LONDON LABOUR
BRIEFING
40p
No 67 JAN 15-28 1987

Show trials begin at Old Bailey

Drop the charges! Free the Broadwater Farm defendants!



Six youths are now standing trial for the murder of PC Blakelock during the uprising at Broadwater Fram Estate in Tottenham in October 1985.

As in the "affray" cases already heard at the Old Bailey, the main evidence against the youths will be derived from "confessions" extracted by the police under conditions of extreme duress. As in Northern Ireland, the police will be using people already convicted of offences as "supergrasses".

These people have been under police "protection" for many months. Their testimony and that of police themselves will be used by the media to foment hysteria and bring pressure on the jury to convict. The establishment, hungry for scapegoats, is preparing the sacrificial slaughter.

The credibility of forced confessions and informers who make "deals" has been undermined by recent revelations regarding the Birmingham and Guildford bombings. Juries at the Old Bailey have already been forced to throw out "confessions" produced by police during the affray cases.

These trials have exposed the brutality and illegality of police methods — holding people for days without charge, denying them access to solicitors and relatives, and threatening them with long prison sentences. Hassan Muller, who was held for ten months pending trial, was acquitted by a jury after the defence proved that his "confession" was completely false.

By Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign

Sentences at the Old Bailey have been harsh. Despite the reduction of some of them on appeal, it is clear that the purpose of the trial is to punish the Tottenham community for its attempt to defend itself from police attack. The current murder trials are *show trials* — their real purpose is not criminal justice but police vengeance.

Blakelock was killed during a mass "disturbance" on the Broadwater Farm Estate — a disturbance provoked by the death of Mrs Cynthia Jarrett during a police raid on her home and by a history of what the Gifford Independent Inquiry called "racist and insensitive policing." Blakelock was the victim not of the six youths unlucky enough to be rounded up in a police dragnet, but of the deep-seated racism of the Metropolitan Police and the brutal and provocative tactics adopted by his superior officers.

The Coroner's Court found that the police lied about Mrs Jarrett's death and their role in it. The officer responsible for the raid on Mrs Jarrett's home has since been *promoted*. Despite numerous complaints and eyewitness accounts of police misbehaviour before, during and after the uprising, *not one police officer has been disciplined in any way*.

This is not justice. This is revenge. The youths on trial at the Old Bailey are being made to pay for the actions of a whole community. The show trials must be stopped.

BROADWATER FARM DEFENCE CAMPAIGN: C/O 12-16 TANGMERE, BROADWATER FARM ESTATE, LONDON N17. 01-808 1667.

Tube workers show the way

London Underground workers have voted by a decisive five to one majority to resist massive management attacks on wages, conditions and jobs.

Nearly 83% voted to support their union in a secret ballot for a campaign including industrial action against management proposals which aim to cut wages by 30% over the next 2-3 years for a majority of underground workers; slash at least another 1,500 jobs from stations and privatise all activities not directly tied in with the day to day running of the service.

Continued on back page

LABOUR—TAKE THE POWER!

Organise in London now!

By Narendra Makanji

London will be centre-stage in the forthcoming General Election.

The Party winning the largest number of the 84 seats in London is likely to form the next government.

Labour has targetted another 25 seats listed in table 1, another 13 of the targetted seats are within easy reach of London and most will have District Council elections on May 7th. These seats are:

Crawley, Welwyn/Hatfield, Watford, Herts West, Brighton Kemptown, Dover, Gravesham, Medway, Basildon, Harlow, Luton S., Slough, Stevenage.

Labour is well on the way to victory juding by the 1986 London Boroughs results. Across London, Tories lost a staggering 285 council seats — the most spectacular losses being informer Tory strongholds such as Hillingdon (29 seats lost), Richmond and Sutton (23 losses each), and Croydon (18). A full list is published in table 2.

Vast areas of London do not have any Tory representation and the Tory election machine has been devastated. This vacuum in the London Tories is being filled by hard-lne Thatcherites employing neo-fascist techniques.

All of this would explain some of the reasons for Tebbit's onslaught on the London Labour Party and on Labour-controlled councils. It is a crude attempt to bolster the flagging moreale of local Tory activists.

