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BROADWATER FARM

COPS STAGE REVENGE RAID

On Friday, September 30th, some 200 police wielding axes and sledgehammers swamped Broadwater Farm Estate in Tottenham in a sham "drugs raid" staged for the benefit of a credulous media.

Another 200 police were kept nearby in reserve.

In an attempt to exploit Thatcher/Bush "drugs war" rhetoric, the cops notified the media well in adavance of the raid and spread preposterous stories about "crack barons" plying their wares in front of little children.

In fact, a total of 31 people were arrested, a handful on "serious" drugs offences (supplying), a few more on "possession", and the rest on public order offences (i.e. self-defence).

The contraband drugs seized amounted to two grammes of cocaine and 1.5 lbs. of cannabis: not much for police to show after subjecting Farm residents to several hours of brutal interference, knocking down doors, emptying cooking pots, examining children's nappies, and strip searching at least one young woman, forcibly separated from her four-month old baby.

By Todd N. Hamm

The real motive behind the raid was the announcement, only days before, that the Poilice Complaints Authority had decided that Detective Superintendent Melvin should face disciplinary charges over his handling of the PC Blakelock murder inquiry (see *London Labour Briefing*, last issue).

This was a severe embarrassment to local police who cooked up the drugs raid in another attempt to brand Broadwater Farm residents as anti-social criminals unworthy of justice or human rights.

As the Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign said after the raid, "There is no doubt that the police came here for one purpose — to criminalise and terrorise the community."

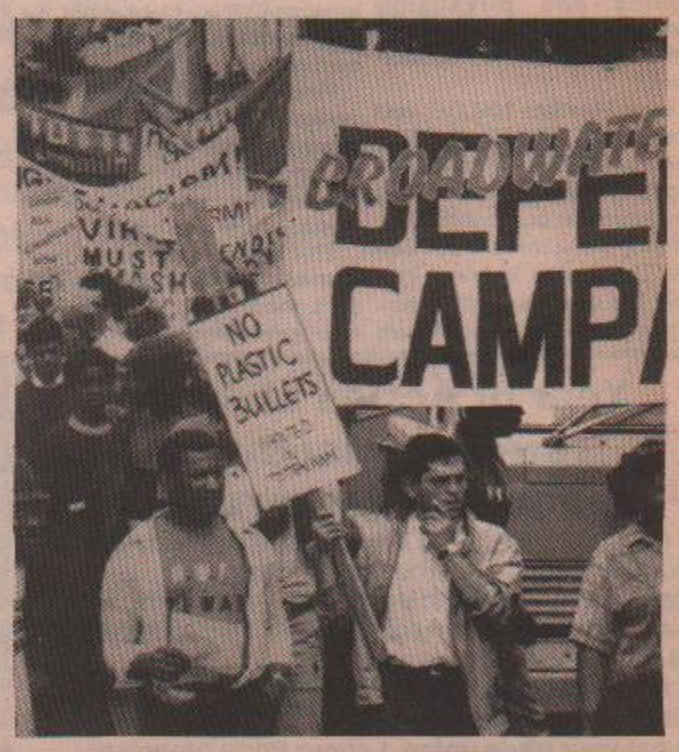
During the raid the police threw an impassable cordon around a one-mile square area of Tottenham. For twelve hours afterwards they kept the Estate itself sealed off, stopping minicabs, pizza deliveries, and casual visitors.

A heavy police presence was maintained on the Estate throughout the week following the raid.

This latest example of police barbarism seems to have galvanised the previously demoralised Broadwater Farm community. Within days of the raid, several hundred angry tenants attended a meeting called by the BWF Residents Association.

On October 6th, a picket of Tottenham police station called by the BWF Defence Campaign to mark the fourth anniversary of the 1985 uprising, attracted 400 people, most of them from the Estate or the nearby area.

The Defence Campaign is demanding the dropping of all non-drugs related charges and has challenged local police to answer questions about the raid at a public meeting.



LABOUR — TAKE THE POWER!

Local Government Round-up

Islington

Childcare workers locked out

On October 6th, Islington Council suspended Children's Day Centre Managers indefinitely without pay and locked out the rest of the staff from all thirteen centres in the Borough.

As a result some 150 NALGO memebrs are on indefinite strike.

These workers have shown consistently, at mass meetings and in an official ballots, that they are opposed to the cuts in the service the Council is making.

