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HESELTINE'S PENALTIES

DOE prepares to crush Labour Councils

by KEN LIVINGSTONE
(Hackney North GLC member)

AS THE FULL EXTENT of Michael Heseltine's plans to crush the main Labour controlled London Councils becomes clear (see centre pages), **London Labour Briefing** backed by over 70 Labour councillors has called a one-day Conference to discuss how we can resist Heseltine's plans.

The main attack will be on the 20 councils being investigated by the Department of the Environment as the worst offenders in the "big spending league table". The list, revealed by the *Financial Times* and confirmed by the DoE on May 28th, is:

Camden
Islington
Southwark
Tower Hamlets
Lambeth
Haringey
Hackney
Lewisham
Newcastle
Hammersmith & Fulham
Swansea
Brent
Waltham Forest
Manchester
Newham
Greenwich
Afan
Doncaster
Wandsworth
Hounslow

Heseltine has already hinted that he will not take action against any councils which have "shown willingness to cut their overspending" by making cuts. This will give him the excuse he needs to exempt Tory controlled authorities like Hammersmith and Wandsworth from any penalties.

What is even worse from our viewpoint is that he is also likely to exempt Labour-controlled Islington, Southwark and Newham on the grounds that they have made the full 5% cut he asked for this year. This will mean he can concentrate his attack on the remaining nine or 10 London Labour councils and four or five Labour councils in the rest of the country.

CONFERENCE

In the next few months the London Labour movement must mobilise every pressure it can to bring Southwark, Islington and Newham into line with other Labour councils. Not only are these three councils betraying the interests of their own local people in the cuts they have made but they are stabbing in the back those councillors who have stood firm against the Tory government.

The Conference on Saturday July 5th provides the first real forum for the Labour Party and its councillors to discuss the Tory assault and how best to resist them.

Unless Labour councils unite in the fight back they will be picked off one by one and the movement will be defeated as it was over the Housing Finance Act in 1972.

In particular we must consider how best to use the GLC campaign to build support for Labour councils and how, when we win control of the GLC next year, we can use its rate base to supplement the income of Labour councils who have their central government grants cut.

It is vital that every CLP, ward, LGC, TU and council group is represented at the Conference in July. Unless we develop a London-wide strategy now we may face a devastating defeat next year with massive cuts in services and redundancies of council workers which could shatter our grass roots support.

The alternative is a victory for the Labour councils which could undermine not just the government's economic strategy but undermine the government itself.

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Special Supplement on THE RSS AFFAIR, with debate between Laurie Pavitt MP, Cllr Len Snow, Manibhai Patel, Alf Filer and Paul Franklin

LONDON LABOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE

RESIST HESELTINE!

A discussion conference to prepare resistance to the Heseltine Local Government Bill and to organise for a socialist Labour Greater London Council. Open to all Labour Party and trade union delegates.

10.00 – 10.15	Registration *Chair* – **Arthur Latham**
10.15 – 11.30	*FIGHTING THE CUTS – opening speakers:* **Ted Knight** (Leader of Lambeth Council) **Ken Livingstone** (GLC Councillor, Hackney North & Stoke Newington)
11.30 – 1.00	*WORKSHOPS:*
	(1) The GLC election and manifesto introduced by Ken Livingstone, chair: Keith Veness
	(2) Building a trade union/Labour alliance introduced by Jack Dromey, SE Region TUC, chair: Pete Rowlands, Secretary of Hounslow Trades Council
	(3) Housing and HIPs cuts introduced by Margaret Watson, Islington Council, chair: John Mordecai, Brent Council
	(4) Local strategy, democracy and control introduced by Geoff Bender, Lambeth-Vauxhall CLP, chair: Jeremy Corbyn, Haringey Council
1.00 – 2.00	LUNCH
2.00 – 3.00	*Reports on Workshops*
3.00 – 5.00	*PLENARY DISCUSSION* on the Heseltine Bill and 'penalties', GLC elections, and the way forward. Statements will be presented on Heseltine's Bill and cuts; Briefing; Defending ILEA.

The conference will not be making policy decisions but statements of information and ideas on the conference themes are welcome. Open to delegates from CLPs, branches, LGCs, LPYSs, trades unions and Trades Councils. Fee £1. Cheques payable to London Labour Briefing, 155 Green Lanes, London N16.

SATURDAY JULY 5TH HAMPSTEAD TOWN HALL Haverstock Hill NW3

SPONSORED BY LONDON LABOUR BRIEFING and over 70 London Labour Councillors

FORWARD TO A SOCIALIST G.L.C.!

LABOUR'S SPECIAL CONFERENCE:
Right-wing & Press shaken

"PEACE, JOBS, FREEDOM!" By 5,163,000 votes to 6,000 we have adopted a policy-document which, whatever its weaknesses, has shaken Labour's right-wing and the Tory press. Their fear is that, taken seriously, such a programme would set us—as a Party and future government—on a head-on collision-course with our traditional opponents both in this country and abroad.

We are now committed to:

- a ban on American Cruise Missiles in Britain
- re-nationalisation of hived-off assets without compensation
- abolition of the House of Lords
- full employment
- an economy geared to need, not profit.

TED KNIGHT
Leader, Lambeth Council

None of these objectives will be conceded without a struggle. The Labour right, backed by their allies in Fleet Street and in the boardrooms, will stop at nothing to frustrate the achievement of these objectives. It is up to the rest of us to show that we will not be any less determined in ensuring the defeat of Thatcher's government and the implementation of Party policy in full. We have the strength—the issue is that of leadership and will.

It is in this respect that the NEC's document, presented to the conference, was weakest. It lacked any clear call to bring down the Tory government, but instead called for meetings and posters preparing for the next general election. No mention was made of using the full political and industrial strength of the Labour movement to end Thatcher's term of office.

But that was not the mood of delegates. Speaker after speaker went to the rostrum and demanded that the NEC lead the fight. The Parliamentary leadership was dismissed as the prisoner of its own past record and incapable of providing any effective struggle against the Tories. Rank and file delegates made it clear too that they would not be content with solely an anti-Tory platform. Calls for clear socialist policies to take control of the economy and to effect real social change dominated the speeches from the floor. Right-wing spokesmen such as Denis Healey, and David Owen, were noisily rejected by delegates.

