

**REVOLUTIONARY
SOLUTIONS
2011**

A Manifesto

Revolutionary Solutions

a manifesto

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Revolutionary Solutions
A Manifesto

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Beyond Resistance

This new draft of the Manifesto of Revolutionary Solutions reflects the tremendous changes that have taken place over the last year since the publication of the previous version.

The revolutions of the Arab Spring have joined the growing resistance in the major capitalist countries to the impact of the global economic and financial crisis. As governments struggle to contain uprisings, mass protests, general strikes and student occupations, the challenge is to go beyond resistance.

Each struggle in every country directly and immediately poses the question of taking power out of the hands of the ruling political and economic elites. Not a single step forward can be taken while the power remains in the hands of corporations, investment banks and the state.

The abandonment of the task of halting global warming and accelerated climate change is verifiable proof of this. After the failure of the Copenhagen summit, world leaders went to Cancun in Mexico – and agreed to do nothing. Remaining competitive through cost cutting is the priority and reducing carbon emissions is not affordable, in their terms.

At the heart of A World to Win's strategy is the building of a network of People's Assemblies in every community, town and city to work for a transfer of power away from capitalist states in each country and into the hands of the dispossessed majority.

Like previous versions, this Manifesto is presented for the widest possible consultation in the coming months. We will respond to comments and proposals made and incorporate them into a revised edition.

You are warmly invited to be part of this important project which is aimed at contributing to the development of a strategy whose aim is revolutionary transformation.

Corinna Lotz
Secretary, A World to Win
May 2011

Strategy for a global crisis

The revolutionary upsurge in North Africa and the Middle East, joining with growing resistance to austerity measures in Europe, north and south America and elsewhere in Africa places the masses in every country centre stage as the only force that can shape the future in a positive way.

New organisational forms have appeared in Egypt, Europe and the Americas, notably in Bolivia. They include People's Assemblies as a way of uniting diverse interests in the struggle against existing power structures. General strikes by workers and student occupations have also been widespread.

Ruling classes and regimes, no matter where, understand that their authority no longer strikes fear into the hearts of ordinary people, whether they are held down by dictatorships, exploited by corporate and financial power or are victims of the global recession. Wielding the brutal tools of state repression like the police and army in a desperate bid to impose order only encourages more defiance and outright resistance. These are truly characteristics of a new revolutionary period in world history that is rich with potential. Not only are the ruling classes unable to rule in the old way, they do not have solutions to a series of crises that together constitute a global emergency. This is marked by deepening economic and financial crisis, runaway climate change, growing inequality and hunger and political failure.

The breakdown of traditional bourgeois political systems is nowhere more marked than in Britain, where a coalition government rules without a mandate and imposes the harshest measures on ordinary people. In the United States, the hopes placed in Barack Obama have been dashed by his inevitable embrace of the ruling corporate elites. The Obama administration is pursuing the policies of the previous Bush regime while in Britain, the ConDem government staggers from crisis to crisis. Only the feebleness of the leadership of those resisting the attacks on living standards allows capitalist governments like these to remain in power.

The crises confronting humanity are interconnected. Each feeds the others, reinforcing and deepening the problems facing humanity. In December 2010, in Cancun, Mexico, world leaders abandoned any attempts to tackle runaway climate change. The interests of competition and profit were, once again, put before a concerted attempt to reduce carbon emissions. No single crisis can be solved in isolation, nor by a country acting alone. International solutions are required. The approach has to be: think globally and act locally to create the conditions for universal solutions. Poverty and hunger cannot be ended while political systems from Washington to Nairobi are inextricably linked to upholding capitalism. Drastic cuts in overall carbon emissions cannot be achieved within the capitalist model of production. The drive to war for resources, or the land grab by richer countries, will not halt until the profit system itself is replaced by co-ownership and production for need.

The uneven development of capitalism, shown in the doubling of the world's working class to three billion as a result of Asia's incorporation into the global economy and the rise of Indian and Chinese capitalism, has weakened the old centres of capital in Europe and the United States. Switching production to cheaper-labour areas, far from solving capitalism's problems actually worsened them in the long run. The expansion of production required to overcome falling rates of profit (see section 3) was made possible by the formation of an unsustainable international financial system founded on creating and recycling debt. This is the essential contradiction behind the global economic crisis.

What are required are not-for-profit solutions achieved in struggle against capitalist corporations and governments. The aim has to be to transfer power to the masses out of the hands of the bourgeois classes and their representatives in every country. In practice, this means expropriating corporate assets and turning them into a collectively owned and controlled commons, along with

all natural resources. These would come under the direct management of a network of People's Assemblies (see section 2) that replace existing oppressive state institutions. Through these solutions we can achieve a real and practical unity between the ordinary working people of the developed economies and those in the developing countries. Only in a world free of exploitation and discrimination, where people are not suffering from starvation, can we put an end to terrorism and violence.

The struggle for revolutionary, democratic change to end the rule of global capitalism and its political agencies can only succeed if it is international in scope and appeal. A World to Win in Britain therefore appeals to like-minded individuals, groups and movements throughout the world to work for the building of an international revolutionary alliance.

The global crisis of the capitalist system is certain to deepen, ushering in a period of revolutionary opportunity. The conditions are increasingly favourable. Millions of people in every country no longer believe official propaganda about the virtues of free market capitalism. Equal numbers are disillusioned with political systems that are pawns of big business and finance. Leaders who have held sway with rhetoric and nationalism are losing their grip.

Revolutionary political organisations of a new type should be built internationally to provide the leadership necessary to facilitate this historic transformation of social relations. They will need to learn from history – from the struggles for democracy, national liberation, self-determination, human rights, against Stalinism, for climate justice and for socialism. To succeed, they will have to articulate the needs and aspirations of the powerless majority in creative ways, free from the dogmas of the past, and firmly rooting themselves in the potential of the present.

Revolutionary Solutions

A revolutionary government in Britain would pursue policies to further the objectives set out in this Manifesto, namely:

- ▶ an immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq and Afghanistan
- ▶ an end to British participation in the NATO attack on Libya
- ▶ support for anti-dictatorship movements in Syria, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Burkina Faso and elsewhere
- ▶ an end to the “war on terror”, torture and state-sponsored kidnapping and assassinations
- ▶ support for the Palestinians, the Kurds, Tibetans, Chechens and all peoples engaged in struggles for self-determination
- ▶ technological and economic assistance to developing economies free from conditions formerly imposed by the IMF/World Bank/World Trade Organisation
- ▶ a new United Nations based on a new Charter that represents each member state equally as a step towards a world system of government
- ▶ support for the government and people of Venezuela, Bolivia, Cuba and other countries pursuing alternatives to the market economy
- ▶ opposition to the undemocratic, corporate-dominated European Union and support for alternative non-capitalist Europe-wide models
- ▶ the unilateral destruction of weapons of nuclear and chemical weapons of mass destruction.

2

Claiming democracy for the people

An unholy alliance between the state, political parties, corporate and financial power dominates society in all the major capitalist countries. From London to Washington, from Berlin to Rome, from Tokyo to Seoul, market states are the rule. Democracy is reduced to a sham, a façade behind which real decisions are made and power exercised over ordinary people.

The right to vote counts for little and the aspirations of ordinary people are denied by state systems that primarily function in the interests of big business. The financial meltdown exposed the real power relations in capitalist society for all to see. Bankers lined up for state bail-outs, but working people are having their hours and pay cut, or losing their jobs and their homes. Essential services for all are being slashed.

In Britain, a coalition of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats that no one actually voted for, and that is therefore without a democratic mandate, is imposing the harshest cuts in public spending ever seen. Throughout Europe, other governments have jumped to attention when the money markets have demanded budget cuts. Barack Obama's administration is as much beholden to the banks and corporate interests as the Republicans always have been, confirming that the two major parties are capitalist through and through.

Each state increasingly resembles the senior management team of a corporation, with the prime minister or president acting like a chief executive. Their role is to smooth the way for transnational corporations and banks to operate as freely as possible and to create new markets and profit-making opportunities in areas such as education, health and pensions. In fact, it can often look like an outright merger, with leading lights from the world of business sitting in governments. In the United States, key state posts are held by ex-bankers from Goldman Sachs. Ministers in Britain leave office and within weeks are sitting on the boards of major corporations.

The state is the lynchpin

The state machine and bureaucracy is the lynchpin of the social system of capitalism, holding it all together. It provides the ideological, political, social, legal, educational and coercive frameworks essential for the maintenance of a class-divided society.

Real power, control and influence lie beyond the reach of ordinary people. Authority instead is concentrated in the hands of permanent structures that rule over, rather than on behalf of, society. These institutions can include central and local government administration, the central bank, legal and penal systems, the police, armed forces, secret intelligence agencies, the monarchy and a whole variety of quasi-state bodies and bureaucracies. In major confrontations, like the British miners' strike for jobs of 1984-5, state forces are deployed physically to maintain the status quo. They are used to subvert legitimate organisations and act as *agents provocateurs*. The role of the state is to protect private rights to property, including land, using force as necessary.

