CAMDEN LABOUR BRIEFING

NO CUTS, NO RATES RISES

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST RATE CAPPING MUST START NOW

Today's Borough Conference should determine the strategy necessary to defend jobs and services, and to defeat the Government's rate capping.

The campaigning proposals from the Labour Group against rate capping should be wholeheartedly supported. However the "Budget Strategy" document seems to be written by an accountant, not a socialsit, and should be decisively rejected. The campaign against rate capping and the 84/85 budget are closely linked. Tenants and workers will not suddenly jump to the defence of Camden, after the councilhas passed on Tory attacks in the form of cuts, rent and rate rises, and job losses. And that is what is being proposed by a "package which is politically acceptable in that the proposals do not directly reduce jobs and services".

The strategy implicit in this document is to attempt to satisfy both local people and the Tory Government. This will not work because a 12% rate rise and £4 million cuts in services are attacks on tenants and workers, and the Government will not let Camden off the hook as the rate capping law is intended to control local authority spending.

Camden Council can no longer hope to muddle through this year and hope to prepare a huge battle against the Tories next year. A completely new direction must be taken now by the Labour Group. This will mean that there should be no more cuts or job losses, and no more rent or rate increases. The Tory attacks can no longer be passed on, otherwise nobody will take the council seriously when it starts to fight rate capping. This is not an easy alternative because of cuts, and rent and rate rises over the last few years.

This alternative will mean a massive campaign with the unions directed to the community to explain that it is the Tory Government that has stolen the money for local services. It would mean linking with other councils and national unions in a co-ordinated campaign culminating in the refusal to cut services and a confrontation as the Tories bring in the commissioners to make the cuts. Only a movement with massive support could force the government to back off. Some say that such a confrontationist approach would not guarantee victory. But slow death by loosing working class support because of rate rises and cuts is a guarantee of defeat.

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lunchtime meeting

COMMITTEE ROOM 2

"WHICH WAY FORWARD FOR LABOUR AGAINST THE TORIES"

SPEAKERS : DAVID BLUNKETT
REG RACE

OPEN EDITORIAL MEETINGS CAMDEN LABOUR CLUB: 3rd MONDAY EVERY MONTH, 9pm