LONDON LABOUR

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BRIEFING

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PHOTO: Workers' Press

Reinstate ILTA Council

LONDON TEACHERS DEFIANT!

On January 13th, 6,000 London teachers went out on unofficial strike to protest against the Baker Bill now progressing through the House of Lords.

Despite the snow, 3,000 teachers marched through Central London.

The Bill will give Education Secretary Baker the power to dictate teachers' pay and working conditions, by-pass the powers of elected education authorities, and remove the rights of teacher trade unions to negotiate pay and conditions with employers.

This Bill, the most serious attack on trade union rights since GCHQ, will give the Secretary of State for Education, what have been called "tyrannical powers, unprecedented in peacetime."

If Baker is successful then the Tories will extend government power to dictate settlements throughout the public sector. Unions will be stripped of their rights to negotiate. The Tory government will be able to impose its idea of wages and conditions at will.

All trade unions and Labour Party members must oppose this Bill and stop Baker now.

Unfortunately, the response of the NUT executive has been weak. They have called for a campaign of lobbying and publicity but have failed to organise the effective strike action which is the *only* way to defeat Baker.

Paul Foley
Hackney South CLP
Islington NUT

When the Inner London Teachers' Association (ILTA) took the decision to strike on January 13th, the response of the national union was to suspend all members of ILTA Council — in effect, the entire, elected leadership of Inner London's teachers. These suspensions divide and weaken the NUT at a time when maximum unity is essential to defend our trade union rights.

At a rally London teachers voted unanimously to demand that the NUT national executive call a one-day national strike on February 19th — and are urging all trade unionists and Labour Party members to support our struggle against Baker and for the reinstatement of ILTA Council.

- Pass resolutions in your wards and trade union branches deploring Baker and the suspension of ILTA Council, and supporting the February 19th strike. Send copies to the ILTA Defence Campaign, 25, John Campbell Road, London N16 8JY and NUT, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1.
- Send messages of support to ILTA Defence Campaign (cheques made payable to same).

Positive Images struggle in Haringey:

Vicar fasts; Tories rave; Labour stands firm!

Attempts by Tory councillors to exploit the so-called hunger strike of the Rev. David Rushworth-Smith against Haringey's lesbian and gay rights policy came a cropper at a special council meeting held on January 15th.

The meeting had been requisitioned by Tories to force the Council to "save the life of this man of god" by retreating on its commitments to introduce positive images of lesbians and gay men in the schools curriculum.

Obnoxious homophobe Councillor Peter Murphy — leading force of the new breed of far-right Tottenham Tories — delivered an oration of such staggering bigotry and ignorance that it had a gallery packed with "positive images" supporters swaying between laughter and tears.

After appealing to "normal, decent" people, Murphy read out extracts from an obscure tract entitled *Towards Gay Communism* with a lingering, salacius prurience that astounded all present. The real aim of the Labour Group in promoting what he insisted on calling "homosexualism" was nothing other, he bellowed, than the destruction of all social norms and "revolution".

Murphy's diatribe was met by an effective counter-attack by Labour Councillors who restated their commitment to the manifesto policy on which Labour swept to victory in May. The Council will meet Rushworth-Smith, explain its policy to him, but on no account will it revise it to please him.

The fast is a stunt, probably cooked up in collusion with the Tories, and must be exposed as such.

The key to a successful night for both Labour and Haringey's lesbian and gay community was a good turnout in support of the Labour councillors and the policy. We have learned that we cannot afford complacency. The Parents' Rights Group, a right-wing pressure group campaigning with obsessional fury againt all advances for lesbians and gays, will mobilise its supporters again and again; we must do likewise.

By Mike Marqusee
Haringey Labour Briefing

Rushworth-Smith, the Parents' Rights Group, and the Tories, will be exposed as the anti-democratic bigot they are only if we consistently demonstrate the breadth of our support.

Towards this end, Haringey Council itself must improve its performance. The long-promised leaflet explaining the issues to the public must be produced. Clear proposals on how the policy is to be implemented in schools must be formulated and publicised.

More support must be forthcoming from elsewhere in the labour movement. We in Haringey are implementing national Labour policy — it is the rest of the Party, and the vast majority of Labour-controlled authorities, who are out of step on this question.

We need the full and public support of Labour MPs, other Labour Councils, CLPs, trades unions, Black Sections, Women's Sections, etc.