By Terry Conway
Islington North CLP

Over the last two years the centres have lost more than one quarter of their staff through the freezing of vacant posts. Despite this, the Council wants staff to care for the same numbers of children.

Workers argue that they must maintain a staff/child ratio of 1:4 in order to provide good and safe childcare. The new ratios would make that impossible and would especially jeopardise preventative work.

Managing Neighbourhood Officers are also out on strike and the priority will be to ensure that their work isn't covered, and that support is built throughout the branch.

Parents continue to be very supportive and have lobbied both management and Councillors to make clear that they too are demanding the Council runs the service on present staff/child ratios.

Support the Lobby of Labour Group, Islington Town Hall, Upper St, 6.30, Monday 16th Oct!



Islington NALGO members — veterans of the picket line.

Tower Hamlets Victimisation

Reinstate Derek Relph!

You may have thought the local government pay dispute ended nearly two months ago — but not in the SLD-controlled London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Since October 2nd, over 2,500 strilking local government workers have brought services to a standstill, following the victimisation of NALGO's branch secretary, Derek Relph, by the Increasingly anti-union SLD Council.

This is not the first time that Tower Hamlets SLD have attempted to "out-Tory" the Tories.

Tower Hamlets, in the East End of London, one of the most deprived areas of the country, has been selling off Council housing and privatising whatever it can. This is the root of the Council's victimisation policy.

Tower Hamlets NALGO and Derek Relph in particular have been vociferous and sucessful in fighting many of the Council's more ludicrous proposals.

During the summer's pay dispute, Derek was involved in a picket line argument with scabs which ended with the individuals concerned, other than Derek, being personally interviewed by the leader of Tower Hamlets Council, Brenda Collins.

Collins even offered to fund a *private prosecution* if the scabs felt that way inclined.

Even those well-known supporters of trade union rights, the local constabulary, visted the scene only to leave almost as quickly as they arrived, finding that nothing untoward had taken place.

The Council suspended Derek on charges of "assault" and as this was a clear breach of the national return-to-work agreement, national NALGO supported continuing limited strike action.

The District staff-side and employers' body were called in at the trade unions request to investigate. They highlighted the failure of the Council to follow its own procedures.

Finally, even ACAS got involved, with the union prepared to accept binding arbitration with an independent disciplinary hearing. But even this the Council refused to accept.

This left no alternative other than full strike action, which was supported by NALGO nationally who agreed finance the dispute.

The ballot was 75% in favour of indefinite strike action until Derek was reinstated.

The disciplinary hearing was held on October 4th-5th, and found Derek "guilty" of gross misconduct. This is normally a straight-forward sacking offence, but solid strike action has pervented even Tower Hamlets from going this far.

They opted for issuing Derek with a "final warning" which means that they can sack him without further recourse to disciplinary procedures.

The branch membership will not accept the decision of a politically-motivated kangaroo court. On October 6th it voted overwhelmingly to continue strike action until Derek receives justice.

SLD Tower Hamlets Council, throughout its short life, has cut local services, squandered millions of pounds and attacked basic trade union rights. This is a dispute Tower Hamlets NALGO must win, for the sake of the union but also for local people.

Victory can be acheived. Every effort must now be made to ensure that the present support given by NALGO nationally is maintained and that stronger links with other trade unions and the local community are forged.

Year of Action on Ireland
Terrence MacSweeny commemoration march

A march and rally will be staged on Saturday October 28th to commemorate Terence MacSweeny, republican Lord Mayor of Cork, who died in Brixton prison on October 25th 1920, after a 78-day hunger strike.

The march will start from Kennington Park (Oval tube) at 12.00 and pass through Brixton. Please try to get your trade union, Labour Party branch or other organisation to support this event which has been initiated by South London Year of Action on Ireland.

London Weighting
NALGO accepts peanuts

By JO SMITH

The NALGO leadership has just thrown away the chance of winning a substantial increase in London Weighting for its members.

With annual negotiations on the London Weighting about to commence, NALGO's London Metropolitan District reccomended that the national leadership submit a claim for £3,000.

London's Local Government workers now get £1,584 London weighting, which compares poorly with the £300 minimum paid by banks and building societies or the offer of £2,500 by British Gas.

Yet, at its last meeting, NALGO's National Local Government Committee refused to support the Met District claim. 18 members of the Committee abstained, 5 voted against, and only the 3 London representatives voted for.