The state has control over formative education, setting out what is taught in schools to ensure that the social contract of capitalism – employer and wage earner – is binding and permanent and that the accepted notion of democracy reinforces the status quo. Organised religion plays a similar role while the mass media can be relied upon to sing the same loyal tune. In Britain, the modern state came into existence in the 19th century to enable corporate and financial interests to flourish while keeping society from breaking apart. Private and shareholder ownership of the means of production and property, including land, was enshrined in law. In Britain, a police force was created to maintain the status quo, while the army enforced colonial rule.

After two world wars, in the face of popular, revolutionary anger, a welfare state was built in many countries. It seemed to signal a new era of social harmony, with the state mediating between conflicting class interests. Then, following the economic crisis of the 1970s, a wave of privatisation, spending cuts, anti-union laws and corporate-led globalisation swept all that away. Post-war controls over the movement of finance and production were abandoned and the trade unions shackled. The unregulated, free market capitalism that is now in disarray was brought into being by the US and British states, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the European Union.

Because capitalism is now globalised, each capitalist state has ceded power to supra-national bodies like the WTO and is subject to the demands of the transnational corporations and international finance. When the transnational corporations (TNCs) and bankers say jump, the state does exactly that. In the market/business state we are expected to carry the entire cost of the financial crisis while bankers' bonuses return to their previous astronomical levels.

Globalisation and the state

Political representation developed out of the bitter and long struggle against the ruling classes for the vote and basic democratic rights. In Britain, it led to the creation of the Labour Party and eventually to reforms like the health service achieved through Parliament. In other countries, workers were able to exert some form of influence through their own parties or in the United States through the Democratic Party.

Now this historically important but nevertheless limited form of bourgeois representative democracy without power is in terminal crisis. Globalisation has reduced the national state's power to direct the economy and thus eroded the basis for achieving reforms through elections. It was this process that in Britain transformed Labour – founded to reform capitalism – into an outright capitalist party. Its leaders have shut down internal democracy and transformed New Labour into a party that promotes war and the values of the market capitalist economy. The policies of the ConDem coalition are no more than a continuation of the 1997-2010 Blair and Brown governments.

The British Parliament has failed to protect rights won over centuries, such as *habeas corpus*, the right to a jury trial and access to justice. Nor did Parliament defend the right to free education and health care. The welfare state has been

TRUST

The *Guardian*/ICM poll of five European Union countries in March 2011 confirms the sharp decline in relations between the political class and voters. The survey revealed:

- ▶ only 6% of people across Europe say they have a great deal of trust in their government. Overall, the percentage of those who think politicians are not at all, or not very, honest outweighs those who disagree by a massive 89%
- ▶ only 9% of Europeans think their politicians – in opposition or in power – act with honesty and integrity
- ▶ some 78% of those questioned don't trust the government to deal with their country's problems, with the figure in Britain a huge 80%
- ▶ even fewer Europeans think their politicians are honest. In Poland, only 3% of those questioned agree; in Britain 12%. Overall, a mammoth 89% believe politicians are not honest
- ▶ overall, only 42% of the 5,000 people questioned believe that governments should cut spending to reduce the national debt, while in Britain, more than two-thirds disagreed.

replaced by a profit-driven market state backed by all mainstream parties. Adequate housing is beyond the reach of many because the market has driven prices sky high. Alienation from a political system that is in the pockets of big business is marked by large-scale abstentions at elections and an increasing distrust of governments and/or their ability to deal with issues fairly. In the May 2011 UK elections and referendum, the majority opted not to vote.

It is ironic that in spite of devolution, the British state is more centralised than ever before. Neither the Welsh Assembly nor the Scottish Parliament have brought significant improvements to the lives of their people. Independence will only improve the lives of ordinary people if it is won as part of a transformation of the whole British state and in a way that nurtures and defends the material unity of the working class in every region and country.

Revolutionary solutions

We do not accept that parliamentary democracy is the last word on the subject, whatever the political class claims. Extending and expanding democracy to give expression to what the term actually means – the power and rule of the people themselves – has to focus on building a momentum which leads to the dismantling of the existing state and all its institutions. In its place, the people themselves would develop a transitional democratic state that takes forward the achievements of the last 200 years. It would go beyond representative democracy, which actually dilutes and filters the aspirations of the powerless majority until they are acceptable to the ruling classes.

Democracy can be extended in new ways. For example, all workers should have the right to democracy at work. Co-ownership and self-management should replace the present capitalist hierarchies of worker/manager/owner.

Framework for democracy

A framework for a new democratic Britain could be built around the following ideas:

- ▶ a network of local, regional and national People's Assemblies (see below) with executive as well as deliberative power and control over resources acting within the framework of a Charter of Economic and Social Rights and a Bill of Rights (see below)
- ▶ Assemblies with delegates who reflect the diversity of communities, with distinct voices for: workplaces, women, minority ethnic citizens, people with disabilities, older people, refugees and asylum seekers, young people, trade unions, progressive political organisations, students and small businesses
- ▶ an electoral system in balance with the new participatory system
- ▶ delegates to be paid no more than the average national income and subject to recall and removal by local/regional voters at any time
- ▶ mass involvement in the new democratic process through the Internet and other social media
- ▶ extensive and binding consultation with voters on significant new proposals.

CHARTER OF RIGHTS

A new constitution would enshrine a Charter of Economic and Social Rights based on citizenship for all and should include:

- ▶ the right to co-operative ownership and self-management in workplaces
- ▶ employment for those who can work and average pay for those who cannot
- ▶ the right to a standard of living adequate for health and wellbeing
- ▶ decent housing at affordable cost for everyone
- ▶ free education for students at all ages; the right to free continuing education and training
- ▶ equal pay and job opportunities for women; free child care
- ▶ free health care at all levels
- ▶ dignity in old age through pension provision at average income, and free social care
- ▶ safe and nutritious food at affordable prices
- ▶ rights to live in an environment shaped by ecological care and basic human needs.

The rule of law

We need to take forward what human society has achieved in terms of law while abolishing the existing class-biased framework of private property and the wage-labour contract. A new courts system would involve lay judges with special training. A commission would investigate what laws inherited from capitalism need scrapping or amending in the light of the structure of the new society. The rule of law must prevail in society, with courts and lawyers guaranteed freedom from state interference and pressure. **A Bill of Rights** should affirm in unconditional and positive terms individual rights to liberty and freedom from arbitrary arrest and include:

- ▶ *habeas corpus*, requiring people arrested to be brought to court and charged or released within 24 hours
- ▶ free and equal legal representation for defendants and those challenging state decisions
- ▶ freedom from state surveillance and interception of communications
- ▶ unconditional rights to organise, associate, demonstrate and strike
- ▶ access to information held by public bodies
- ▶ equality in all areas for minority communities

- ▶ the free movement of people based on “no borders” principles.

The existing, **barbaric prison system** should be scrapped. Where it is unavoidable to detain offenders, a new approach would make rehabilitation the priority alongside the protection of society. The bureaucratic, secret world of the police means they are often closer to the criminal fraternity than ordinary people; many vulnerable and innocent people end up serving long sentences for offences they did not commit. Deploying the police to break up demonstrations, arrest protesters and infiltrate movements is part and parcel of their role as a state agency. The present police force should be disbanded and reorganised to serve communities within the framework of the rule of law and a democratic system of justice. In time, as society develops along new lines, the community would be able to learn to control and regulate itself.

The secret intelligence agencies, MI5 (Security Service) and MI6 (Secret Intelligence Service) together with the police Special Branch would also be abolished. The secretive Privy Council, which has powers to impose rule by decree, will be dissolved. The army, together with the navy and air force, presently used to fight wars on behalf of the capitalist state, would be reorganised as a defensive force under democratic control and command. All weapons of mass destruction will be scrapped. The institution of hereditary monarchy would be dissolved and the Church of England separated from the state.

As the state turns more and more to repression, surveillance and foreign wars to maintain its grip, we need to claim democracy for the people. Without a comprehensive revolutionary regime change we cannot breathe new life into democratic achievements and give the right to vote real significance. Each country will find its own path to freeing the people from state oppression and creating new democratic structures that reflect revolutionised economic and social relations. In this way, we would open a new chapter in the history of international relations.

Beyond resistance – building People’s Assemblies

People’s Assemblies can go beyond resistance and struggle for a democratic society based on co-operation and self-determination instead of profit and corporate power. A network of People’s Assemblies will challenge the lie that there is no alternative to a capitalist system in deep crisis.

What Assemblies can do

- ▶ defend communities against closures, evictions, public service cuts and job losses
- ▶ fight for democracy and rights
- ▶ campaign for action on climate change
- ▶ oppose war and the secret state
- ▶ struggle against racism and attacks on minority communities
- ▶ build links with movements internationally
- ▶ create a new democratic society through a transfer of economic and political power.

Q: How will Assemblies come into being?

A: Through local initiatives of people and communities who want to resist cuts, job losses, repossessions, and go beyond protest to build a real democracy.

Q. What is A World to Win's role in setting up Assemblies?

A: AWTW is joining with others to take the idea forward. We advocate the policy of setting up People's Assemblies wherever cuts, closures or strikes are happening, where people are at risk of benefit cuts, and where repossessions or evictions are threatened.

