LONDON LABOUR
BRIEFING
40p FORTNIGHTLY
NO.118 SEPT 27 - OCT 9 1989

MELVIN DISCIPLINED OVER BROADWATER CONDUCT

COPS TO BLAME!

In the light of the decision by the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) that Detective Chief Superintendant Graham Melvin, the officer in charge of the investigation into the Broadwater Farm disturbances in 1985 — is to face disciplinary charges, the families of the men convicted at the killing of PC Blakelock in 1987 and the Defence Campaign wish to make the following statement.

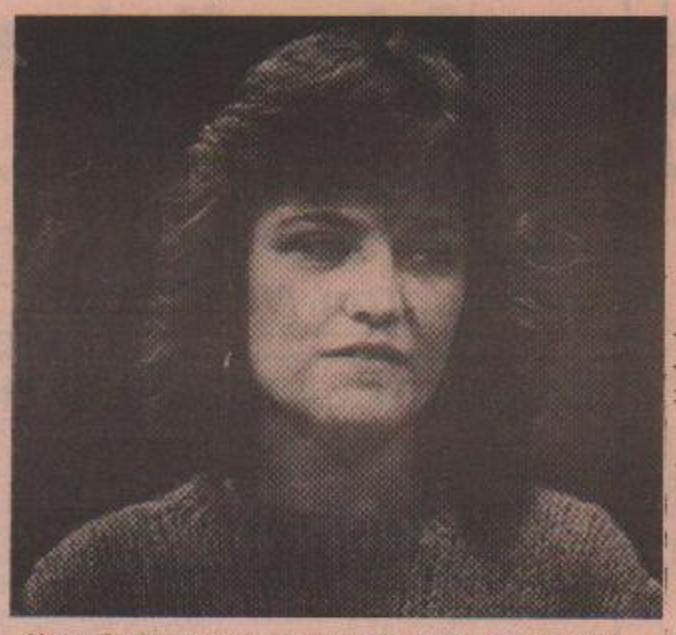


PHOTO: Leesa Herbert

Sharon Raghip, common law wife of Engin Raghip, one of the "Tottenham Three".

Since the investigation by the police into the disturbances here begun nearly four years ago, we and the whole community in Tottenham have known that police were operating a systematic policy of holding arrested persons — including juveniles — in *incommunicado* detention for the purposes of obtaining self-incriminating confessions.

Of the 42 cases brought after the disturbances which resulted in convictions, independant evidence was produced in only four. The role of confessional evidence obtained by Melvin and the officers under his command was therefore vital.

In particular, the cases against Mark Braithwaite, Engin Raghip, and Winston Silcott were based soley on this evidence.

The decision of the PCA to discipline Melvin himself is therefore doubly significant. What is at stake are not the actions of individual police officers, but the entire investigation, and the tactics which were used to obtain confessions from all suspects.

The whole process, from arrest through to charge and trial, which resulted in the conviction of our loved ones and of many other young men is now under a cloud.

We find it distressing that the cases against juvenile defendents were thrown out of court because the judge ruled that their confessions had been extracted under oppression; yet, at the same time, confessions which were obtained from adult defendents under exactly the same circumstances were allowed to stand.

Our loved ones — especially those who were illiterate or had learning difficulties — were no less vulnerable to oppression than those juveniles. Why then are they now in prison?