A shadow did overhang the conference. The democratic changes won at Brighton last year are in danger. Delegates were well aware that the fight for clear policies must be linked with the ability of the movement to have its wishes put into practice.

The scene is set for a major and decisive battle both against the Tories and within our own Party—the need now is to turn speeches into action and force the NEC to respond.

Rank & File Mobilising C'ttee:
UNITED FRONT IS LAUNCHED

The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy rally at the Special Conference had over 500 people inside the hall and many more outside who couldn't get in—an encouraging way to launch the new Rank and File Mobilising Committee for Labour Democracy. Several organisations—CLPD, Clause IV, Independent Labour Publications, Institute for Workers' Control, Labour Co-ordinating Committee, National Organisation of Labour Students and Socialist Campaign for Labour Victory—came together on a common platform to mobilise and fight for the preservation of the Labour Party as an instrument of the working class.

The platform is a simple one:

(1) Defence of mandatory reselection by GMCs as agreed at Brighton 1979
(2) Defence of the present structore of the NEC
(3) The NEC must have the final say on the contents of the manifesto
(4) The Leader must be elected by the Party as whole
(5) The PLP must be accountable to the Party, internally democratic and officially pledged to implement Party policy.

Despite differing points of view on particular issues, this common platform is a sound basis for a united campaign. Already other organisations are rallying in our support. We have produced a broadsheet *Mobilise for Labour Democracy* which will be distributed throughout the Labour movement. We shall be organising public meetings in London and in every major centre between now and Annual Conference.

But let there be no doubt as to the magnitude of the threat to the influence of the Party's rank and file. The majority of the PLP, a minority of trade union leaders and the Campaign for Labour Victory have concentrated their attack on mandatory reselection and the structure of the NEC: on reselection in order to allow MPs to ignore their constituency Parties and on the NEC to deprive Conference of an accountable Executive and of its present leadership on the NEC.

During his speech at the meeting, Reg Race MP emphasised that unless the rank and file actively demonstrates its determination to defend last year's gains, these will be lost. He urged support for the Mobilising Committee and appealed to activists to ensure that CLPD model Conference resolutions are adopted.

Special Conference voted in favour of . . . *"a fundamental shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families. . . . public ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange. . . . Democratic Socialism."* This endorsement of the Party's aims is not enough; until we have a Labour government that is fully accountable to the Party these aims will never be implemented. Only active rank and file participation now can ensure this accountability.

For more information on the Mobilising Committee, or if you wish to place orders for *Mobilise* (which includes articles by Tony Benn, Bob Wright, Reg Race, Brian Sedgemore, Ken Livingstone)—price 20p, bulk half-price, not including postage—write to: Jon Lansman, c/o 10 Park Drive, London NW11, or phone 458 1501.

JON LANSMAN, CLPD Executive Committee

CLPD Model Resolutions: contact Vladimir Derer, 10 Park Drive, NW11.

Registered Support and Donations: contact Victor Schonfield, 21 Wallingford Avenue, W10 (969 2511)

For CLPD Speakers: contact Andy Harris, 265a East Bernet Road, East Barnet, Herts (440 9396)

'DAY OF ACTION': RIGHT STRENGTHENED?

IT'S NOT ONLY THE TORIES who are crowing about the "failure of the Day of Action". In Parliament and on local councils, the right-wing of the Labour Party are pointing to May 14th as proof that their strategy is sensible and correct. Echoing around every town hall will be the smug argument: "Militant industrial action doesn't work. If the workers won't support the TUC against Thatcher, then why should they support a local authority which refuses to make cuts? It's better to do a deal with Heseltine than to make futile, heroic gestures" etc etc.

Impelled by this inexorable logic, they will merrily chug down the road of capitulation and cuts. Unfortunately, not a few 'left wingers' may also be chugging alongside them. After all, "what else could we do comrades?"

We need to take a long, sober look at the situation we face and the tasks ahead. Was the Day of Action a failure? Clearly the response was patchy. Nevertheless it was a **political** strike to which hundreds of thousands of workers did respond. Numerous marches and meetings were held, transport and key industries in some regions and some sectors were paralysed. However, it did not produce the massive wave of anger against the Tories that many of us had hoped for. As such, it was a qualified failure.

Doesn't it 'prove' most workers are prepared to tolerate Thatcher? Anyone who has recently leafletted a high street knows that most working people hate the Tory government, and would dearly love to get rid of it, if they seriously thought we had half a chance of **winning**. But, at present, most of them think the odds are stacked against us. They feel that the Tories really mean business and they aren't exactly confident of the Labour leaders' willingness to fight.

Indeed the performance of our representatives isn't exactly inspiring. The TUC originally launched May 14th in order to head off the demand for a general strike in support of the steelworkers. Len Murray 'prepared' for the Day of Action by reassuring the press that it wasn't really a threat to the Tories' 'constitutional right' to govern—only a 'protest'. The PLP's 'support' took the form of a grovelling apology in Parliament to the ruling class. They may have been wrong, but it's hardly surprising that many workers weren't prepared to invest a day's pay (let along their jobs!) in protesting against Thatcher.

The lesson to be drawn is not that the workers won't fight, but that we will never construct a mass movement on the basis of ineffectual Parliamentary shadow-boxing and half-hearted protest politics. Only in so far as we are really prepared to challenge the power of the Tories and the ruling class, will we be able to mobilise massive working class support. Only in so far as we show that we really mean business, can we expect the Tories to concede a single inch.

The immediate task is to fight against the demoralisation in the Labour movement following May 14th. Above all, this means standing firm against the right-wing's attempts to cut and run. The line which must be drawn is still between those Councils who refuse to make cuts and those who are only too willing to do Heseltine's dirty work. If the autumn battle over cuts is lost, then this will reinforce defeatist attitudes and strengthen the Labour right.

However, the main problem which still confronts the left is: what strategy do we adopt? Should Labour Councils still attempt to "buy time" through rate rises, indeed is this feasible given the enormous rate rises required? Should they go bankrupt and 'do a Clay Cross'? Should they resign and fight elections on a 'no cuts' position?

Will Heseltine 'penalise' all Labour local authorities, or try and victimise the militant few? Clearly there are no easy answers—at least in the realm of practical action.