Labour activists will need to begin their election campaign immediately. One major task will be the registration of voters. Official figures state that one in five are not even on the register. Shop stewards and union representatives must take this up in workplaces, whilst branches and constituencies must carry out a door-to-door registration campaign.

Student activists must ensure that their colleagues and friends are registered — especially if they are living in one of the targetted marginal seats. All the techniques of campaigning during the miners' strike and the political fund ballots must be used to achieve a full and accurate register.

On election day — whenever it comes — Labour must aim for a high turn-out. Inner London seats have a low turn-out and this must be reversed. Seats such as Peckham and Newham NW have very low turnouts as do key marginals such as Westminster N. and Bermondsey. Recent experience in Fulham and the Borough elections indicates that Labour benefits from a high turnout.

The third major task for Labour is to project Labour's positive policies. The struggle for jobs and services, for equality, for peace and nuclear disarmament and for local democracy must form the bassis of Labour's campaign. Labour's candidates include a record number of Black (7) and women (23) candidates. A victory for Labour in London will change the face of British and world politics for a long, long time.

Table 2

Borough	Lab		Con		All		Other		Tory
	86	82	86	82	86	82	86	82	loss
Barking & Dagenham	35	37	3	3	5	3	5	5	0
Barnet	18	13	39	47	3	0	0	0	8
Bexley	15	13	36	37	11	9	0	3	1
Brent	43	32	20	31	3	3	0	0	11
Bromley	10	5	44	50	6	5	0	0	6
Camden	44	33	13	26	2	0	0	0	13
Croydon	26	5	44	62	0	0	0	3	18
Ealing	47	29	20	35	3	3	0	3	15
Enfield	28	19	38	47	0	0	0	0	9
Greenwich	44	43	12	16	6	3	0	0	4
Hackney	53	50	2	3	5	7	0	0	1
H'smith & Fulham	40	24	9	23	1	3	0	0	14
Haringey	42	33	16	26	1	0	0	0	10
Harrow	9	6	32	39	18	14	4	4	7
Havering	20	12	28	36	5	5	10	10	8
Hillingdon	34	10	28	57	7	2	0	0	29
Hounslow	40	30	17	27	3	3	0	0	10
Islington	36	51	0	0	16	1	0	0	0
Kensington & Chelsea	15	14	39	39	0	0	0	1	0
Kingston	4	3	24	38	22	9	0	0	14
Lambeth	40	32	21	30	3	2	0	0	9
Lewisham	50	39	17	28	0	0	0	0	11
Merton	25	13	29	42	0	0	3	2	11
Newham	60	55	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
Redbridge	17	12	45	49	1	1	0	0	0
Richmond	0	0	3	26	49	26	0	0	0
Southwark	43	50	4	8	16	4	0	2	3
Sutton	7	7	18	41	31	8	0	0	23
Tower Hamlets	24	30	0	0	26	19	0	1	0
Waltham Forest	31	25	16	25	10	7	0	0	9
Wandsworth	30	26	31	33	0	2	0	0	2
Westminster	27	15	32	42	0	1	1	1	10
	957	766							285