Q: What will Assemblies do to show they are the legitimate representatives of the people?

A: They will have a strong defensive role, as the government launches its attacks. They can learn lessons from others about how to defend communities and individuals. For example, from the movements in the US against evictions, where communities are getting together to stop people being thrown out of their homes when they can't pay their mortgage.

The experiences of Transition Towns which have been encouraging communities to do things for themselves, exploring new ways of living, can provide a source of inspiration.

Assemblies can learn from history – from the Paris Commune, the early Soviets or Workers Councils in Russia, from the Councils of Action in the 1926 General Strike in Britain and the movement that brought down the Berlin Wall, to the struggles in Venezuela and Bolivia today.

Q: How will this be different from the old politics?

A: The Assemblies will involve and mobilise the whole community, including young people, people from minority ethnic communities, small businesses and self-employed people as well as workers from every sector.

They will show by their own actions that there is another way of living, and another way of “being political” that isn’t about money-grubbing and getting expenses.

They will work for education, for culture and a decent life for all. There will be opportunities for everyone to share their skills and talents, and for young people to work creatively and learn. A wide range of people will gravitate towards them. They will embrace different points of view in a refreshing way.

Q: What will AWTW’s role in the Assemblies be?

A: The Assemblies can look beyond a failed economic system towards building a true democracy in place of the sham one we live under now. That is the revolutionary policy we will campaign for in Assemblies.

We will work within the Assemblies to win people to the idea that they should not be talking shops, or just organisers of protests or social support, but start to see themselves as the legitimate representatives of the people, with the right to replace the existing undemocratic structures of both local and national government. This includes revolutionising the Welsh Assembly and Scottish Parliament, which in their present form have dashed the hopes raised by devolution.

EXTENDING DEMOCRACY

A Britain based on local and regional People's Assemblies would aim to democratise society as a whole in new ways:

- ▶ **Co-ownership of resources.** The key areas of productive and financial resources, including land, would transfer from private equity and shareholder ownership into forms of co-ownership. These resources would be held in trust by locally-elected bodies and placed under democratic control.
- ▶ **The workplace.** All workers should have the right to democracy at work, whether in a factory, hospital, call centre, in public transport, civil service, local government, offices, shops, schools, colleges or university. All major decisions would require the consent of the workforce. Self-management would be encouraged in place of top-down control.
- ▶ **Public services.** Users will have the right to be involved in how services are run and what they should do. For example, rail passengers will be in joint control of the network. In schools and universities, teaching and admin staff will work as equal partners with students and parents.

Priority actions

A revolutionary government should:

- ▶ end private equity and share ownership as a step towards social ownership of major corporations and banks
- ▶ abolish the anti-union laws, giving trade unions independence from the state
- ▶ restore basic rights by scrapping the anti-terror laws, database and electronic surveillance
- ▶ stop repossession of people's homes and launch a crash housing programme
- ▶ launch an economic recovery and retraining programme, with average pay for those out of work
- ▶ draw up plans for a People's Convention on the Constitution.

3

Transforming the economy

As the masses in Europe, the Middle East, parts of Africa, China and the USA rise up against the desperate measures taken to save the global capitalist system from collapsing into slump, the world's ruling classes are in disarray. The system of capitalist production is showing itself absolutely unsustainable in social, economic, ecological and political terms.

The financial meltdown that began in 2007 froze credit markets, interrupted trade and led to the shut down of productive capacity worldwide. But, far from being over, the financial crisis has only begun to run its course. Immeasurable mountains of unrepayable debt, tied up in devices that few understand, are still to be written off. World trade has slumped and the year-on-year growth that is the lifeblood of capitalism is out of reach. Global corporations are engaged in a new round of consolidation, mergers and acquisitions that will lead to closing factories and relocating production to lower wage countries. Those still in work are forced to work far harder for less money as the search for profit drives productivity upwards. Huge, worldwide stimulus programmes designed to restart the global economy are ending, leaving massive overcapacity and sending inflation soaring – especially in food and energy.

In the United States, the policy of printing money has spectacularly failed to return the economy to growth. It has fuelled inflation and global commodity

speculation and added to the gargantuan federal deficit. A bidding war between Democrats and Republicans, intended to cut the \$14.3 trillion deficit by a stunning \$4 trillion, would slash health care and provoke nationwide resistance. Credit rating agency Standard & Poor has downgraded its outlook for the US for the first time, a warning that if the government fails to crack down hard enough, investment money will go elsewhere and interest rates will rise. Wisconsin and Massachusetts – led by the Democrats – are among the states passing draconian anti-union laws. Ben Bernanke, chairman of the Federal Reserve, has admitted that the deficit is unsustainable. Gold soared to an historic record beyond \$1,500 an ounce on the news.

Attempts to restart the growth engine with high levels of debt and near-zero interest rates have floundered while sowing the seeds of runaway inflation. Britain leads the world in this respect. In the 20 years between 1990 and 2009, its combined private and public debt soared from two to five times the value of its annual production. Britain is now the most exposed of all the rich, but heavily-indebted countries, ahead of Japan, Spain, South Korea and France.

According to the European Union's "debt league" table, Britain's national debt – the amount the country owes to investors – is the third highest of member states. Britain is just behind near bankrupt Greece and Ireland who together with Portugal have brought the euro to the point of disaster. The Coalition government's savage austerity measures, based on massive cuts in public spending, only add to the recession. In May 2011, the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) forecast that consumer price inflation would reach 4.5% during the year, while real disposable incomes will fall by 1.3% as a result of price and tax rises. The NIESR also suggested that the Coalition's targets for cutting the deficit would not be met, saying: "The weak recovery will feed through to lower tax revenues. That will mean that even if the spending plans are met over the next four years, public sector net borrowing will fall only to 3.6 per cent of GDP in 2015-16 rather than the 1.5 per cent projected by the Office for Budget Responsibility. Likewise, the current budget will then run a deficit of 2.2 per cent of GDP compared with the OBR's deficit of 0.2 per cent. We do not expect the government to meet its target to balance the cyclically-adjusted current budget by 2015-16." This can only lead to further cuts in public spending.

Germany's return to growth supplying heavy machinery to China is dangerously exposed to Greek and Spanish debt through over-extended

banks which have lent 20 times the value of the assets they hold. China's government-funded programme of infrastructure investment has produced more than 50 new cities together with rail and road connections. These are intended to transfer production to lower wage areas, now that workers have become organised in factories producing for Honda, Apple and others. But much of the new capacity remains unused. Despite a series of interest rate rises, inflation outruns the 30% pay increases won by some workers, and is stirring unprecedented unrest.

The social costs of attempting to resuscitate the financial system and restore capitalist production to profitable growth are simply too great to bear, as the experience of Greece demonstrates. A year after an EU bail-out, Greece's hospitals are experiencing severe shortages of beds and supplies while schools can no longer afford cleaners. Disposable incomes have dropped dramatically as wages and pensions have been slashed, taxes have been raised and unemployment has reached a record 15%. Eighteen months after the economic crisis erupted, despite a series of general strikes and increasingly violent protest actions, and with the cost of borrowing rising to an impossibly punishing 25% in April 2011, Socialist Party Prime Minister Papandreou insisted that more cuts were needed to meet deficit-cutting targets. Riot police have been put on continuous alert.

Capitalist logic means that tens of millions more will have to join those throughout the world who have already lost their homes, their jobs and their futures. Their experience contrasts sharply with the renewed enrichment of the bankers and investors whose demands for cost-cutting measures lay behind the environmental disasters in the Gulf of Mexico and at the Fukushima nuclear plant.

Dealing with the crash has drained the confidence from political and economic elites who not long ago were declaring that the world had entered a new "golden age" of limitless, risk-free prosperity. Neo-liberal dogmas about the "free market" now lie in tatters, whilst gargantuan neo-Keynesian intervention has produced minimal signs of success as an even bigger debacle unfolds.

The source of the crash

Though many blame the "greed" of bankers and speculators on the money and commodity markets for the crash, their rise to power was the result of the insatiable demand for credit needed to fund the growth of commodity production and consumption. The real source of the crash is to be found at

the heart of the capitalist system of production, in the “real” economy where labour adds value to the inputs. In capitalist society people are employed to produce the commodities and services which are bought and sold in the global marketplace: cars, refrigerators, trainers, mobile phones, laptops, notebooks, net-books, tablets, food and drink, bus, train and plane journeys.

Only part of the value workers add through their labour is returned to them as wages. The surplus remaining – after the other costs of production are deducted from the income on sales – is distributed to shareholders as dividends, to pay rent to landowners, and as interest to banks and other suppliers of credit. Competition on price requires increases in the productivity of labour which reduces the hours needed for the production of a commodity. So the value, which is determined by the quantity of labour it contains, and hence the price of, and profit from each commodity tend to decline as a result. To offset the reducing profit derived from each ever-cheaper computer or car, more units of each type of commodity must be manufactured and sold.