Despite May 14th the situation is still very fluid both nationally **and** internationally. Temporary downturns can quickly change into major upheavals. A group of Labour Councils plus a newly-elected left Labour GLC refusing to bow down to the Tories could have a decisive effect upon the consciousness of the Labour movement and provide the unity for a real political and industrial challenge to the Tories. What is at least required is a frank and open discussion where the possible alternatives can be assessed and our strength can be measured. With this in mind, **Briefing**-supported by over 70 Labour councillors—is organising a 'Resist Heseltine' Conference on July 5th—make sure **you** are there!

FRANK HANSEN
Brent East CLP

IRELAND

PRIORITISE THIS RESOLUTION

Last year's Labour Party Conference was notable not only for the changes in the constitution, but also because a debate on Ireland took place—a rather rare occurence to say the least. Given Labour's shameful record on Ireland it wasn't surprising that the Standing Orders Committee and even the NEC did everything in their power to try and prevent any discussion of the struggle in the six counties. Nevertheless, thanks to the efforts of a small handful of CLPs the silence was finally broken, which in itself was a tremendous step forward.

Now that the bi-partisan approach has been challenged, it is imperative that many more resolutions on Ireland are sent to Conference so that a *full debate* can take place (a pathetic 30 minutes was allotted last year). The Labour Committee on Ireland urges your Party to adopt this model resolution:

"Conference recognises the evidence that the clear popular wish of the Irish people favours a British withdrawal from Ireland, and progress towards a united Ireland.

Furthermore, we recognise that British involvement in Ireland constitutes a major obstacle to developments towards socialism in that country. Conference therefore:

1 rejects the current bi-partisan policies of the Parliamentary Labour Party leadership;

2 repudiates the policies of successive British governments which have effectively guaranteed the right of veto to the Unionist minority in Ireland, thereby ensuring that the present disastrous situation remains unresolved;

3 feels that effective communication between British and Irish working class organisations is essential and urges that measures be taken to ensure that British trade unionists and Labour Party members are provided with accurate information about the views of their Irish counterparts;

4 instructs the Labour Party leadership to adopt a policy favouring political and military withdrawal from Ireland;

5 calls on the next Labour government to immediately begin the process of this full political and military withdrawal."

CLPD slams CLV 'democracy' fraud

ANDY HARRIS
GLRC EC
Chipping Barnet CLP

The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy has been the leading force in the struggle to democratise our Party—a struggle handicapped and littered by "pink herrings", miscast votes and a barrage of smears and diversionary tactics employed by the proponents for the status quo.

The euphoric gains of Brighton '79 are in jeopardy because the Enquiry, coupled with reverses in the AUEW have given a breathing space for the opposition to regroup. More than ever it is necessary for the movement in London to re-state its commitment to mandatory reselection of MPs and ultimate control of the manifesto by the NEC. Faced with the prospect of a new Leader the achieveable extension of the franchise through the electoral college seems eminently preferrable to election by the Westminster "Ivory Tower".

In supporting these ideas the London Labour movement needs to go on the offensive in exposing those who seek to 'extend democracy' by introducing a paimaries system for the reselection process. Some members of Campaign for Labour Victory, not content with advocating that all members should be involved in the final selection, are calling for a postal ballot of all members to decide the candidate. Go down this road if you wish to see the media decide who the candidate is going to be. Surely the AUEW elections, the "Red Robbo" episode, and the media's dilution of May 14th have taught us something about the nature of "mass democracy" in a capitalist society.

We also need to protect the NEC from those who would restructure it. The NEC was not the reason for the failure of the 1974-79 government to carry out conference policy, it was not the reason for the alienation of our most loyal supporters. Those who seek this restructuring are arguing for places to be given to people because of the status they've achieved in the Party, i.e. MPs or important regional councillors. The NEC should be reflective of the sociological and functional make up of the Party giving bias to those sections of the movement that are discriminated against or need to be encouraged—women and youth. The only beneficial change would be for the women's section to be elected directly by women's conference.

In pursuance of the objective that women assume active positions at *all* levels of the Party, CLPD is calling for the end of selection shortlists composed entirely of male non-manual workers. It is also presenting a model resolution seeking to democratise the internal workings of the PLP so that the Cabinet is elected by the MPs, speeches and votes to be recorded at regularised meetings of the PLP so that reselection can be performed in the full knowledge of an MP's Palace or Westminster activities.

CLPD is in a position of wishing to extend its work from the three fundamental reforms. All sympathetic sections need to rally to our support. CLPD which nas worked tirelessly for the benefit of all grassroots activists, is £1,000 overdrawn. Now more than ever to protect and extend we need to register more supporters (£3), gain donations and affiliations from branches, CLPs, TUs and Co-Ops on a massive scale—the alternative to the continuation of our work is the continuation of years of frustration, lost opportunities and arrogant disregard for democratically arrived at policies.

'No cuts, no growth' in Waltham Forest

Despite the Tory government's assault on local authorities—they are attempting to enforce cuts in local authority expenditure that are proportionately larger than for any other part of the national economy—Waltham Forest's Labour council decided on a 'no growth, no cuts' policy.

Yet just to standstill on services which really ought to be improved has resulted in a rate rise for householders of almost 43%. The reasons for this rise, which have been publicised in the council's own borough newspaper and a full-page advert in the local press, are as follows:

Direct effect of inflation:	19.2%
Extra contribution to North East London Polytechnic due to government changes in financing of Advanced Further Education:	1.3%
Reductions in Rate Support Grant by the government:	5.3%
Further shortfall in Rate Support Grant due to government assumptions of cuts in spending on local services:	9.2%
Additional effect directly on householders of the government not increasing the domestic rate relief to allow for inflation:	7.6%
TOTAL	42.6%

These factors, along with record interest rates, rigid cash limits and the slashing of building and improvement programmes over which they have direct power, show the extent of government pressure on local councils to make cuts.

The local Tories wanted a £3 million cut in services. This would still have meant a rate rise of over 30%, but the cuts would have been massive. The council's chief officers indicated that to achieve a reduction of £900,000 would involve a whole range of cuts including: staff in the Homeless Families Unit, reduction in telephone rentals for the housebound, cessation of holidays for the elderly and physically handicapped, closure of Leyton Baths, teacher training and adult education classes reduced, library books and staffing reduced, cuts in street cleansing and highways maintenance.