Table 1

Parliamentary Constituencies	Candidate	Held	maj %	turn-out %
Barking	Jo Richardson	LAB	11.8	65
Battersea	Alf Dubs	LAB	7.5	66
Beckanham	Kenneth Ritchie	C	41.9	70
Bethnal Green & Stepney	Peter Shore	LAB	20.6	55
Bexleyheath	Jim Little	C	36.0	74
Bow & Poplar	Mildred Gordon	LAB	18.3	55
Brent East	Ken Livingstone	LAB	12.4	63
Brent North	Praful Patel	C	33.2	70
Brent South	Paul Boateng	LAB	26.4	63
Brentford & Isleworth	Ann Keens	C	18.2	74
Carshalton & Wallington	Joan Baker	C	33.8	72
Chelsea	David Ward	C	50.4	56
Chingford	Maggie Cosin	C	37.4	72
Chipping Barnet	Dave Perkin	C	40.1	70
Chislehurst	Selwyn Ward	C	37.2	72
City of London & Westminster S.	Ruth Bush	C	42.0	51
Croydon Central	Bridget Prentice	C	30.5	68
Croydon N.E.	Christine Patrick	C	30.1	67
Croydon N.W.	Malcolm Wickes	C	18.1	67
Croydon S.	-	C	57.3	71
Dagenham	Brian Gould	LAB	7.5	63
Dulwich	Kate Hoey	C	4.9	67
Ealing Acton	Phil Portwood	C	22.5	72
Ealing North	Hilary Benn	C	12.3	74
Ealing Southall	Sid Bidwell	LAB	21.8	71
Edmonton	Brian Grayston	C	2.7	68
Eltham	Rees Vaughan	C	18.6	74
Enfield North	Martin Upham	C	23.8	72
Enfield Southgate	Richard Course	C	40.2	69
Erith & Crayford	Colin Hargrave	C	9.8	73
Feltham & Heston	Charles Hands	C	3.9	69
Finchley	John Davies	C	24.2	69
Fulham	Nick Raynsford	LAB	12.2	76
Greenwich	-	LAB	3.5	67
Hackney N. & Stoke Newington	Diane Abbot	LAB	23.4	54
Hackney S. & Shoreditch	Brian Sedgemore	LAB	20.1	53
Hammersmith	Chris Soley	LAB	6.0	71
Hampstead & Highgate	Phil Turner	C	7.6	66
Harrow East	David Brough	C	27.5	72
Harrow West	Colin Bastin	C	38.2	72
Hayes & Harlington	Peter Fagan	C	10.4	70
Hendon N.	Jenny Manson	C	26.2	68
Hendon S.	Louise Christian	C	27.5	65
Holborn & St Pancras	Frank Dobson	LAB	16.8	60
Hornchurch	Alan R. Williams	C	20.2	73
Hornsey & Wood Green	Barbara Roche	C	7.4	71
Ilford North	Paul Jeater	C	26.1	71
Ilford S.	Ken Jones	C	11.1	70
Islington N.	Jeremy Corbyn	LAB	15.2	61
Islington S. & Finsbury	Chris Smith	LAB	1.0	62
Kensington	Ben Bousquet	C	16.4	62
Kingston upon Thames	Robert Markless	C	41.9	71
Lewisham Deptford	Joan Ruddock	LAB	16.8	61
Lewisham E.	Russell Profitt	C	4.5	69
Lewisham W.	Jim David	C	5.7	70
Leyton	Harry Cohen	LAB	11.9	65
Mitcham & Morden	Siobhan McDonagh	C	13.9	73
Newham N.E.	Ron Leighton	LAB	21.9	62
Newham N.W.	Tony Banks	LAB	24.7	56
Newham S.	Nigel Spearing	LAB	27.1	53
Norwood	John Fraser	LAB	7.9	65
Old Bexley & Sidcup	Howard Stoate	C	46.5	74
Orpington	Steve Cowan	C	49.5	76
Peckham	Harriet Harman	LAB	27.4	54
Putney	Peter Hain	C	10.7	73
Ravensbourne	-	C	53.7	73
Richmond & Barnes	Michael Gold	C	39.3	79
Romford	Nigel Smith	C	34.1	69
Ruislip-Northwood	Hazel Smith	C	47.2	72
Southwark & Bermondsey	John Bryan	ALL	15.0	61
Streatham	Anna Tapsell	C	15.0	65
Surbiton	Alastair McGowan	C	39.0	71
Sutton & Cheam	Lorraine Monk	C	49.5	74
Tooting	Tom Cox	LAB	5.8	67
Tottenham	Bernie Grant	LAB	21.8	63
Twickenham	Valerie Vaz	C	42.9	77
Upminster	Dennis O'Flynn	C	32.0	72
Uxbridge	David Keys	C	32.0	72
Vauxhall	Stuart Holland	LAB	19.8	60
Walthamstow	Eric Deakins	LAB	3.9	68
Wanstead & Woodford	Lesley Hilton	C	46.8	68
Westminster N.	Jenny Edwards	C	3.9	72
Wimbledon	Christine Bickerstaffe	C	33.1	72
Woolwich	John Austin-Walker	C	7.1	68

Stop Press

At the beginning of January, Regional Party officals decided to postpone all regional activities till the end of February — in order to concentrate on the Greenwich by-election. As a result London Women's Conference, and London Young Socialists Conference, are postponed, and Regional Executive meetings have been cancelled.