Instead the Committee accepted the employers' offer of a rise of 8.8% — without NALGO even submitting its own claim.

NALGO branches should send resolutions condemning this decision and calling on NALGO to submit cost of living supplement claims in other areas of the South East. These should be negotiated by the union district concerned.

London actio

Nalgo st back!

After the successful national pay strike several London Nalgo branches now find themselves forced to take further strike action in defence of basic union rights and working conditions.

The good news is that the strengthened union organisation fostered during the national action has meant that town hall managers have had a tougher fight on their hands than they bargained for.

Tower Hamlets Nalgo is on all-out strike since October 2nd following the suspension of Branch Secretary Derek Relph for allegedly abusing scabs during the national pay strike. At a disciplinary hearing Derek was given an official "final warning". This verdict was rejected by a mass meeting of 1000 members on Friday, October 6th, at which only sixteen people voted to accept the disciplinary hearing's judgement and return to work.

In neighbouring Newham, 150 Nalgo members in the Social Services department have been out on strike since the end of September demanding reinstatement of Dominic Williams, departmental convenor. Management allege that Dominic altered the date of a colleague's resignation letter. In fact, the colleague in question has admitted to making the alteration herself.

This attack is the culmination of six years of harassment of union activists in Social Services. It coincides with the summary dismissal (without any hearing) of a gay man accused of failing to disclose a criminal conviction which did not affect or relate to his work.

Meanwhile, Branch Secretary Carolyn Sikorski has also been subject to continuous petty harassment by management. Newham Nalgo is about to ballot on all-out strike action. The ballot will be preceded by a one-day strike on Wednesday, October 18th, when the ruling Labour Group is scheduled to meet.

The Branch leadership see all these attacks as revenge for the successful pay strike and for local action against draconian management methods.

In Islington, 150 nursery



NALGO members are and growing in confi get the placards bac

Lewis

Defend Mich

Over the past two years Michael Owen, a young black gay man from Lewisham, has been subjected to a campaign of intimidation and vilification.

He and his family have had abusive phone calls, letters with death threats, and hostile graffiti and posters have gone up on walls near his home.

On one occasion huge red letters spelling out a threat to shoot Michael were painted on a wall opposite his family residence.

By Terry Clayworth
Lewisham Councillor

Neither Michael nor his family have done anything to provoke such violence. They are being subjected to this simply because Michael is out as a gay

n round-up

trikes



PHOTO: Nick Hazlewood

taking action
ence. Time to
into use!

orkers in all of the Council's
irteen nurseries were out on
ike from Monday, October
h, after the suspension of
rsery managers who refused
admit new children in order
maintain a decent
ff/children ratio. On paper
ratio is supposed to be 1:4
t the Council's failure to fill
cancies has meant that some
ups have nine children for
ly one staff member. The

DSS guidelines recommend a 1:4 ratio for under fives but the reality of "caring" Islington Council cuts will be a 1:12 ratio after sickness and leave are taken into account.

The nursery workers are determined to fight off these cuts and are enjoying the full support of parents.

Housing estate managers in Camden won a claim for an extra 18 staff after a 17-week strike. However, soon after returning to work they were compelled to take action again in support of NUPE boiler workers who are striking against a 40% cut in jobs and an unachievable increase in productivity. The boiler section has been gradually run down and is now threatened with privatisation.

At the end of August the Labour Council issued a 90-day notice terminating all agreements. In order to break the NUPE strike it is trying to get private contractors to turn on and repair heating systems. The Nalgo estate managers are refusing to co- operate with the private contractors and will soon be threatened with suspension.

Messages of support and donations should be sent to:
Tower Hamlets Nalgo, c/o Newham Nalgo, Eve Road, London E.15.
Social Services Nalgo Strikers, c/o Newham Nalgo, Eve Road, London E.15
Nursery Strikers, c/o Islington Nalgo, 2 Orleston Road, London N.7
Boiler workers, c/o Camden NUPE, Arlington Road Depot, London, NW1.

nam

ael Owen!

n and is active in fighting for
ck lesbian and gay liberation.
Sadly, Michael's experience
not unique. Anti-gay attacks
on the increase across Lon-
n, fuelled by AIDS hysteria
d Section 28.

Different

f Michael's case is different at
it is in the sheer level of or-
nisation involved in the cam-
gn against him and the deter-
mination that his persecutors have shown in pursuing him and his family.