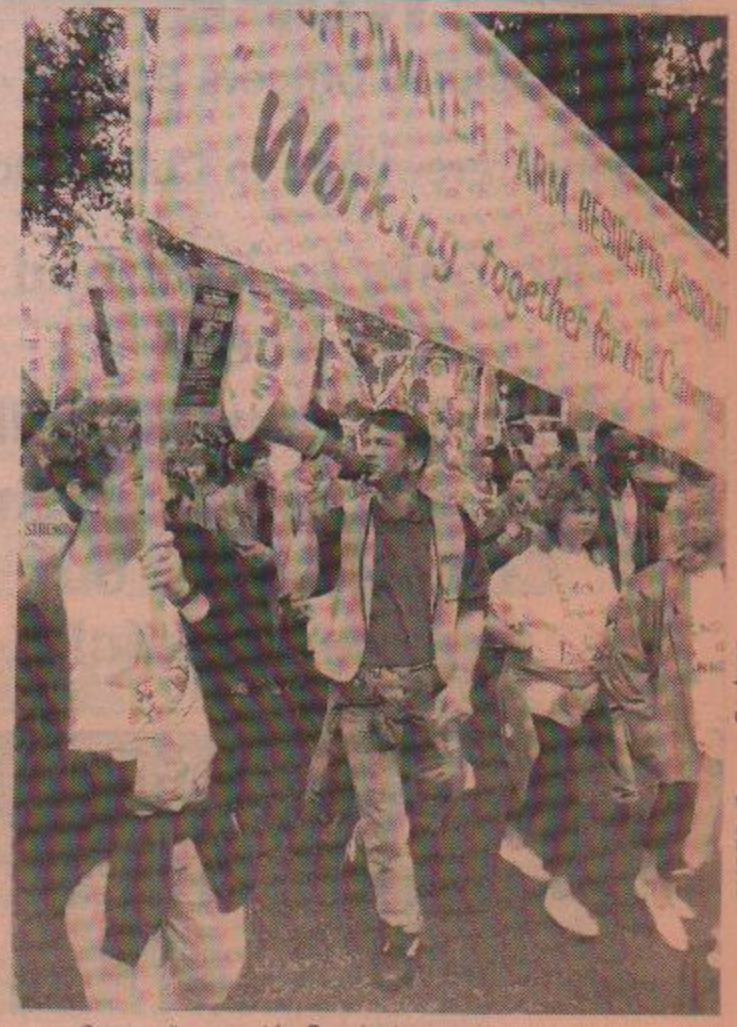


PHOTO: Graeme Cookson

Community support for Broadwater...

Every single body which has looked into the police investigation — including Amnesty International and the PCA — has decided that there are serious dounts as to its legality. There is now no further excuse for the Home Secretary to delay reviewing these cases, in order to ensure that justice is done to all involved.

Remember the innocent
Picket Tottenham Police Station
6-8pm Friday October 6th
Tottenham High Road
Nearest tube, Seven Sisters, Victoria Line
Public Meeting
Police Attacks: Community Defence
7.30pm Thursday September 28
Tottenham Town Hall
Tottenham High Road N15
Nearest tube, Seven Sisters, Victoria Line

LABOUR — TAKE THE POWER!

Islington Co-operative Party

sends

Greetings to Conference

NUPE

Hackney Officers Branch

sends greetings to Conference

No cuts in Jobs and Services!

Fight the Housing Bill!

Labour Councils: Fight CCT and keep our services public!

Remember the innocent

October 6th will be the fourth anniversary of the Broadwater Farm Uprising in 1985. A black woman died at the hands of the police as a result of an illegal raid on her home.

No action has ever been taken against the officer responsible for this outrage. He remains on the force today.

In the wake of the uprising that followed, hundreds were arrested and charged. Forty-two were given prison sentences, including the "Tottenham Three", framed for murder and sentenced to life imprisonment on no evidence.

Four years on, very little has changed. The police have not yet learned to respect the rights and lives of black people.

Raids on black families in Tottenham are still commonplace. Assaults and beatings on innocent members of the public such as the Seventh Day Adventists and the Parkinson family continue. Last year, over one thousand incidents of police violence and harassment were monitored in Haringey alone.

London-wide, the recent spate of deaths in custody shows the police's contempt for the lives of black people. Yet the killings of Jamie Stewart, Edwin Carr, Vincent Graham and other innocent people have gone almost unnoticed by the politicians and the mainstream media.