Whilst agreeing that the Greenwich by-election must be given a priority, and used to demonstrate Londoners' opposition to the Thatcher government, surely this decision should have been made by the elected Regional Executive, and not by the full-time officials. There was, after all, an Executive meeting two days before the decision was taken — what had changed since this meeting to prompt the officials' action?

As well as being the democratic body elected to consider such decisions, the Regional Executive meeting could have been used as a springboard to launch the campaign amongst Party members across London. The conferences, too, could have organised for an effective women's and youth input into the campaign.

January 28th
East Lewisham Labour Party
"Rally Against Low Pay"
8pm, Lemore Centre, Clarendon Rise, SE13
Speakers:
Russell Profitt, John Prescott MP, local trade unionists.

London Regional Conference Slate-making meeting

The meeting to decide *Briefing's* slate for the Regional Executive — and to organise our intervention at this year's London Conference — will be held on *Friday, January 30th* at 7.30pm at *Lambeth Town Hall.*

This meeting is important. All *Briefing* supporters are welcome.

Focus on Focus:

Liberals show their colours in Tower Hamlets

Barely eight months after their local election victory, the Liberal Focus councillors in Tower Hamlets are dropping their manifesto commitments like hot bricks.

Of course, their one True Policy, the Holy Grail of Focusism, the so-called "decentralisation", will cost them an arm, a leg, a huge rent increase, and large scale closures and sell-offs. You could say they're now following a policy of the Three Yesses.

Recent Council Committee meetings have seen a whole range of "proposals" for service cuts. Protesting trade unionists pointed out at one meeting that the Council has a "no redundancies" policy, and the Committee had just made cuts in jobs — they were told the "no redundancies" policy would have to be changed!

By Christine Shawcroft Leader, Tower Hamlets Labour Group

While holiday hotels, public baths, laundries, libraries, the Civic Theatre — even the *public conveniences* — are up for the chop, the Focus leadership, with their tame SDP wally in tow, are spending thousands on personnel consultants to "head hunt" a new Chief Executive, and thousands more on stationery and repainting vehicles to reinforce neighbourhood identities. What a sense of priorities!

Yet the cuts that they're owning up to at the moment are just the thin end of the wedge. They add up to nothing like the kinds of "savings" which will be needed to keep within the ratecap limit *and* meet the "decentralisation" bill.

The budget for so-called decentralisation is the only protected budget in the Administration. So we can expect ever deeper cuts, as well as a large rent rise — between £5 and £10 a week is being considered.

The local CLPs are mounting a campaign against these cuts. We are determined to show people that they were *had* last May. The Neighbourhood Committees where Labour has a majority will refuse to implement the cuts, closures and privatisations "proposed" for their areas — and most of the cuts are for Labour neighbourhoods, surprise, surprise.

We will be campaigning against the rent increases with local tenants' group, and refuting Focus's slimy racist arguments that the budgetary problems are caused by homeless families.

Our message to the working class in Tower Hamlets is this — the Tories are to blame, and Focus are actively colluding with them. Their privatising zeal will out-Wandsworth Wandsworth, and their rush to close down well used facilities will out-Westminster Westminster. George Lansbury must be turning in his grave.



Christine Shawcroft

Haringey Labour Briefing

A year in the life...

The last year has been an active one for Haringey Labour Briefing.

At our regular monthly meetings we have tried to transcend the usual caucus bureaucracy and have debated a wide range of issues. Consensus was not always reached, but our overall direction has been clear: to build a cohesive and unashamed left fightback within the Party.

In May, Haringey Labour Party scored a big victory in the local elections after months of racist vilification in local and national press. Briefing supporters played a key role in this victory and a number of them won seats on the new Coucil.

