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AGAINST COPS – AGAINST MANAGEMENT TIME TO UNITE

The student movement is rising. Not yet on the scale of 2010, when tens of thousands protested, occupied, and invaded Tory HQ at Millbank, but more and more are resisting the corporate offensive on our campuses.

University management are using a funding crisis caused by the Coalition government to push through the wholesale corporatisation of our universities. Behind everything we are campaigning against here in Bloomsbury – the worsening exploitation of contract workers and academic staff, the shut-down of ULU and the privatisation of the student loan book – lies the government's austerity agenda.

A minority of students have resisted – and faced immediate repression. Five students were suspended in Sussex – before mass student pressure saw them reinstated. Here in London over 30 students have been arrested, and police brutality is becoming normalised. Now they have tried to put the whole university on lockdown – and we've come to show

our solidarity with our fellow students, our commitment to education, and to defend our right to protest.

University management and the police have gone on the offensive for two reasons: firstly, the window of opportunity they have to trash our universities is narrow. Either university managers go for broke now, or their long-term plans for market-led education will be curtailed. Secondly, and critically for us – management sniffed weakness on our side, picking up on the isolation of a radical minority from the general student body. A minority of students, however radical, can and will be broken. All they fear is mass action: a re-birth of the student movement.

Both to protect ourselves, and defend our universities, we must win the battle for hearts and minds across campuses. To achieve this we must defend our right to engage in direct action – but also argue for action on a mass scale. Police underestimated the loyalty of our academic staff who have given their support, and the solidarity

amongst students – proven by our presence here today. That's a strong base on which to build.

Therefore, we call for a renewed focus on building a mass movement now, in which a broad range of tactics are welcome. In order to build unity throughout the student body and wider society, we must also establish greater unity amongst ourselves – that means overcoming the divisions between national and so-called 'local issues'. The exploitation of the workers represented by campaigns like 3Cosas and Justice 4 Cleaners is part of a national attack on workers affecting every community in this country; just as the sell-off of student loans threatens each and every current and former student in this country.

A new chapter of resistance is only just beginning. But there is now, for the first time since 2010, the serious prospect of a win – because there is the will to fight. We need a London-wide student assembly early next term to help make this happen.