

Scottish Socialist Party

**Keep chasing the councillors!
THE BATTLE CONTINUES!
UNITED WE CAN WIN!**

**Scottish
Socialist Party**

**20's
PLENTY
IN A CLASS!**

The Scottish Socialist Party whole-heartedly supports and applauds the movement of parents, carers, communities and kids against the massacre of our schools and nurseries by New Labour.

The SSP has been involved at the heart of the Save Our Schools Campaign from day one – helping on the ground to organise protests, petitions, lobbies of councillors, public meetings, the 1,000-strong St Valentine's Day Unity Demo, the massive opposition movement expressed through the consultation meetings, and countless other protests.

The SSP strongly believes unity in action is the strength of any movement.

The unity and coordination of working class communities against closures through the city-wide Glasgow Save Our Schools Campaign has played a huge part in putting the councillors on the run. That unity needs to remain at the heart of this battle.

The Glasgow SOS Campaign is open to all parents, carers, school/nursery staff and community campaigners who want to defeat this blatant exercise in cost-cutting – at kids' expense – by the Labour council.

And the SSP will continue to help others build united action until the councillors retreat.

The battle is far from over. Don't be conned or brow-beaten into thinking it's a done deal, that protest is pointless. Far from it!

No final decisions have yet been taken. There are plenty of examples from the past where people's power has stopped school closures – for example, Edinburgh 2007, Glasgow in the mid-1990s.

The arguments and action taken already against closures has rocked the complacent Labour councillors, who had hoped they could quietly sneak through the closures and save £3.7m a year by shutting down 25 schools and nurseries – whilst handing over the same amount (£3.7m) to a bunch of property speculators! *continued on back*



PUBLIC MEETING - all welcome

Monday 23rd March 2009

@ 7.30pm

@ Piper Bar (upstairs), George Square

FIGHTING TO WIN! UNITING TO SAVE OUR SCHOOLS!

- learning from past and present schools struggles

Speakers: Glasgow parents; Council worker;

Jim McVicar (former SSP councillor who occupied schools in 1990s);

Sarah Higgins (Edinburgh school student in defeat of 2007 closures);

Richie Venton (SSP & Glasgow Save Our Schools Campaign)

Scottish Socialist Party - Save Our Schools

SHOCKED AND ROCKED!

The council was shocked by the scale of fury that erupted. They were rocked by the size of the Unity Demo on St Valentine's Day – organised by the Glasgow SOS Campaign. It is no coincidence that days later they tried to intimidate school staff with threats of disciplinary action if they dared to speak to parents fighting closure. That is a brutal suppression of free speech that the SSP and broad-based Glasgow SOS Campaign will not tolerate. Nor should the unions. Apparently it's alright for staff in receiving schools to speak in favour of the council's proposals at consultation meetings – but staff facing closures and cuts to jobs are gagged! That dictatorial attitude shows the Labour council is desperate!

When parents turned up at the City Chambers to peacefully hand in petitions, the Council called in van-loads of police! Clearly the actions of a council that is panic-stricken at the level of fury they have stirred up – which should only encourage us to keep pounding them.

KEEP POUNDING THE COUNCILLORS!

When Labour councillors have bothered to turn up to the consultation meetings, they have mostly tried to hide in the crowd, letting well-paid council officials that are unelected and unaccountable to anyone take the flak.

But when the councillors have been singled out, named and shamed at these meetings, they don't have a single argument to justify the closures. And some of them have not only squirmed under questioning by people directly threatened by the closures, but tried to mutter their sympathy. Keep pounding them – they have yet to vote on the closure plan, so the battle is still to be won!

Labour councillors – and councillors from any other party who are less than firm in their opposition to the 25 closures – will have to weigh up whether it's worth risking their full-time wages by facing delivery of their P45 from the voters in future elections!

That's where the Save Our Schools Campaign comes in. Already these councillors are well aware of the monumental scale of opposition. The more we can keep hounding them at their surgeries – bombard them with phone calls, letters and emails – and mount massive demonstrations on key dates like the 17th April when the City Council Executive meets – the more we keep up a united, city-wide, coordinated protest movement, the greater is the chance that enough Labour councillors will buckle and vote against closures.

In the run-up to 17th April the Glasgow SOS Campaign and local school campaigns will need to keep pounding councillors with pressure. But if by then there is no sign of them conceding the demands of the vast majority of the people,

then other forms of action will need to be taken.

Members of the SSP have a long track record of fighting school closures – often winning!

In 2007, when the Edinburgh city council – which is controlled by the SNP and Lib Dems (NOT Labour this time!) – announced closures of 22 schools, school students led a revolt involving parents and communities. The new SNP government was so compromised by the actions of SNP councillors that in the face of public protests they stepped in and forced their councillors to reverse the closures. Scottish Socialist Party members were heavily involved as students, parents and community activists.

In the mid-1990s, when Glasgow Labour council announced closures, SSP members were at the heart of the Save Our Schools campaign, which protested, petitioned and marched against closures – but also built up community support and occupied the school buildings to save them from the Labour Axe-wielders. And we saved most of them!

SCHOOL OCCUPATIONS

Occupations of schools can take the form of short protests that help highlight the injustice of the closures through media coverage. An entirely justified method.

But indefinite occupations may also be necessary before final decisions are made – to publicly demonstrate that we are going nowhere – that the council can't just move in to bulldoze the school and sell off the land for lucrative housing deals – or convert the buildings into some other form of income source. The more coordinated such steps can be – through the existing umbrella of the Glasgow-wide Save Our Schools Campaign – the more effective it is likely to be.

The battle is still there to be won!

Councillors are more vulnerable now than they were in the 1990s; they now rely on voters for a full-time councillor's wage, not just a partial payment like in the past. The fact that some of them now say they will oppose LOCAL closures (when they voted to recommend them in January!) is a sure sign of the pressure we have put them under.

But they must not be allowed to get away with the old cynical trick of voting against LOCAL closures, but FOR the closure of the rest of the 25, in the knowledge that Labour's 46:33 majority can survive such self-interested gestures to the voters in their own area. They must be hounded into voting against ALL the closures.

Nothing has yet been decided by those who make the decisions – the councillors – SO WE CAN WIN IF WE REMAIN UNITED IN ACTION.

SSP says: Stay united! Keep piling pressure on the councillors! Demand investment in local community schools! No staff cuts! Cut class sizes - not kids' education - 20's plenty in a class! Join the SSP and fight for your future!

**JOIN THE GLASGOW CITY-WIDE
SAVE OUR SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN**

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Join the SSP - the party of public ownership, solidarity and socialism

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