LONDON LABOUR
# BRIEFING
40p FORTNIGHTLY
No 87 JANUARY 26~FEBRUARY 9 1988

# ALL OUT FOR THE NHS

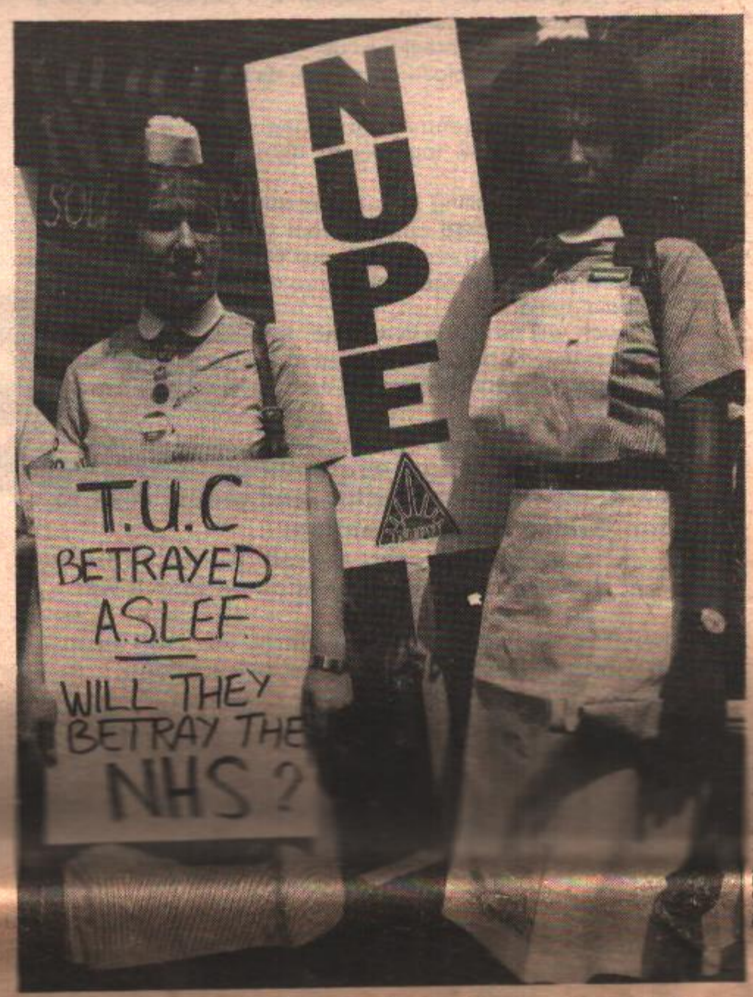


PHOTO: John Arthur

*Nurses' pay: when will the trade unions take it seriously?*

**Who on earth would believe the pantomime performances of Tory Health Ministers as they parade a load of misleading statistics purporting to show an expanding and improving NHS?**

**The real experience of those who work or use the health service is totally different. Morale is rock bottom, people are leaving the service at a rapid rate, and patients are already dying because of Tory cuts.**

**The position in London is even *worse* than in other regions.**

**● The cynical transfer of funds from inner London to "outer" London has placed a massive strain on the capital. This transfer was the work of the Resource Allocation Working Party, designed in the mid 70s to allocate *growth*, not administer cuts.**

**● London's massive teaching hospitals attract funds and services from non-teaching districts (although they are by no means escaping the cuts) and have exacerbated the tendency to centralise.**

**● The extra demands put on the NHS by increased homelessness, poverty, bad housing and unemployment, and the increasing numbers of elderly people have all added to the pressures on the NHS in London.**

**● The cost of living in London has led to a massive recruitment problem. Low pay in the NHS (apart from doctors) affects not only nurses but also paramedic staff, catering and cleaning staff, and admin and secretarial staff. London weighting nowhere near compensates for the high cost of living in the capital.**

**Between 1982 and 1986, 7,989 hospital beds were scrapped in London — nearly 16%. In 1987, a further 1,400 beds were closed and with District Health Authorities all over London facing massive overspends, this figure is likely to increase. The government's Xmas cash gift to the NHS is a drop in the ocean, and because it is non-recurring, it is being treated with suspicion by the DHAs.**

**The list of local horror stories is endless. Haringey DHA agreed last November to cut a further 120 beds (2%), leaving the borough without *any* acute beds; in Paddington, St Mary's hospital has lost over 400 beds in the last five years; in Bloomsbury the DHA was told in January that they faced a projected overspend for next year of £2.5 million, *after* making 3.7 million "efficiency savings".**

**By ROGER HARRIS**
**Hampstead Community Health Council**
**(personal capacity)**

**Nearly all Health Authorities are now saying that the government's desire for further efficiency savings is a joke. There is no "fat". The knives are now carving directly into patient care.**

**The recent high profile on health adopted by Labour in Parliament is welcome, but in general the response from the front bench has been weak and limited:**