To reach £3 million the service cuts could be drastic involving the sacking of teachers, officers and manual workers and likely closures of schools, nurseries or old people's homes.

The Tories attack on local services is on a wide and complex front and it is not easy for local Labour councils to convince their electorate on the necessity of rate rises to maintain services. Since the rate demands have gone out both the Liberals and Tories have been using simplistic slogans (e.g. 'No rate rises, we care for people'). that are impossible to defend in debate and argument but appear superficially attractive.

Labour controlled local authorities must not only resist these attacks and cuts which hurt the people they represent, but also have an active programme of political education to pin blame squarely on the Tory government where it belongs.

Cllr HARRY COHEN
Secretary of the London Borough of Waltham Forest Labour Group

As Thatcherism begins to bite...

LONDON ATTACKED ON ALL F

RATE SUPPORT GRANT INCREASE ORDER

Each council gets between 20% to 60% of its income from the government in the form of Rate Support Grant. It is told at the start of the year how much to expect and then in the autumn the DoE review the situation in the light of inflation. In the past Labour governments have often increased the sum if inflation has worsened during the year, but this year the Tories said they would only allow 13% for inflation and if wage increases went above 13% jobs would have to be cut to meet the difference.

Part of the RSG was held back from each council and is subject to an 'increase order' in the autumn. The Tories' new Local Government Bill which is being rushed through Parliament gives Heseltine the power to withhold all or part of the RSG increase order if councils have not made adequate cuts.

Therefore those Labour councils Heseltine wishes to attack will find themselves up to three or four million pounds short in the middle of the financial year and forced to levy a supplementary rate increase or make massive cuts.

ILEA BREAK-UP

The Cabinet have already decided to 'deal with' the ILEA in the Queen's Speech in October. The Cabinet are not really concerned with the question of educational standards as they don't send their own children to state schools. But they are upset by the existence of the ILEA which is the most effective means for the redistribution of wealth anywhere in the country. Seventy-five percent of the ILEA's rate income is from commerce and over half comes from the office blocks of central London.

If the ILEA can be broken up and each borough has to pay for its own education service then the rates paid by the average family in inner London would go up by £4 a week whilst the largest office blocks in the City would get reductions of up to £2 million a year each.

GLC HOUSING TRANSFERS

The 10 Labour boroughs which refused to take the transfer of GLC estates now face enforced transfer on 1st April 1981, just five weeks before the next GLC election. The Tory GLC have asked Heseltine to push the enforced transfer order through Parliament and then legislate to remove the GLC's existing housing powers, thus preventing a future Labour GLC from moving into the housing field.

The transfer order also means that although councils would have to take over the estates they would only get a subsidy from the GLC equivalent to the current level of spending on management and maintenance. Thus if the boroughs wished to spend more in order to improve the present non-existent level of service they would have to increase their own rates or rents in order to fund the spending. For boroughs like Hackney and Lambeth with 16,000 GLC slum properties this would be a crippling financial burden.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS

The Tories' Local Government Bill also includes the setting up of a Docklands Development Corporation which will take away from the five Labour controlled dockland boroughs vast areas of their boroughs and put them under a Tory controlled corporation loaded with speculative developers who will ensure that their friends in industry do very well out of the area.

As the Tories can't win control of these boroughs the government has decided to abolish elections as far as docklands is concerned and the pathetic figure of Bob Mellish is being hawked around as Vice-Chairman of the UDC in an attempt to associate the Labour Party with the whole UDC concept.

1981

By next year Heseltine's new bill will give him a whole range of powers to:

* abolish Direct Labour organisations even if they are making a profit
* force councils to sell land which they cannot develop because of the housing cuts
* prevent any rate income being used to fund capital building projects
* introduce a block grant to replace RSG which will allow him to withhold government funds from any council which is politically opposed to Heleslstine's policies.

'ILEA'S break-up would produce untold disruption'

The recent Baker Report, compiled by Marylebone's rabid Thatcherite MP, has caused a stir throughout the Inner London Education Authority. The report contends that ILEA, as at present constituted (a) is "undemocratic" and (b) provides an education "inferior" to that which would result from the break-up of the authority into twelve separate borough education authorities.

The real reason for these break-up proposals is clear enough. The Tories know that they have virtually no chance of ever gaining control of ILEA—it is elected by the twelve inner London boroughs, each nominating one person, the remainder of the seats being taken by the GLC Members for the area. Besides, the funding of ILEA, whilst extremely complex, basically involves the wealthier boroughs—like Kensington, Westminster and the City—subsidising through the rates the education of the rest of inner London. ILEA's break-up into twelve authorities would produce untold disruption of education along with probable cuts, closures and redundancies on a level not yet seen anywhere.

The Annual Conference of the London Labour Party showed the fullest support for ILEA and demanded a campaign in its defence backed by the London Labour movement as a whole. This was *despite* not because of, the miserable, expenditure cutting, capitulating record of the ILEA Labour Group itself (which played a significant part in alienating many people from the need to defend ILEA). All the trade unions involved in ILEA have come together in an umbrella campaign to ensure that they put a common view to the government on the reasons why ILEA should not be dismantled, and to encourage members to form local campaigns with the Labour Parties and parents' groups to step up the campaign. Already campaigns have been set in motion in Wandsworth, Lewisham and Islington, and great efforts are being made to extend these. Additionally, the Inner London Labour Parties are being called together on June 8th to work together with the trade union campaign. The campaign will involve the sending of material to every school, a massive petition and a major rally and demonstration in September.

FRONTS

Ken Livingstone
GLC Councillor
Hackney North

WHY WE SUPPORT THE ILEA

- Classes are smaller than in most other authorities
- Excellent back-up provision for teachers and pupils
- Comprehensive further and higher education facilities
- Wide range of youth and adult education
- Good support for those in need and the handicapped
- Many advances in education originate within ILEA
- Standards are rising continuously

WHAT WOULD THE BREAK-UP OF ILEA MEAN?

- Lower standards
- Higher rates
- More bureaucracy
- Confusion and instability

The closing date for submissions to the government is June 30th. Immediately before that date, a conference will be held for shop stewards of all Inner London unions to put a joint statement to Baronness Young, the Minister of State at the Department of Education and Science.

Details of local campaigns can be obtained from Nick Sharman, South East Region TUC, Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1. All London activists must be prepared to fight on this issue—the defence of ILEA is crucial to us all.