The government and other official bodies have not acted to defend our interests, or to properly investigate these incidents. We need to show them that we will not stand by and let the police get away with murder. We need united mass action to defend our basic civil rights and get justice for our community.

Come to the public meeting to hear the families who have suffered speak. Attend the picket to show your anger. Join us in this protest to defend yourself.

The conviction fo so many innocent young men following the uprising was intended to silence the community. We will not be silent.

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Labour Party

Uxbridge CLP banned from Conference

Right claim *Briefing* "infiltration"

Labour Party officials are witholding recognition from Uxbridge CLP because of the CLP's refusal to allow the EEPTU to affiliate.

This means the CLP will be allowed no motions or delegate to Labour Party conference.

Officers from the Greater London Labour Party have tried by various means to overturn the CLP's democratic decision, but so far Uxbridge remains solid on this issue.

By Uxbridge CLP spokesperson

However, as in the past, a small group of right-wingers have begun communications with Walworth Road and the press regarding the alleged "infiltration" by *Briefing* supporters of both the CLP and the local Labour Group.

(Twelve local Councillors signed the *Briefing* "no cuts" statement).

Letters have even been sent to EEPTU's John Spellar calling for "action" against the "infiltrators".

The right have siezed upon remarks made by a leading local left-winger, Councillor Micheal Walker, who stated at a Council meeting that Margaret Hodge, leader of Islington Council was "a middle class, right-wing scab".

This was said in response to Tory jibes that Margaret Hodge and Islington, Brent, and Haringey Councils all supported making cuts in services — so why shoudn't Hillingdon?

This is just one example of the right's continued frustration at their failure to control the CLP, LGC, or Labour Group. Hillingdon is a hung Council with Labour the largest single group.

Labour in Hillingdon looks set to take control of the Council in May 1990. The left has ensured that there have been no pacts or sell-outs on policy since the hung Council was elected in 1986.

Labour Party officers are already talking about closing down the CLP. But Uxbridge will fight hard to defend democracy, accountability, and socialism.

GLLP conference timetable

Greater London Labour Party (Regional Council) Twenty Third Annual General Meeting, Friday/Saturday 2nd/3rd March 1990.

Last date for receipt of:
- motions — 1st post Friday 17th November 1989;
- amendments to motions — 1st post Wednesday 10th January 1990;
- nomination for election of Officers, Executive Committee and Standing Orders Committee — 1st post Wednesday 10th January 1990;
- compositing — Saturday 27th January 1990

Last date for receipt of delegations — 1st post Wednesday 7th February 1990

JEREMY CORBYN MP

LIZ DAVIES (Delegate)

KEITH VENESS (Agent)

send greetings to Conference from Islington North CLP

HARINGEY LABOUR BRIEFING

sends

Socialist Greetings to Conference Delegates

Say NO to Tory Anti-Union Laws!

1906-1989
A MEMORIAL MEETING

A meeting to commemorate the life and struggles of

Harry Wicks

a founder member of the British Communist Party and Young Communist League, a graduate of the Moscow Lenin School, a founder member of the first Trotskyist organisation in Britain, the "Balham Group" and the Secretary of the British Committee in Defence of Leon Trotsky in 1938.

Conway Hall
Sunday 8th October 1989
3.00pm-5.00pm
Meeting called by
Socialist Platform and *Revolutionary History*

National Black Students Alliance and Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign
Black struggle and the fight against racism: a conference for the student movement
London School of Economics Students' Union, Houghton Street, London WC2
Saturday November 11 10.30am-6.00pm

Speakers include:
Stafford Scott; Unmesh Desai; Families of the "Tottenham Three"; National Black Students' Alliance; Labour Party Black Sections
Workshops on:
Policing the Community; Immigration and Refugees
Racist Attacks and Fascist Violence
Videos
Lunch and bar available
Registration £5.00/£3.00
Details and registration from: Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign, 79, Tangmere, BWF, London N17 6NB
Telephone 01-885 3752

Anti-Apartheid: C

New controversy o

This year's City of London Anti-Apartheid AGM, held on September 23rd and 24th, was dominated by sharp discussion on the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) of Namibia.