**● Robin Cook's advice to the nurses to think long and hard before going on strike is a disgrace. It is a major decision for any nurse to go on strike and leave a patient. No one takes it lightly. But the nurses have had enough, and inspired by the courage of their colleagues in Manchester, London nurses have decided to take action themselves. Front bench spokespeople should be on the picket lines, supporting their action, not trying to undermine it. When nurses at the Royal Free in North London vote 127-0 with 8 abstentions for a one-day strike, the mood of militancy is clearly unprecedented.**

**● The Labour front bench have accepted the Tory framework for the NHS, and are beginning to repeat what Tory ministers are saying. When Neil Kinnock says that he agrees with Tony Newton that the demand for the health service is infinite he fails to address our real health needs and how we should be meeting them.**

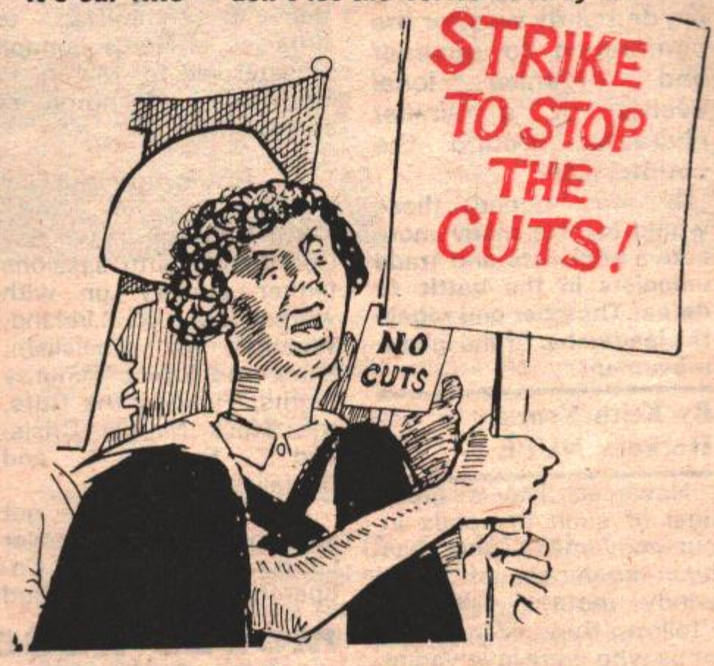
**● The front bench has failed to put across Labour's alternative. We must not always be seen merely reacting to Tory arguments. There are a number of problems with the NHS and people do have complaints about it. The Tories' success has always been to stoke up popular discontent, and then go in for the kill!**

**The alternative way forward to defend the NHS is being shown by London's healthworkers. Nurses throughout London are taking strike action on February 3rd, *political* strike action to defend the Health Service from Tory cuts. This is part of the first wave of strike action since the Great Miners' Strike to take on the government arguments about "you have to be cost-effective". London's healthworkers are saying to the government: "there *is* money available, and we want to spend it on social need."**

**Although February 3rd is led by nurses, the way is open for all socialists to show their support. Other healthworkers can plan their own strike action in support of the nurses — they will be faced with picket lines if they attempt to go into work anyway.**

**But also all other trade unionists have an interest in defending our health service, for it is the working class's health service which is at risk. Socialists can argue in all trade union branches for supportive action on February 3rd — anything from solidarity strike action to taking banners down to the picket lines in the lunch hour.**

**It's *our* NHS — *don't let the Tories destroy it!***




**ALL OUT FOR THE NHS**
**See Inside**

**LABOUR—TAKE THE POWER!**

# Local government campaigns

# All out on March 9th!

## LONDON BRIDGE

**Local Authorities Joint Trade Union Committee**

### No Cuts!
### No Privatisation!
### All out on March 9th!

London Bridge, formed on March 5th 1984, is a joint union, cross-Borough committee of shop stewards, meeting to fight cuts in jobs and services in local government.

The Tories are making unprecedented attacks, particularly against the ability of Councils to provide housing, adequate social services especially for children and the elderly, education, health care and amenities.

In this process of breaking up public services through privatisation, cuts and closure, thousands of jobs will continue to be lost.

Councils, Tory and Labour, are caving in, and it is essential that trade unions work together to fight to defend jobs and services.

London Bridge is calling for support for the call for strike action on March 9th 1988 coming from the London Boroughs. This will be a demonstration in London of the solidarity of local government workers in their resolve to defend services provided for social need.

The march will be in the West End, followed by a rally. This demonstration is to prepare the ground for the struggle ahead, at a time when London Authorities are considering the budgets for 1988/9.

**Please submit the following resolution to your union branch or stewards committee, and send a copy to London Bridge with a donation:**

This ..... agrees to support the call of London Bridge for a one day strike and demonstration on March 9th 1988.

We therefore resolve to strike on March 9th 1988 against cuts in jobs and services, and against privatisation, specifically in opposition to:

The Local Government Bill,
The Education Bill
The Housing Bill.