Of course, Labour right wingers would like nothing better than to see this initiative in Haringey defeated. We expect nothing from them. But thus far we have received virtually no support from other left parties and Labour Groups.

Where are you? If we fail to win the battle over "positive images" in Haringey, what future for the lesbian and gay rights struggle elsewhere in Britain?

Positive Images
— the group set up to campaign for lesbian and gay rights in Haringey — will be happy to receive your message of support and send a speaker to your meeting.
Contact
Positive Images
c/o Reading Matters,
Lymington Avenue,
London N22.

LABOUR—TAKE THE POWER!

The Hackney Experience:

Should the left stay in local government?

In May 1986, a Labour Council was elected in the London Borough of Hackney with an increased majority and significant shift to the left.

There was solid commitment to a radical manifesto. There was excitement, determination, a genuine expectation of change, and a confidence in our ability to achieve it.

Nine months on, the atmosphere has dulled.

"Disillusionment" would be too strong a word; but many new members have been forced to recognise the unresolvable conflict between socialism and British local government.

There is no such thing as a socialist local authority in this country — only socialists attempting to run a piece of capitalist state machinery. In coming to terms with this simple fact, many enthusiastic new socialist councilors are left feeling compromised and isolated.

In the current political climate, some of the compromises that have been made closely border on the unacceptable. In Hackney, perhaps the most significant were: the catering workers' dispute and their occupation of the Town Hall; the freezing of "uncommitted growth" and consequent shelving of large chunks of the manifesto; and the decision to apply for redetermination of our expenditure limit and "rate cap".

Catering Workers Dispute

The catering workers' dispute placed many new Councillors for the first time in the employers' seat. Catering workers, unhappy with the progress of negotiations, occupied the Town Hall with a demand for better low pay thresholds.

The Council refused to negotiate while the occupation was taking place. The workers were "defeated"; the occupation ended, and the dispute went to arbitration.

The Labour Group's overwhelming vote against occupations as a method of furthering industrial disputes left many councillors shifting uncomfortably in their seats. Surely, as socialists, we should support the struggle of workers against the state using whatever tactics they believe are most likely to bring victory?

What do we do when *we* are the representatives of the state, yet do not have the power to meet the demands of workers, justifiable though they might be?

The two-year freezing of uncommitted growth was a pragamatic decision based on the need to prioritise expensive manifesto commitments in the context of a huge budget deficit. substantial package of new growth items, largely for housing initiatives, the decision meant the indefinite postponement of most non-housing manifesto commitments. In a borough like Hackney, there is general agreement that housing is an absolute priority. But again, although the proposal won universal approval of the Labour Group, it left chairs and members of all the other committees wondering quite what they are to do for the next two years.

Redetermination

The council had decided not to apply for redetermination of its government-imposed spending limit and rate-cap on the grounds that it would only result in permission to levy higher rates, and that the application would involve revealing information which would assist the government. At the heart of this was a feeling that we found the whole process of rate-capping, as a way of determining local authority expenditure, repugnant.

In the event, Mourad Flemming, local SDP activist and multiple bye-election failure, threatened to challenge this decision in the courts. He also threatened to challenge decisions on the housing "uncomitted growth" package, and special capital finance deals involving £30m. A deal was struck with Flemming whereby he dropped all three cases if the council changed its mind on redetermination. Again, this won overwhelming support on Labour Group. But it left a very bitter taste.

The Arden Report on corruption and inefficiency within the council bureaucracy, the battle with three black community groups over their accountability and financial control; the damning report from the District Auditor on the council's organisational procedures and the way it spends its money have all worn down initial resolves and idealism.

This is a personal account of the experiences in office of Hackney Councillor Peter Chowney, who was first elected last May.

In the midst of this, the Labour Group has retained a remarkable solidarity with the local Party which has been consulted on all major decisions. But the feelings of isolation and disappointment remain.

Many good socialists now find themselves embedded in a process of self-analysis and "good housekeeping" exercises. Although clearly very necessary (and long overdue in an indisputably inefficient bureaucratic machine) is it really the best way to organise the forces of socialism and the labour movement?

Two reasons are offered for socialists to participate in local government in Britain: the "reformist" approach that it is our duty to protect the working class from the worst effects of Capitalism; and the "propagandist" approach that local government can be used as a tool for educating and organising the working class.