In the aftermath of the uprising at Broadwater Farm, Briefing supporters have worked hard to explain to other Labour Party members and the community at large the political nature of the police repression and the ensuing show trials. We have tried to build effective practical support for the Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign.

By Haringey Labour Briefing

Haringey's pioneering stand on lesbian and gay rights has made it a target for Tories, religious fanatics, and the right wing press. Briefing supporters have been in the forefront of the difficult struggle to defend the Council's policies, and in the continuing effort to ensure there is no backsliding on this issue by the Labour Group.

After the election, we organised a half-day discussion on the problems of the Left in the Party locally and nationally. Later in the year we held a successful public meeting at which some fifty people turned out to hear Jeremy Corbyn, MP, a striking printworker and a speaker from the local "Positive Images Campaign" for lesbian and gay rights.

We have produced a regular newsletter — featuring articles on local, national and international politics — which we give out free to Party members. We also produced a leaflet setting out the Briefing slate for the NEC and explaining the politics behind it (National Briefing, please note!)

We recently produced a ten page pamphlet analysing the financial plight of the Council and calling for unlimited borrowing to implement our Manifesto programme in full, while recognising that this course can only succeed if it is accompanied by a political mobilisation of the Party, the Council workforce, and the community at large.

We are the main organised force on the Left in the Haringey Parties, and of course have come in for the inevitable baiting and harassment. Our opponents are largely an unprincipled coalition of soft-left and hard-right forces in the Party, united only by an obsessional desire to defeat the Left — by whatever bureaucratic means necessary.

In a difficult year for socialists in the Labour Party, we in Haringey have made some gains and shown in practice that there is an alternative to Kinnock's class collaboration. This has been achieved by dint of hard work, open minded and non-sectarian discussion, and not least the central role played by women comrades in our debates and activities.

Labour rocks City complacency

As expected, Labour did not win any seats in the recent elections for the Corporation of the City of London, but the 170 votes (out of 600 cast) we collected in the 3 wards contested were more than we had hoped for.

By Paula Watson City of London and Westminster CLP

All our other main objectives were achieved. The absurd and undemocratic nature of local government in the City has received some much needed attention, with articles in the local and national press, including a personal attack on me in the *Daily Telegraph* (for being a *Briefing* supporter) and an hour-long live phone-in programme on LBC radio devoted to the subject. The Labour spokesperson, John Whitehead, wiped the floor with the Corporation's representative, who, when asked to defend the present system, could only reply "it's traditional".

The complacency of the present councillors has been shaken. In the contested wards, the sitting members devoted most of their addresses to attacking Labour for actually daring to introduce party politics into their nice clean election!

We also drew attention to the Corporation's new plan for the City, which includes no new residential building, but an unrestricted explosion of office and hotel development.

Finally, one of the more interesting aspects of the campaign was the number of people who took the trouble to phone in saying that, although not normally Labour supporters, they would vote for us on this occasion becaue they supported our fight for greater democracy.

Hammersmith AA boycotts theatre

Hammersmith & Shepherd's Bush Anti-Apartheid are currently engaged in a boycott action against MJR Productions of Capetown, who have a production (*The Bijers' Sunbird,* by Robert Kirby) running inthe 150-seat Studio at the Lyric Theatre.

H&SB AA called on the theatre to close the production because it breaches the United Nations' Cultural Boycott of South Africa — a boycott first called for by the African National Congress and supported by the United Democratic Front. H&SB AA's call has been specifically supported by the national Anti-Apartheid movement, and locally by Hammersmith CLP, H&F TUC (and a number of union branches), H&F CRE, and H&F Council Labour Group.

Council appointees on the Lyric board called for an emergency meeting, which took place on December 18th. It is understood that the Council appointees and the two representatives of the local community on the board unanimously supported the cancellation, but were overruled by proxy votes of absent members (who could not have been in possession of the full facts).

By Steve Parry

Despite this setback, and generally hostile press comment (with some exceptions) there is no doubt that H&SB AA's stand has been a successful one. A picket line has been maintained at the theatre for the hour before each performance since the play opened on December 4th, and audiences have fallen to a very low level.

