! EMERGENCY !

NHS EMERGENCY NHS

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LEFTUNITY

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Millions of people are waiting longer than ever before for hospital treatment as desperately needed operations are repeatedly delayed. Elderly people are lying on trolleys in corridors for hours, some have even died there, and in some hospitals nurses have had to be allocated to corridors! Emergency ambulances are sitting for hours outside A&Es because of bed shortages; hospital managers have been pressurising staff to send patients home early. It's a nightmare.

## CUT TO THE BONE

Senior NHS bosses (appointed by the government and its accomplices) are expected to submit positive reports despite the public seeing the worrying truth with their own eyes. As a result, fiddling statistics and inventing stories has become 'just part of the job' for NHS managers. This behaviour is helping to destroy our NHS, and in the meantime, people are dying.

The truth is that spending on the NHS is growing more slowly under this government than at any time since records began in 1955. Next year spending will actually drop by 0.6%. Already the UK spends a lower percentage of GDP than comparable countries and we have considerably less hospital beds per head of population.

Research recently published by the Royal Society of Medicine shows that there were 30,000 excess deaths in 2015, reporting that 'failures in the health and social care system linked to disinvestment are likely to be the main cause'.

## MONEY IS THERE

The government can always find billions of pounds to spend on war – the Tories, UKIP and Labour all recently voted to replace Trident at a cost of £205 billion.

The government have also been happy to cut taxes for the super-rich, to allow tax evasion on an enormous scale, and give huge tax discounts to big companies who have tax debts. The government has bailed out the banks with billions of our money, and simply printed extra money when it suits them, calling it 'quantitative easing'.

The NHS itself is wasting millions by diverting money to the private sector due to the huge increase in privatisation and tendering, particularly through Private Finance Initiatives (PFIs). Multinational pharmaceutical companies are holding our NHS to ransom.

And on top of all that, overpaid management consultants are allocated hundreds of millions of pounds of NHS money to plan ever more cuts and privatisation: STPs (so-called Sustainability and Transformation Plans) which are written and overseen by private companies, appointed by Jeremy Hunt's Department of Health.

## PEOPLE VS PROFIT

The NHS is a beautiful idea and an example of how society should be run for the people – it's an example of socialism. That's why we love it, and why the capitalist establishment hates it and is mutating it.

Tony Blair (in particular) brought the market into the NHS, and the Tory coalition government's Health and Social Care Act accelerated the process to the point where £8.7 billion of the NHS budget is now spent on private providers every year. This will inevitably increase with the Tories, UKIP, right-wing Labour and the EU all supporting so-called free trade agreements (like CETA and TTIP) that would further open up our public services to private companies.

These private companies act like vultures looking for easy pickings. In the case of the NHS they deliberately target the running of risk-free services with cheap labour costs, leaving areas of the NHS such as A&Es and acute services to the state.

However, when the Tories, UKIP and right-wing Labour want your vote they shamelessly pretend to support the NHS. Before the last election, David Cameron said 'the NHS is safe in my hands'. The right-wing of the Leave Campaign claimed leaving the EU would provide money for the NHS. Despite this, the truth is sometimes openly revealed; Paul Nuttall (speaking before he was made UKIP party leader) said the NHS was 'a monolithic hangover from days gone by', adding 'I would like to see more free market introduced into the NHS … the very existence of the NHS stifles competition'.

It would be welcome to see Labour taking the Tories to task over the NHS, but they are unable to. Despite great speeches from Jeremy Corbyn, the party leadership is hamstrung by its policies and previous record. The last Labour government (to its credit) hugely increased NHS spending, but it also introduced privatisation and PFIs which partly prepared the way for the current disaster that's unfolding.

## MIGRANTS UPHOLD OUR NHS

Hospital cleaners, ancillary staff, nurses, doctors and other clinicians have come from overseas to work in our NHS, looking after the sick and elderly. To blame the problems of the NHS on migrants (and so-called 'health tourism') is simply racist, and undermines the hard work they provide. Migrants use the NHS far less than people living here already; they are younger, they work, and they pay taxes. Blaming migrants is in the tradition of blaming junior doctors for not working anti-social hours. It's also in the tradition of blaming single mums or the disabled for receiving 'benefits'. It's the kind of lies we get from the Daily Mail and other haters.

**LEFT UNITY** is proud to stand in solidarity with migrants and with all NHS staff.

## MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Aneurin Bevan (founder of the NHS) stated 'The NHS will last as long as there are folk left with the faith to fight for it'. That faith is at the heart of the health campaigns springing up in towns and communities across Britain. This is fast becoming the biggest movement in recent times, and **LEFT UNITY** is at the centre of it.

Health Campaigns Together, which initiated the 4th March demonstration, is helping give a lead, and the health unions have supported too. We all need to strengthen this diverse movement; we need determination, imagination and tenacity from our campaigns, communities, unions and political parties.

Together, let's save our NHS from the emergency created by this savage government.

## SAVE OUR NHS!

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