JEREMY CORBYN
London Labour Party
Executive Committee Member
NUPE organiser for ILEA

GLC Manifesto: resolutions needed

ANDY HARRIS
GLRC EC
Chipping Barnet CLP

The GLC election policy discussion papers are currently circulating the affiliates. Overall they are a credit to the effort put in by the working parties and to the innovative procedure that will make the 1981 manifesto truly reflective of the democratic will of the Labour movement in London.

However some members of the GLRC EC faced with the education working party report found it lacking in vitality in that many necessary demands and radical improvements were missing and accordingly rectifying amendments were tabled. The EC, under pressure of printing schedules, were only able to make a small but significant number of changes. We managed to introduce a sentence recognising that the 4.2% cuts in expenditure for 1980-81 was wrong coupled with a commitment to an expanding service. School student organisations would be recognised throughout the ILEA and parents' associations would be promoted in all schools.

Some crucial amendments were not taken and are being discussed by a recalled working party. The full EC will have the opportunity to put these additional policies to the October Conference should it decide to so. I am hopeful that this will be the case, but it is important that as many organisations as possible submit additions to the report so that the ILEA are re-elected on a radical mandate.

The whole area of women and sexism needs tackling. This issue is so important that a new sub-committee should be set up to monitor the employment and promotion of women within the authority and actively pursue the elimination of sexist practice in education. This is particularly urgent in the current cuts climate where so many part-time women teachers, helpers and meals workers are vulnerable to loss of job. Within the schools themselves for mothers and fathers employed by the authority, the area of paternity leave needs tackling and so does the protection of gay teachers against discrimination together with the promotion of a positive attitude towards gayness within the curriculum.

The whole section entitled "English as a Second Language" has been dealt with unsatisfactorily. The authority has recently announced 25 new posts within the unified language service—largely peripatetic English language teachers—for which they should be congratulated. However what is needed as well is a recognition that bi-lingualism is a good thing and that the school-based teaching of mother-tongue languages is desirable because we support the right of ethnic minorities to have their languages and culture respected and valued within the state school system. We need the appointment of divisional co-ordinators whose job it would be to employ a wide range of mother-tongue language teachers whose function would be to integrate mother-tongue alongside English in our schools. These coordinators would also re-educate existing staff to the needs of a multi-cultural society and build up a bank of resource material.

Finally the authority must return to office with a mandate to implement maximum class sizes. I suggest 28 (25 for reception classes) achieved during the first year to be further reduced to 25 and 23 respectively—only in this way can all children benefit from falling rolls, staffing be protected and the scandal of over-sized classes in denominational schools ended.

Teachers must be guaranteed one-fifth of the week marking and preparation time and progress must be made on the internal democracy within schools reducing the heirarchical power structure and promoting collective decision making.

Public Meeting
SUPPORT THE I.L.E.A!

THURSDAY 19th JUNE
7.30pm

ASSEMBLY HALL
LAMBETH TOWN HALL

SPEAKERS:

Vanessa Wiseman (NUT)
Bryn Davies (GLC/ILEA)
Harold Wild (NUPE)
Stuart Holland (MP)

ILEA CUTS: Right-wing running scared

INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH one of the most worrying aspects of ILEA's cuts is the authority's fear of discussing them. There is no point in lamenting their imposition because little else can be expected from the current administration who are utterly divorced, both from the electorate and the Labour movement.

The cuts, of course, are important. They mean the loss of 700 teaching posts, and a presently unknown number of white collar, non-teaching and technical support staff. There is a reduction in adult, further, art and nursery education standards by increasing ratios and decreasing provision, together with an increase in fees, charges and prices. Other aspects are important: the run down of the Nature Study scheme, who provide the gardening in smaller schools, the effective phasing out of the education TV and the closure of two holiday homes for deprived and sick children on the south coast. Similarly the Education Bill is no doubt eagerly awaited to allow significant "modifications" in the school meals service. This is coupled with a removal of the no-redundancy guarantee for some 12,000 part-time workers.

On top of these budgetary cuts, ILEA's ten divisions are subject to a "review" of their secondary school provision. The intention is to close or "federate" them, with consequent effects upon primary provision. Call this process what you will, but I think the reader knows the true name of the game.

Let us take an example of one of these cuts—the gardeners at the Nature Study scheme. £50,000 is the saving. The first the unions heard was when the decision was made. ILEA had no idea at that stage how the saving could be achieved, what were the effects, or how the grounds in some 700 schools were to be maintained. Indeed nobody even asked. ILEA then approached the unions (the senior officers concerned could not come because they had to go carol singing) and indicated a job loss of 14 per annum for four years. No further information available.

The unions submitted their views in writing to Fred Styles (Staff and General Sub-Committee Chairman). The stewards reported a total lack of interest in their views, i.e. the plan was impossible to implement and keep the schools maintained. The alternatives were then submitted to the relevant bodies who agreed it to be nonsense. Result: the cut to be made. Mr Barker, Secrerary of ILEA's Trade Union negotiating body, in a letter to the ILEA stated: "The Education Officer has completely disregarded the objections from all the bodies that have been consulted and I am therefore wondering why the fallacy of consultation is ever entered into."

This is not isolated. NUPE's reactions to the Hackney and Islington Secondary School Reviews were not even read by the Committee! Small wonder that the London Labour Party referred back the ILEA Group's Report at its AGM. Yet what is more amazing is Comrade Styles' response to Arthur Latham (Chairman) on the referral back. In a letter of 14th March he states: "I can well understand the concern that both you and the Annual General Meeting of the London Regional Committee felt at the observations made from the floor regarding the alleged lack of consultation on the closure or reorganisation of schools. Most of the complaints originate from the failure of so many trade union officials and stewards to understand and accept the democratic processes of negotiation which one has to follow in local government."

I leave you to make your own assessment of the actual operation of democracy, accountability and the ability to respond to other views, that the Group's officials have.

Suffice it to conclude that there can be little wonder that the Tories reactionary attempt to break up the ILEA can gain popular support when our representatives act in the way they do. If ILEA is to be destroyed part of the blame is from within.

MARK SANDERS

(Mark Sanders is a full-time official of NUPE who represents 14,000 workers in ILEA)

GLC LEADERSHIP

Since the last issue, London has seen a new Labour leadership elected for the GLC. Sir Reg Goodwin has finally retired, after years of leading the right inside the largest local authority in Britain.

