LONDON LABOUR
BRIEFING
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WIN WANDSWORTH FOR LABOUR

A Labour win in the Tory marginal Southfields ward on November 19th would overturn the 31-30 Tory majority over Labour and give us control of the borough of Wandsworth for the first time since 1978.

Labour intends to turn the by-election into a referendum on Wandsworth Tories' plans to pull the borough out of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA).

"This by-election will give the Southfields voters the chance to vote on an issue that otherwise no one else in the borough can vote on," said Mike Barley, leader of the Labour Group.

A fightback against withdrawal is building up. Parents meetings in Southfields and across the borough have already virtually unanimously declared their opposition.

A well-attended meeting, organised by the Wandsworth Education Campaign after a noisy lobby of the Council, heard how withdrawal from ILEA would be a disaster for students and education workers alike. Several speakers compared neighbouring outer London borough Merton's shoe-string education service unfavourably with ILEA, in terms of class sizes, books, school meals, and other charges.

Nursery provision, adult education, careers services will all be slashed. No one mentioned, however, the potential Achilles heel of the campaign: ILEA's own programme of cuts, attacks on teachers' jobs and conditions, and its ideological capitulation to Baker's elitist concepts of education.



PHOTO: Gina Glover (Wandsworth Photo Co-op)

October 21st, 1987: June Hantot describes the appalling conditions in Merton's schools. This is the future for Wandsworth, if it opts out of ILEA.

A demoralised and angry workforce will not mobilise to defend such an employer. ILEA's policies, unless reversed, will break up the unity building up around the anti-Baker campaign.

By PETE COOPER
Battersea CLP

Wandsworth is the jewel in the Tory local government crown, and they will pull out all the stops to retain the seat. Losing the by-election would be a national embarrassment to Tory ministers. No doubt Baker will descend to announce a "generous" central government grant for an independent education authority — at first!

Even if Labour wins, the Tories are threatening to have 3 Labour councillors debarred from voting on the education issue — because they are ILEA employees!

But Labour's campaign must not concentrate solely on the education issue. The Tories will make much of their false but so far winning formula of "good housekeeping plus privatisation equals low rates". The sweated labour conditions, union bashing, and poor service delivery of the privateers must be exposed, and pledges to end the contracts made.

Socialists should not have any illusions about the nature of an incoming Kinnockite-dominated Labour administration in Wandsworth. But we must take this election very seriously — and so must the Labour Party in London and nationally.

The Labour candidate is John Gibbs, a post office worker. The Tory majority is only 143. Campaigning will start on Sunday November 1st, 11am, with weekday activities from 6pm. The Campaign HQ is at 104 Wimbledon Park Road, London SW18, tel. 870 1327 (nearest tube Southfields).

LABOUR—TAKE THE POWER!

Local government round-up

Haringey

The fightback gathers strength

On Thursday, 22nd October most Council offices and schools in Haringey were shut as a result of a day of action called jointly by Haringey NALGO and NUT against the cuts being implemented by Haringey Labour Council.

From early in the morning, strong picket lines were in place at all workplaces and these remained throughout the day.

By Mandy Mudd
Haringey Fights Back

Solidarity was shown by telecom and postal workers who refused to cross the picket lines; though not by the manual unions in Haringey who worked normally throughout the day.

As in other boroughs, the Labour Group has adopted a divide and rule tactic, with this round of cuts hitting its white collar workers harder. The NUPE and T&G leadership have colluded with this and failed to mobilise their members in defence of jobs and services in the borough.

Later there was a 3,000 strong march to the Civic Centre, where a letter of protest was handed in and a rally was organised by HFB. Here trade unionists, community groups and service users united to condemn the cuts and called for an escalation of action to resist this attack on the people of Haringey.

Everyone recognised that this would be a long hard campaign, but the determination to fight and the mood of militancy was strong.

Two workplaces are currently poised to take all-out strike action in protest at the sacking of temporary workers. The Council Workers Fightback group is preparing a special leaflet for rank and file members of the manual unions explaining how the cuts will ultimately pave the way for privatisation and threaten their jobs, and calling for solidarity in struggle so that the passivity of their leadership will be challenged.

As the severity of the cuts package begins to bite in Haringey more and more people are realising that there is no alternative but to fight back and that our strength lies in unified collective action.