This is the insane logic of capitalism. It pushes for growth not because it can, but because it must, until the limits of the market are reached, stretched and oversupplied. And then growth goes into reverse. Capacity is idled and then destroyed, while the exploitation of those with jobs increases as costs are slashed. **In the US**, whilst real corporate profits are now near an all-time high, one out of six working people are either out of a job or have no choice but to work part-time. The amount of goods and services produced per worker rose by 3.5% in 2009, and 2010 saw a 3.6% increase, the largest in eight years. At the same time, labour costs – the value of wages and benefits – have seen their steepest decline since 1962-63. This is the result of companies putting the big squeeze on their workers – threatening to cast them into a sea of unemployed Americans if they don’t produce more for the same wages. These numbers tell us that an economy that now employs seven million fewer workers than it did in 2008 can produce the same amount of stuff, but at a great social cost.

According to an analysis of census data by *USA Today*, just 45% of the population now holds a job, the lowest share since 1983. Over the past decade, the number of non-working adults in the US has increased by 27 million. Those who have been laid off and were then lucky enough to get rehired mostly return on worse conditions. In an employers’ market, over half of all full-time workers laid off after at least three years at the same job return to the workforce with lower wages. More than a third of them lose 20% or more of their previous

income. The average length of joblessness among the unemployed is now 39 weeks, shattering the record set during the 1981-2 recession by around 17 weeks. There are about five jobless workers for every full-time opening, but when you include involuntary part-timers, that ratio rises to 8:1.

The limits to credit

The intense speed-up and enforced wage reductions experienced by American workers is but one of the responses to a global economy that was driven by new kinds of credit invented to try to overcome the barriers to growth. These limits had produced increasingly frequent and severe recessions throughout the last three decades of the 20th century and into the new millennium. Following the 1971 breakdown of the post-war Bretton Woods agreement of fixed currency exchange rates and capital controls, an unparalleled expansion of credit and debt channelled through globalised financial markets in equities, currencies, bonds and a multitude of derivative products funded the growth of transnational corporations and the consumer boom, particularly in the US and Britain. The financial system found new reserves of creativity. It learned to recycle debt into new credit in bewildering ways until it appeared that money could be made from money, simply by pressing a few buttons on a computer keyboard.

The global cloud of credit expanded way beyond the value of the productive capacity, goods and services it supposedly represented, engulfing the world in debt. By 2006, around 90% of the world's credit was effectively worthless, sustained as it was by the fiction of endless growth. The boom in foreign currency exchange trading took the billowing cloud of fictitious value beyond measure. But every process has its limits. The credit boom reached its nemesis in 2006 when the first of many people found that they could no longer service their mortgage and credit-card debt. The consumer boom gave way to a downward spiral that ended the dream of continuous credit-and-debt fuelled growth.

With government cuts now biting hard, unemployment is set to soar in every country to and beyond the levels seen in the 1930s. By March 2010, in Europe, the total had soared to one in ten of the working population and it remained at that level throughout the following year. For young people the picture is much worse. By November 2010, in Ireland, the unemployment rate for 15-19 year olds had risen to 36.4%, in Greece 35% and in Spain a stunning 42.8%. A million young people are out of work in Britain and an independent study said that more than 3.4 million were without jobs, a million higher

A VIEW INTO THE FUTURE

Imagine that you are a member of a global society of communities whose citizens work together, co-operating on the land and in the buildings we own to meet our needs for food, clothing, housing, education, health and transport. You haven't got a "job". No-one has a job. There's no employer, nor any employment contract. Your work is a contribution to satisfying the needs of the community. The work you do entitles you to a share of our community's collective product.

The era of global capitalist corporations organising the world's production to maximise profit has been replaced by a system of collectively-owned, democratically-controlled co-operatives. Now the global network of communities you belong to can ensure that the decisions we take are consistent with the continuation of life on the planet. You are not continuously bombarded with enticements to consume more products you never knew you needed. You are no longer addicted to buy-one-get-one-free food products laced with salt, sugar and fat. None of the value you produce is siphoned off for distribution as profits to external shareholders. You are not entrapped by offers of

than official figures, even before the cuts came into effect. In the 17 countries forming the eurozone, joblessness among the young stood at 20.4% in April 2011, up from 14.6% in February 2008, before the start of the financial crisis.

In the United States, the crisis has destroyed almost eight million jobs and 2.8 million homes were repossessed between 2007 and 2009 from people unable to pay their mortgages. Despite claims that the recession had ended in the United States in 2009, repossessions rose by 35% in the first quarter of 2010, against the same period one year earlier, as banks took charge of 258,000 houses and flats - the highest quarterly total ever seen.

Credit-induced, corporate-led globalisation created social inequality and poverty on a vast scale, even before the present crisis. The richest 2% have appropriated more than half of all global wealth. In contrast, the bottom half together hold barely 1% of all global wealth. Despite the crash, there are now close to a thousand billionaires worldwide whilst almost half the world – over three billion people – live on less than \$2.50 a day. The collective wealth of these super-rich individuals is greater than the combined income of the poorest three billion.

Britain under New Labour became a more unequal country than most other industrialised countries. The gap between rich and poor is wider now than 40

unlimited credit. Any surplus is saved for the future or used to target priority needs agreed by the community. You contribute what you can, and get back what your household needs.

Growth now means increasing local production, including the growing of food, with communities reducing their dependence on goods transported around the world, but exchanging fairly those things that cannot be made locally. Low-energy transport systems fuelled from renewable sources carry people and goods from place to place. The issue of money for exchange and credit for investment is controlled by democratically accountable not-for-profit service organisations modelled on credit unions and building societies.

Communities meet regularly to review their needs and plan what they collectively will do to improve lives and the lives of people in other communities around the world. Because you take part in the decisions which are made, you feel and are in control. Your community sends its delegates to regional and national Assemblies, taking part in decision-making at every level.

years ago, according to the National Equality Panel's 2010 report. About 15% of pupils in state schools are now entitled to free school meals. Since 1997, the poorest 10% of households have seen weekly incomes fall by £9 a week to £147 once inflation is accounted for. In 2006/08, half of the households in Britain owned 1% of net financial wealth, while the wealthiest 20% owned 84%.

A system beyond repair

Capitalism is an unsustainable, exploitative, obscene system that is beyond repair and past its use-by date. A handful of for-profit corporations – perhaps as few as 100 controlling everything from food, drugs, cars and energy to finance – have brought us to this emergency in alliance with states and politicians who are there to serve the tiny elite which benefits from the accumulation of capital. We do not advocate regulation as a solution because deregulation was not the cause of the meltdown that has engulfed the world economy. Instead, the inner contradictions of the capitalist system of production are the source, forcing it to expand production, overcoming all constraints. It was this that drove on the deregulation process imposed on national governments by the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Revolutionary solutions

Millions of people already live at least part of their lives on non-capitalist, not-for-profit principles. Some 186 million belong to democratically-run credit unions using members' savings to fund cheap loans. Millions participate in co-operatives of all kinds. Let us build a movement to replace capitalism with a society working along these lines. We could call it a co-operative transition.

In ending the selfish pursuit of profit we will work with others in a global network of revolutionary organisations to restore the health of the planet's ecosystem. A not-for-profit system of production, distribution and exchange will optimise local production for local needs.

Together we will release the revolutionary potential of science, technology and technique to minimise resource use, creating a society based on co-operation, satisfying the needs of all. By replacing the employment contract with co-operative membership we will overcome alienation of people from their work, from what is produced and from society as a whole. Extending these relationships and principles throughout society will allow and enable people to fulfil their potential and aspirations, and make health and well-being the single defining social objective for the world's population.

Solutions: local and global

We should dismantle and replace the undemocratic top-down pyramid of organisations of free market capitalist rule from the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organisation to for-profit lobbyists, credit rating agencies and bottom-feeding loan sharks. New and democratised institutions will take measures to ensure that incomes and the standard of living are progressively equalised around the world.

A democratic world body like the United Nations, but not controlled solely by the interests of big powers and without the massive bureaucracy that goes with it, would debate what global institutions and laws are wanted. The World Health Organisation and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change would make sure knowledge is shared and offer help and aid.

All productive resources would be owned in common, replacing unlimited exploitation and depletion with stewardship of the land, sea, the air and all of the planet's ecosystems. Ownership of the production facilities of the major

corporations will shift from external shareholders to a variety of forms of co-ownership under democratic control operating forms of self-management.

They will encourage and support small-scale enterprises, creative workers and farmers. Property rights in seeds, pharmaceuticals, genes, intellectual products and even water by global corporations will end. Providing assistance, sharing expertise and technology will become the new norms.

Decisions about the extraction and use of natural resources and the optimum location of facilities for the production and distribution of goods will no longer be determined by the market in cheap labour. Instead, the guiding principle will be the equitable satisfaction of needs in line with the restoration and enrichment of the planet's ecosystems.

A revolutionary government will outlaw gambling in the derivatives casino and shut down speculative trading on stock markets, hedge funds and foreign exchange as a prelude to the unification of monetary systems into a not-for-profit global system of accounting designed to equalise the value of labour worldwide.

