

Take a Stand

It's time to take a stand against the attacks on our social services. The fight-back needs to come from below. We need to build alliances and join in common cause with all oppressed people who are willing to oppose injustice.

It's absurd that we should have to pay the price of an economic crisis we didn't create. The only way to stop this is through our resistance.



The **NEW SOCIALIST GROUP** is a network of socialists active in community, labour and campus organising. We are committed to working with others to help build the next new left. Find out more about the NSG and read our new webzine!

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May Day 2010
Fight the Deficit-Cutting Agenda!

new SOCIALIST
IDEAS FOR RADICAL CHANGE

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As we mark May Day 2010, workers and oppressed people globally are being forced to pay for the capitalist economic crisis.

In Canada, the crisis has been stabilized by the state but unemployment remains high. Employment Insurance remains grossly inadequate, as does welfare, and the lot of the poor worsens. The threat of corporate bankruptcy has helped employers pry major wage cuts and other concessions from unionized private sector workers.

The state is cracking down on migrant workers while racist scapegoating rises. Indigenous lands and livelihoods are threatened by ecologically destructive megaprojects.

Now we are being asked to sacrifice as governments at all levels impose cutbacks in the name of fighting the deficit. A massive propaganda campaign blames the deficit on high social spending.

But this is just not true. Deficits have grown because of the capitalist economic downturn. Governments sought to prevent a meltdown of the international banking

system, bail out corporations and stimulate the economy. Meanwhile tax revenues fell due to the decline in economic activity and years of generous tax cuts to the corporations and the wealthy.

Now governments think that economic collapse has been prevented. So they think they can get away with claiming the deficit is our problem.

We are being suckered into accepting the "solutions" of capitalists and pro-capitalist political parties. These include cuts to spending on education, health care, social assistance and other government program. More privatization, hikes in regressive sales taxes, higher college and university tuition and more user fees for other public services are also part of the right-wing package.

This deficit-cutting agenda means many more cuts to social programs, layoffs of public sector workers and stepped up attacks on public sector unions.

Whose Priorities?

We need to unite to resist the deficit-cutting agenda.

The state provides and funds services that people need, including health care and education. In response to the threat of cuts, these are increasingly run as if they were for-profit companies. Such services need to

be defended and improved, not weakened.

The state also spends a lot of money on things we don't need. Just think of military spending (including the cost of Canadian participation in NATO's war and occupation in Afghanistan), the \$8 billion spent on the 2010 Olympics, corporate bailouts and payments to bond holders. This kind of squandering of our public dollars should be stopped.

By fighting against social service cutbacks and austerity we are defending our rights and needs.

We should be inspired by the resistance to cutbacks in Greece. Pressured by international capital, the Greek social democratic government has agreed to a package of layoffs, cuts and tax increases that hit ordinary people. But Greek workers have not bowed their heads and meekly accepted this. They have engaged in inspiring actions of resistance including general strikes by public and private sector workers, mass marches and occupations of public buildings.

This starkly contrasts with the lack of mobilization by union leaderships here. The result will surely be more defeats, more cutbacks.