In the current political climate, there is increasingly less and less scope for either of these projects.

The utter failure of the rate-capping struggle illustrates that the unpopular image of local government makes it a poor centre for broad-based organisation. This image is carefully fostered by central government cuts and restrictions which we have all obediently passed onto working class people. This is unlikely to improve greatly or rapidly under any future Labour government.

As the screw tightens further on socialists in local government, we are left with a question: at what point does it become unacceptable to participate in a system where we can do little more than give socialism a bad name, where we are merely occupying notional positions of power and responsibility simply to pass on the effects of an increasingly efficient system of class oppression?

In Hackney, as elsewhere, many good socialists now find themselves defending the indefensible for purely pragmatic reasons. We cannot go on with this indefinitely. Soon there will come a time for the left to reconsider completely its role in local government.

We welcome replies, but no more than 400 words please.



PHOTO: Hackney Gazette

Councillors Peter Chowney (right), Leader Andrew Puddephat (left), and John Bloom celebrate on election night.

Camden's Budget:

The Crunch is coming!

A budget consultation paper circulated to Camden Labour Party branches sets out the financial position facing Camden Council.

The report from the Leader of the Council explains that Camden's forecasted spending for 1987/88 is nearing £200m.

In addition, the Labour Group recommend £10m growth to begin the next stage of the manifesto, leading to a total budget of around £210m. Under rate-capping, the most the Council can raise through the rates is £145m. A gap of £65m exists between the planned expenditure and resources.

A second document in the batch of consultation papers is a report from the Director of Finances. He gives more information, including the fact that this year's expenditure is £10m more than forecast, and says that this leaves the Council in a "precarious position". He wants this £10m overspend reduced, and warns that any growth next year will be difficult.

This view must be rejected. The manifesto which the Party drew up and campaigned on in May 1986 must be implemented. The Labour Group must pursue all possible borrowing options for bridging the gap between expenditure and resources.

A deferred purchase agreement has already been signed. Further capitalisation of £40m can be achieved. Other measures still remain, including lease and lease-back of buildings, and other forms of using the Council's existing capital assets as security to borrow money from financial institutions.

Every option must be pursued to ensure that the manifesto is implemented. At

By Kate Allen
Camden Councillor

a time of massive homelessness, continuing and devastating increases in unemployment, we must recognise that the intervention of the Council by creating employment and offering services must be extended to ensure that the Labour Party in Camden will defend working people.

The start that has been made on extending equality of opportunity in employment, and in access and appropriateness of the Council's services must be continued.

What is sadly missing from these consultation papers is any recognition that a borrowing strategy must not simply be seen as an accountancy measure, or be allowed to be interpreted only as a high risk strategy — it must be explained in a political way.

This means openly and simply explaining our strategy to the people of Camden — explaining that the alternative is cuts and rent increases.

People need to be informed that the responsibility for the need to borrow lies with the government. Our strategy, explained on our terms, must become an issue during the General Election. We must say that the return of a Tory government would mean cuts, rent increases, and privatisation.

We must increase pressure on Kinnock and Cunningham not only to end rate-capping, but to restore central government grants and restructure local authority debts. After all, Kinnock told us to be a "dented shield". It is his policy we are pursuing.

Camden should take a lead in bringing other London Labour Boroughs together, using the resources of the ALA, LSPU, and LGIU to explain our policy politically and show the position that much of London is in.

Already the Tories and the Audit Commission have begun the attack. Stories of potential bankruptcy of London boroughs are appearing in newspapers, and the line is that it is the loony left again.

If we don't campaign now then we will lose the battle by default. We will face a Labour government which will tell us to increase the rates, in Camden's case by £5 a week.

This is an unacceptable solution. If we do face the return of a Tory or Tory/SDP government, we will be in no position to fight if we have not prepared the ground.

Haringey Labour Briefing Working Conference
LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN LONDON

The Final Crunch

When is it coming?
How do we face it?

Haringey Labour Briefing invites all *Briefing* supporters in London to a day of discussion and debate. The purpose of the conference is to hear reports on the financial and political situations facing the various Labour controlled authorities and to try to develop a coherent strategy for future action.

We will be discussing the deficit budget strategy, the debt crisis, the deferred purchase agreements and leaseback schemes, the problems and possiblities of mobilising council workers to defend jobs and services, etc.