The entire financial system will be replaced with a not-for-profit network of socially-owned organisations providing essential services. Existing trading platforms and communication networks will become part of a democratically-accountable global system of distribution and exchange. The issue of money needed for exchange and credit for investment will be subject to democratic control. As electronic systems proliferate, digital accounting based on units of labour can replace money.

Local Assemblies will decide which personal debts can be cancelled and which renegotiated. Outstanding mortgages, for example could be replaced by socially-determined payments. All empty properties will be requisitioned and used to house those who are homeless or living in housing that is not fit for purpose.

Priority actions

- ▶ all austerity and spending cuts programmes aimed at appeasing the money markets will be terminated
- ▶ loans made to finance deficits caused by the capitalist crisis will be repudiated as the preparatory step to an entirely new financial system
- ▶ stock markets will be shut down and the majority of shares - those used for speculation by hedge funds and private equity funds - confiscated

- ▶ title/ownership will be transferred in trust to the workers in an enterprise. The remaining individual shareholdings will become non-transferable
- ▶ banks and all financial institutions will be taken over and their operations reduced to not-for-profit services run by committees elected by depositors and workers
- ▶ all mortgage debt will be replaced by socially-determined payment for housing renegotiated according to the ability to pay
- ▶ Private Finance Initiative contracts with the public sector will be terminated. Assemblies will delegate teams to re-prioritise and re-finance development projects
- ▶ surplus income from pension funds, freed from speculative investors' control, will be used to fund the costs of transition
- ▶ all those able to work who are unemployed will be offered a job at the average wage or retraining with no loss of income.

4

Creating a sustainable future

The ecology of planet earth, and human society as part of it, is facing an existential crisis driven by interacting negative trends including:

- ▶ Climate change resulting from global warming, leading to drought, hunger, water shortages and growing conflict over resources
- ▶ An accelerating extinction of species and destruction of coastal, forest and marine habitats, threatening the survival of our interdependent ecosystem.
- ▶ A crisis of power generation due to the decline of oil, resulting in soaring prices and the expansion of the most polluting forms of energy production.

Driven by the need to expand year on year to reward shareholders, capitalism regards all of nature purely as a “resource” to be exploited. And this includes the people who inhabit the planet and labour on behalf of the corporations. The accelerated rise in emissions coincides with the period of corporate-driven globalisation for profit. The food supply has been undermined by climate change but soaring prices are also driven by profiteering, speculation in land and commodities and the search for “safer” investments in the wake of the financial crisis. Food prices rose by 36% in one year (to April 2011) according to the World Bank’s Food Watch, which estimates that an additional

44 million people fell below the \$1.25 poverty line, joining the one billion hungry people in the world.

Salination, excess cold, drought, hurricanes, floods, late and failed rains, forest fires and heat waves, have ruined crops in many parts of the world. High oil prices have raised the price of fertiliser, leading to lower yields. And whole tracts of land and forests are being turned over to production of bio-fuels. Food prices in the UK have risen by 22% over the last three years, the highest rises in Europe. In the UK's entirely unregulated market, supermarkets are cashing in. Tesco's pre-tax profits rose by 11.3% in the year to February 2011. Since 2006, corporations and countries have spent \$30 billion buying up 20 million hectares of fertile farmland in Africa and Asia – an area that equates to a fifth of all the agricultural land in the European Union. Catherine Flax, investment bank JP Morgan's CEO for commodities, admitted in January 2011 that "investors are increasingly looking at physical assets, whether agricultural assets or infrastructure type assets, in part because of the expectations of inflation but also I don't think investors are entirely over the insecurity of the financial crisis".

Food prices were one of the factors in the uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East and the United Nations' top climate official Christiana Figueres gave a dire warning to capitalist nations in February, saying: "It is alarming to admit that if the community of nations is unable to fully stabilise climate change, it will threaten where we can live, where and how we grow food and where we can find water... In other words, it will threaten the basic foundation – the very stability on which humanity has built its existence."

There is a powerful and growing opposition to the law of the market, represented by the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa. Governments of small but determined nations such as Ecuador, are prepared to leave oil in the ground in return for global support. In the leadership of this movement is the Bolivian government. They are pioneering the concept of legal rights for Mother Earth. This idea creatively brings together the material reality of the unbreakable unity of the eco-system with the human ideal of a law-governed society. This cannot be delivered by capitalism, but it is an urgent necessity for our survival as a civilised society that we unite in a global network of People's Assemblies to pass this law and implement it.

Climate change

The total failure to sign a successor agreement to the Kyoto protocol, which expires in 2012, was set in stone at the UN climate talks in Cancun in December 2010. There will be no binding international agreement on emissions reductions. Of course, during the period of Kyoto's existence greenhouse gas emissions continued to rise. The concept of a market in carbon was soon corrupted into yet another area for speculation and profit, and many of the carbon credits were awarded fraudulently. Every country signed up to the Cancun betrayal with the exception of just one – Bolivia. President Evo Morales explained they refused to do so “based on the principle of responsibility and the need to defend Mother Earth, which is under attack from the irrational politics of industrialisation of the developed nations”. He added: “It is unfortunate that the industrialised countries fail to assume their responsibility and expect developing countries like Bolivia to carry on their shoulders the crisis generated by capitalism.”

Since Cancun, **European governments have retreated from pledges** they had made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with Kyoto. Commitments to researching and funding a switch to renewable forms of energy generation have been abandoned. In Britain, the ConDem Coalition dumped subsidies for local renewable energy schemes overnight and plans to abandon legally binding emissions reduction targets put into law by the last parliament. Governments globally have accepted that temperatures will be allowed to rise by +2°C above pre-industrial levels. A study published by the United Nations Environment Programme shows that rises of up to +4.3°C could occur. This exceeds the threshold for many “tipping points”, including the end of summer Arctic sea ice, and the melting of glaciers and the Greenland ice sheet. Sea levels could rise by up to two metres by 2100 and five to ten times that over following centuries.

Some regions, populations and eco-systems are already suffering irreversible effects of climate change. Most affected are the Arctic, where the ice cap is melting; sub-Saharan Africa, where drought, and therefore hunger, is increasing; small islands, like the Maldives, which are losing coastline as the sea rises; and the Asian and African mega deltas, where fish stocks are diminished and fertile land becoming salty because the sea is pushing back into the river deltas. As the final declaration of the Mother Earth rights conference held in Cochabamba, Bolivia, in April 2010 stated: “The corporations and governments of the so-called ‘developed’ countries, in complicity with a segment of the scientific community, have led us to discuss climate change as

BIODIVERSITY UNDER ATTACK

According to the United Nations, the planet is in the worst biological crisis since dinosaurs were wiped out 65 million years ago. The causes are deforestation, marine pollution and the creation of dead-zones as a result of the use of chemicals and the result is:

- ▶ close to 30 countries have lost 90% of their original forest cover
- ▶ coral reefs in the Caribbean have declined by 80%
- ▶ globally 30% of mangroves have been lost in the past two decades
- ▶ 22% of the world's mammals are threatened and at risk of extinction
- ▶ nearly a third of amphibians, one in eight birds, 27% of reef-building corals, and 28% of conifers face extinction.

a problem limited to the rise in temperature without questioning the cause, which is the capitalist system.” Attended by 25,000 people, the declaration added: “Humanity confronts a great dilemma: to continue on the path of capitalism, depredation, and death, or to choose the path of harmony with nature and respect for life.”

The protest movement, represented in Britain by Climate Camp, the Climate Justice Network and other direct action groups, faces a dilemma.

They have learned that neither popular support, nor direct action, will shift governments on climate change. The state will not listen, but will spend millions to “listen in”, planting police agents in organisations. Transition Towns’ experimental and innovative localism is producing some important lessons that can be built on. But the Transition Town movement is now debating whether local food markets and energy initiatives can truly make a difference in the face of government and corporations pulling in the other direction.

Fukushima and the energy crisis

The on-going crisis at the four Fukushima reactors, damaged in Japan’s devastating earthquake of March 2011, has forced many governments to halt plans for new nuclear power stations – at least for the time being. There were numerous cover-ups by Tokyo Electricity & Power Company prior to the earthquake and tsunami. Anti-nuclear campaigners in Japan called regulation by the government’s trade department “an amiable fiction”. And in Britain, a leaked report to ministers admitted that in February 2011 there were two spillages of radioactive waste – at Sellafield and Torness – and a breakdown of

an emergency cooling system at Hartlepool.

The other factor in the nuclear equation is the availability of uranium. Mining uranium wrecks the health of miners and their families and leaves land polluted and useless. At current levels of use there is about 80 years supply of uranium remaining in the world – not all of it so easy to get at. A massive expansion of nuclear is not feasible. But nuclear provides around 15% of Europe's energy, and with older nuclear power stations coming to the end of their lives, the problem is how to keep the lights on, never mind fuel a fresh round of profit-driven commodity production. Under these circumstances you would think a massive shift to renewable forms of energy would be underway but you would be wrong. Instead, the oil and gas companies are finding ways to tie three or four more generations in to fossil fuels.