We resolve to donate £..... to London Bridge to help with publicity costs for the day.

**For further information please write or phone: The Secretary, London Bridge, 9-15 New Park Road, London SW2 4DU. 01 674 9844 ext. 180.**

**The mobilising committee for March 9th meets every Monday at 6pm in Room 126, by the NALGO Office in North Block, County Hall.**
**Make sure your Fightback group, trade union branch, community group, women's group, Labour Party and other organisations are sending delegates.**

**Local government union branches all over London are voting to strike and join the demonstration called by London Bridge and London Fightback on Wednesday March 9th.**

**With Labour Councils caving in to the re-elected Tory government and slashing jobs and services, the local government unions and the community are fighting back.**

**By Fred Leplat**
**ILEA NALGO**

Since the autumn there have been one day strikes in a dozen boroughs across London, with mass lobbies and demonstrations to protest at the attacks.

The national and district leaderships of local government unions — with the exception of ILTA — have been sitting on their hands as redundancies are planned and new legislation attacking Councils is being rushed through parliament.

The Local Government, Housing and Education Reform Bills will affect Council jobs and services through privatisation, opting out provisions for schools and estates, abolishing ILEA, introducting the poll tax... and goodness knows what next.

Councils across London are caving in without a fight to the Tories' financial constraints. They are planning to lose 20,000 jobs (9,000 in ILEA alone) by the end of the financial year on April 1st — a sick joke to those who voted for Labour Councils.

Camden Council Leader Tony Dykes admitted that *"no one will thank Labour for the cuts"* — as he proposed cuts in services up to 40%.

He should have added that workers will fight back — and are right to do so.

The London strike and demonstration will show that there is widespread opposition to the Tories and Labour Councils pushing through cuts and privatisation. It will also give confidence to workers in the boroughs that they need not fight on their own. Unity will avoid isolated defeats borough by borough.

Strike action to defend jobs may be difficult to win, but it is necessary and brings results. The recent one day strikes by nurses in Manchester and Edinburgh and in the blood transfusion service have forced the government to retreat from cutting health workers' pay and conditions. Health Authorities that overspent their budget were the main beneficiaries of the government's extra £70 million for the NHS.

The labour movement should campaign to make Council services — such as meals on wheels, libraries, education, housing — just as much a popular issue as the NHS. This would give a boost to workers' confidence to strike in defence of jobs and services.

We must not get sidetracked by grumbling about how services are so bad no one will defend them — grumbles usually heard from those who are voting to remove the services altogether. Every Council tenant can provide complaints about repairs services, etc. — but they will still be against their rent being put up, and can be invited to organise against rent rises!

The day of action on March 9th is the beginning of a campaign of resistance, to defend our living standards. Let's build it and make it a success!

## ISLINGTON NEWS

# Strike support builds

**Support for the 1-day strike on February 4th is building up — both inside the branch, and in other Council Unions.**

**NALGO**

- Over 100 members at one of the largest ever NALGO Housing Departmental meetings voted overwhelmingly not just to urge all members to join pickets and a lobby on the day — but also to produce a leaflet for distribution to every tenant in the Borough to win support for our action.
- The largest ever Libraries Departmental meeting — more than half of all members attended — began making plans for what they will do on the day.

**GMB**

The Branch meeting on January 14th voted to support the strike. They are now consulting with stewards, and through section meetings, to make sure the decision is backed.

**NUPE**

Shop Stewards were unenthusiastic about a 1-day strike, but are looking at ways of supporting a lobby in the evening and holding a large branch meeting during the day.

**So far the following NALGO branches are supporting the day of action:**

Haringey, ILEA, Islington, Camden, Hackney, Newham, Ealing, Greenwich, Westminster, Waltham Forest,
**as well as**
ILTA, Camden & Haringey NUT, London Transport NUR

**London Fights Back** groups in the boroughs are winning the support of tenants, service users, and other unions to support Council workers striking across London.

*Councillors Against the Cuts* will be using all its influence to make the day a success.

## HACKNEY NEWS

# Strike action Vote

**Housing workers in Hackey have voted almost unanimously to strike unless the housing cuts package was withdrawn by Monday January 25th.**

**A packed meting of over 400 NUPE Officers and NALGO members voted to walk off the job on that day and to escalate action if any move was made to implement that package. NUPE Officers Branch Secretary Keith Veness commented:**

**"My members are furious that severe cuts are being made in areas like the estate-based offices, the patrol service, and amongst reception staff, whilst they propose to create two new Assistant Director jobs.**

**"I have never seen my members so angry. The stewards' recommendation for action was pushing on an open door."**

**In addition to arranging pickets, leaflets will be delivered by workers to every tenant on the affected estates.**

# Socialist Conference

# N. London takes the plunge!

**At last October's *Socialist Conference* in Chesterfield one of the big demands was for the conference to sponsor and organise local events of a similar character around the country.**

**It was hoped these would involve many more active socialists and trade unionists in the battle to defeat Thatcher and regain the leadership of the labour movement.**

**By Keith Veness**
**Hackney NUPE**

However, like a great deal of such demands in our movement, this has been in danger of being windy rhetoric with no "follow through". Some of us who were involved at the periphery of the organising of Chesterfield decided informally that some action should be started at a local level to make these decisions a bit more useful.