Please attend and bring as much useful information on the situation in your borough as possible.

10am-4pm
Sunday February 8th
Brabant Road Trade Union Centre
(just off Station Road, Near Wood Green tube)

Call Mike Marqusee 341 9203 for more details

Ealing Budget Strategy

Take the High Road!

Quite a lot of things have changed in Ealing since May 1986.

One change is the introduction of a Borough Conference; the first was held on January 17th.

By Kevin Veness
Ealing Borough LGC/ Labour Group

The Conference and the way it was organised have been widely commended — particularly for being less like the routine labour movement conferences we all endure. And indeed, the morning "seminar" type sessions were generally well received, if rather cramped and occasionally a bit manic.

The afternoon, however, was primarily devoted to a full-scale discussion of the Council's 1987/88 budget.

By majorities in excess of 2 to 1, the 150 people at Conference voted for the following:

- "This Conference calls on the Labour Group to continue to implement the manifesto. It urges the Group to set a sufficiently high rate to enable it to carry out these policies."
- "This Borough Conference:

a) reaffirms its support for the programme outlined in the 1986 Local Election Manifesto
b) supports a Budget for 1987/88 which implements major priorities in Labour's four year programme, particularly in relation to disadvantaged groups such as Women, the Black and Ethnic Minority communities and people with disabilities
c) recognises that the implementation of Labour's programme is likely, as a result of Tory government financial penalties, to result in a substantial rate increase
d)calls on the Labour Council to agree a rates and budget strategy for 1987/88 which:
i) makes real progress on the policies in the Manifesto
ii) minimises the size of any rate increase to a level compatible with Manifesto objectives
iii) allows maximum scope for further progress in implementing Labour's programme in 1988/89 and beyond
iv) focuses any new growth into programmes which particularly benefit groups and areas hardest hit by any rate increase."

A resolution from Action LPYS — for a 30% rate increase and deficit budget — was defeated (33-78) despite strong support from comrades in *Militant* and *Socialist Action*, primarily on the grounds that such a tactic would not result in the mobilisation of the Council's workforce or mass popular support — if the experiences of two years ago are any guide.

A deficit budget was felt to mean that we would hand the Town Hall over to unelected officials who would make the Tories' cuts, at a time when it is still possible to protect a growth budget — which is the case given Ealing's very low rate base.

In the light of the support for the "necessary" rate rise option among the LGC, the Borough Conference and the Labour Group, it now seems that the Group will have no choice but to pursue this line.

A Labour councillor's view
Community this... community that...

"Community politics" is a catchphrase of the moment.

We want to make people feel close to local government again, we want to beat the Liberals at their own game... and we want to win local elections!

But, in a neighbourhood not dominated by an issue over which local people are fundamentally united (e.g. a motorway due to cut through a housing area or a campaign to clean up factory pollution) what can "community politics" really mean?

And can it offer anything tangible, or liberating, to the people who lose out continually in our society?

The very concept of a community means nothing, in practice, to about 70% of inner city residents. (That was the conclusion of a series of London Voluntary Service Council studies carried out in 1983/4). The degree of isolation is extreme, heightened in

By Cllr Tim Barnett
Lewisham

London by the concentration of people vulnerable to discrimination, such as black people, lesbians, gay men, youth and pensioners.

The Labour Party is comparatively well-organised to serve such communities of interest through its youth, women's and developing Black sections — but what of the old geographical neighbourhood? True, we work at the ward level. But wards have boundaries determined more by political gerrymandering than by "natural" neighbourhods.

We tend only to find the time to talk to other Labour Party members or to people contacting us for help with (usually housing-related) problems. We only appear on the doorstep near election time, and are normally seen as representatives of the Council rather than a socialist party.

As councillors we are often (all too willingly) pushed into making decisions which look reasonable on paper, but have untold effects on individual and community life.

As the power and resources of local authorities have been reduced, we have increasingly looked at *how* local services are delivered. This is an essential exercise, but how likely is it to succeed if — rather than develop means of communicating directly with our constituents, as consumers of services — we continue to rely on endless officer-prepared reports for our information?

So what can we do to make "community politics" a reality?

We must find ways of by-passing traditional, Council-established consultation structures, and of questioning how representative local groups are, to avoid only getting views from people well-trained in using the system.