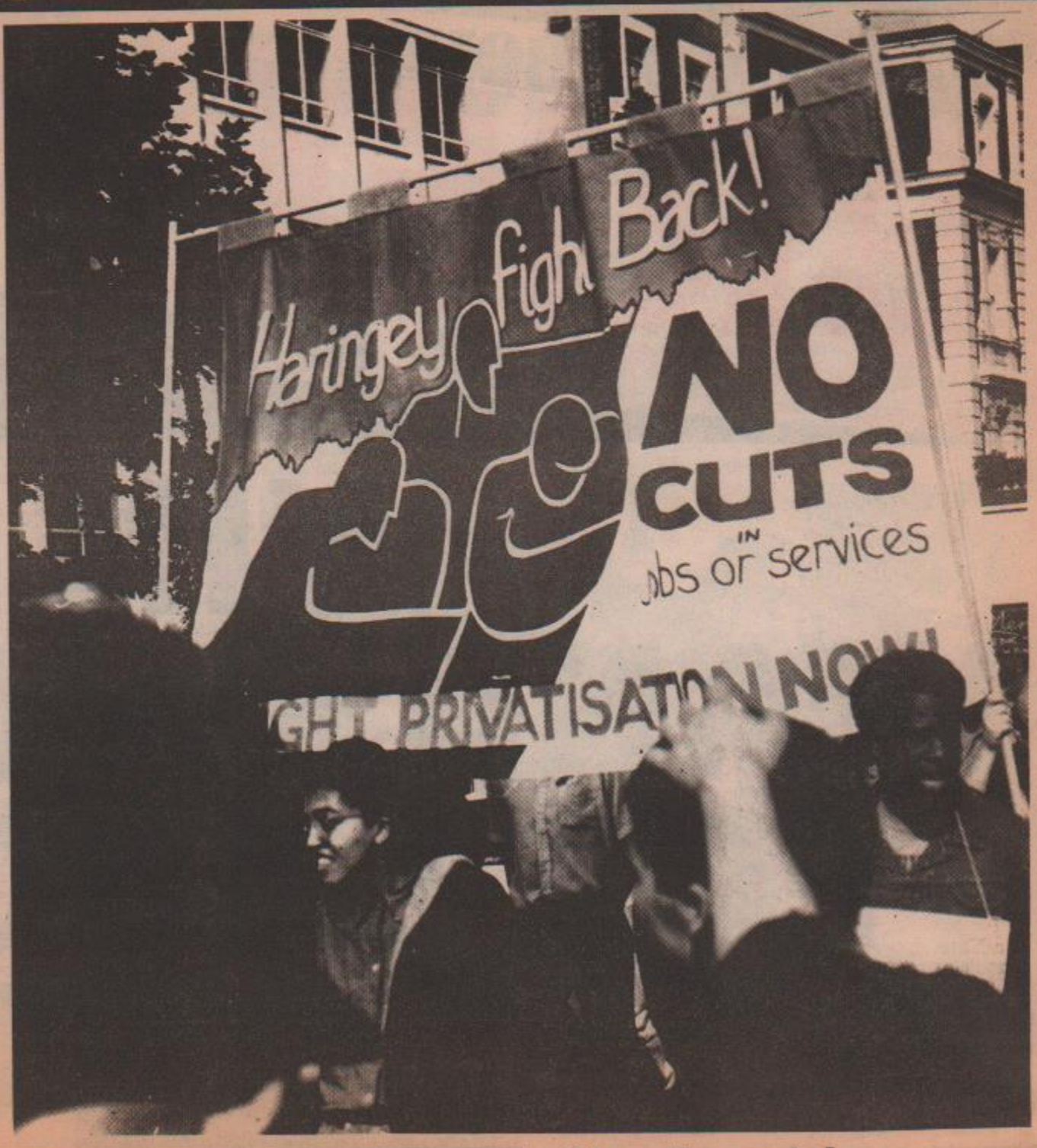


PHOTO: Leesa Herbert

Southwark

Conker fights in Southwark

The "hurricane" on the night of the Ides of October destroyed 10% of trees in Southwark and most other London boroughs.

The following day, Southwark Labour Councillors were shocked by the devastation and it dawned on some that the cuts package Labour was putting forward at the full Council meeting that night was more damaging to the Council's services than the hurricane was to the trees.