There was the blunt fact that if it was not possible to organise a successful "get together" in North London, then there was very little hope left!

Accordingly, we have taken the initiative, with the agreement of the national organisers, in starting a committee to organise a North London Chesterfield for March, to be held in Islington or Camden.

### Envisage

We envisage a two day Conference with sessions (either plenary or with workshops) on Ireland, Women for Socialism, Black and Ethnic Minority Rights, Fighting the Cuts, the Stock Market Crisis, and Ecology and Socialism.

It is vital that we get sponsorship from major Labour Party, Co-operative, Trade Union and community organisations in North London. Already a number of union branches and Labour Party wards have agreed to back us and have donated money.

*Briefing* supporters should try to get the resolution below, or a variant of it, passed through their CLPs, wards or union organisations.

We also need volunteers to share some of the mundane organising with us. We need help in circulating material, preparing the agenda and stewarding on the day.

All sponsorship, monies and offers of help to: North London Socialist Conference, c/o 23b Mildmay Road, Islington, London N1 4PU.

### MODEL RESOLUTION

This ..... notes the success of the recent *Socialist Conference* held in Chesterfield and the attendance of over 2,000 people to discuss the urgent problems facing our movement.

We also welcome the call for local "mini-Chesterfields" and in particular the idea of a North London Socialist Conference.

Accordingly we agree to:

- Sponsor the Conference
- Donate £10 as a sponsorship fee
- Send a delegate to the organising meetings to be held at the Red Rose Labour Centre, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7 on Thursday January 28th and Thursday February 11th.

# LETTER

# Redeployment

Dear *Briefing*,

As a *Briefing* and Hackney Fightback supporter I would like my opposition to be known to the redeployment procedure that has been put together by Hackney Council, to be put to the Town Hall Trade Unions as part of the cuts package.

The purpose of this procedure is to redeploy workers into vacant posts, sack workers and use it as an instrument to isolate militant trade unionists by redeploying them into workplaces where they do not come into contact with many workers.

### Procedure

The procedure says that three offers will be given to workers who have been chosen for redeployment. It then goes on to say:

*"If all offers are rejected, the Council will instruct the individual to take up the last offer made as his/her substantive post, made in accordance with this agreement. The signatories to this agreement recognise that in so doing the Council will be making a reasonable instruction* (my emphasis) *on the individual. If the individual refuses that reasonable instruction then the Council has the right to take the action it would normally take if the individual refused to carry out their job."*

In other words if a worker refuses all three offers they will be sacked! Note: this is *not* the same as redundancy, and the Council would save money as they will be able to get rid of workers, if this procedure is agreed, without paying redundancy money.

To *Briefing* supporters and fightback activists everywhere opposition to this agreement would seem to be mandatory, which I assumed was the position of both the *Briefing* and Fightback group.

To my surprise, at the Hackney Fightback meeting of January 4th, Keith Veness, who I believe to be on the editorial board of *Briefing*, and also happens to be Branch Secretary of Hackney NUPE Officers branch and one of the main union negotiators, said at the fightback meeting that he thought "the redeployment package is the best in the country".

What is going on, I thought, have I missed something along the way?

I found out I haven't missed anything at all. It is true that in principle most of the Town Hall Trade Unions have agreed to accept this procedure — although in amended forms which, it must be noted, do not change the basis of it at all (i.e. to cut jobs) It is also true that in effect the battle has been lost, and that what we should all be doing now is supporting those sections of workers who are going to lose their jobs (e.g. the Council has agreed to cut 26 toilet attendant jobs, 40 refuse collectors, etc.).

Yet unfortunately it seems that *Briefing* and Fightback (apart from individual supporters) cannot even be credited with campaigning for refusal of the agreement!

This procedure was a test for when the real fight comes and we failed abysmally! Let's hope we don't fail again.

*Tom Silverlock*
Member of Hackney NUPE Manual General Branch and NUPE Hackney North GC delegate

PS: I hope this letter is taken in a comradely way. It comes from a Council worker who supports Fightback because it is the only organisation which is openly coming out against the cuts, with the exception, that is, of the Town Hall Trade Union Broad Left.

# Local government round-up

## Southwark

# Labour Group confronts community

**The inexorable logic of the "balance the budget" option is now forcing Southwark Labour Group towards a head-on fight with its own workforce.**

**However, many of the Councillors who argued for "gentle cuts" (overtime reductions, "socialist" service reviews (?), etc.) now find the latest "necessary to balance the budget" proposals too much to take.**

**By Cllr Piers Corbyn Southwark**

In order substantially to cut the wages bill, the Leisure & Recreation Department has proposed the sacking of the entire Parks workforce on March 31st, with re-employment under a new contract on April 1st.