From December 15th-23rd (8 performances) only 125 members of the public went into the studio, while at least twenty turned away at the picket line. These included two journalists who had come to review the production. Some of those who have crossed the picket line have used the excuse that "the play is anti-apartheid"; the content of the piece is of course not at issue (so that the accusation of "censorship" is also wide of the mark). Others have directed racist (and sexist) abuse at the pickets.

The performances scheduled for December 24th, 26th, 27th, 31st and January 1st were cancelled, presumably because the theatre feared that there would be no audience at all. The pickets will not relax their action, even if it means staying on the line until January 10th, the scheduled closing date of the production.

cape

The opportunity to leaflet and talk to other users of the Lyric (which has a bar and restaurant and, of course, a main theatre) and thus publicise the boycott of South Africa has been a valuable one for the movement and also for the individuals concerned; the experience has certainly been politically educative.

If you have not joined the line yet please do so — any night (except Sunday), 7-8pm. Further information from Steve Parry (262 7055/740 0248) or any member of the local Briefing Group.

Other theatres in London are known to have plans for productions that may break the boycott, so it is important that this action is seen to have public support; if theatres know that breaches will produce protests *and* tiny audiences they will have less excuse for such decisions.

There are Briefing supporters who have different views from some of those expressed in this article. We invite readers to write in and express their views in the next issue of Briefing.

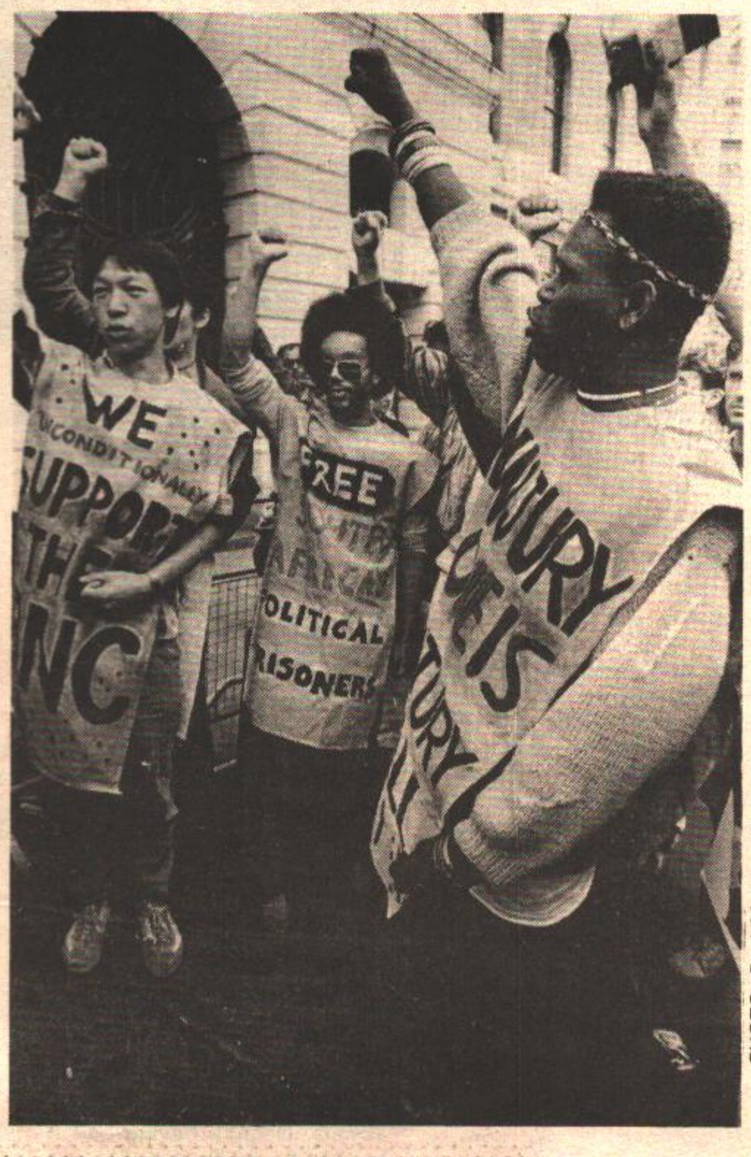


PHOTO: Paul Mattson/Frame

Direct action against apartheid: picketing the South African embassy.

