one of the most unpopular in history - with the vote of only 36% of electors - but it has so far clung on to power because in most areas of the country there is no-one else for working-class people to vote for. There is no doubt that it is time for Blair to go, but what is the alternative?

In the CNWP, we believe that it's time to fight for a new and completely different type of party - a party that stands for the millions, not the millionaires. Some on the left argue our energies would be better spent trying to reclaim the Labour Party, rather than launching a new party. However, think that the time to reclaim the Labour Party has passed - our energies need to go into the building of a new party which can appeal to the mass of workers and young people who are disgusted with Labour's policies of cuts, privatisation and war.

Which ever position you take, it is clear that currently working class people in this country face a crisis of political representation and that a plan of action is urgently needed to change this. If you aren't sure of the way forward, perhaps a debate at your Union branch with a CNWP speaker would be a good place to start.

Overleaf is a copy of the CNWP declaration which lays out our arguments for the need for a new mass workers' party. Hopefully you will agree and decide to organise a meeting or debate in your Union branch. You can contact us at the e-mail address or phone number above to arrange a speaker from the Campaign for a New Workers Party for this.

Yours in solidarity,

Cllr Dave Nellist
CNWP National Chair
Socialist Party Councillor

Roger Bannister
CNWP Secretary
UNISON NEC (personal capacity)

campaign for a new workers' party

declaration for a new workers' party

- We, the undersigned, agree to campaign for the establishment of a new mass workers' party in England and Wales.
- We will campaign for the calling of a representative conference as a step towards the founding of a new party.
- We will also support all other genuine initiatives towards independent working-class representation.

Supporters of the CNWP include:

Bernard Roome CWU NEC
Gary Jones CWU NEC
Jim Barbour FBU NEC
Jim Donnelly NAPO NEC
Molly Cooper NUJ NEC
Ian Lavery NUM National Chair
Linda Taaffe NUT NEC
Hazel Danson NUT NEC
Janice Goodrich PCS President
Chirs Baugh PCS Assistant Gen Sec
Marian Lloyd PCS NEC
Rob Williams PCS NEC
Mark Baker PCS NEC
Jane Aitchison PCS DWP President
Sevi Yesidalli PCS DWP President
John McNally PCS NEC
Danny Williamson PCS NEC
Kevin Greenway PCS NEC
Chris Morrison PCS NEC
Zita Holbourne PCS NEC
Dave Bean PCS NEC
Kathy Liddell PCS Deputy President
Martin Cavanagh PCS DWP GEC VP
Kevin Kelly PCS National VP
Andrew Price UCU NEC
Alan Whitaker UCU NEC
Liz Lawrence UCU NEC
Jim Tahakoordin UCU NEC
Mick Barr UCU NEC
Jeff Fowler UCU NEC
Keith Andrew Mallinson UCU NEC
Rosemary Row UCU NEC
Angie McConnell UCU NEC
Pauline Atienza UCU NEC
Craig Lewis UCU NEC
Dave Hamer UCU NEC
Pam Neild UCU NEC
Roger Bannister UNISON NEC
Jean Thorpe UNISON NEC
Ralph Parkinson UNISON NEC
Glenn Kelly UNISON NEC
John Jones UNISON NEC
Robbie Segal USDAW NEC
...and over 2,500 more.

(all signatories in a personal capacity)

A CENTURY AGO trade unionists and socialists came together to fight for independent political representation for the working class: the result was the Labour Party.

Labour Party

In the past the Labour Party, however imperfectly, provided a voice for the working class. Today, however, New Labour is a party of the giant corporations, its policies a continuation of Margaret Thatcher's attacks on the lives and living conditions of working class people. Public services are being sold off; the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan have led to the deaths of thousands of innocent civilians and over three thousand 'coalition' soldiers; democratic rights are being undermined in the name of fighting terrorism; and the Tory anti-trade union laws, the most repressive in the European Union, have been left almost completely intact.

Solidarity action

At the 2005 Labour Party conference 99% of the trade union votes supported the reinstatement of trade unionists' right to take solidarity action. However, the Labour Party conference no longer has any power. This, and the other anti-New Labour resolutions passed, were immediately brushed aside by the party leadership. At the same time Gordon Brown made it absolutely clear that his future leadership of the party would not represent 'a shift to the left'.

Reclaim Labour?

We believe that the chance to reclaim the Labour Party has long passed and there is no point in continuing to fuel false hopes. Last year's success of the new Left party in Germany, winning 8.8% of the vote and 54 MPs, gives a glimpse of the potential for a new left force. We pledge to do all in our

power to bring a new workers' party into being in England and Wales.

Structure

We believe it would be wrong, at this early stage, to attempt to predetermine the structure or every aspect of a new party. That can only be decided on the basis of democratic debate leading to agreement amongst the forces involved. However, if it is to be successful, it is crucial that a new party, and any pre-party formations, be open, democratic and welcoming to all those who want to work together against the neo-liberal onslaught on the working class. This means that all groups and individuals, provided they are in agreement with the basic aims of the party, should have the right to democratically organise and argue for their point of view.

Reaching out to workers

This approach will help ensure the new formation is attractive to trade unionists, community and environmental campaigners, and anti-war activists. Most importantly it will assist in reaching out to workers and to young people who are not yet active in struggle.

Unite the struggles

In this way we can unite the strongest possible forces to build a powerful working class party that is capable of effectively opposing the anti-union laws, cuts, privatisation, environmental degradation and war.

Camapign for a New Workers' Party

We believe that such a party would represent a fundamental break with the big business parties which currently dominate politics, giving workers the opportunity to resist the neo-liberal capitalist agenda and fight for a socialist programme - including a living minimum wage, full trade union rights and for fully funded, democratically controlled public services.

If you want to support this statement then contact us:

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> 020 8558 7947 > www.cnwp.org.uk