Leader Anne Matthews — who paradoxically faces surcharge for her stand against the govenment in the ratecapping fight — has stated that since no trade unionist worth their salt would accept this scheme, one side would have to impose its will on the other — the Council on the workers.

The Labour Group, however, had second thoughts and decided not to go for a showdown, yet.

Unless action from below forces the Group to stand up to the Tories, it will soon be locked in confrontation against its own community around one cut or another. The idea that Labour cuts can help the community will soon be as believable as the proposition that a hard boiled egg can hatch into a chicken.

The battle of wills in Southwark will be resolved in action on the ground. The March 9th Day of Action is seen as very important in Southwark to get effective resistance going. Southwark Fight Back Liaison Committee and Southwark Broad Left are organising together to build for action on the day.

## Surcharge

# *Mobilise to support a labour appeal*

**The new round of surcharge attacks on Labour Councils has begun in Southwark. It has important implications for the whole labour movement. Cllr BRIAN KELLY spoke to Cllr PIERS CORBYN from *Labour Briefing*.**

**In 1982 Labour was elected on a left programme to reform, defend and improve the Borough.**

We were prepared to be surcharged if necessary. Everyone on the left ticket — and that was the new majority of the Labour Group — knew this.

In mid '84 an overwhelming Borough conference vote for a deficit budget strategy was declared "only consultative" by the Leadership (Tony Ritchie et al). Instead, they opted for the Delay in Rate-making tactic (DR).

In solidarity with the left nationally, I and other Councillors went along with this, although it was not our idea of an effective fight. The danger in the DR strategy was that each Council would be picked off one at a time — as happened in 1985 when Liverpool and Lambeth were left to battle on alone. They were then surcharged.

Our notices were dated the day after Thatcher was re-elected last year. We are being surcharged *now* to destroy any effective resistance to Thatcher amongst Labour Authorities, and to intimidate Labour Councillors into meekly accepting the destruction of their Councils.

The "legal" reason is that by delaying rate-making until May 30th we incurred losses in the interest which would have accrued on the rates — to the tune of £294,000.

Because of the complexity of the Southwark Councillors' voting pattern from March to May 1985 the District Auditor (DA) has decided 26 Labour Councillors, eight Tories, four Liberals and one Independent are guilty (of "wilfull misconduct") and are all potentially surchargeable.

There will be public hearings this March and April. Notice is likely to be served in May ordering us to pay up and removing those of us who are still Councillors from office. After that we will have 14 days to lodge an appeal.

The Tories and Liberals may appeal against the DA's decision. It is important politically for the Labour Group of Councillors to appeal because this will tie up the DA legally and financially for a considerable time and stave off further surcharge attacks in the pipeline for Camden, Islington, Haringey, Hackney, etc.

There is a *further* threat to Lambeth and Liverpool where the DA is after more blood money — £800,000 from Lambeth — to destroy their chances of ever paying off the surcharge debt.

The difficulty in speaking at public meetings to raise money for the Southwark Labour Councillors is that over half of them have voted for massive cuts in services and jobs since being re-elected in 1986.

However, the political effect of an extended battle in court wil be to defend other Councils and Councillors. On that basis, I am sure we must raise the money for an appeal.

*For further information and offers of support contact: Southwark Labour Councillors Defence Campaign, c/o Leader's Office, Southwark Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB. Tel.: 01 703 6311.*

## HARINGEY

*Hundreds marched in Haringey on January 18th against the latest cuts package.*

*A coffin, representing the lost jobs and services, was carried at the beginning of the torchlit demo.*

*Despite the massive protests seen in the borough, the Labour Group majority managed, with the support of the Tories, to hammer home their cuts proposals.*




PHOTO: Vaughan Melzer

## LAMBETH

# Class collaboration!

**Lambeth Labour Group agreed a £40m cuts package at an 11 hour meeting on January 17th.**

**Measures include closing 17 housing offices, 21 luncheon clubs for elderly people, and two old people's homes.**

At the meeting, Linda Bellos again claimed that there would be no compulsory redundancies — but voted against a proposal to state this clearly in the budget strategy.

A redeployment (i.e. redundancy) policy will be imposed on the workforce in an attempt to do away with 1,000 jobs. In response NALGO called a successful one day strike on January 18th.

That evening hundreds lobbied the Policy & Resources Committee, where the cuts were forced through in ten minutes. Three anti-cuts Councillors refused to sit with the Labour traitors and voted against the cuts from the public gallery.

**By Cllr Steve French Lambeth**

The following evening, Linda Bellos told the LGC that she had not been able to consult the Parties about the cuts because officers had not prepared the necessary papers. (This was despite the fact that Councillors Against the Cuts were able to produce a bulletin for the Parties with details of all the cuts that had been leaked to them.)