Twelve Labour Councillors, with the vociferous backing of a packed public gallery, voted against the half-year budget cuts package — £2 rent rise and vacancy freezes of 17% (officers) and 10% (manual) — but it was passed with the Tories' support.

The Liberals were against (that week they were in a progressive mood).

The decision is a complete negation of Labour's manifesto commitments and the decisions of the 1986 Council AGM.

Unfortunately, many of the 12 are not against cuts as such. Some have put forward alternative cuts to attack, among other things, the main gains of the last administration — such as the Women's Committee.

By Cllr Piers Corbyn
Southwark

Others, while opposing Council cuts, also oppose the Council seeking cash from the government earmarked for the setting up of a new Travellers permanent site — a site to help one of the most deprived groups in Britain.

Four of the 12 put forward principled opposition to all cuts in line with the manifesto, with the explicit backing of various wards (including the Leader's) and issued a statement which was printed in the new Southwark Fightback bulletin.

Council Leader Ann Matthews, whose consistent and solid defence of Equal Opportunities policies has now sadly developed into an "Equal Cuts Policy" finds herself daily guided by a "nouveau-socialist-monetarist" — Chief Whip John McTernon — who appears to be in "control" of all fiscal matters whatever post he is elected to (or not).

He raises the spectre of the "Knight surcharge" in every debate, to steer Councillors to approve government-imposed cuts — *Tory cuts.*

Legal advisers chime in that if Councillors don't approve cuts then the Chief Executive will *have to* carry them out anyway!

Labour is discredited by carrying out Tory cuts. That is what the Tories intend. They are preparing the ground now for a final onslaught to kill off local democracy, and the last vestiges of Labour's influence.

Ann Matthews likened our strategy of fighting every cut and preparing for legal challenges to "throwing conkers at tanks".

We could point out that even the conker-less have stopped tanks before (e.g. Prague 1968) — the issue is the tank-drivers, not the tanks. But even the *Financial Times* has estimated the government could not face many Local Authorities simultaneously refusing to carry out cuts, pay precepts to the police, etc., and demanding the rescheduling of debts, etc.

However, fine words in the Council chamber alone will not bring about the stand needed. *The key to the fight is outside.*

Tenants, and the workers and users of nurseries and day centres (such as Crispin House) are already taking demonstration action against every cut.

Their actions are being drawn together alongside struggles outside the Council, through Southwark's Broad Left and Southwark Fightback Committee.

Only through escalation of action in and beyond the Council and Labour Party will the situation change and Councillors be dragged in *behind* the fightback on the ground.

Meanwhile the Labour Councillors who refuse to defend the manifesto should plant conker trees. But which side will they be throwing them at?

Stop the cuts! Stand by the manifesto!

We, the Southwark councillors named below, dissociate ourselves from the decision of the Southwark Labour Group to raise rents and cut services.

The rent rise of £2 a week is a disgraceful attack on those least able to afford it. It is a slap in the face for loyal Labour voters in the Borough to be treated in this way.

Labour Councillors were not elected to carry out Tory policies in Southwark. We were all elected on a manifesto of "No cuts in services or jobs, and no redundancies." What we now see is a retreat from all those policies on which Labour fought the last two Council elections. In attempting to "balance the books" to impose the Tory cuts, Southwark Labour Council is attacking the very people it was pledged to defend: the unemployed, the homeless, single parents, working class people and its own workforce.

Defend Local Democracy!

This Tory government is intent on destroying Council services, ILEA schools, local democracy and Council housing — the only base of daily living for millions of people. Their policies aim to change Southwark beyond recognition: to cut and privatise services, to force ordinary people out, and to "yuppify" the Borough.

If Labour now carries out the Tories' cuts, the government will move in after a few years to "finish the job".

The Council must stand firm against the cuts, deliver a decent service, and prepare to fight the legal attacks which will come against Councillors when a budget crisis is reached, by campaigning and industrial action in and beyond Southwark. Only through resistance can the Tories be stopped.

Fight *every* cut

We can no longer stand by and watch this Council renege on commitments made to the people of Southwark. The cuts and rent rise are nothing short of betrayal of all socialist principles by Councillors working under the proud banner of the Labour Party.