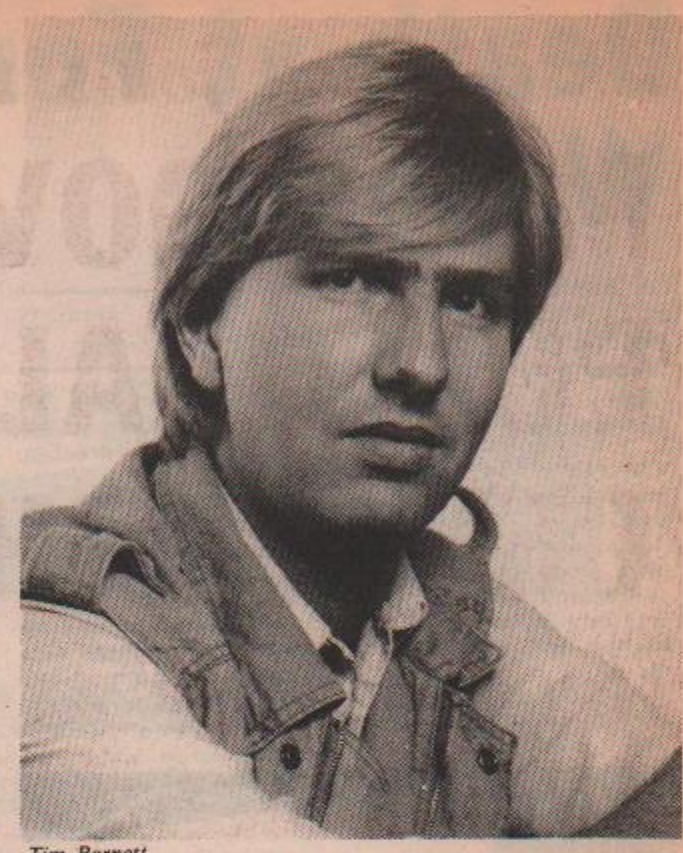
For example, in my ward (Hither Green, Lewisham) we have:

- produced a detailed ward manifesto, distributed to each house before last May's election;
- instituted a system of annual visits to each household in the ward, picking up issues, complaints and new members;
- linked councillors to the ward party, through a support group of interested ward members;
- started to develop a "labour link" system of Party members around the ward, to feed back on local issues.

Neighbourhoods — especially in inner cities in Thatcher's Britain — are influenced by powerful external forces. Incomes, a wide range of public services, most leisure time activities, institutionalised discrimination — community politics alone can do little to affect those crucial things.

Liberation for oppressed sections of the community will not come through community action, although such action can be a powerful politicising force and has already succeeded in changing the face of the Labour Party in many parts of the country.

The message is to think locally, be generous with the time and effort you devote to the work, but don't believe that it alone can achieve the programme which we as socialists have embarked on.



Tim Barnett

An end to double standards

Some ten years after the death of Kevin Gately in Red Lion Square, a meeting is taking place to lift the ban of Farrakhan, the leader of the Nation of Islam organisation, who was barred from entering this country from the States by the Home Office.

While Botha and other racists have been allowed in, Farrakhan was barred on the grounds that he is an anti-semite. Without supporting the use of state bans and immigration controls, one wonders why the Campaign to lift the ban on Farrakhan put their energies into giving credence to this anti-semite.

"I say this, I'm not backing down from the Jews because I know their wickedness. I'm not separating just Zionists out, because the Zionists are the outgrowth of the Jewish transgression."
(L. Farrakhan, Washington, 22.7.85)

"Hitler was a very great man."
(L. Farrakhan, Chicago, 11.3.84)

"I am your last chance Jews... Listen Jews... The Scriptures charge your people with killing the prophets of God... You cannot say 'Never Again!' to God, because when he puts you in the oven, you're in one indeed. 'Never Again!' don't mean a damn thing when God gets ready for you."
(L. Farrakhan, Maddison Square Gdns, 7.10.85)

These and many other comments by Farrakhan have never been denied or disproved, and clearly do

By Alf Filer
Brent East CLP

not suggest anything progressive that deserves endorsement or support. While the Campaign to Lift the Ban may not itself be anti-semitic or racist, objectively it is defending an anti-semite, even under the guise of opposing his banning from this country while not endorsing his views. One can oppose immigration controls quite rightly as racist but that does not mean socialists should do anything to encourage his entry.