Bellos went on to say that the CLPs would now be consulted on which cuts they preferred. They could reverse the cuts — if they replaced them with others. Some consultation!

Two of the three CLPs and 14 Councillors oppose the cuts. Opinion in the Parties is now hardening as the full horror of the cuts is made clear and because of the leadership's complete failure to consult.

The Council still faces a budget gap of £16 million. Officers propose that rents be increased by more than the £2.50 already imposed and possibly up to £8; that more jobs should go; and even that pay packets should be reduced!

To bridge the remaining gap one in ten grants will be chopped, and the leadership will go begging to the DoE.

Bellos declares that strikes, lobbies and campaigning will not influence the Tories, but choses to "negotiate with government departments". She chooses class collaboration rather than class struggle.

At the time of writing, engineers at the vehicle workshops are on indefinite strike following the Council reneging on a new bonus deal and 35 hour week.

The workforce did their part of the deal and when they demanded the Council honoured their side they were locked out following a work to rule.

Management told them to work to high targets but refused to pay them as agreed.

The AEU put a picket on the Council meeting on January 20th which Councillors Against the Cuts refused to cross — leaving the administration to survive a vote of no confidence by the narrow margin of 23-22.

## LEWISHAM

# Fightback gathers pace

Lewisham Council met on January 20th to discuss rent rises, cuts and compulsory redundancies.

Filibustering and agenda manipulation by the Council Leadership and pro-cuts Councillors forced these items off the agenda. Instead, such vital issues were discussed as a maverick Tory's plans to put the homeless in Council garages — not very amusing, and hardly the key issue facing Lewisham at present.

At the end of the meeting votes were taken on Committee reports without debate, and the anti-cuts Labour Councillors forced a vote on the sections referring to the rent rises and cuts.

The Tories cynically voted with them. On a show of hands the vote was close, which panicked the pro-cuts Councillors. One of them quoted standing orders, saying a vote shouldn't be taken at all.

On a recorded vote, the Council Leadership's majority was cut to eight, with four abstentions, on a higher turnout than they can usually manage.

The forcing of the vote, and the fact that amid confusion Councillors broke with the Labour Group line, bodes well for the future. The Leadership can't postpone the debates forever, and has underestimated the strength of feeling against the rent rises in particular.

More important than the farce of the Council Chamber is the NALGO voluntary sector's vote for all-out industrial action when the first compulsory redundancy is made. They are to suffer first, with up to 24 redundancies before April, hitting such extremist organisations as Pensioners Link and the Family Welfare Association.

The NALGO branch as a whole is pledged to take action when compulsory redundancies are made, and they will receive the full support of the growing *Lewisham Fightback* campaign.

Council Leader Dave Sullivan always said compulsory redundancies were his "bottom line" — now he's sunk that low, can we look forward to his resignation and at least an attempt at fighting the Tories?

**Lewisham Fightback meets next on February 9th at 8pm at Deptford Town Hall, New Cross Road and has just published a Bulletin listing the Council's cuts.*

***Dan Carter***

## AEU Strike

### *It's official!*

As from the morning of January 20th the Lambeth Council AEU branch have been locked out of their workplaces and have therefore gone on strike as a result of the following joint trade union policies.

They are in dispute with the Council over broken agreements and a refusal to carry out the duties of vacant posts.

The dispute has been made official by the District Committee of the AEU.

Despite an offer to provide a level of emergency cover there will be none — as the management have refused the offer.

The AEU has approached the joint union officials and other delegates and have received their full backing.

However, they are not willing to stand outside their depots for the next however many months and have therefore exercised their right to call on other unions for their tangible support in a fight which affects us all.

There will therefore be picket lines on other Council buildings.

You must not cross these picket lines as it is clear that the AEU are fighting for us all.

You should also be aware that the Council has agreed to compulsory redundancies in Lambeth.

Additionally we should point out that the AEU have at no time been unreasonable and have always attempted to resolve any problems through negotiation with management — but they have been consistently ignored.

**Never cross a picket line — Support the AEU — Don't cross their picket.**

*From Lambeth Joint Trades Union Committee leaflet*

## NO CUTS IN JOBS & SERVICES!

**Lambeth Fightback have called a conference to build the resistance.**

**All labour movement and community organisations represented in Lambeth should send delegates.**

**£3 registration per organisation, for an entitlement of up to three delegates should be sent to Steve French, Lambeth Town Hall, London SW2**

**Saturday February 6th**
**10.30am-5.30pm**
**Lambeth Town Hall**

Speakers include:
TED KNIGHT MARTHA OSAMOR

## Paddington & N. Ken victory!




PHOTO: Richard Hawkins

Victory in Paddington and North Kensington!

Paul Harrington and Francis Prideaux address jubilant health campaigners at a lobby of the Paddington and North Kensington District Health Authority Meeting on January 20th.