However, his resignation was only to pave the way for a successor to be elected before the reforms agreed at GLRC conference could come into effect. As a result, Labour will be lead into next year's election by Andrew McIntosh, a Labour "moderate" already at odds with much of the manifesto he is expected to defend and then implement. Such myopia on the part of Labour at County Hall is sadly neither rare or recent.

However, this is not the whole story by any means. Even McIntosh's victory was preferable to the other main challenger of the right, Iltyd Harrington, whose style of politics we will not comment on as the law of libel can be harsh on small socialist magazines.

The election had its positive side too. Ken Livingstone, the left's candidate and a frequent contributor to our pages, lost by only one vote on the final ballot and this can only be interpreted as an amazing victory for the left in the context of the present GLC Labour Group.

Even more significant though was the fact that many GLC councillors actually consulted their GMCs before voting, and those that did were overwhelmingly mandated for Livingstone. Allowing for the closeness of reselection, it does show that the growing power of the campaigns for Labour democracy can even now exert an influence in the corridors of County Hall.

When comrades select GLC candidates between now and the autumn, it is vital to choose those who will both defend our manifesto **and** maintain the GMC's views for the whole period of office. If we do, some good can yet come out of the demise of Sir Reg!

Brent Action Against Cuts

ON MAY 4TH, 1978 just over two years ago, a Labour council was returned to power in Brent. It was a sweet and satisfying victory. In a poor set of election results for Labour as a whole, Brent was the one London borough to *increase* its Labour majority.

The reasons for this victory against the swing are many but I would pick out *three* vital factors:

1. The Labour Party went into the election with a radical, progressive manifesto, drawn up and approved by the Brent Local Government Committee.

2. The Party, over a period of time, had built permanent excellent links with the local Labour movement as a whole and ethnic community groups in particular.

3. Grass root members were fully involved in the election campaign at all levels and at all stages.

Many of the plans for Brent, including a massive improvement in quantity and quality of housing stock, expansion of the social services, improvement of educational standards and class size and great improvement in the quality of the environment, were dealt a bitter blow on May 3rd, 1979, one year to the day after that great victory in Brent, when the most reactionary Tory government in living memory came to power.

Now, one year later, as Maggie Thatcher blows out the solitary candle on the birthday cake, she can reflect on the revolution in the British economy that has been brough about by her mad monetarist policy. The highest inflation rate for years, the highest mortgage interest rate ever, the highest unemployment rate since the thirties, a massive balance of payments problem brought on by the highest value of the pound against the dollar for years, the biggest cuts in public expenditure ever, highest spending on armaments ever, the highest level of indirect taxes ever and the highest interest rate ever.

But it is the cuts in public expenditure that have most affected the operation of local councils such as Brent. The first cut, within months of the Tories coming to power, led Brent to take the decision to cut £4,500,000 from its budget rather than levy a supplementary rate last July. Although the leader of the Council gained support for this move among the constituency parties and at the LGC, these cuts infuriated local pressure groups and many activists within the Labour Parties in Brent.

In September the campaign was launched to force Brent Council to carry out no more cuts in the 1980-81 budget. The campaign, launched and directed by an organisation known as Brent Action Against Cuts, concentrated on the collection of over 10,000 signatures of local residents and workers on a petition calling on Brent Council not to implement any more cuts and lead a campaign against the government. The local Labour Parties were very active in this campaign and were soon committed to a position of calling on the council not to implement cuts. The presentation of the petition, a massive demonstration outside the Town Hall, the council calling a Towns meeting on the rates issue, all led to a mood in which the council made the decision to go for a no-growth budget and a 39% rate rise.

In a sense this campaign was a success. But it must still be realised that by raising the rates to balance the budget, Brent Council are playing the role that the Tories want. The Tory strategy is to shift responsibility for paying for services directly to the consumer wherever possible, rather than from taxation, or to run those services down. Brent took the decision not to run its services down but to force Brent consumers to pay more for these services. However, opinion locally now tends to the view that this exercise cannot be repeated next year for social and political reasons. So what strategy to oppose the government should Brent follow if it wishes, once again, to maintain services?

If Brent is to make no cuts in services or employment in the borough and at the same time keep any rate increase down to the same level as inflation, a new approach to local budgeting must be found. Especially, in view of the Tory government's declared intention to make swingeing cuts in the rate support grent for "overspending" boroughs (like Brent, perhaps?).

Firstly, Brent cannot fight and win against the government alone. It needs the co-operation of other boroughs, acting in concert, to oppose and defeat government policies (that is why the conference of July 5th is of such great importance). Secondly, Brent needs a lively broad based campaign against government policies and cuts. Only in this way will public opinion be receptive to new approaches to budgeting. Thirdly, Brent needs the support and cooperation of the trade unions (especially those in the public sector).

If these conditions are met, Brent (and similarly, other boroughs) does have another option to cuts or excessive rate rises—namely deficit budgeting. The average council, although aiming to "balance" the budget, usually ends up each year with a surplus. Brent should aim *not* to balance the budget for 1981-2. Depending on the industrial situation and political situation sometime in the winter of 1981-2, Brent then would still have the option open of taking on the government by still refusing to balance the budget or admitting defeat and taking steps to balance the budget if there were insufficient political and industrial support.

The severity of the attack on working people by this government, gives full justification for Labour councils, such as that in Brent, to use all the means at their disposal to defeat and bring it down.

RON ANDERSON
Secretary, Brent East CLP
Chairperson, Brent LGC
(personal capacity)

LABOUR GROUP ACCOUNTABILITY

Appeal

The Local Government Committee of the Brent Labour Party at its AGM agreed that the Leader of the Labour Group should in future be elected by the Party as a whole. The precise form of the necessary constitutional amendment has yet to be agreed. Brent LGC would welcome the setting up of a London-wide campaign on the question of the accountability of Labour Groups to the Labour Party. If you are interested, or if a similar campaign is taking place in your Party, please contact: Neil Nerva, 48 College Road, Wembley, Middlesex, or phone 904 8483

BRIEFING

In this issue we have succeeded in printing every article or letter submitted to us—no matter what the 'line' being argued—without cuts or alterations. We'll do our utmost to continue this policy. The aim is to provide **information** which cannot be obtained elsewhere, not to harangue readers with an artifically-concocted ideological 'line'. Be as polemical as you like, but please try to keep your articles (a) informative and (b) short. We'll try to find space for everything; but the longer your article, the smaller the typeface will have to be! Articles to:

'Briefing', 158 Thorold Road, Ilford, Essex.