Lewisham: Aftermath of NALGO strike

The Lewisham NALGO strike over the Labour Council's refusal to provide safety screens for staff working in the Borough's Housing Advice Centre (HAC) (see last *Briefing*) ended on December 22nd.

The Labour Council, whose arrogant anti-union tactics and attitudes were directly responsible for the strike, were let off the hook by the Greater London Whitley Council (GLWC) Disputes Committee, which called for a joint Council/Union review of the security issues at HAC.



Reprinted from their strike bulletin, courtesy Lewisham NALGO.

By Lesley Lee
Chair, East Lewisham CLP
(personal capacity)

This joint review has five weeks to come up with an alternative to temporary fixed screens; if that deadline isn't met, the matter will be referred to the GLWC to appoint specialists, whose recommendations would be binding.

Many Lewisham NALGO members, seeing the increasing isolation of the Labour Councillors, were bitterly disappointed that the NALGO representatives on the Disputes Committee agreed to this proposal. However, they felt they had no alternative but to support a return to work. NALGO Head Office were refusing to count the ballot papers for the strike ballot that had already been conducted, strike pay would have been stopped immediately, and the local branch funds could not have supported even a short "unofficial" continuation of the strike.

The strike may be over, but the dispute certainly isn't. It is still the clear and overwhelming policy of the local Labour Party to settle the dispute by the installation of screens. This position has now been adopted by East Lewisham, West Lewisham and Deptford Labour Parties, the Borough Local Government Committee (BLGC), the BLGC Conference, and many individual branches.

The Labour Group has consistently ignored this clearly expressed Party view, making it plain that when it really comes to it, they hold themselves accountable to no one. The bitterness and division caused by their refusal to listen to those who worked to elect them will take a long time to heal. Many Party members are determined that the behaviour of individual councillors on this issue will be remembered when the easy selection promises start tripping off the tongues in three years' time.

The councillors and their supporters have produced some incredible arguments in defence of their indefensible position. We have been treated to gems like:

- *"NALGO aren't a proper union — they're not even affiliated to the Labour Party"* — an argument that was never used against supporting the teachers.
- *"NALGO members are all highly paid and middle class"* — which, if it were true, presumably means it's all right for them to be physically attacked; and how many councillors have tried living on the wages of nursery workers, clerks, typists, etc?
- *"NALGO is being run by Labour Party lefties"* — funny, I thought we wanted trade unionists to join the Party?
- *"NALGO is being run by the SWP"* — hang on, they can't be being run by leftie Labour Party members *and* the SWP, surely? This is either evidence of a giant conspiracy (somebody tell Neil, quick), an unparalleled example of non-sectarian co-operation, or... a bunch of unprincipled Labour politicians spewing out a "reds under the beds" scare story.
- *"We can't be accountable to the Party — we are accountable to the whole comunity"* — a classic argument for being accountable to no one. The community voted for *Labour* councillors — if they don't want to be accountable to the Labour Party, let them be honest and stand as independents.

There have been some very positive aspects to the strike. Over 1,000 NALGO members came out and stayed out in the face of considerable pressure and harassment from the Council. The local Labour Party and NALGO established a good working relationship, supported by the handful of Labour Councillors who stuck by Party policy.

We were able to make it clear to union members and the public that the Labour Party supported the strike. Russell Profitt, East Lewisham's PPC, supported the strike from the start, and made that support public. Members of the newly-formed Lewisham Left Forum were active in building Labour Party support; it was particularly useful to have Deptford and East Lewisham members working together.

Party members in Lewisham have made it clear to Town Hall workers, and the Labour Group, that when the chips are down they will support workers in struggle and not blindly follow unaccountable Councillors just because they were elected on a Labour ticket. Industrial relations have always been mishandled by Labour politicians at local *and* national level. It is likely that if a Labour government is elected we could see the same mistakes made nationally. If this happens, we must again support the just demands of workers and not be bound by misguided loyalties.