The closure of three local hospitals and the Accident and Emergency Department of a fourth was taken off the agenda of the meeting. What is more, the 40% cut in child psychiatry imposed last October was restored.

This is a tribute to the strength of the local and national campaigns in defence of the health service.

Now the local Save Our Health Service Campaign plans to move onto the offensive, demanding the restoration of all cuts made in the last year. It's time we won a few. Now let's exploit our advantage!

## EVENTS

**In a press release for their public meeting in Hammersmith to discuss the government's plan to "outlaw" homosexuality, the Council argued that Clause 28 of the Local Government Bill seeks to prohibit Local Authorities from promoting homosexuality.**

This will have significant implications for their policies on lesbians and gay men.

"This Council was elected on a platform of providing services for all sections of the Community," said Deputy Leader of the Council Hugh Thomson. "Sweeping and wide-ranging powers seem set to destroy many of the gains made in recent years within local governemnt, and if this Clause becomes law the implications are potentially dangerous."

Tony Phelan, NALGO Branch Secretary, added, "the Clause may stop Local Authorities carrying out any activity designed to provide accurate information about lesbians and gay men and invite discrimination. This could include not allowing gay people their employment rights: its full implications could mean the closure of pubs and clubs, stopping public libraries stocking lesbian and gay authors, financing any lesbian and gay groups, and counselling and advice schemes. We cannot allow this government to just set the clock back ten years. It's time we made our voices heard."

Hugh Thomson added, "If this becomes law it will send a message from Parliament to the people of this country that lesbians and gay men are second class citizens. We believe this is actually the most massive attack on civil rights and civil liberties ever launched by an elected government on any group in this country. The Administration and NALGO have organised a public meeting to discuss the issues."

**Contact West London Campaign to Stop Clause 28: 748 3030, ext. NALGO**

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**United Against Gutter Education!**

International Tour by Namibia National Students Organisation and SWAPO Youth League

Part of an international tour being undertaken to highlight the military, economic, social and cultural interference by the racist South African regime in Namibia and the international network of support for apartheid from Reagan, Thatcher, the multinationals and the atomic weapons industry. Hear about the fight for cultural and national independence from Namibian youth!

**London meetings**

**Thursday Feb 2**

Meeting with Committee on South African War Resistors at Africa Centre, 6-10pm. Additional speakers ANC and Angolan and Mozambican Youth Organisations.

**Thursday Feb 4**

North London Namibia Support Cmttee meeting at Tottenham Public Library, 391 High Road, N17. 8-10pm. Additional speakers from Rail Against Apartheid-NUR, Socialist Teachers Association, Broadwater Farm Youth Association.

**Monday Feb 29**

End of British Tour, London meeting organised by National Namibia Support Cmttee at Friends House, Euston Road, 7.30pm. Additional speakers invited from General Union of Palestinian Students, Bernie Grant MP, Joan Ruddock MP, Diane Abbot MP, Glyns Kinnock, etc.

For further details of further meetings, additional information, phone Namibia Support Cmmttee, 01 267 1941/2.

**Save Hackney's Education!**

They've been doing it to our Health Service — now they're doing it to our schools

They are stealing our children's future!

**Public Meeting**

Thursday February 11th

Hackney Town Hall

Mare Street, E8

Speakers include local MPs, Parents, Governors, Teachers and Support Workers

**Black People against the Cuts**

**● PUBLIC MEETING ●**

**Thursday January 28th, 7.30pm**

**Black Women's Centre, Lordship Lane, London N17**

(Old Somerset School)

**Speakers:**

**Cllr Martha Osamor, Cllr Narendra Makanji, Sharon Atkin (invited), NALGO Black Workers, National Union of Teachers, Broadwater Farm Youth Association, Other Black Community Organisations**

**Don't Reduce Our Services!**

**Build for the Future!**

Contact: Haringey Black Campaign Against the Cuts, c/o 10 Lymington Ave, London N22

**SAVE THE NHS!**

**London-wide rally**

**Sponsored by London bodies of ASTMS, COHSE & NALGO, and branches of NUPE**

**Called by London Health Emergency**

**Speakers from unions & campaigns**

**WEDS, FEB 3rd, 7.30pm**

**The Camden Centre**

Bidborough St, London WC1

(King's Cross tube)

**Details from LHE, 01-833 3020**

## ILEA

# Budget crisis looms

**Although ILEA escaped the fate of the GLC in 1986 it now faces the biggest threat yet from Baker's Education Reform Bill.**

But ILEA's intention to make swingeing cuts, in an effort to cope with its severe budget crisis poses the question of survival immediately.

Just before Christmas ILEA announced a vacancy freeze for support and teaching staff, part of an attempt to save £19m before the new financial year. Staff went home to stories in the national press of ILEA's intention to shed 9,000 jobs in 1988/9.