By going public in this way we seek to build a mass campaign against cuts and rent rises. We will give active support to all those groups in Southwark who wish to get organised and fight back, and urge all who live or work in Southwark to join local campaign, and to support the Broad Left Campaign and the Southwark Fights Back! Liaison Committee, which are working to build the fightback.

Statement of four Southwark Councillors:
Piers Corbyn, Brian Kelly, Brian McKeon, David Main.

Camden

On the line against the cuts

Camden Labour Group pushed its massive cuts package through the Council meeting on Wednesday October 21st.

£43m is to be cut from a revenue budget of £195m this year.

This will be done by cutting 1,500 jobs and reducing services by 20% (in some departments by 40%). These cuts will mean closure of libraries, nurseries, swimming pools and the ending of all but emergency repairs to housing.

By Fred Leplat
Camden Labour Briefing

Council properties will be put up for sale, and deals with property speculators will be entered into in order to raise further "creative" money.

In addition to these cuts, the Labour Group is taking a tough attitude to industrial relations. "Flexibility" and increased productivity of staff are being imposed.

The NALGO meeting was not authorised, as 10 days notice was deemed to be insufficient. Management sent individual letters to all staff, but 700 NALGO members turned up and voted for a one day strike on October 29th.

Meanwhile, there are 3 separate disputes going on: boilerworkers have had their travelling expenses removed, and staff in mentally handicapped homes and libraries are refusing to cover vacancies. The Labour Group is also trying to blame housing staff for a massive fraud by bed and breakfast owners: all staff in the Homeless Persons Unit have been sent home on full pay for a fortnight while a Council — not independent — investigation is carried out.

The Tory government must be delighted that Labour is carrying out such massive cuts. This has created divisions in the Council Unions, Labour Party and community organisations.

Uniting

Instead of uniting against the Tories, sections of the local labour movement are justifying this attack as being necessary to remain in office. However, NALGO and UCATT are opposed to cuts, as well as the majority of voluntary organisations.

Opposition is growing as the scale of the cuts is being understood. Two more councillors voted against the leadership in the Council meeting, and a cuts campaign uniting all those prepared to fight back is underway.

Camden Against the Cuts meets every Wednesday, 6.30pm, Carol St Workshops, 43 Carol St, NW1.

