

NEVER TRUST A POLITICIAN.

WHETHER RED, YELLOW OR BLUE.

Many voters feel disappointed, maybe even betrayed, by Nick Clegg and the Liberal Democrats. Leading up to the general election Clegg presented himself as a progressive voice and as an alternative to the two major political parties. But when it came to the crunch not only did the Lib Dems support the Conservative bid for power, but Clegg and his party are now behind widespread attacks on welfare, cuts in pay and redundancies for public sector workers. This shouldn't, however, come as a surprise. Clegg is only following the example set by every politician before him – making sure the state guarantees the future

stability of the capitalist system, even if this means betraying the voters.

The nature of parliamentary democracy means that it's the capitalist class who always call the shots. They control the media, investment in trade and finance, millions of jobs, even the value of the currency itself. By capital flight (companies choosing to invest their money elsewhere), business can ensure that any government which becomes too independent and starts to consider the interests of those who elected it will be put back into its place. We shouldn't expect a different group of politicians to react in different ways to the same institutional influences and interests.

For all his attempts to put himself forward as an "alternative" at election time, Clegg ultimately gained power because he represents the best interests of the business world. In 2004 for example, Clegg was a contributor to **The Orange Book**, a Lib Dem policy paper that stressed the role of the free market, i.e. privatisation, in reforming public healthcare, pensions, the environment and local government. It should be



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of little surprise that not only is the pro-free-market Clegg now in power, but four of the five current Lib Dem cabinet ministers were also contributors to **The Orange Book**.

Any politician, whether red, yellow or blue, would be carrying through the same cuts, privatisations and austerity measures the market demands. After all, let's not forget that it was Labour, not the Lid Dems or the Tories, who were hastily privatising the NHS, cutting benefits and pay AND signed the cheque for the billion pound bail-out of the banks while in government. In Greece it's the "socialist" government, elected in the wake of the December riots, which is carrying out a massive and vicious programme of cuts and attacks on the living standards of working people.

We need to stop blaming this or that politician and realise that it's the whole system which is rotten. Only by taking action ourselves, not putting our trust in leaders or officials, can we hope to push forward real change. We need direct, self-organisation of working class communities to fight this wave of cuts. Only then can we start to push back and push even further still for radical change, working towards a world governed not by profit and greed but organised for human needs.

- **Anarchist Federation (Sheffield)**
<http://yorks-afed.org>
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Organising for Resistance



<http://www.afed.org.uk>
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The Anarchist Federation is a growing organisation of like-minded people from across the British Isles who aim to abolish capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal world, without leaders and bosses, and without wars or environmental destruction. Day to day, our individual members and local groups are politically active in many workplace and community struggles.

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