Consistent Tory attacks on local government financial arrangements have created huge financial problems for ILEA. Faced with a potential deficit of £49m in 1988/9, ILEA approached the Department of the Environment to take three years to implement cuts on a "planned basis".

This was nothing short of naive. Nicholas Ridley informed ILEA it could take a short walk, but it could have an extra £15m to be spent strictly on redundancies!

It looks like the 9,000 redundancies wil be divided between 6,500 support staff and 2,500 teachers. In the 1980s the service has been severely overstretched as legislative requirements increased, as ILEA's commitment to implementing equal opportunities was carried through and as Thatcher's economic aims relentlessly bore down on the inner city community, creating desperate problems for teachers in the classroom.

**By Josie Irwin**
**Hornsey & Wood Green CLP**

The ILEA budget strategy document claims that it will maintain a quality provision and equal opportunities despite "savings". But cuts of any sort will put the service at risk.

The blanket vacancy freeze is creating particular difficulties in catering and cleaning, under threat from the Local Government Bill. Non replacement of kitchen assistants or cleaners in an area of high staff turnover has already had an impact on morale.

If the situation is allowed to continue ILEA is in real danger of seeing more classes sent home.

Cuts outlined in ILEA's budget strategy include higher pupil/teacher ratios, reduced nursery service and reductions in adult education.

### Parents

In the past parents, governors, local politicians and staff have rallied to defend ILEA. But now ILEA members with one or two exceptions do not have the political conviction, courage or foresight to unite the campaigning energies of those groups.

Capitulation in the face of the government's financial squeeze is no preparation for the fight to retain ILEA.

The only way to fight the Baker Bill is to build a united campaign in defence of the ILEA and against any cuts in education provision.

## London Development



*Will our well-known main railway stations make way for new luxury housing like this estate in East London?*

**Property developers are drawing up plans for the largest single redevelopment in inner London, at a cost of £6-7 thousand million.**

**The 120-acre site covers the Kings Cross and St Pancras stations, and a vast area of old sidings, industrial tracts and warehouses that stretch a mile to the North of the terminals.**

The Grand Union Canal (Regent's canal) cuts across the site , which is walled in by four major roads: Euston Road to the South; Midland Rd, St Pancras Rd and St Pancras Way to the West, York Way to the East, and Agar Grove to the North.

**By John Turkie**
**Hackney North & Stoke Newington CLP**

The British Rail Property Board (BRPB), the area's major landowner, recently reduced the number of competing developers from four to two: a consortium involving Speyhawk and Mc Alpine, and the London Regeneration Consortium (sic) which comprises Rosehaugh Stanhope and the National Freight Consortium.

Once the BRPB have decided which developers' plans they like best, a planning application will go before Camden Council for consideration. It is certain to contravene the Borough Plan.

The LRC have been around longest, and have made most of the running. At the forefront of this organisation are Rosehaugh Stanhope who are backing the 4 million sq. ft Broadgate office development at Liverpool St, and who are involved in the redevelopment of Newham's Royal Docks.

Rosehaugh's plans for the site are reasonably well-known and currently involve a four million sq. ft office development to the south of the canal; a leisure and shopping development to "out Covent Garden Covent Garden" straddling part of the canal; canal-side luxury housing (thereby privatising stretches of the canal); a "business park" at the Northern end; and hotel, shopping and exhibition space on the site currently occupied by the two stations.

The most commercially valuable part of the site is its Southern end bordering Euston Road. The trouble is that most of that part is occupied by the two stations. To Rosehaugh the answer is simple — move them.

### Options

They are putting forward three options: close St Pancras and run its lines into Kings Cross; build a new joint terminus immediately to the north of the existing stations; or — their preferred choice — build a new joint terminus at the northern end of the site, next to the North London Line near Agar Grove.

Rosehaugh's plannings consultants' report gives no consideration to the strategic and local impact of such an enormous development. It does not even mention the fact that people actually live on the site in Victorian blocks of flats built for railway workers.

Over 150 people live in the Culross and Stanley Buildings and the gas cottages, and there are thriving industrial businesses on Pancras Road, St Pancras Way, Goods Way, Battlebridge Rd, and Camley St. Though the majority of the residents are "short life licensees", in reality many have been resident there for more than ten years.

### Applications

Though Camden Council will not be seeing a planning application for a few months, Rosehaugh began informal talks with the Council in the summer. The leadership were only too pleased to take the opportunity to discuss some "planning gain".

What concerns the Railway Lands Community Development Group (RLCDG) is that the Council is actively engineering the community — and its needs — off the scene altogether, in favour of negotiating an "equity holding" with the developers.

Both the developers and Camden Council must be stopped. If this redevelopment — which is twice the size of Canary Wharf — goes ahead, it will represent another major step along the (Tory) process of selling inner London cheaply to the property market. It is up to Party members in both Camden and Islington, to link up with RLCDG, put pressure on their Labour Groups, and make sure no deal is stitched up between the Council and the developers behind closed doors.