CAMDEN LABOUR BRIEFING

NEXT MEETING: DEFEND UNILATERALISM
SPEAKER: KEN LIVINGSTONE
Monday 17th July 8.00 pm
Basement Study Room, The Town Hall NW1

JULY 1989

Vauxhall Reselection

Martha Osamor received more nominations than anyone else for the Panel of Candidates in Vauxhall. Three Branches, the Women's Section and Women's Council, and three Trade Union Branches. **Kate Hoey** received one nomination, and this from a meeting attended by SDP MP John Cartwright! **Martha Osamor** was not even included on the shortlist drawn up by the NEC. **Kate Hoey** is now the official Labour Party candidate, imposed on Vauxhall by the NEC. **Kate Hoey is right-wing. Martha Osamor is left wing, and just happens to be black.**

Roy Hattersley to the NEC:

"If there was ever anyone who has been used by extreme elements, it's Martha Osamor. She's a simple woman, of that sort. She could never have got elected to Parliament."

Ken Livingstone told *Briefing*:

"Hattersley might as well have added, 'But I did offer her a job cleaning my house.' "

THE DISTRICT HOUSING OFFICE STRIKE

NEW REALISM IN PRACTICE:

The DHO strike need never have happened. The DHO staff had been attempting to negotiate with the Labour group since November of last year when 14 posts were cut. The Council have refused to open discussions with NALGO from the very beginning of the dispute, and actually provoked the strike by suspending 5 members of staff who were taking limited action against the Council's refusal. The suspension - which was over the refusal of workers to process Right to Buy applications - has led directly to over 100 DHO workers coming out on strike. Their only demand has been that the Council should open negotiations on the basis of extra staff to meet the 30% increase in workloads.

Obviously, this demand was too much for the **new realists** who have had control of the Council's Housing Committee for the last two years. The strikers have been subjected to an hysterical campaign of villification and abuse, and the localised dispute has spread into other Departments.

The DHO workers are more aware than anyone about the scale of the housing crisis in Camden. It is the DHO workers who have to deal with the day-to-day problems of housing management, repair and rehabilitation work, overcrowding and stress. They are on strike not only for themselves, but also for the Council tenants who have been the victims of neglect. Both the workers and the tenants are aware that it is no longer possible to square the circle of increasing demand and decreasing resources.

Camden Labour Briefing has supported the DHO workers from the beginning. We would urge other Party members and community organisations to add their support to the strikers.

* Invite a NALGO speaker to your local meetings
* Hold collections for the hardship fund
* Send messages of support to Camden NALGO
* Demand that the Labour Group negotiates
* Join the picket lines at the District Offices

LIFE ON THE TITANIC #1

Former Chief Whip Alan Woods accuses former Housing Chair Gareth Smyth of threatening to blow up the Labour Centre in Camden! **Camden Labour Briefing** understands that the allegation refers to an anonymous call made to the Labour Centre during a visit of Sinn Fein Councillors to the Borough. Both Councillor Woods and Councillo Smyth have been extremely robust in demanding disciplinary action against members who 'bring th Party into disrepute'.

LIFE ON THE TITANIC #2

The Regional Executive of the Labour Party has ruled that 'there was a clear miscarriage of justice' when anti-cuts Councillor Adrian States was suspended from the Labour group. **Camden Labour Briefing** has ruled that **all** cuts are a clear miscarriage of justice.

CAMDEN YEAR OF ACTION ON IRELAND:

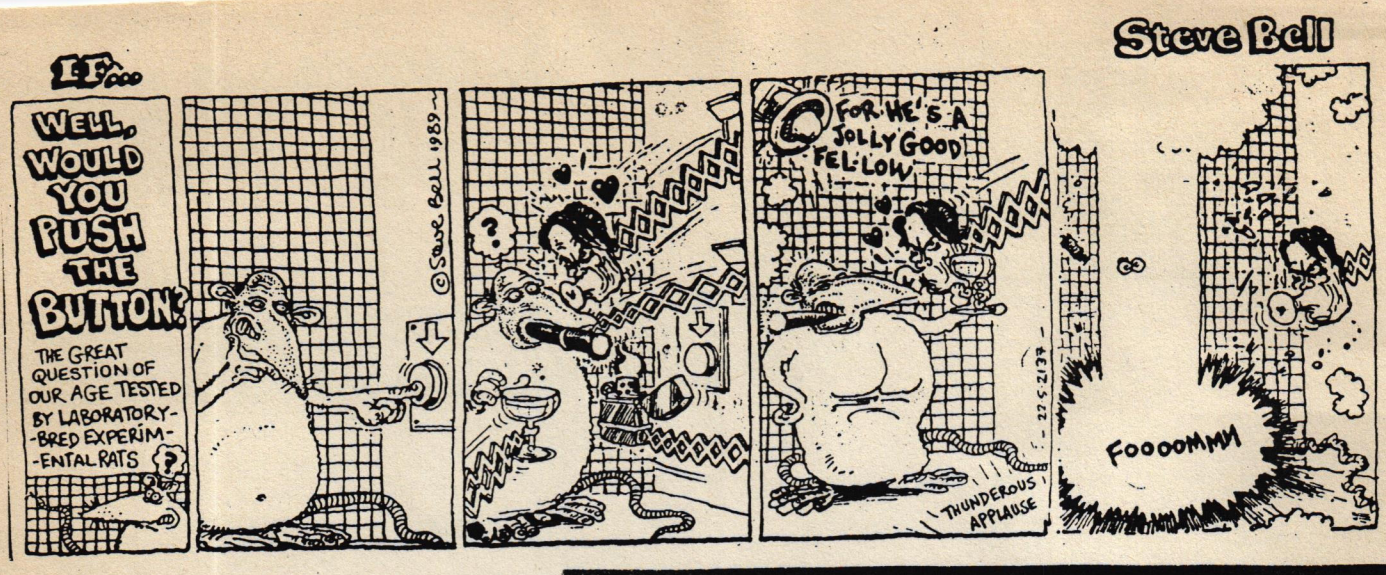
PUBLIC MEETING

Monday 3rd July 7.30 pm
Camden Irish Centre
Murray Street NW1

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:
SINN FEIN COUNCILLORS



p&p Camden Labour Briefing c/o 24 Godwin Court NW1



LIFE ON THE TITANIC #3

Camden Labour Briefing would like to thank all members of the Labour group for involving the local Parties so fully in the Group elections. This continues a tradition that began in 1986 when Tony Dykes came to power in Camden by over-turning the decision made at a joint meeting of the Group and the Party that Kate Allen should be leader of the Council.

Local Government

Camden Labour Group

The worm turns?

In a dramatic and largely unpredicted vote at the Camden Labour Group AGM on 8th May, the hard right were virtually wiped out in the contests for leadership positions and Committee Chairs.

LCC councillors and their allies were thrown out as Chairs of Housing, Grants, and staff. The right's challenge to the leadership and other positions collapsed, and by the end of the meeting, the LCC and their supporters weren't even bothering to put themselves forward.

Councillors Hulme, Smyth and Wakeham were the most notable casualties, although the right did hang onto the Group Chair.

What makes the result startling is the fact that less than a month ago the Labour Group were taking disciplinary action against the left-wing Manifesto Councillors because they had refused to endorse either rent increases or the cuts budget.

A number of these very councillors are now Committee Chairs and hold key positions within the Group and the Council.

The shift in allegiance by members of the Council leadership probably owes as much to exasperation at the antics of the right-wing as any change of political direction on their own part.

By Steven Taylor
Hampstead & Highgate CLP
(personal capacity)

The right have adopted an openly confrontational attitude towards industrial relations and have seemed to relish implementing the cuts. In addition, their attitude towards the leadership has tended towards the dismissive.

The price of their arrogance has been a refusal of other cuts councillors to continue to back them. The results of the AGM were largely unpredicted because there had been no policy change on the part of the Group.

There have been no statements or initiatives that indic that the more "moderate" c councillors are about to char their strategy of compli with central government.

The marked shift towards left probably owes as much the right's incompetence as the left's ability to mobilise su port for a policy of resistanc central government.

The fact remains howe that the surviving members the Council leadershi re no dependent on the le l of su for their legitimacy — the l failed, mistakenly I believe run anti-cuts candidates either leader or deputy, and on six councillors abstained — b also for their ability to mana the Council in the twel months leading up to Poll T the impact of the Housing A privatisation, and the run-up the local government electio in 1990.

It will be a measure of th left's political strength to se how much progress it can mak in getting other members of th Group to adopt a strategy whic offers an alternative to com pliance.

CAMDEN STOP THE POLL TAX CAMPAIGN

GRAND POLL TAX BAR-B-Q

Sunday 17th June 4.00 pm
St. Martins Gardens, St. MartinsPlace
(off Camden Street) NW1

Register your real opposition to the tax by burning Registration Forms.

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8.00 pm
BASEMENT STUDY ROOM
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DEFEND UNILATERALISM ° Speaker: KEN LIVINGSTON