With under 40 people attending and with hardly any guest speakers from the liberation movements, the AGM seemed set to be a low-key affair.

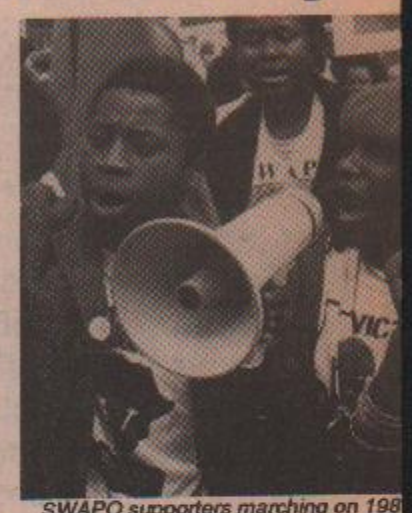
But the opening session came to life when two counterposed motions were put concerning recent press reports of the SWAPO leadership's imprisonment, torture and execution of its own militants.

By Joe Jarvis

The first motion, proposed by an RCG member, expressed its concern at these reports, the truth of which was not in doubt.

The second motion went further, calling for a labour movement enquiry into the problem, with the City Group having an input. It was moved by a Namibian in exile.

Supporters of the first motion argued strongly that it was not the job of a solidarity group in an imperialist country to carry out an investigation into a liberation movement.



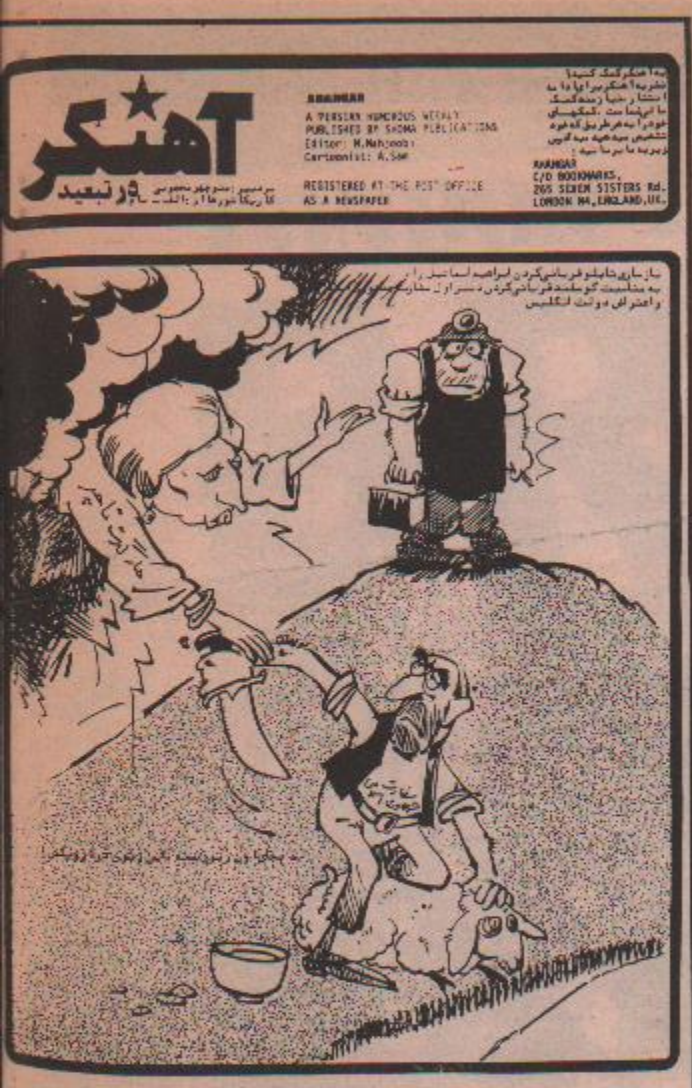
SWAPO supporters marching on 198

The Namibian people themselves would have to resolve such internal problems in the course of their struggle.