The Obama administration has just given the go-ahead for an expansion in coal mining on federal land, enough to raise the country's annual climate pollution by more than half. And major oil companies, facilitated by governments, are pushing ahead with the polluting process of extracting shale oil from tar sands. Drilling for new oil and gas in deep water and extreme conditions, such as in the Arctic and in the Gulf of Mexico, has already had devastating results in Alaska and in the Deepwater Horizon explosion and leak in the Gulf of Mexico. Shale gas from rock deposits is potentially a massive new industry. Governments are being charmed with promises of freedom from dependence on imported oil or coal and emissions reductions without the effort of developing renewable power. But a report from Cornell University shows that far from reducing carbon emissions, this form of natural gas releases 30-50% more methane into the atmosphere than conventional natural gas.

Revolutionary solutions

Sustainable production

A central part of creating a healthy and sustainable eco-system is the need to break the tyranny of profit-driven production relationships. We need to develop an entirely different approach to production, based on recognition of the unbreakable relationship between meeting our needs and the health of the eco-system as a whole.

Through a new commonwealth, and democratic, not-for-profit forms of ownership and management people can agree the goods and services they need to live life to the full. Associated producers can set prices that include the costs of meeting high environmental standards and providing a social surplus for vital public services – but no private profit. (See section 3 for more detail)

Technology in the service of capitalism adopts a one-sided approach, setting out to create new processes and bring new products to market, with minimal concern for wider social or environmental impacts. In a not-for-profit society, technology will serve a social purpose. No novel technologies or new products will be rushed into production without extensive testing of their environmental and social impacts. The focus of innovation would be recycling everything; even revisiting materials dumped in the past could be beneficial. All enterprises will be required to take back the products they sell at the end of their life for recycling. In a networked world, the waste of one product can be offered on-line to become the useful material for another product.

Transport

In the UK, 27% of carbon emissions come from transport and this continues to grow as car use increases and public transport is limited to that which is profitable. A low emissions transport strategy is about fundamental economic and social change. Existing work patterns have people travelling long distances to get to work or to buy goods. A transformation of our cities and of people's working hours, is essential.

A new generation of planners will put the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first, discouraging individual car use, in favour of urban rail and tram links. Between transport routes, cars can become the new buses, with car sharing and car pools for occasional use.

Communities will consider what flights are important and what is not. Business conferences, importing cheap flowers and out-of-season vegetables will not be needed, leaving scope for people to explore each others' countries and have new experiences, using a personal allocation of air miles.

Renewable energy

Research published in the *Scientific American* (November 2009) shows that renewables like wind power can meet 100% of the world's energy needs (not just electricity) and that it is technically feasible to do so by 2030. A European Environment Agency report found that potential wind power amounts to more than three times projected demand for electricity in 2020 and seven times projected demand in 2030. And that could be achieved with existing technology and without covering the entire landscape with wind farms. Offshore wind power alone could meet between 60% and 70% of projected European demand for electricity in 2020 and about 80% of projected demand in 2030. This is without taking into account the reduction in energy requirements that would result from properly insulating existing buildings and ensuring new ones meet higher standards. We can achieve all this in Britain by putting energy generation and use under democratic control, creating decentralised local or small regional, energy supply co-operatives.

Food and land

The food we eat is responsible for an eighth of our carbon footprint and the UK exports the same amount of food as it imports, adding to carbon emissions solely for the purpose of profit.

In the West, an uncontrolled experiment of feeding the population highly processed food has caused serious neurological and physiological damage, and an explosion of heart disease, obesity, diabetes and behavioural and psychological problems. Common ownership of land in every country is absolutely vital, with farmers' rights protected. But at the same time, that does not mean an immediate end to people's right to hold land and use it – either individually or co-operatively. A framework for land use will protect people's right to continue farming. This must be a local and community-based framework, not a handing over of land to the state. The concept should be of a new Commonwealth.

A handful of transnational agri-corporations, seed corporations, commodity speculators and supermarkets monopolise the food chain. They exploit

MODEL FOR COMMUNITY-BASED ENERGY GENERATION

- ▶ Combined Heat and Power plants (CHP) to provide electricity, heating and cooling. This will enable waste heat from one building to be used in another that needs it, rather than going to waste
- ▶ anaerobic digesters transforming the community's waste, to create bio-gas to fuel the CHPs
- ▶ combining decentralised CHP with solar thermal panels for providing hot water and photovoltaic arrays, plus using the storage capacity of the ground itself to make the whole community a clean, de-carbonised power station
- ▶ rural and coastal communities forming community owned not-for-profit energy generating co-operatives to benefit directly from the harnessing of wind, wave or tidal power from within their communities for exporting to urban communities, through unobtrusive cables to reduce grid losses
- ▶ formation of not-for-profit co-operatives of architects, construction workers, suppliers and product makers, creating all new buildings with energy efficiency as the main driver, not pushed to the margins
- ▶ crash programme of insulating all existing homes, and firms to achieve agreed standards of insulation and energy efficiency for offices and factories. The firms would participate fully in the energy strategy for their district.

producers and consumers alike. Corporations like Monsanto, Wal Mart, Glencore, Tesco, Syngenta and Cargill have to come into collective ownership, and be run by partnerships of employee-owners, suppliers, farmers and consumers. Farmers and natural scientists can then work together to develop solutions to the problems formerly solved by the application of herbicides and nitrates, leading to impoverishment of the soil and the crop.

Essential to sustainability is that composting becomes a structured part of social life. Returning waste to the soil is a concrete recognition of the unbreakable cycle of life. It will also re-establish the essential link between town and country, consumers and producers. Discouraging industrial-scale meat and dairy production and encouraging diets high in grains, vegetables and fruit would reduce greenhouse gas emissions while improving human nutrition and lowering health costs. Locally-sourced food must become the priority wherever possible. The system of Green Belt land in Britain could

include an expansion of allotment land, to encourage local food growing. These new commons would be sacrosanct for use by the community for ever.

Biodiversity

An unprecedented destruction of species is taking place just at a time when natural scientists are providing more and more evidence of the interdependence of the eco-system, and the extent to which the survival of genetic diversity is the key to human survival. The UN's Bio-diversity treaty, with all its flaws, could dramatically improve this situation – if ever it was implemented. But the process is going in the opposite direction with the market now embarked on what we could call “remaindering”, where formerly uneconomic land, mineral deposits and fossil fuel deposits have now become valuable commodities to be dragged out of the earth at any cost.

The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, proposed at climate change talks in Bali in 2007, established a copyright-free global seed bank to protect the widest possible range of seeds so that we can respond to climate change. But because it includes WTO rules, the corporations are taking materials freely given by countries and transforming them by seemingly insignificant modifications into private property.

The rights of farmers to reuse seed and develop their own seed appropriate for local conditions are being destroyed. As the organisation Via Campesina, which represents peasant farmers from across the world, states: “This is a contradictory and ambiguous treaty, which in the final analysis comes down on the side of theft.”

This manifesto supports the Bolivian government's proposals for a binding global treaty recognising Mother Earth Rights. This will protect the rights of indigenous people, who live in wildernesses or other tribal lands, for all time and make the patenting of any plant species illegal. The only equitable way of halting climate change is through contraction and convergence. We need a democratic global forum to plan to halt the growth in emissions and to mitigate the impacts that are now inevitable. They would draw on all the expertise represented by climate scientists, world food and health experts and support each others' development towards self-government and economic independence.

Priority Actions

- ▶ close London's carbon trading exchange
- ▶ fund insulation grants and solar panels for all households where suitable
- ▶ bring rail, air and bus networks into not-for-profit ownership, slashing fares and working for an integrated transport system
- ▶ take cars out of city centres with park and ride, and create public transport/cycle-only boxes in the centre of cities
- ▶ establish car pool schemes and car sharing schemes
- ▶ set upper limits on total flight miles in and out of Britain and distribute them fairly through an air miles system; halt airport expansion
- ▶ halt plans to build a new generation of nuclear power stations
- ▶ launch a crash programme of renewable energy projects.

Freeing culture and education from profit

Access to culture and education is under attack in an unprecedented way, especially in Britain. The right-wing Coalition government has slashed public spending on the arts and imposed soaring tuition fees on students in England and Wales.

Due to the economic downturn, sponsorship from local business has declined. Major and minor arts organisations have become more dependent on banks and oil corporations such as Merrill Lynch, HSBC, Getty and BP.

And while corporate sponsorship in the US is held up as a model, it costs around \$20 (£12) simply to set foot into major institutions like the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Broadway theatre tickets can cost hundreds of dollars. The US shows that reliance on business sponsorship is associated with politically and artistically conservative programming, less diversity and lower public access. Also in the US, members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra have taken a 22% pay cut after a six-month strike while the famous Philadelphia Orchestra has filed for bankruptcy. In England, national institutions such as the Tate galleries are now charging over £15 for their latest shows.

Young people in Britain took a stand against the Coalition when they took to the streets in December 2010 and occupied places of learning around the country in protest at education cuts and the rise in tuition fees. College and school students walked out against the abolition of the Education Maintenance

Allowance and against the imposition of higher fees. Students of all ages by their actions challenged the mainstream agenda, which is to turn everything into a commodity for sale.