Hitting the skids



Demonstration at Bethlem and Maudsley Hospitals, Spring 1986.

PHOTO: Stephano Cagnoni/Report

Patients waiting for hospital treatment in London face another bleak winter, according to London Health Emergency's latest catalogue of NHS cuts in the capital, *Hitting the Skids*.

Five more hospitals closed in 1986 — New End, Hampstead; St Nick's and Dreadnought Seamen's hospital in Greenwich; St Mary's, Harrow Road; and St John's Skin Hospital in Homerton. On top of these, hundreds more beds were lost and the urgent waiting list has increased in the last six months by 22% to 12,500.

By Kevin Flack
East Lewisham CLP

LHE estimates that upwards of £210m has been cut in real terms from London's health spending since 1982. More closures are to come in 1987, and ambulance services have been singled out for a second round of savage cuts.

The difference between reading London Health Emergency reports and those in your local paper is that you also hear about the campaigns fighting back against the cuts.

In **Brent** the District Health Authority voted to overspend its cash limits and save 40 acute beds at Central Middlesex. A strong, popular local campaign supported by Hammersmith and Fulham Council has forced **Riverside** to retreat from the closure of the West London Hospital. Following 9 months of campaigning by staff and supporters, and a ballot vote in favour of industrial action by COHSE members, cuts have again been delayed at **Bethlem and Maudsley** Hospitals.

Hitting the Skids is available from LHE at 335, Grays Inn Road, WC1, price £3.

Tube workers show the way

Continued from front page

In a 75% turnout of the 12,500 NUR members on London Underground Ltd (LUL), 7,426 voted "yes".

After the count the National Executive Committee of the NUR immediately instructed all NUR members to take one day strike action on Wednesday January 14th. From the following Monday there will be a ban on all overtime, rest day and higher grade working. Negotiations will continue and action will be escalated unless management withdraw all the cuts.

The ballot result is a significant victory not just for LUL workers but for all workers employed by London Regional Transport whether on the tubes or the buses. In the teeth of all the difficulties following the defeat of the miners and the assault of the Tory anti-trade union laws, compounded with the setbacks in both industrial action and ballots inflicted on London Transport workers and their unions, this result proves that with serious and disciplined campaigning rank and file activists can harness the resources of the union apparatus and build the basis for a serious fightback amongst the members.

The campaign around the ballot has lasted over 5 months. Around 100,000 items of campaign literature have been given out, keeping the membership in literally hundreds of widely dispersed work locations up to date with every latest development.

That management were and remain deadly serious about smashing up the standard of living of transport workers built up over the last 20 years became clear when in April last year they refused to pay the canteen workers the 5% being offered to other tube workers.



By Patrick Sikorski
NUR

Instead they came back with a package of cuts which included no wage increase this year; flat time for weekend working and a once and for all buy-out of London Weighting. This represents a 30% wage cut.

If repeated in other grades it could mean up to £50 cuts in wages. Despite having had 5 months to do so management have refused to deny categorically that this is what they intend to do.

The fact is that they can't give undertakings not to make thes cuts. The Tory government has slashed the LRT subsidy. They have appointed a board of their friends from the world of finance and the City. These people have options under the 1984 London Transport act to introduce competitive tendering which they are taking up with relish.

The aim they say is an efficient and competitive service. The real aim is to play their part in the bosses offensive which has as its overall aim the driving down of all workers' living standards by between 30-40% and the opening up of all areas of the economy to the "privateers". For his efforts to date, LRT Chair Dr Keith Bright was knighted in the New Year's Honours List.

This deep-going attack and the arrogant and dictatorial style of management that goes with it has caused the tube workers to take a stand. The stakes in the dispute are high. Many supporters of *Briefing* will live near Underground depots, and should be going along to make contact with NUR members now. In particular, we can organise through Labour Party branches and CLP Trade Union Liaison Officers to discuss the distribution of material to the public, support committees and public meetings.



First driver-only operated tube train, Metropolitan Line, Whitechapel.

PHOTO: Brenda Prince, Format