

## X MARKS THE SPOT FOR NEW NATIONAL PROTEST NETWORK

By our roving reporter Peter Pannier.

As the Coalition government brings an end to the belief that the Liberal Democrats represented an "Alternative" to the politics of the last 30 years, and the Labour opposition struggles to escape the party's neo-liberal recent past, disillusionment with politicians - and with 'Representative Democracy' is probably at an all time high. This is before we mention the expenses scandals, or the regular examples of misleading promises and corrupt backroom dealings.

It would seem strange then, if anti-cuts campaigns were to place their faith in the Labour Party - or indeed, in any political party. In Argentina - after the financial crisis of December 2001 and the austerity agendas that followed, a mass movement emerged that chanted as its key slogan "Que Se Vayan Todos" - "They ALL Must Go!" In Manchester last weekend (15th-16th January), a group of people with similar feelings got together to thrash out the shape of a new network that can act against the cuts, and organise for a better future.

The network has since issued two statements. The first statement forms a summary of the network's analysis of the problems we face:

### "Capitalism in Crisis

We live in a time of crisis; economic, environmental and social. This is the normal functioning of capitalism: the shock and misery of crisis, and the shock and misery of "recovery". The economy falters and the majority of us suffer the consequences, the economy is readjusted in the aftermath and it is the majority of us who suffer unemployment, cuts etc. to foot the costs.

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For more information on the articles see the following.

To fight austerity, we must fight capitalism itself.

### The working class pays

Austerity is nothing more than an attack on the living standards of the working class. Class ultimately is not about having a manual job, education level of accent, it is about our relationship with the economy. Either you live off your ability to work now (wages), your ability to work in the future (a student loan) or, unable to work, you are allowed to scrape by on the dole. Those with the wealth and power to be above these "choices" will be untouched by austerity. Instead, we will pay the price through layoffs, wage cuts, attacks on working conditions, cuts to benefits and services and student loan hikes."

The second statement is a call for an Anti-Capitalist section or 'Bloc' on the March 26th "March for the Alternative" organised by the TUC. It reads "The politicians, businesses and banks ARE in it together. The rest of us need to take action on 26th March in London, the financial and political capital."

Arguing that action needs to go beyond an obedient march from A-to-B, the statement calls for people to "Sit down // sit in // don't go with the flow // enough of doing what we are told.

When you act you will not be acting alone. Legal advice, food and shelter will be available."

Whether this new organisation represents just another political group, or an exciting development for the movement, remains to be seen.

For more - including the full statements and information on getting involved see:

<http://networkxuk.wordpress.com/>



Stroud

# Views & Burblings

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## GO DIRECTLY TO JOB CENTRE, DO NOT COLLECT £30 EMA

### AS YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT TOPS X MILLION, GOVERNMENT PUSHES POOREST OUT OF EDUCATION

University and College Union and Association of Colleges Survey finds 70% of pupils would drop out if support grants taken away

#### By Youth Correspondents, Ed U. Cay, Shaun Four, Eve Reewon

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is an of between £10 and £30, paid to 16- to 19-year-olds who stay on in education, on the basis of means-testing. Those with a household income of less than £30,000 per year were eligible.

EMA was introduced nationally in September 2004, and helps with the cost of books, travel, equipment or anything useful to the continuation of learning. Paid directly into pupil's bank accounts, it gives students independence and forces them to take charge of a small weekly budget. It also forces them to attend classes, while there are further disciplining elements contained in the use of bonuses for hard work or good grades. It is worth noting that this bonuses are not comparable in scale to those paid to bankers, and that unlike bankers bonuses, repeated failure is not rewarded and threats to leave the country are not taken seriously.

Official figures suggest that youth unemployment is at an all-time high of 951,000 or 20.3% of those adults under 25 - the highest level since records began in 1992.

Protests against the scrapping of EMA took

#### Lying Politician of the Week - 'No Plan Dave'

Prime Minister David Cameron is wasting no time in engaging in that favourite pastime of political office: Lying. Following on from his broken promise not to raise VAT (covered in Issue 1), this week's Coalition Clanger comes with regard to another three letter acronym - EMA. This time, you can watch Cameron disingenuously claim that the Tories "have no plans to get rid of them" for yourself at a Cameron Direct event held in January 2010: <http://saveema.co.uk/archives/521>

place outside the House of Commons in London and around the country yesterday, as parliament voted by a majority of 59 to scrap EMA. Leeds Trinity University is currently in occupation for the second time, the first of the more than 50 universities that went into occupation in November and December to re-occupy.

Network X - a national anti-cuts network formed last weekend (see back page) is going to be producing a regular Further Education Bulletin. If you would like to contribute, particularly if you are a FE student, email [upcap-tiveminds \[at\] gmail.com](mailto:upcap-tiveminds[@]gmail.com).

Tell the StroudViews & Burblings what you think by emailing [stroudviews@aktivix.com](mailto:stroudviews@aktivix.com)