George Orwell’s book 1984 was a work of fiction about a Britain where its government monitored and spied on everything its citizens said and did.

The government has now made that a reality. The state is now able to carry out surveillance on an industrial scale. The authorities can now listen to telephone calls and read emails. They can also access computers or mobile devices regardless of encryption and items stored can be altered or deleted. They can access documents, diaries, contact books, photographs, messaging chat logs and GPS location records. They have the power to access all internet browsing histories and what is typed in to a device, including login details and passwords. Draft documents and deleted files can also be accessed and the microphone, webcam or GPS based locators can be turned on. The surveillance state collects information about everyone, without regard to innocence, guilt or consent.

You know the NHS is in crisis, the public knows even the head of NHS England knows but Theresa May refuses to acknowledge the fact.

UNISON head of health Christina McAnea said: “It’s quite clear from the evidence that the government’s claim to have ‘protected’ the NHS is a sham. Theresa May and Jeremy Hunt need to start listening to those who run and work in the NHS, and stop pretending that this latest crisis will soon pass.

“More money may not solve all the health service’s problems, but it would take huge pressure off hospitals creaking under the strain.

“It’s no exaggeration to say that every part of the health service is at breaking point, with delays and blockages in one part of the NHS creating headaches elsewhere. Sick people stranded on trolleys in corridors, ambulances stuck outside A&E departments unable to handover patients, and the elderly trapped in beds they can’t leave because there’s no cash to pay for their care at home.

“The fact that it still continues to treat and care for most patients effectively and safely is a tribute to the staff working in the NHS who get on and do their job day in and day out. Simon Stevens is right to say we’re falling behind comparable countries and this is made worse by the complete lack of a national strategy to deal with and fund social care.”

UNISON is calling for an immediate emergency injection of cash into the NHS and a genuine cross-party approach to tackling long-term social care funding.
Salary Sacrifice Schemes

Many staff are using the Trusts salary sacrifice scheme for cars or electrical goods. From 6th of April 2017 the government is changing the rules on salary sacrifice.

Tax savings will be removed from all new salary sacrifice schemes after that date except: pensions, childcare, cycle to work and ultra-low emission cars with emissions under 75 grams of CO2 per kilometre.

Employees enrolled in a car salary sacrifice agreement, before 6 April 2017, will be protected until the end date of their agreement, or until 5 April 2021, whichever is sooner.

For all other schemes the protection runs until the end date of the agreement, or until 5 April 2018, whichever is sooner.

Work Related Tax Relief

A number of claim handling companies are offering to claim work related tax relief for NHS staff, for a fee of course.

You can claim this tax relief yourself for free. UNISON has produced a tax relief claim form for members to use.

Don’t pay for a service you can do yourself for free.

Full details at
https://benefits.unison.org.uk/all-benefits/