LAMBETH: Confrontation 'inevitable'

THE CONTROVERSIAL debate over the strategy of Lambeth Council—a debate carried on in the columns of **Briefing** and throughout the Labour movement—has taken a new turn in the borough itself, with possible repercussions for all of London.

GRAHAM NORWOOD
Lambeth Labour Left

A new group of Party members, called Lambeth Labour Left, have undertaken to hold a London-wide meeting in June, to draw together those supporters of the "no cuts—no rate increases—no rent increases" policy.

The group has already gathered momentum in Lambeth, and has drawn informal support from smaller groups supporting the same line in Southwark, Lewisham, Islington and Haringey.

RATE DEBATE STILL LIVE

Lambeth Labour Left feels that the main debate still to be won throughout Lambeth is over the rates issue. Council leader Ted Knight, plus his supporters on all wings of the Party, have upped the borough's rates by a massive 49%, on top of cutting future planned expenditure, and increasing council rents by £1.50 a week.

Yet LLL regards such a strategy as another way of doing the Tories' work for them—tax concessions being paid for not through cuts but by taking money directly out of working people's pockets in increased rates.

Combined with rent increases—still the source of much debate and acrimony amongst the Lambeth Labour Parties which came out against such rises—the picture is far from the popular impression of Marxism-in-one-borough.

SOCIALIST STRATEGY

Lambeth Labour Left does not want a new leadership in the borough, but it *does* want a new, socialist strategy which keeps the working people's living standards intact.

Even the right-wing concede that confrontation will inevitably come about unless cuts are made—and the policies of buying time by not cutting but pushing up the rates will come adrift next year. If no cuts are made, what will the 1981 rate rise be in Lambeth? Seventy percent . . . . or more?

Confrontation will inevitably come as Heseltine et al come down on any borough which increases its rates to pay for existing services. So why not Lambeth and as many other boroughs in London take up the battle now, become more strident and principled, and refuse to make cuts or put up the rates?

Such a stand would bring Lambeth into direct conflict with the Tory government; but it would do so on a basis which would ensure popular support for the council.

And popular support will not be forthcoming under Lambeth's present policies. The people will treat the council as they treated Callaghan's government last year—they won't blame the Tories, but they will blame the Labour people who did the Tories' dirty work.

UNITED SUPPORT

But individual support of the no cuts, no rate rises and no rent rises position is not enough. Nor would it be sufficient if Lambeth Council moved in that direction. It is necessary to have not one or two councils hitting against the Thatcherites, but several—support throughout London **at least** is necessary.

So Lambeth Labour Left is inviting Party comrades who share the outlook of the group to a public meeting in Lambeth Town Hall at 8.00pm on Friday June 27th.

The emphasis will be on a free exchange of ideas and experiences in different parts of the capital, with strategies developing and links being made to develop the fight on a wide geographical base.

To gain some idea of what support will be coming to the meeting, LLL would like any supporter who wants to come along to contact either: Graham Norwood, 25 Fawnbrake Avenue, SE24 (274 0042); or Steve Stannard, 33 Clarence Crescent, SW4 (674 2036).

Crunch Time

Keith Veness

This autumn is crunch time for London Labour. The Heseltine Bill aims from November to doubly penalise those Labour councils who have, in the view of the government, not cut sufficiently —or have to spend more money than the Tories think they ought to!

Yet this situation is not without its irony. The Labour authorities who have complied in making cuts and attacking jobs and services are just as likely to be penalised as those who haven't. The councils who did not cut this year—Lambeth and Lewisham—have at least been bracing themselves for trouble. Now the Islingtons and Southwarks could find themselves in the "penalty box" as well, though these sort of councils have spent the last few months kicking precisely those groups whose support they most need now.

What is our response to be? Firstly, of course, a united struggle of Labour councils, the trades unions and the CLPs is vital. Without a joint effort the Tories will simply succeed in forcing cuts in expenditure far greater than any yet. But verbal unity and condemnation is hardly enough. The learned submissions appealing to the government that emerge from Labour representatives on the LBA and AMA will not cut much ice with this vicious *class* government.

However, the government does not hold all the trump cards. Even Tory local authorities are beginning to waver—many have joined in protesting about the Bill—and such splits in the enemies' ranks are important. We also have the fillip of the recent local election results outside London, where voters showed their support in places like Wolverhampton for councils determined to defend public expenditure on necessary services. The tide is now moving our way and public support can be mobilised.

A fight against Heseltine is crucial to the defence of public expenditure, jobs and services. Defeat cannot be contemplated without the end of the programmes at the core of any Labour local authority's plans. Help build the 5th July as the springboard for our counter-offensive.

SOUTHWARK FIGHT GETS DIRTY

Cllr CAROL TURNER

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS brought by Southwark Council against Labour Party activists Dave Russell and Southwark Councillor Carol Turner, ended on Friday 9th May when the council gave up and paid costs estimated around £5,000. This nine-day hearing at Lambeth County Court was the culmination of an 18-month long attempt by Southwark to evict Dave and myself from our council flat.

An investigation into Dave's application for rehousing was instigated by Deputy Council Leader Ann Ward and Planning Chairperson Ron Watts, shortly after I moved in to live with him in October 1978. With the exception of three letters from the Director of Housing, questioning Dave on his previous accommodation, we lived for almost six months knowing that something serious was going on but without being told exactly what that was.

The sordid details finally came to light when we were summoned before a special committee meeting, set up as a quasi-court, to hear allegations that Dave had misrepresented himself on his application form. It was then we discovered that not only had Ward and Watts started the investigation, but they were the main 'prosecution witnesses', having submitted statements claiming that Dave and I were living together at my flat before he was rehoused. In court later, the judge commented that Watts' statement was "ninety-nine percent gossip" and should have been disregarded by the committee.