Hackney

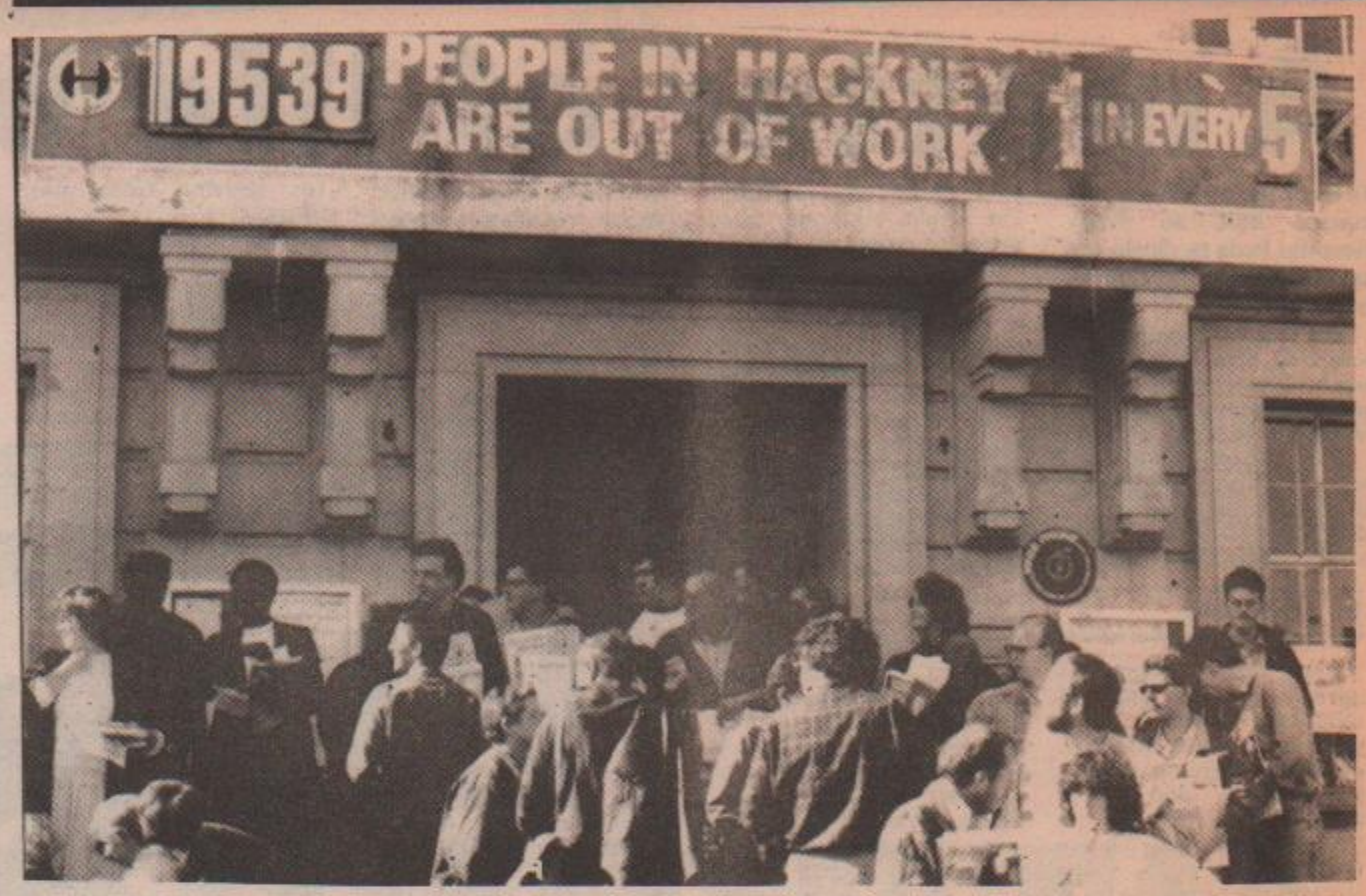


PHOTO: Maureen White

Lobby of Hackney Council

Hackney fights back!

The Hackney Fightback campaign has now been launched and will hold its first meeting on Tuesday November 17th at the Town Hall.

Speakers will include Martha Osamor, ex-deputy leader of Haringey Council.

By Hackney *Briefing* supporters

This launch follows developments since the decision of the Annual Borough Conference on October 1st to make cuts.

The Labour Group has received papers from the Director of Finance and Management Team (a weekly meeting of the Chief Executive and the Council's Directors) which gave a more detailed breakdown of the cuts required.

Papers

These papers could have been made available to the Annual Borough Conference delegates who were deprived of this information in making their decision.

The Hackney North Women's Section — which supported no cuts at the ABC — was particularly concerned to see that "overspending" in the Social Services Department was to be partially compensated by an underspend on nurseries and child-minding facilities; and at rumours that the Council will no longer automatically cover those posts vacated by women on maternity leave.

Confirms

This confirms a fear that services for women and other oppressed groups will be the first to suffer in the face of the leadership's cuts in jobs and services.

The Women's Section has therefore issued a letter to all local labour movement bodies, tenants, community groups and local campaigns to launch a Hackney Fightback Campaign, on the basis of no cuts in jobs and services and no rent rises, and to campaign for the return of the millions of pounds stolen from Hackney Council by the Tory government.

We urge all those who oppose cuts to sponsor the meeting on November 17th and to help us organise the Fightback.

Lambeth

New Tory Leader rescues Linda Bellos

Tories and Labour "moderates" on Lambeth Council have been forced to unite to push through a £35 million cuts package.

The cuts are opposed by the Lambeth Labour Parties' powerful Local Government Committee who have demanded further public consultation on how Lambeth will bridge a £60 million budget gap.

Twelve Labour Councillors, including a number of committee chairs and the Chief Whip, defied their own group's policy by supporting a resolution put by a Norwood Labour Councillor opposing the cuts.

The resolution would have rescinded the cuts package pending further consultation. But the Tories, led by new leader Hugh Jones, voted with the Labour majority, including Leader Linda Bellos, to block this.

In a statement after the meeting, ten Labour Councillors said:

"We voted in line with Party policy. Our manifesto pledged us to fight cuts no matter what obstacles were placed in our way. The majority of Labour Group have now reneged on their promises and have failed to offer any resistance to the government's spending cuts. The people of Lambeth need more resources, not less, to begin to tackle the growing poverty in the borough.