In harassing and intimidating lesbians and gay men the bigots hope to divide the black community, to weaken the fight against racism, and isolate those who are struggling to gain equality and fight oppression on whatever grounds and from whatever sources.

Support the campaign to defend Michael Owen!

Lambeth: Poll Tax Climbdown

Time to regroup the left



PHOTO: Nick Hazlewood

Cllr Steve French joins enthusiastically in a Lambeth Anti-Poll Tax protest burning of Registration forms.

Following the Lambeth Labour Group meeting of October 9th, where a further £2 million was agreed to implement Poll Tax, Councillor Greg Tucker and I have resigned our respective positions as Chair of Management Services and Chief Whip.

Even the Leader's previous half-baked strategy of resisting Poll Tax until threatened with surcharge was dumped.

It had taken a DofE Section 114 order to frighten Councillors into buying the Poll Tax computer. This time just a letter from the Chief Executive reminding Councillors of their "duty" did the trick.

Unfortunately, Leader Joan Twelves gave no recommendation but presented four "options" for Poll Tax expenditure: £2.25 million; £1.9 million; zero; and "whatever the Group fancied".

The last option proved successful when the right split the difference and went for £2 million.

Ten Councillors voted not to spend a penny more on the Poll Tax.

In debate, Linda Bellos stated that it would be an embarrassment to the campaign against the Poll Tax if Lambeth were once again seen as the focal point for resistance.

The LCC argued that non-payment in Scotland was having no effect and that it was no greater than the rates backlong would usually be.

By Cllr Steve French

Once again attempts were made to "minimise" the impact of Poll Tax, and "good practice guidelines" were agreed, including a commitment not to use distraint (warrant sales) or attachments of earnings.

Ratecapping scab Janet Boston argued passionately in favour of attachment of earnings as the effective way to collect the Tax. She managed to win support from a lone LCCer.

However, it is unlikely that Councillors will stick by a commitment not to use distraint when threatened with the law.

The £2 million agreed is in addition to the government grant of £800,000 which is already accounted for. This is despite pledges by the leadership not to spend any more than the Tories give to implement Poll Tax.

The cave-in of the left leadership in Lambeth shows how even the Labour left has failed to attune to the upswing in the class struggle. Many formerly militant Party activists now reluctantly adopt a defeatist line as a result of New Realism.

Regroupment of these forces is essential if the Labour Party is to take up the challenge that faces local government in 1990.

To this end Lambeth Briefing has called a London-wide meeting to discuss rebuilding the fight in local government. We would welcome attendance of all anti-Poll Tax Councillors and candidates for next year's elections.

Lambeth Briefing Meeting
"What's 'left' in local government?"
Monday October 30th, 7.30pm
Lambeth Town Hall

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

Martha Osamor fights smear tactics

Dolly Kiffin's unscheduled departure

During the recent police raid on Broadwater Farm, self-styled "community leader" Dolly Kiffin had to be escorted from the Estate under police protection after she was attacked by furious residents accusing her of being an "informer".

Kiffin was taken by police to "a place of safety" from which she later made her way to a plane bound for Jamaica.

Kiffin has been the lynchpin in a sustained smear cmapaign against left-wing Haringey Councillor Martha Osamor.

By Mike Marqusee
Haringey Labour Briefing

This campaign has involved Haringey's right-wing Council leadership, top Council officers, Walworth Road apparatchiks, and others who fear Martha's principled politics, her genuine base in the Tottenham community, and her growing stature on the left.

Back in February, under pressure from Kiffin, Haringey's Head of Internal Audit compiled a confidential report which claimed that £104,000 in grants to four voluntary groups in Tottenham was "unaccounted for" — and implied that Martha, as Treasurer of these groups, was responsible.

Kiffin, who was the Chair of the groups in question, supplied all the "evidence" used by the Head of Internal Audit and was the only source for the allegations against Martha.

The report contains numerous inconsistencies, unjustified assumptions, and critical ommissions.

It is short on anything that could be called hard evidence and its presentation and timing indicate that it has always been seen as a political property to be used against a particular political figure.

Kiffin's vendetta has its roots in Martha's refusal to collude with her in sacking six workers at one of the voluntary projects in question. Martha backed the workers, as did their trade union, and insisted on paying them.

Ultimately the Council was forced to offer all of them alternative work.