The RCG position of expressing concern but taking no action was overwhelmingly passed, backed up by arguments about the legitimacy of SWAPO as a liberation movement.

SWAPO is clealy legitimate, but a leadership faction which kills and holds its own militants





Memorial Meeting
of speeches and music
for
Manouchehr Mahjobi
Editor, playwright, poet, cartoonist, satirist of the regimes of the Shah and Khomeini
Monday October 2nd, 7pm
Conway Hall
Organised by CARI and
the Iranian Community Centre

Above:
Cartoon printed in paper edited by Manouchehr Mahjobi — Thatcher offers up British miners for sacrifice.

City Group AGM

over Namibia



PHOTOS: Graeme Cookson

's Anti-Apartheid demo. Should our support be questioned?

in underground jails is not.

Unfortunately the City Group have put power block politics above principle, by washing its hands of this problem against the better interests of the Namibian people.

Reading Matters Bookshop
High Road, Wood Green,
London N22
(near Wood Green tube)
Good books for socialists!

Local Government Round-up

Brent

Right takes its gloves off

On Sunday September 24th, Brent Council Labour Group voted to expel three Councillors — Helga Gladbaum, Frank Hansen, and Mick Woods — indefinitely from the Labour Group.

The formal charge was that the three voted against the Labour budget in March — when a 32% rate increase was passed on the casting vote of the Chair — and that they had not signed a loyalty oath swearing to carry out future Labour Group decisions.

But their "crimes" in the eyes of the Labour leadership go beyond this.

While the majority of the Labour Group have inflicted massive redundancies, rent and rate rises and cuts in services on the working class of the Borough, they have opposed all cuts and together with Graham Durham (expelled last year) been involved with trade unionists and users in organising to fight them.

Many in the Labour Group have voted for additional cuts proposed by the Tories and, indeed, there is barely a Labour Councillor left who has not broken the whip at some time.

Yet none of these have ever been disciplined, nor have others who are refusing to sign the "loyalty oath".

By Pete Firmin
Brent East CLP

The delay since the budget meeting in March indicates the real purpose in taking action against the three.

Being expelled indefinitely means they are unable under Party rules to stand for selection for next year's selection rather than leaving their branches (which have supported them) to decide.

It also has the effect of creating two vacancies in one of the safest wards, leaving an opening for those right wingers scurrying for safe seats at a time when Labour is likely to lose many seats as a reaction to its cuts.

As has become normal practice in Brent, in the process of carrying out this witch-hunt the Labour Group ignored both the wishes of the local Labour Parties and excluded anyone from observing the proceedings.

Brent Local Government Committee had recommended that any decision on disciplinary action should be deferred while full discussion took place in the Party.

This motion was ruled out of order on the curious grounds that the meeting was called specifically to decide on the charges!

It is obvious from the voting (even though it was a secret ballot) that the majority of LGC EC members (led by leading local LCCer Jim Moher) saw this as a green light to vote *for* the expulsions!

The meeting was lobbied by about 40 supporters of Brent Fightback who refused to leave the Council Chamber when told to by the chair of the Labour Group, forcing him to first adjourn the meeting and then hold it in a cramped committee room where they could restrict entry.

His statement that standing orders do not permit anyone to observe the meeting was untrue, and the reconvened meeting did at least have to vote not to allow observers.

There was even a long delay before they agreed to admit the official CLP observers to the meeting.

The three anti-cuts Councillors were unrepentant, standing on their record.

Because of their persistence in challenging the record of the Labour Group nearly all of their accusers felt the need to "justify" themselves and the proceedings strung out over two and a half hours.

The three even had to insist on their right to respond to the debate before the vote.

Despite this setback, the three Councillors, together with Graham Durham and Brent Fightback, certainly do not intend to go away, as the majority of the Labour Group would no doubt wish.

