


# Morning Star

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## Kill predators? Not today

SOLOMON HUGHES on the weakness of Labour's pro-NHS rhetoric: p8



Could debut of Tyrannosaur mark a sea change in British cinema?

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# BBC BOSSES TO CULL 2,000 JOBS

## Thompson announces 20% budget cuts as result of coalition settlement

by John Millington

BBC bosses wielded the axe at 2,000 workers yesterday, threatening to decimate the public broadcasting service with cuts to key programmes.

Under management's Delivering Quality First proposals BBC budgets will be cut by 20 per cent in an effort to find savings of £670 million a year by 2016/17 — on top of £30m savings which are to be generated by exceeding targets for the service's existing efficiency programme.

Director general Mark Thompson said the plan meant "stretching efficiencies and significant job losses," adding: "It's my judgement that this is the last time the BBC will be able to make this level of savings without a substantial loss of services or quality or both."

Media unions expressed outrage over the statement with both the NUJ and Bectu condemning the decision.

Technicians' union Bectu general secretary Gerry Morrissey said the pro-

gramme should have been called Destroying Quality First.

"They are destroying jobs and destroying the BBC," he said.

Mr Morrissey accused Mr Thompson of doing the government's "dirty work" by making such big cuts in spending and jobs, accusing the corporation of "salami slicing."

NUJ general secretary Michelle Stanistreet said the situation was unsustainable pointing out that the BBC had already shed 7,000 jobs since 2004.

"This is a watershed moment in the BBC's history — the reality is that the BBC will not be the same organisation if these cuts go ahead," she said.

"You cannot reduce budgets by 20 per cent and pretend that the BBC will still be able to be a world class broadcaster. Quality journalism and programming is inevitably going to be diluted.

"If the BBC presses ahead with these changes strike action across the corporation seems inevitable."

The union also expressed concern that

the areas under attack include news, local radio, regional current affairs and the Asian Network — services which are "core" to the BBC's public remit.

The union called for the licence fee deal to be re-opened and a proper public debate to take place about BBC funding, given the "close relationship between the government and Rupert Murdoch at the time the deal was done."

"We are asking [the BBC] for reassurance that this consultation process will be transparent, independent and genuine," the union said in a statement.

NUJ parliamentary group chairman Austin Mitchell MP said the cuts were a consequence of "the dirty deal between Murdoch and the Tories."

He added: "A vicious licence fee settlement and the imposition of the World Service costs have forced the BBC to this act of self-destruction. It's time for the government to save the nation from this by easing the licence fee stranglehold on this great British institution."

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### CUTS MOOTED SO FAR

The BBC HD channel to be closed and replaced with an HD version of BBC2

All new daytime shows to be moved to BBC1 with more repeats on BBC2

Less original radio programming

Cuts to comedy on Radio 2 and 5 Live

Fewer lunchtime concerts on Radio 3





Hague-Livni talk anger

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10 years and still on a march for freedom

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Butt accused of link to Test betting scam

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