"The Council leadership has been forced to rely on the Tories. Thy have no support outside the Council chamber. We will continue to vote against cuts at every opportunity, at every committee and Council meeting, and we will demand that Labour Councillors keep their promises to the people of Lambeth to resist Tory cuts."



Linda Bellos

This statement was issued by:
Steve French, Chair, Construction Services
Lesley Hammond
John Harrison, Vice Chair, Social Services
Alison Higgs, Chair, Environmental Health & Consumer Services
Bill Houghting, Deputy Mayor
George Huish
Julian Lewis, Deputy Whip, Chair, Police, Vice Chair, Construction Services
Jonathan Oppenheimer, Vice Chair, Environmental Health
Greg Tucker, Chair, Economic Activity & Employment
Joan Twelves, Chief Whip

Brent

All out on November 11th!

The campaign to force Brent Labour Group to listen to those hit by its cuts reaches its next high point with the lobby of the full Council meeting on Wednesday November 11th at 6.30pm, Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane, Wembley.

We call on all *Briefing* supporters in Brent and comrades from outside to be there, and in the run-up to mobilise maximum support in their unions and community groups for this crucial event.

We must build on the twelve-strong bloc of anti-cuts Councillors, to isolate the right — both old and new, and overturn the disastrous package pushed through by the Group leadership.

For the benefit of comrades who may encounter any Brent Councillors now or in the future, the voting on the £7m cuts package was as follows:
For cuts: Amory, Collymore, Duffy, Ernstoff, Ford, Harrod, Jackson, Jordan, Joseph, Long, Magloire, McLelland, Maloney, Parshotan, MD Patel, Pendsay, Sargeant, Snow, Spray, L Williams, Witham and finally Wadwha.
Against cuts: Baird, Durham, Frazer,

By Dave Statham
Publicity officer, Brent Fightback

Gladbaum, Hansen, Heizer, Kataria, Rashid, Roberts, Shaw, Smith and Woods.

(A further two abstained, and five were absent.)

The remnants of the Group leadership have now sunk to the level of defending their use of scab security guards to assault members of the Party seeking to attend the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee which agreed the cuts.

For further information on Brent Fightback contact:

Steve Barton or John Hogan, 11a Ivy Road, NW2 6SU, tel. 450 1730;

Christine Clavering, Flat 8, 64-66 Anson Road, NW2 6AD, tel. 450 1436;

Dave Statham, 76a Hanover Road, NW10 3DR, tel. 459 7799.

All out on November 11th!

● Brent *Briefing*, meeting on Sunday 25th, agreed to back Graham Durham in the leadership contest for Brent Council. It was further agreed to call on Ron Anderson to stand down in favour of Graham Durham and to put a statement on the cuts to all potential leadership candidates.

Health in London

A matter of life or death

If trade union action had caused half as many hospital beds to close, the press would be screaming blue murder.

But though Tory cuts are knocking nine bells out of our health services, few people seem to realise the scale of the attack.

This autumn could be the worst ever for the NHS, as a tidal wave of spending cuts devastates hospitals right across the country.

By John Lister

Pontefract campaigns against savage cuts of £800,000, while Tory Eastbourne steels itself to axe £1m. Hospitals close in Liverpool and in Cheltenham: there is no "North-South divide" in the latest health cuts. The stockbroker belt of Surrey is being clobbered as hard as the inner cities.

But perhaps the worst concentration of cuts is in London's 30 health authorities, which face cash shortages totalling over £30m this year — and more cuts still to come.

With waiting lists already soaring, these cutbacks will bring fresh misery this winter to tens of thousands of patients throughout the South East of England.

Among the more brutal cutbacks already announced:

● **West Lambeth** has decided to axe over 140 beds at the world-famous St Thomas's Hospital as part of a £2.5m cuts package. The Health Authority also agreed to reorganise mental health services, closing two wards to cut £341,000. The loss of 140 beds (one fifth of the total) at St Thomas's will save only £625,000, but will add at least 2,000 to the 7,700 already waiting for admission.

● **Paddington**, facing a £3.2m shortfall, has axed 92 beds, cancelled over 1,500 operations, cut child psychiatry treatment and postponed the opening of newly-built wards at St Mary's Hospital. More cuts, including the closure of up to three hospitals (the Princess Louise, Samaritans and Western Opthalmic) will be decided next month.