Not only will we continue the fight against the continuing cuts by the Council but also campaign to get this decision reversed and all four reinstated to the Labour Group.

Poll Tax in Camden

Disciplined for voting against!

In 1986 I was re-selected and re-elected as a Labour Councillor for Kilburn Ward in the London Borough of Camden.

The 1986 election results were the best that Labour has ever achieved in Camden. The campaign was fought in the wake of the fight against rate-capping and on a manifesto which committed us to direct confrontation with central government.

We promised the people of Camden an alternative to Thatcherism and a complete break with the policies of compromise, compliance and surrender.

Since 1986, the Labour leadership in Camden have cut over 2,000 jobs, services have been privatised, service charges have been increased, rents have escalated, and the borough has fallen into dereliction and disrepair.

Every promise we made — about jobs, services, our relationship with the community and trade unions, and about our willingness to confront central government — has been broken.

Some of us, with support from workers, community groups and organisations, fought against surrender.

We argued for alternative positions within the labour movement and aligned ourselves consciously with those bearing the brunt of Camden's [illegible]

In Camden, the Poll Tax will [illegible]

By Councillor
Angie Birtill
Camden

Councillor Adrian States and I voted against implementation for two reasons.

First, the Poll Tax directly contradicts everything we believe in, everything we promised, and everything central to the principles of democratic socialism.

Second, the refusal to discuss the Tax in political terms, to mount even a minimal campaign against it, and the refusal to even consider that there might be an alternative to surrender, places the Labour Group leadership outside not only the rules of the Party, but the political criteria of the entire labour movement.

As a result of voting against implementation, we have had disciplinary charges brought against us.

We have received support from our Labour Party Branches, our Constituency Labour Party — Hampstead & Highgate — and dozens of workers', community and trade union groups.

Virtually every Tenants Association and community group in our borough has written to the Labour Group [illegible]

pay the Tax.

The decision to implement the Poll Tax was taken without any reference to either the local Labour Parties, the trade unions or the wider community.

does not take action against us.

Meetings of the Labour Group have been lobbied and its action in bringing charges against us has been condemned in virtually every forum where the issue has been raised.

Despite protest, the Group have decided that our decision to honour the promises that we made in 1986 is simply too extreme.

We do not believe that we will be the only socialists to be disciplined for believing that our principles are more important than the practice of wholesale surrender.

The fight we are waging against the Labour leadership is the same as the fight against all aspects of the Party leadership's surrender to Thatcherism and the dictates of the market.

Our campaign is against the reality of Conservatism, the high rents and bad housing, the lack of social provision and jobs, the introduction of profiteering, and the demands of Capital over Labour.

The Poll Tax is the clearest example of Thatcherism in practice. The refusal to fight against the Tax is the clearest example of new realism in practice. We call upon all members of the labour movement to join us in our campaign.

STOP PRESS:

Poll Tax rebels beat hatchet

Councillors Angie Birtill and Adrian States have seen off a right-wing/LCC attempt to discipline them because of their opposition to the Poll Tax on Camden Council.

A joint meeting of Camden's LGC and Labour Group voted by 22 to 20 to take no action against the two *Briefing* supporters, who refused to support Poll Tax implementation at a recent Council meeting.

A lobby of over 50 local people, including Camden anti-Poll Tax campaigners, gave vocal support to the two Poll Tax rebels, who were also backed by ex-Council leader Phil Turner.

In his speech Turner said that Angie and Adrian were the only two Councillors in Camden doing anything about the hated Tax.

Camden Stop the Poll Tax Campaign
Public Meeting
Thursday 5 October 7.30pm
[illegible]

Tower Hamlets

Magistrates Court picket

Almost 100 Bangladeshi youth took the morning off school to form a picket outside Thames Magistrates Court on Tuesday September 12th.

The protest was against criminal charges brought against 39 people arrested on July 15th on a march to protest inaction against racists.