Kiffin was not prepared to tolerate such a challenge to her dictatorial regime. Over the years she had built up a system of personal domination over a network of local voluntary groups. She came to regard it as her prerogative to decide who should work for which project for how much under what conditions.

In this she was aided and abetted by senior Council officers, who failed to challenge these practises and each year renewed susbstantial grants to the groups under Kiffin's control without querying their lack of democratic accountability of their inadequate financial records.

Earlier this year Kiffin was convicted of obstructing the course of justice when she was found to have destroyed Broadwater Farm Youth Association accounts.

Her murky monetary affairs were coming under increasingly close scrutiny — and her response was to step her outlandish public attacks on Martha.

In February, over 300 Farm residents signed a petition making four specific complaints against Kiffin's management of local voluntary groups.

The petition was presented to Council leader Toby Harris, who ignored it. Instead, he allowed Council officers' time to be taken up with the witchhunt against Martha, one of his most formidable opponents inside the Labour Group.

All this came to a head around the Vauxhall by-election controversy, during which the *Guardian* quoted "Party sources" to the effect that Martha was "under investigation" by police and the District Auditor.

This was not true, though indeed Martha has stated repeatedly that she would welcome such investigation, which would be impartial compared to the hatchet-job performed by the Head of Internal Audit.

Martha has already forced a local newspaper to retract one smear story about her.

With Kiffin's unscheduled departure in disgrace, perhaps the right-wing wolves will realise they are on a hiding to nothing and will drop their hideous slanders and get on with tackling the political questions which really concern the people of Haringey.

Note: if you would like more detail on the smear campaign against Martha Osamor, Haringey Labour Briefing has prepared a dossier on all the relevant events, available from the Briefing office.



PHOTO: Leasa Herbert

Dolly Kiffin had a finger in every pie on the Farm: this one was the shortlived "Movement for Civil Rights and Justice" initiative.

Docklands

Jets set for Docklands

The London Docklands Development Corporation is in a mess about whether jets should fly into London City Airport in the heart of Newham's Royal Docks.

Their problem is having to respond to contradictory pressures.

By John Turkie
Hackney N. & Stoke Newington CLP

The Tories are pushing for more housing. The LDDC recently announced plans for 3,000 homes on the south side of the Royal Victoria Dock.

But the airport — a Tory flagship — will close unless the LDDC allows jets to fly in.

Some LDDC members fear that the sale of these homes — already uncertain because of the current slump in the local housing market — will be threatened if jets are flying overhead.

An LDDC spokesperson confirmed:

"We do not yet have a definite policy on the future use of jets. On the one hand, we want the airport to succeed, but on the other we do not want to jeopardise housing. We hope a compromise can be worked out soon."

But a compromise is unlikely to work. Even if the LDDC were to agree to the use of jets but insist on halving the number of flights, this would still be plagued by economic uncertainty.

Mowlem, the airport operators, have lost nearly £10 million and the two airlines using it over £7 million since it opened little more than a year ago.

All three say it could take five years for the airport to make an all-round profit, and then only if the present ban on jet aircraft was lifted.

The CBI has now swung its weight behind the jets lobby. In a letter to Transport Secretary Cecil Parkinson, it insists the plan is vital not only for the airport's survival, but for the overall success of the redevelopment of Docklands.

The "user-friendly STOLport" (Short Take Off and Landing) only got the go-ahead after assurances from Mowlem that it did not intend to bring in jets and would only use quiet propeller-driven aircraft.

At the time expert evidence suggested the airport could not be economically viable if it was unable to fly jets. Clearly, Mowlem were playing a deceitful game, and objectors predicted it would only be a matter of time before the company tried to bring in jets.

Just before he was booted out of the Department of Transport, Paul Channon agreed a redesign of the East London River Crossing bridge to allow jets to fly in.

Under the revised plans, the central span of the bridge — at 240 metres instead of 350 metres, as recommended by the Port of London Authority — is dangerously narrow.

A hazardous, one-way system will now have to operate along this busy stretch of the Thames.

All of this means that the LDDC will bow to the inevitable and allow the airport's expansion.

Meanwhile, the lives and homes of local working class people, particularly around Silvertown and North Woolwich, will be blighted by jets.



Protestors gather to watch planes taking off from the STOLport. Now bigger, noisier jets are threatened: but find the LDDC in a quandry. See article, right.