I have heard some of the campaign's supporters suggest that it is racist and divisive to oppose Farrakhan, while others have gone further, stating that even though he is an anti-semite he is also Black and therefore it is racist to deprive Black people in this country the right to hear him.

Such a patronising and tokenistic argument is an insult to the anti-racist movement, and ignores the concerns and fears of the Jewish community. You can not build an anti-racist movement on the basis of prioritising one form of racism over another.

The organisers of this particular meeting on January 23rd attempted to claim that one of their main speakers was Bertha Joseph, a Black councillor from Brent. Bertha has made it clear that her name "was used without (her) knowledge or permission,"



Farrakhan

PHOTO: Stefano Caglioni (Report)

and that in line with Brent Council and Brent Party policy, she is "totally opposed to having anything to do with their campaign."

Last October, following an extensive debate throughout the Brent Labour Parties, the 3 CLPs and Local Government Committee were unanimous in banning halls to this campaign, clearly recognising that anti-semitism is a product of the same Capitalism responsible for other forms of racism.

Farrakhan's links with extreme right wing, Nazi and racist groups in the States show that he has little to offer in his petty bourgeois programme of Black Capitalism. In September 1985, Tom Metzgar, now leader of the White American Political Association and formerly leader of the Californian Ku Klux Klan, donated $100 at a rally in L.A. to Farrakhan.

Calling this a "token donation", Metzgar said afterwards that he had been in contact with the leaders of the Nation of Islam ***"for several years"***.

What type of memorial is being built to Kevin Gately, Malcolm X, and the millions of people throughout the world who suffer at the hands of racism by giving credence to Farrakhan? Surely there is far more positive work that should be a priority for socialists than thinking even twice as to whether he should be supported or his ideas debated.

Unfortunately some of us have had to divert some of our energies into putting the record straight and opposing the reactionary ideas he is attempting to spread. We look forward to the day when other socialists will join us in condemning Farrakhan. Any movement that is built on dividing Jews and Black people can only lead anti-racism into a dead end.

"The International shall ring when the last anti-semite will have disappeared."
Yevgeny Yevtushenko

Camden Briefing
Organising to fight back

***Camden Labour Briefing* is organising the local left to push for the implementation of the Council's manifesto commitments and the organisation of a widespread fightback against the privatisation of local services.**

Whilst the right wing have tried to discredit council unions as privatisation looms, *Camden Labour Briefing* have argued for the opening up of local government to council unions so that a battle against privatisation is politically effective.

We have joined forces with women's groups, black groups, lesbian and gay groups, and NALGO to oppose Council participation in a Police Consultative Committee which has been proved to be a sham.

Camden Labour Briefing has consistently supported important Council initiatives, such as its invitation to Sinn Fein councillors, while opposing any attempt by the Council to "muddle through" on the backs of the local working class.

If you want more information about what Camden *Briefing* is doing phone Fred on 387 1361 or Fran on 431 0357.

Tea and sandwiches with Anderton's Men of God

Arrivals for the first meeting of the Camden Police Consultative Committee were met by a picket of printworkers, council workers, women's groups, unemployed groups, lesbian and gay groups, some councillors and Labour Party activists.

Feeling locally is strongly in favour of a boycott of this sham committee, set up to head off growing demands for police accountability and to rubber-stamp police activity. However, some councillors favour participation — a politically suicidal move considering the urgency of mobilising all sections of the working class to fight government cuts and privatisation.

By Fran Rayner
Hampstead & Highgate CLP

Strong heckling stopped the meeting inside — this time. This must be the beginning of total withdrawal of all Labour Party representation. The councillors who crossed the picket line were: Tony Dykes (leader), Latham, Rippington, Pope, Cane, Hughes, Hulme, Wakeham.

London Regional Conference

London Regional Conference has been rescheduled for April 11/12th at Poplar Civic Centre.

***BRIEFING* has called a meeting to discuss our slate and intervention:**

FRIDAY, JANUARY 30th at 7.30pm
Lambeth Town Hall

Death at Fortress Wapping

On January 10th 1987 at 11.45pm a lorry from Murdoch's Fortress Wapping ran over and killed 19 year old Michael Delaney.

Michael was crossing the road at the top of Butchers Row by Commerical Road. Police were present protecting a TNT/Murdoch convoy. The first lorry in the convoy hit Michael and then carried on.