The July march was attacked by racists in Bethnal Green — the police protected the racists, arrested over 60 marchers and allegedly beat up some of those arrested.

Also on the picket outside the court was the Bethnal Green & Stepney Labour Party banner, Tower Hamlets NUPE, NALGO and NATFHE union banners.

The cases were ajourned until Thursday 28th September. Another picket is planned for 10.00am outside Thames Magistrates Court, Aylward Street E1.

***Heather Clarke*, Bow & Poplar CLP**

✉ ✍ ✉ ✍ ✉

Letter from Phil Maxwell, Leader of Tower Hamlets Labour Group to Sir Peter Imber, Chief of the Metropolitan Police.

Dear Sir Peter,

Re: POLICE VIDEO SURVEILLANCE OF PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS

I noted with great interest the presence of the "Metropolitan Police Video Squad" at the Thames Magistrates' Court on 12th September.

I was flattered by the particular attention that the camera operator paid to myself!

I would be grateful if you could let me know when and where the first public screening of the film will be made.

If there is to be an opening night, I would be grateful if you would consider sending me a couple of tickets.

Finally, as a concerned ratepayer who contributes to the police precept, I would be grateful if you could advise me of the cost of the surveillance operation of the peaceful demonstration.

I anxiously await your reply.

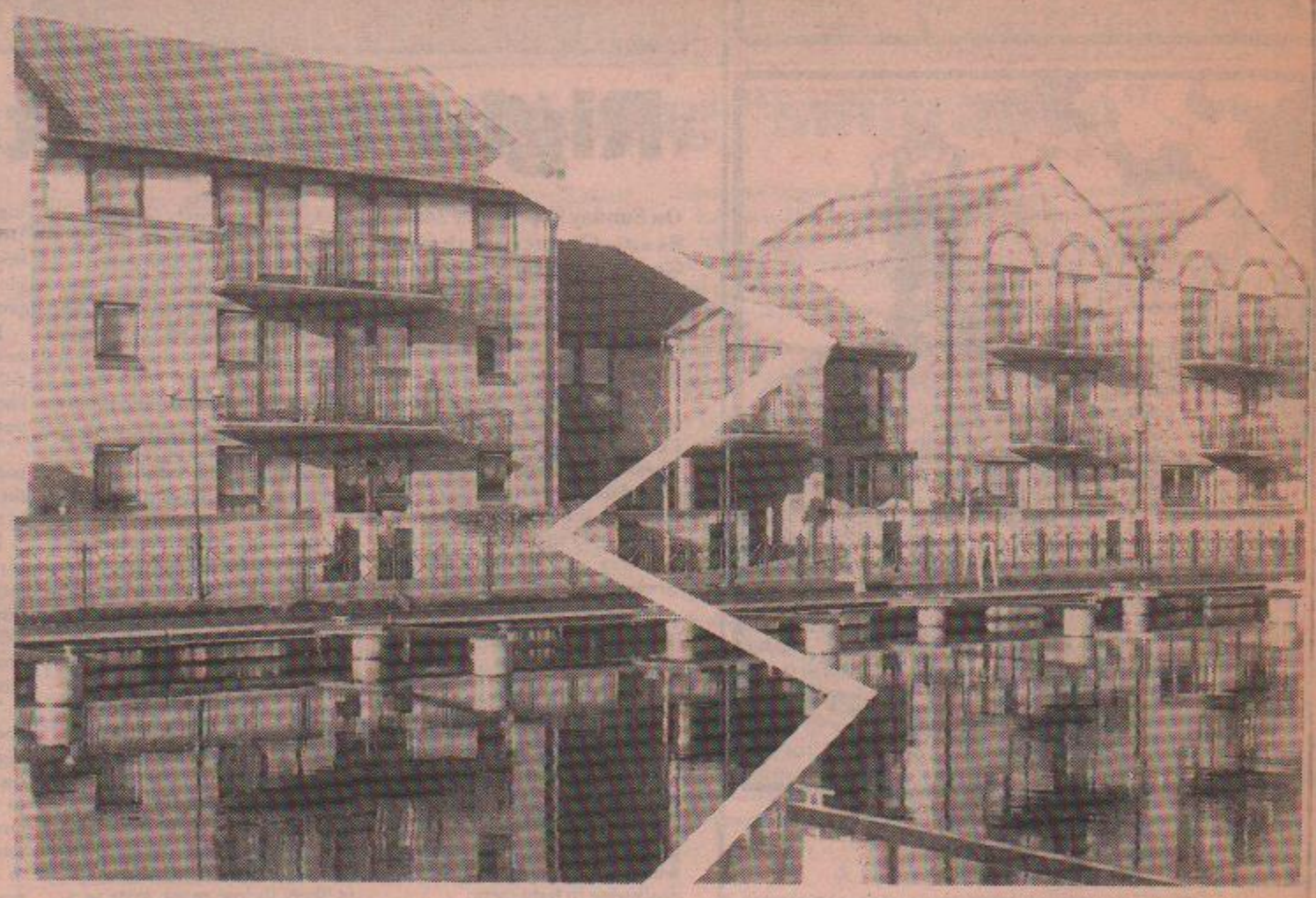
P.S. As a professional photographer myself, I am well aware of the technical shortcomings of video.