● **Brent**, seeking to cut £1.2m, voted to close two acute wards at Central Middlesex Hospital, axe outpatients services at Willesden and Wembley Hospitals, close wards at Shenley psychiatric hospital, and cut medical staff: more cuts totalling £1m are yet to come.

● **Tower Hamlets** Health Authority, seeking to cut £1.5m, is to make drastic reductions in life-saving heart, kidney and neurosurgery operations, as well as cancer treatment. In addition, management plans to close Mile End Hospital's casualty unit and axe over 70 acute beds.

● **Ealing** is planning a £1.2m cuts package to include a halving of numbers of special care baby cots.

● **Lewisham & N. Southwark**, short by £1m, has cut communtiy services by £350,000, delayed the opening of new facilities at Lewisham Hospital, and is considering more ward closures.

● **Wandsworth** health chiefs, overspent by £1.5m as early as August, are under instruction to take "urgent management action" to cut spending.

Government policies have left almost every district of the capital short of the funds needed to maintain present levels of health care.

Other districts facing cuts include Barnet (£1m), City & Hackney (£1m), Harrow (£0.7m), Haringey (a massive £1.8m), Bloomsbury (£1.3m), Haringey (a massive £1.8m), Bloomsbury (£1.3m), Hampstead (£0.7m), and Camberwell (£1.4m). Riverside is a hefty £3.1m overspent.

Ironically, many of those hardest hit by these new cuts are patients from outside the capital who are referred for specialist treatment in London's prestige teaching hospitals. Cash shortages and bed closures have led many hospital managers to prioritise patients living in their own health district.

Paddington's cuts include cancelling 300 gynae operations for women outside the district: similar policies are being adopted in Hackney, Bloomsbury, and Tower Hamlets, where management want to close up to one third of the 235 "hidden speciality" beds used largely for patients from other districts.

Since the cash crunch that is causing the London hospital cuts is also hitting health authorities across the whole country, many of the patients turned away will wait years for treatment or die for lack of specialist care.

Meanwhile throughout the country protest campaigns have sprung up against the new wave of cuts. Significantly, many of these have begun to include consultants and even junior managers as well as nurses and other health workers.

Unfortunately the labour movement — especially the Labour Party, but also the health unions — has tended to lag far behind these developments, and have yet to mobilise fully to fight the cuts.

Now is the time for protest strikes, occupations, demos and lobbies — reaching out to build broad campaigns linking health unions and community organisations — before it's too late and the closures have gone through.

The beds, wards and services axed "temporarily" in the present round of NHS cuts may never reopen: the task is to prevent the closures.

Labour Parties and union branches wanting speakers on the health cuts or information to help build health campaigns are urged to contact London Health Emergency, 335 Grays Inn Road, London WC1 (01 833 3020).



PHOTO: Wayne Edginton

John Prescott and COHSE nurses during a COHSE lobby of the House of Commons earlier this year. Will the Shadow Cabinet stand by the NHS in its latest cash crisis?

London Education

In the front line against the cuts

The fight by part-time lecturers in Haringey Colleges of Further Education to secure basic employment rights has taken a new turn after the Council's new leadership agreed on their paackage of cuts.

Part-time lecturers are now fighting for their survival as their hours are being cut by management with an abandon worthy of Tory-controlled authorities.

Though the rights of part-time workers have been affirmed by both the Labour Party and the TUC, the "new reality" of Labour Councils prevails. In complying with the Tories, they are reaffirming the fact that part-timers are still the last hired and first fired.

This comes against a backdrop of a Tory government which has sought to increase the attractiveness of employing part-timers — they're cheap, easy to get rid of, and often non-unionised — by reducing their employment security.

It would not seem unreasonable to expect Labour Authorities to recognise that part-timers, who constitute over 20% of the British workforce, have basic employment rights; or that it is clearly an equal opportunities issue. In Haringey FE Colleges, for example, women constitute 60% of the part-time workforce, but only 40% of the full-time workforce; while nationally, an hourly paid part-time manual woman worker earns only 62% of what a male manual worker makes.

Consequently, part-timer lecturers in Haringey view their fight as part of a larger battle that includes not only other part-time workers, but all workers and groups in the frontline of the Council's retreat into the future.