Fact: The police made no attempt to stop the lorry until it was on the M4.

From Tower Hamlets Print Support Group

Fact: Michael was left on the road without any cover in freezing temperatures.

Fact: Police radios stated at the time that "they need not worry, he wasn't a picket so they haven't got a martyr".

Fact: Offers of help by residents and pickets were repulsed by the police whilst 20 minutes elapsed before the ambulance arrived.

Fact: The TNT lorries use the Highway and Butchers Row like **Brands Hatch.**

Fact: All statutory traffic regulations are suspended for Murdoch's TNT lorries.

Although he usually rushes to comment on incidents at Wapping, Deputy Police Commissioner Wyn Jones maintained silence after this event. Local Labour Councillor Charlie Mudd wrote to the Police, and has received an unsatisfactory reply — at variance with eye-witness accounts.

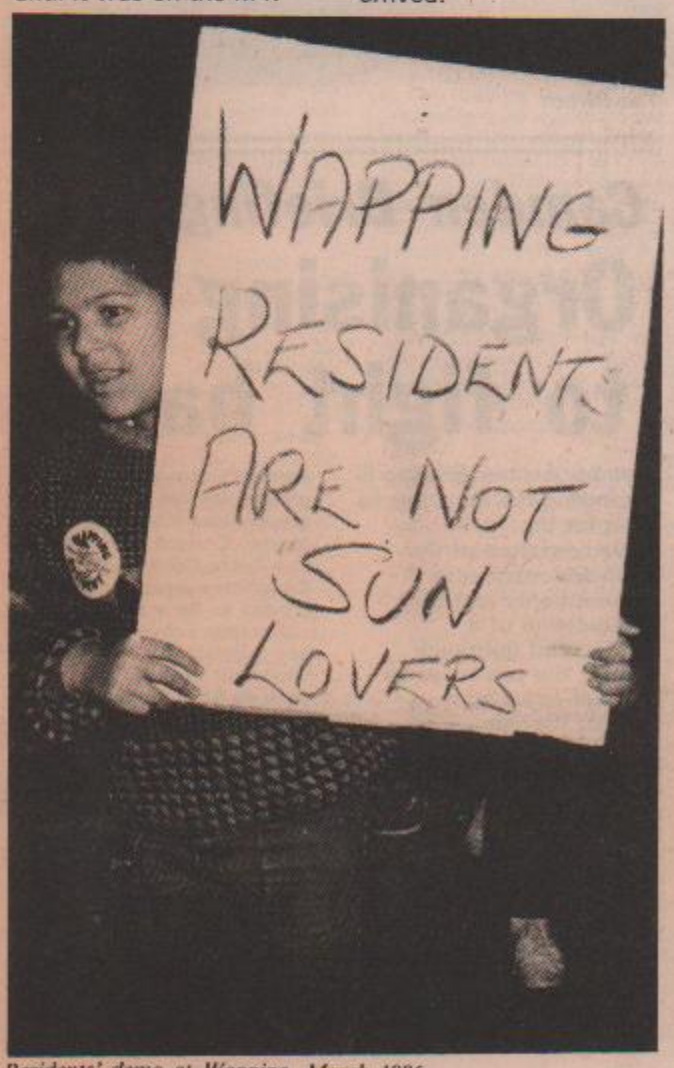


PHOTO: Andrew Wisrd (Report)

Residents' demo at Wapping, March 1986.

The Tower Hamlets Printworkers' Support Group urge you to:

- Order copies of the petition from the Group c/o 236 Cable Street, London E1.
- Join your local printworkers support group. Tower Hamlets P.S.G. meets every Tuesday, in the Basement, St George's Town Hall, at 7.00pm.

NALGO
Met District
Broad Left
Tuesday
February 3rd
6.30pm
County Hall
Discussion on NALGO's privatisation campaign and NEC election

MAIRE O'SHEA will be speaking at a meeting in Camden Town Hall on Wednesday Feb 4th at 7.30pm to outline the need for a campaign to free all the framed Irish prisoners. All are welcome.

National Justice for Mineworkers Campaign
South East Region
PUBLIC MEETING

The miners, the printworkers, Silentnight, Hangers —
the victimisation of trade unionists continues
How shall we counter this attack on trade union rights?