Clear, still photographs of myself are freely available from the public relations office at Bethnal Green Town Hall. I would be pleased to forward signed copies to your office upon request.

Graham Bash & Co.
Solicitors
26 Wattisfield Road,
London E5
01-985 8892

- Personal Injury Compensation
- Employment Rights
- Unfair Dismissal
- Medical Negligence

Housing slump deepens



Has the Docklands bubble burst?

Out of more than 2,000 new homes available this year in Docklands, fewer than 300 have been sold.

Sales are only 25% of last year's and are predicted to slump even further.

The depth of the depression in the Docklands market is such that in July 1989 Docklands developer, Kentish Property Group, was pushed into insolvency.

Prices have dropped by around 30%, but it will take further falls of 10%-15% to get people buying.

Particularly worrying to developers and their backers must be the fact that almost half of this year's sales, 120 units, were in just seven developments.

A total of 45 schemes are currently being marketed in Docklands, 12 of which have had no sales at all.

There are currently 1,879 new homes for sale in Docklands, all of which have been on the market for almost a year. But the potential oversupply is even greater, as 2,000 homes in new schemes are about to be released on the market.

The severity of the slump is threatening developers' plans for 4,000 homes on the Greenwich Peninsula and LDDC plans for 3,000 homes on the south side of the Royal Victoria Dock in Newham.

The slump in the residential property market is such that housing starts are poised to fall nationally by as much as 30%-40% and nearly 1,000 jobs have been lost in the house-building industry since the beginning of the year.

Related businesses have also felt the impact: London Brick, part of Hanson, has recently made 500 redundant; Kentish Property Group has gone bust, as has the South-East developer Tudor Grange.

McCarthy and Stone, which specialises in retirement homes, is laying off over 10% of its workforce. Bovis Homes, an offshoot of P&O, has sacked 200 architects, planners and technical staff, and Costain Homes sacked 150 staff in July.

By John Turkie
Hackney North & Stoke Newington CLP



PHOTO: RLPC

Originally a protest at the HIGH prices of Docklands housing, this Docklands graffitti now takes on an extra irony — shame, indeed, about the price.

Further bad news for developers comes in a new report stating that the fall in house prices nationally is not a temporary blip.

It suggests prices will fall by 10% this year, by a further 10% in 1990, and may then recover slowly. At worst, and the report considers this likely, prices may not recover at all.

The Docklands housing boom was built on the shaky foundations of a temporary economic boom, based largely in the financial sector.

The developers are getting their fingers burnt — whilst working class communities are left to pick their way through one of the largest building sites in the world.