

## STOP BENEFIT SANCTIONS, STOP ABUSE OF CLAIMANTS

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**The Labour government introduced the National Insurance Act in 1946 which was an insurance scheme designed to ensure that everyone in Britain enjoyed financial security whether unemployed, disabled or in work: security for all.**

**2010 saw the election of the most pernicious government ever seen in Britain.** It has been dismantling the welfare state, including social security, by stealth. The present government is speeding up this process.

It changed the language from 'social security' to 'benefits' to make it appear that payouts on claims are gifts to the claimants. Social security is an insurance claim. The premiums we pay

are our National Insurance contributions and we can claim from this scheme when we fall on hard times, such as if we lose our job or become unwell. Insurance claims are not benefits.

**The government demonised claimants with the help of their friends in the right wing media. The stage was set for them to put in place a punitive regime for claimants, culminating in sanctions where minor breaches of arbitrary rules result in people having their entire income stopped.**

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### ***What's with WRAG?***

Employment Support Allowance (ESA) is paid to people who cannot work for health reasons. There are two groups: the Support Group and the Work Related Activity Group (WRAG). The WRAG is for people who are presently unable to work but may be capable of some form of work in the future - but to be clear, they are **not** yet fit for work.

The WRAG regime for claimants is demanding. Those who cannot cope with this regime due to their health condition or for any other reason, if they are, say, 2 minutes late for an appointment or don't reply to a letter from the DWP that was never sent, they will be sanctioned.

This means they will lose all of the money they need to live on. 64% of sanctions have been served on people with mental health conditions or a learning impairment causing major distress and harm.

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### ***SANCTIONS KILL!***

**David Clapson tragically died after being left without the money he needed to manage his diabetes having been sanctioned. He was receiving Jobseekers Allowance at the time.**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-28864294>

**There have been many deaths since the the government began the process of dismantling the welfare state which includes social security. Even for those in work, lack of financial security is a feature of life in Britain today. Why do we continue to accept this?**

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