Chair: Peter Heathfield
General Secretary, NUM

Speakers:
Alan Barnes
Hangers
Irene Scott
Silentnight
Liz Short
Printworkers
A victimised miner

Friday January 30th, 7.30pm
Conway Hall,
Red Lion Square, WC1

London Miners' Office
190 Shepherds Bush Road, W6

Heroes Concert: March 22nd, Picadilly Theatre



PHOTO: John Chapman

Nick Raynsford flanked by the Kinnocks.

Fulham:

Witch-hunt on the road to London

It has been a most successful year for the right wing in Fulham CLP.

Just over a year ago they organised to select Nick Raynsford as PPC. Following the death of the sitting Tory MP, and with the help of the regional and national party organisations, there was the famous bye-election victory.

The by-election had its dubious moments, in particular a scurrilous leaflet which gave details of how the "militants" were to be dealt with, but in general was competently run from Harold Laski House by the Party bureaucrats.

Comrades on the left were totally involved in the campaign. Indeed, in the spectacular council election results last May, the best results were recorded in those areas where the left was in control.

However, with the election of the new Labour Council the right swung into action. A resolution was pushed through

By Ian Coleman
Fulham CLP

branches which effectively makes it impossible to implement the Party's manifesto.

The tight control of the GC by the secretary/agent has ensured that the LGC delegation is almost entirely hard right.

Flushed with its successes, the right is now flexing its muscles for its next campaign — to become the first CLP in London to expel *Militant* comrades.

Many of us have severe reservations about *Militant* which have been confirmed by their recent voting record on the Fulham GC. Their decision to vote for Meacher and Blunkett in the NEC elections rather than black section candidates, and their collusion with the right in voting against the Sinn Fein visit, demonstrates only too visibly what a thoroughly tired and bankrupt group they are.

This, however, is not the issue before us. A resolution will come to the January GC which has been worded in a most unsubtle manner and which is clearly designed to pave the way for expulsions. Those of us who reject expulsions on political grounds must do everything in our power to defend the *Militant* comrades and resist the lunatic activities of the Fulham right wing.

Surely the last thing Nick Raynsford needs now with an election looming is a full scale war inside the CLP, and the publicity that will inevitably follow.

We must make it clear to the right that we will ensure that the issue is fought tooth and nail both inside the CLP and the regional executive.

We are every bit as committed to the election of a Labour government as them. We will do more work to elect that government than them. A split inside the local Pary at this time will almost certainly cost Labour the seat.

Massive bus cuts planned

A secret document leaked to Lambeth Public Transport Campaign reveals just how far the present management of London Buses Limited (LBL) will go in their frantic efforts to cut costs.

Over the next year, LBL plan to shed over 1,000 drivers and more than 1,500 conductors; to have 86% of the fleet One-Peson-Operation (OPO); to put 30 more routes out to tender; and to buy over 200 second hand buses.

The key to cutting costs, the document argues, is to save on staff wages by converting to OPO as rapidly as possible. This will require at least 200

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doored buses, which LBL will buy from places like Manchester, which, since deregulation, have a surplus of vehicles.

If LBL were to bid successfully for the tendered routes, they would require over 400 additional buses. Resouces, in the view of the LBL Bbard, could not stretch that far. The clear implication, therefore, is that LBL **will not bid for tendered routes**, resulting in entire garages (Norbiton, Harrow Weald and possibly Merton) being given over to private operators.

The implications of this programme are far-reaching for both staff and passengers. A clear long-term strategy is emerging: the old London Transport is being broken up into smaller and smaller units which are being sold to private companies, whose wages and conditions are far inferior to those of LBL. The power of the TGWU is being eroded.

The needs of the passengers most dependent on Public Transport are being cast aside. To convert yet more routes to OPO and to buy badly designed second-hand buses is a slap in the face to women, people with disabilitites and to the elderly, all of whom have long argued that they need more conductors and new buses properly designed to meet their needs.

Dr Keith Bright, the Chair of LRT and recently knighted by Margaret Thatcher, comments in his annual report:

"LRT is grateful for the views and suggestions it receives... we look forward to a continuing active public involvement as we develop strategies to take us into the 1990s."

This leaked document from his bus division shows that to be window dressing. Their only aim is to save money. Their only involvement is with their mistress at No. 10. Her will dictates their strategy.