Student assemblies turned to the community at large for support against cuts, supporting calls for permanent, city-wide people's assemblies. Many sought to link up with the uprisings led by young people in Tunisia, Egypt and the Middle East. Discussions began early in 2011 about the right to education, its very nature, and how to connect students with the broader movement to oppose cuts. That movement to defend the right to education now coincides with a more general reversal of access to education and culture – a “death by a thousand cuts”.

The last 20 years saw many arts projects spring up, encouraged by funding from the National Lottery combined with the vision, energy and enthusiasm of thousands of talented people. Public access widened through the abolition of museum admission charges. Cultural centres were begun or expanded in Belfast, Salford, Nottingham, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Swansea, and most recently Margate – places which had seen nothing but industrial and social decline since the 1970s. In any case, many of the poorest areas of Britain such as parts of the North-East, Midlands, Scotland and Cornwall have never experienced the benefits of “regeneration”. Community-based arts projects, theatres and dance studios have been sustained by a combination of lottery grants, local council funding, fundraising, sponsorship, volunteers and dedicated professionals. They often survive on a financial shoestring.

Over past years, cuts in funding from government and especially local authorities have made arts bodies increasingly dependent on business sponsorship and volunteers. Spending cuts will decimate many of the achievements of the last decades. They affect not only existing institutions and arts bodies but will drastically reduce the cultural level of generations to come. The way in which the cuts will widen the gap between the “haves” and “have-nots” is described as “cultural apartheid” by writer-director Richard Eyre.

The attacks on culture include:

- ▶ a £23m cut (29.6 % reduction) in the Arts Council of England budget which has resulted in around 200 organisations losing all funding
- ▶ local authority funding cuts with the poorest 36 councils taking an 8.9% hit
- ▶ between 600-1000 library closures

- ▶ an average overall 25% cut in education spending
- ▶ 40% cuts (£2.5 bn) in university funding (with an 80% cut in teaching budgets)
- ▶ introduction of £8,679-a-year (on average) university tuition fees, with some even higher.

In addition other factors are reducing access to education and affecting arts spending. These include:

- ▶ sky-high charges for student accommodation. A year's stay at a London Hall of Residence can cost more than £5,200 per year. A single room may cost up to £330 a week
- ▶ diversion of resources to the Olympics
- ▶ a decline in business sponsorship to the arts
- ▶ the soaring cost of admission to both "high" and "low" cultural activities from sports, music and arts events to museums
- ▶ local authorities selling off artworks left as inheritance not to the state, local or national, but to the people of an area
- ▶ cuts in public transport subsidies which will make cultural centres inaccessible to many people, especially in rural areas.

These public sector cuts give more influence to the giant commercial "cross-platform" conglomerates and media empires such as Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation – the second largest in the world after Time Warner – and companies like Endemol, which is responsible for reality TV such as Big Brother and has 80 companies in 26 countries.

The savaging of education and art institutions by the state is countered by the mushrooming of new, largely independent forms of communication and creative production. The rise of the Internet, with its social networking platforms, has enabled talented people of all kinds to reach wider audiences for music, film making, writing, photography and other forms of art. Digitisation, file sharing, open access library and museum catalogues are transforming appreciation and making new forms of expression possible. As the recession bites harder, increasing numbers are reaching out to many forms of cultural activity. Membership of organisations like the National Trust has shot up. Attendance at art exhibitions, music festivals and concerts is growing significantly. There is a hunger for an alternative to shopping and commodity fetishism.

The role of creativity

Human creativity occupies a special place within late globalised capitalism, the era of the image conveyed through an all-pervasive mass media. Culture is an integral part of the system, while simultaneously enabling us to look beyond it. But in today's world the commercial, profit imperative is stripping away all notions of liberal, humanist education and the provision of culture in general. Many students involved in the protests to defend their right to education were aware of this contradiction – that they were fighting to defend an education system that in itself does not meet their true aspirations. Universities are now managed largely by groups of narrow-minded businessmen who think their role is to turn out fodder for the corporations. As a result a movement for open schools, free universities and pioneering approaches to learning is springing up across the country alongside the struggle against the cuts.

The new generations have it in their power to liberate the creative drive from the profit-hungry conglomerates, not only in the arts, but also in technology, science and sport to open a new chapter in the development of human culture. By widening out public access, education and training, what has been until now “high” culture will stop being the preserve of the privileged minority and belong to all. Living the life of a full-time performer or artist, unlike that of many other professions, provides an inspiring model of how a human being can work in a way that is fulfilling and creative. Creative work shows the potential of human existence free of exploitation and the need to make profit for a boss.

The special role that cultural workers and performers occupy, their ability to inspire people, enables them to give a powerful impetus to social and political transformation. The unique quality of creativity gives some exceptionally gifted people the power to call the shots for change. The corporations need this Midas touch of talent to transform humdrum goods into something appealing to make people part with their money and, they hope, share a little of the limelight.

We appeal to all artists, writers, educationalists, musicians, performers and content creators, sports people, designers and scientists to go further: help liberate and expand the scope of your creativity by ending the prison of capitalist social relations that blights culture in pursuit of profit.

Revolutionary solutions

Cultural workers – artists, musicians, actors, film makers, writers and technicians – create the products that generate the revenues of the media conglomerates which dominate much of culture. It is only right therefore that workers in the media and entertainment industries, organised in their associations and unions, should own, control and manage these resources in collaboration with consumers. The experience of making art, crafts and writing should be freely available to all. A thriving culture should provide access to art activity as part of everyone's life.

Education and access to culture should be a social and political right. People value education for many reasons that go beyond the possibility of better pay and the values promoted by the present system. We reject the business-corporate agenda which sees education as a form of investment rather than essential to a truly civilised, human existence. Teachers, students, parents and local communities should be involved in how education is run, without depending on religious, state or commercial interests.

Resources must be available, in a non-exploitative way, to widen the scope of cultural output. Film makers, artists, theatre producers and writers should receive public funding so that they can work on a much wider range of issues even if they do not have an instant mass appeal. In the music industry, for example, a small group of artists are exploited, heavily promoted and frequently destroyed in the process, while the majority have to struggle for access to a wider audience. A socially-owned industry would provide the conditions for greater variety as well as the development of music itself.

The handfuls of publishing houses that dominate the industry similarly block the emergence of new writers and poets because they are not deemed profitable. This deprives the public of access to new literature. Co-operative forms of ownership would benefit everyone. Intellectual property rights – which at present are used primarily by corporations to maintain profits – could be phased out as creators and users arrive at mutually-beneficial arrangements.

Through the Internet countless people participate collectively in the creation of new content at many different levels. We oppose commercial or state interference with servers and social networking. Control and distribution of content should be agreed between creators and users, democratically mediated by professional bodies.

Instead of state or government bureaucracies, independent public subscription bodies (such as the BBC and the National Trust) could become a new model to fund or subsidise arts organisations. Artists and cultural workers would then be able to work free of ideological pressures and open or hidden censorship. Local Assemblies could be expected to set aside funds for musicians, film makers and other artists. Museums and galleries are not luxuries to be starved of resources on a political whim. They and their staff, including conservators, need to be generously funded, especially outside the major cities, and seen as a vital part of everyone's existence. Special exhibitions often charge prohibitive entrance fees and must be made affordable. Art collections currently held by the monarchy will be taken into public ownership.

The running and management of arts institutions should be democratised, and run with the participation of living artists and performers. The art trade should be freed from the grip of the global auction houses and corporate dealers and placed in the hands of existing not-for-profit national and local arts bodies. Great masterpieces should no longer be bought and sold for vast sums but transferred to public collections.

Existing cultural facilities, including local and national centres, trusts, and self-organised bodies such as studios, orchestras, cinemas, film clubs, arts festivals, theatres, and exhibition areas would be developed and expanded. Free training to different levels could be provided in different areas of the arts and crafts such as film-making. Architects would be encouraged to work on sustainable buildings, creating high standards in housing for ordinary people, and in designing public spaces to improve the quality of life in city and rural areas. Trade skills such as construction, joinery, decorating, plumbing, electrics, would be recognised as crafts and be taught, trained and valued in that way.

Public, open air and street art including theatre, sculpture, dance, music and murals would be encouraged. Each community could provide space for artists' studios. Music recording and film studios would be provided for musicians, film makers and community projects.

Cultural workers would be financially supported by local Assemblies and publicly-funded cultural committees. Minority languages, dialects, literature, arts, crafts and traditions, such as those of the Roma people, should be supported and encouraged to prevent their loss from society in Britain and other countries. Those with rare and unusual skills could be encouraged to train new generations. All aspects of education – from pre-school to university,

special needs and adult education – are at the very heart of transforming society from the social inequality of today to a truly democratic one. Rather than a return to a paternalistic state-run or business model for education, we advocate the right to high-quality education as an essential part of moving to a new social arrangement.

