

NO CAPITULATION

WHY WE SHOULD REJECT THE DEAL

by Des Freedman and Vladimir Unkovski-Korica

The deal reached between the employers and UCU negotiators to end the pensions strikes is a huge blow to thousands of university staff who are determined to fight for fair pensions. We should reject the deal and lobby the Higher Education Committee of UCU to show the same commitment to our futures as the ordinary members who have thrown themselves into this dispute.

The deal will mean lower pension payments, increased staff contributions and, perhaps most disastrously, only a temporary reprieve for the 'defined benefits' scheme as the deal will be reviewed in three years when the employers will be able to come back with the same arguments that the scheme is 'unsustainable'.

The deal also encourages members to reschedule classes lost due to the strike action even though they will already have had pay deducted for taking action.

We do not have to accept that this is all we can win. Our union is in a strong position following ten days of strikes and the recruitment of thousands of new members in just a short time. UCU members have made major sacrifices, financial and other, to turn out, often in cold weather, to fight the onslaught on our pensions.

We've seen mass pickets everywhere, great enthusiasm, and a feeling that we can stop the neoliberal degradation of higher education.

We have strong student support as witnessed across the country with students visiting picket lines and occupying in support of our strike as they connect our struggles with their own opposition to the commodification of education.

There has been a growing list of university vice-chancellors breaking ranks with UUK which has forced UUK to abandon its initial hard-line 'no negotiations' stance. Vice chancellor salaries are now the laughing stock of the whole country while we have even forced mainstream media and politicians to recognise that we have a legitimate cause.

Local branches across the country are mobilising to call on the national leadership to reject the deal. Get your local branch to do the same. The fight is far from over and we are not ready to concede the initiative to the employers.

This is a deal that has already angered a huge number of UCU members. At the time of writing #NoCapitulation was trending and it's not hard to see why.

**LOBBY THE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE FROM 10AM,
TUESDAY 13 MARCH, UCU, CARLOW STREET, LONDON NW1 7LH**

COUNTERFIRE