By Woody Haut and Pam Sladek
Part-time lecturers, Haringey NATFHE

The extent of the work to be lost by part-time lecturers in Haringey is still unclear. However, while management picks off one part-timer or department at a time, there have been reported cases of some NATFHE members losing all their hours and others losing half or more of their hours, often in cases where those hours account for the sole source of income. A number of these part-timers are single parents who will now be facing extreme hardship.

Until the change in leadership, Haringey Council had committed itself to improving the conditions of part-time lecturers. We, in turn, felt that if any authority would protect part-timers, it would be an authority committed to defending jobs and services, such as Haringey.

Seeing it as an equal opportunities issue, the Council's former leadership set up a special working party to seek ways of ensuring that part-timers received basic employment rights such as payment on completion of work, sick pay, security of employment, holiday pay, etc.

In addition, the ruling which said that a part-timer could not teach more than 12 hours per week throughout the year (for that would mean a more permanent position as associate lecturer) was abolished in January 1986 — though it has been subsequently discovered that there was never any official endorsement of this "rule" in the first place!

While the Council's position is now highly ambiguous, there is talk about reimposing the "12 hour rule" despite the fact that the LEA has not given management the authority to do so.

At Tottenham College, where approximately 500 hours of overtime are notched up each week despite the union ban on such hours, part-timers are feeling particularly vulnerable.

Though , the Council agrees that overtime should be cut before part-time hours, management, seemingly oblivious to the fact that part-timers are entitled to one month's written notice before their hours can be cut or that some are covered by the Employment Protection Act, has opted for · reducing part-time contracts.

In one department, part-timers are being given notice, while a sizeable proportion of overtime hours are being retained.

While it is understood that income generating courses have to be retained, it is not clear that the preserved overtime is in this category, or that "cost-effectiveness" should be the sole criterion in deciding which hours to cut.

Since all this started, many part-timers have joined NATFHE. In turn, the local branch at Tottenham College has supported part-timers, unanimously passing a resolution that deplores the cuts in Haringey, the effect it will have on part-timers, and the fact that overtime hours are still being worked.

Many full-timers are aware that while last year part-timers felt relatively secure with a sympathetic local authority, next year, when Haringey seeks to make cuts totalling some £50m, there might well be no part-timers left to economise upon.

With cuts on that scale, no one's job is going to be safe. Therefore the discussions amongst part-timers regarding what measures they can take to safeguard their jobs, secure their basic employment rights, and fight against the cuts in Haringey, take on a greater importance than ever before.

London Conference

At the beginning of October, the West London Teachers Association, a branch of the NUT, organised a one day conference to discuss education in London.

Trade Unions, parents, governors, ILEA members and students were involved in wide ranging discussions on the type of education service required by all of London.

Much of the Conference was based around the Education Reform Bill, with Stephen Ball leading off the debate with a detailed analysis of the inter-relation beween all aspects of the Bill and other Tory ideology.

Most of the workshops then looked in more detail at the possible consequences of the common curriculum, opting out, open enrolment, financial deregulation, etc.

By Debbie James

Other more general workshops were held on unity between parents, governors, teachers and students and on the recent controversies over Equal Opportunities.

Inevitably much attention focussed on the newest attempt, through secession, to break up the ILEA. Although everyone present supported a unitary Education Authority in London there was much criticism of recent ILEA policy.

Teaching unions felt very bitter about ILEA's enthusiasm in introducing many aspects of the teachers' Pay and Conditions Act, in particular their inflammatory position on docking pay for refusal to cover, or carry out a "reasonable" demand of a headteacher; and last year' redeployment exercise.

General concern was expressed over ILEA's aparent acquiescence to many of the Tory initiatives. Neil Fletcher's speech at a fringe meeting of the Labour Party Conference was seen as a clear attempt by ILEA to become acceptable in the eyes of the government.

More recent statements, seeking a review of education in London, further expose the unwillingness of ILEA to fight for socialist education policies.

The plenary debate constantly reiterated the need for a regular forum for this sort of discussion. A similar but hopefully bigger conference will be held in the new year to begin to develop a strategic London Education Policy.

A planning meeting for this Conference has been provisionally suggested for Saturday 14th November. Anyone interested in being involved should ring 470 9780 for further information.