Sport

Sport has been transformed and sucked into the orbit of the global corporations. Rampant commercialism is the name of the game. In football, the top clubs are owned by billionaires and run as corporations. Clubs like Manchester United and Liverpool are weighed down by huge debts used to turn them into sources of revenue for investors. Teams and individual players and athletes have been transformed into brands for maximum global exposure. Every aspect of the new brands is then exploited for money. Top performers earn more money for themselves (and their sponsors) as brands than they do as sportsmen.

Governing bodies have become ever more accommodating to the private bodies that profit out of sport. Advertisers, sponsors, agents, merchandisers, equipment manufacturers, PR and media companies and the owners of the clubs, including the new billionaires in football, now control everything from the kick-off times to the price of seats. Live sport is increasingly in the hands of subscription channels like Sky, denying access to the majority. Football fans find the seats unaffordable and their loyalty to the club spurned. More money can be made by creating corporate boxes and by encouraging the better-paid middle classes to become the new fans.

The biggest money-spinner of all is the Olympic Games. The costs of the 2012 Olympics to the British taxpayer are likely to reach around £10 billion, including a contingency fund, with security alone estimated at £1 billion. Hundreds of thousands of CCTV cameras will allow security personnel to follow individuals through the city. The RAF and the Navy will be deployed with missiles and drones. It is rumoured that the Met Police are planning to use remotely-controlled spy drones. Television rights for the London Games are being paid in billions of dollars. The games themselves, paid for by the people of the host city and country, become devalued and tainted as the setting for corporations and others to make a killing.

Sport for all

Below the elite level, sport struggles. Local authority leisure centres have been sold off. Most state schools are unable to provide good sports environments. Local clubs operate with little support from government or involvement with the community.

Alternatively, on a not-for-profit basis sport can lead to a transformation of lives, with mass participation and a return to sporting codes and behaviour. Resources would be diverted to the grass-roots, to local clubs, schools and universities. The priority would be the free provision of resources such as playing fields and sports venues. Cultural and sports centres would be opened in areas where they have been closed down or where few are available, with the help of funding from local Assemblies.

Sport would be encouraged and resourced at all levels, creating the conditions for democratically-controlled sports clubs, on the model of Wimbledon AFC and United FC of Manchester, where the people who care about the game, own it and run it. Nobody would be allowed more than one share. Sports administrators would become responsible to the fans, the players and the local community.

Children would have the right to learn a sport, with parents, teachers and coaches involved in the development of their potential if they showed an interest and an aptitude. All schools would have playing fields and sporting facilities. The problem of obesity and lack of fitness would be tackled through these changes in the profile of sport. Adults would be encouraged into sport. Clubs and sports halls would be attractive and affordable. Sports stars would be encouraged to help with the building of a sports culture to help change attitudes on diet and drinking. A people's Olympics would be organised without commercial sponsors.

Priority actions

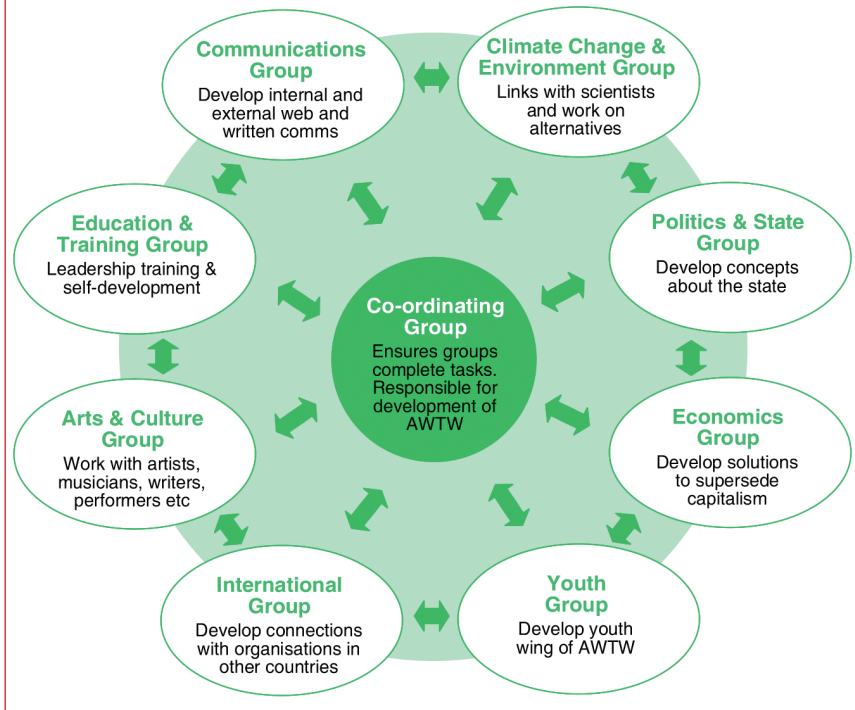
- ▶ halt all cuts in spending on the arts, sport and education
- ▶ unite student, teacher and lecturer campaigns against closures, sackings and poor quality education with the community at large through People's Assemblies
- ▶ occupy universities, libraries, arts venues, community arts projects and places of learning which are threatened with closure
- ▶ develop alternative, independent schools, teach-ins and free universities

run by students, lecturers, teachers and parents

- ▶ scrap university fees and provide low-price accommodation for students
- ▶ democratise culture and communications. Set up a network of media collectives to challenge the corporate media
- ▶ reduce admission prices to affordable levels for heritage sites, botanical gardens and stately homes
- ▶ retain and expand music, art, language and humanities courses at schools and universities
- ▶ re-form football clubs, to be owned and managed by supporters' clubs and associations in partnership with players and local communities.
- ▶ transform the Olympic Games into a People's Olympics, free from corporate sponsorship and influence
- ▶ encourage and finance sport for all, in schools, clubs and localities.

A new type of organisation...

interactive | networked | group structure | transparent | democratic
ICT intra-communications | outward looking | effective leadership
flexible | learning | non-dogmatic



6

A democratic organisation

Our priority is to win support for the strategic aim of a transfer of political and economic power from the ruling elites and classes into the hands of the majority in each country. We will take forward the historic struggles for democracy, human rights, self-determination and socialism.

A major challenge is to think about what kind of organisation could be built to guide the struggle for such revolutionary change. A new organisation has to inspire people to take on the big tasks and become leaders in their community, workplace, school, university or town.

And at the same time, we need an organisation that can draw on the most up-to-date knowledge in every field - and where people feel they can contribute to make a difference in the areas they are passionate about. It must be both a leadership organisation and a democracy, with a constitution that defends members' rights.

Technology gives us the opportunity to be profoundly networked, not just nationally but globally. It creates opportunities for consultation and voting. But it must also be an organisation that meets, discusses, argues and inspires using art, film, drama, music and social events. Revolution can't only be in virtual space, it has to happen in actual spaces too!

Our aim is to build A World to Win (AWTW) into effective membership, group-structured, networked organisations internationally that can inspire and offer leadership to the movements struggling against global capitalism and its consequences. Membership is open to all those who agree with this objective and support the policies outlined in this manifesto.

Membership of AWTW ensures that members have the opportunity to participate actively in the decision-making process. Members will pay an agreed regular subscription to help fund the organisation's work and campaigns.

AWTW will encourage and participate in all initiatives that encourage self-emancipation and independence from the state, such as the Transition Town movement and groups that struggle for community improvement schemes. We will support and take part in demonstrations, pickets, lobbies, direct actions, strikes and occupations. AWTW will aim to show how these diverse struggles express aspirations that lead to a struggle for power itself against the state which can only be achieved by mass, co-ordinated action.

Group structure

We propose a democratic, interactive, organisational network with specialist groups responsible for developing theory and practice in key areas. From the outset, we would need to focus on Climate Change/Environment; Arts and Culture; Education and Training; International issues; Communications; Trade Unions; Economy; State and Democracy. Members may belong to any Group(s) of their choice and can suggest the creation of other groups.

Each Group carries out a programme of research/analysis and policy/campaign development as well as detailed work in relation to areas like education, health and housing.

Policy and campaign proposals go to the Co-ordinating Group for wider debate and discussion by all AWTW membership. Group members have the right to minority positions and to have them circulated throughout the organisation.

All materials developed by specialist groups will be posted to appropriate digital locations on sites maintained by the organisation. Each Group will elect two of its members to represent them on the Co-ordinating Group.

Co-ordinating Group

The Co-ordinating Group is made up of the elected representatives of each group together with the Secretariat and meets at least monthly. All members of AWTW have the right to attend and speak at meetings of the Co-ordinating Group. The agenda and any documents are made available in advance and decisions circulated to all members.

The Co-ordinating Group will formulate the strategy for the development of the organisation, including education and training. A dialectical, non-dogmatic approach to theory and practice will be encouraged and developed. The Group will co-ordinate research, proposals, campaigns, policies and action across the Groups, deal with membership issues and communicate the organisation's policies, campaigns and proposals.

New policies will require a two-thirds majority of the membership as a whole before they are adopted. Once agreed in this way, they are binding on all members.

Elected by AWTW conference, the Secretariat is responsible for the day-to-day running of the organisation. It is accountable as well as subordinate to the Co-ordinating Group. The secretariat is made up of: chair, secretary, assistant secretary, treasurer, communications editor and may co-opt other members.