As well as these documents which were presented to the committee as 'evidence', Dave and I were also invited to submit statements. Prior to the meeting certain assurances about the procedure were sought and given to Dave– on the night of the meeting they were ignored. After the sevenhour meeting, where Dave waited over four hours to address the committee, it was decided that Dave had misrepresented himself and would be evicted.

This decision to evict was taken at the beginning of March last year by Southwark's Housing Management Sub-Committee, headed by chairperson Evelyn Ackroyd. South London readers may well remember that around this time the *South London Press* carried tales of her own housing plight. Having sold her £50,000-plus Dulwich home to buy a Westminster council house (and despite the fact that she had a country cottage and was not therefore homeless) she was given temporary, housing association accommodation. Chairperson of Housing, Charles Sawyer, told the press that nothing improper was involved and that the temporary home had been arranged on "the old pals network".

Needless to say, Dave and I don't move in the same circle of "old pals". After the meeting, which we have always regarded as a kangaroo court, the press was told that the meeting was held to ensure "scrupulous fairness" and the same Charles Sawyer claimed that the meeting was held "to clear Cllr Turner".

We have been fighting the decision in court since November last year, on the grounds that the Chairperson, Evelyn Ackroyd, was biased and the committee did not observe the rules of natural justice. The eviction was contested on nine counts of serious irregularities in the committee proceedings. Sawyer and Ackroyd appeared as witnesses for the Council, but two committee members came forward to speak in support of Dave's case.

When the hearing resumed after a break, on Thursday 8th May, a new legal decision had made the notice to quit invalid on technical grounds. With the agreement of Southwark Council and ourselves, the judge decided to finish hearing the case but to withhold his decision until Southwark had issued a new, valid notice to quit. The case continued and the day ended with Southwark's barrister part-way through his summing up.

On Friday, at the eleventh hour, Southwark decided to back out, using a procedure known as "non-suit"–a device available when the plaintiff has been unable to prove their case. Southwark tried to claim that their reason for withdrawal was time–the judge was not available in Lambeth court till November. However, after he had offered to give his verdict in another court, as soon as a proper notice to quit had been issued, Southwark still withdrew.

Our barrister commented in court that Southwark's application to stop the case amounted to "manipulation of the procedures of the court in order to avoid an adverse decision." He regarded it as dubious practice. But, with no discretion to prevent it, the judge allowed Southwark to withdraw. An undertaking had to be given by Ackroyd that she would recommend to the next Housing Management Sub-Committee that the decision be rescinded. But she added, ominously, that she would ask the committee to refer the matter to the Director of Housing for further consideration.

A further special meeting of the Housing Management Sub-Committee was held on Tuesday 20th May. Several councillors who were not committee members, including myself, attended the meeting. Ackroyd refused to give permission for us to stay. She also refused to give her reasons for not allowing this. The decision of March 12th last year was duly rescinded and the matter referred to the Director of Housing. One interesting aspect of the meeting was the chair's reluctance to allow committee members to debate the issue.

The council are reluctant to admit publicly that they withdrew because they didn't believe they could win. They are trying to claim that it was simply a technicality. Were that the case, they would have no trouble taking the whole thing back to court. Given the reality of their withdrawal, they must now realise the politically delicate position they find themselves in. Peckham Labour Party has already passed a resolution instructing its councillors not to support any further action against Dave and myself because such action is clearly regarded as harrassment and a waste of money. A similar motion is coming to the next Dulwich GMC.

We have yet to see what lengths the council right-wing will go to in order to silence their enemies.

LETTERS

DEAR EDITOR,

I would like to express a contrary view to that contained in Carol Turner's recent article in **London Labour Briefing.**

First, she produces no evidence of SDA domination in the Southwark Labour Group other than her own paranoia and a reference to John O'Grady who, although leader, is still only one out of 53 members in the Group. Unlike Carol Turner, I have up till now found the Labour Party a sufficient grouping for my political tastes and have not joined, or allowed myself to be dominated by, any group left or right. I am fairly certain that the large majority of the Labour Group in Southwark would share this view: this is not to say that I claim to be neutral. I make no secret of my views but at least they are my views, not those stereotyped slogans churned out by some miscellaneous, unelected, and as far as I am concerned, unwanted grouping.

Secondly, on the question of the Labour Group liaison nomination from the Dulwich Labour Party, it is no longer a matter of dispute (except perhaps with Miss Turner) that Mick Dalton was not eligible to attend the relevant group meeting. He had not been elected by the AGM of the Local Government Committee, also he was not at the time a member of the Local Government Committee. How Mick subsequently became a Local Government Committee member is a whole story in itself which would take up rather more space than I think your publication would wish to make available to me.

If I can conclude on the question of how councillors vote in council, any of your readers with even a passing knowledge of local government will know that the Constitution of the Labour Party lays down that voting on a council agenda is determined by the decision and democratic majority of the Labour Group. This applies to all councils not just to Southwark. Carol Turner does not want to be bound by this rule. She would like to see CLPs decide the rate perhaps, or a local government committee, or her own Ward, or in fact any organisation provided that it will agree with her views, but the Constitution of the Labour Party does not accommodate her wishes on this matter and, until the Labour Party changes its mind, perhaps Miss Turner should reconsider her style of democracy.

Yours fraternally,

BOB EADIE
Southwark Councillor

DEAR COMRADE,

Curb The Labour MPs, But Don't Forget Your Borough Councillors!!

It is not enough to ensure that Labour MPs are brought to account by their sponsoring CLP General Committees and trade unions for their records and actions. We must not forget Labour councillors who have some scope for introducing what Tom King (the Minister for "local" government) has termed "socialism on the rates" and as we now are aware seem reluctant even to resist the Tories, let alone except in the case of Lambeth LBC advance the cause of the working class in their boroughs.

In London borough after borough the opposition to the Tories from Labour councillors is so loud as to be deafening!!

I must say that in the London Borough of Redbridge (Tories 51, Labour 13) this is not the case and our Labour Group has been instrumental in opposition to the ruling Conservative Group. Indeed we have even managed to stop some of the vicious cuts that are being implemented. The alternative policy of rate increases has also be made clear too.

There is a good chance that in 1982, Labour will take control of Redbridge Council, as well as other London boroughs and for this reason we must ensure that whether we have a hard working and radical Labour Group on the borough council or a Labour Group which is the opposite, the principles of accountability extend throughout the Labour Party to include local council Labour Groups.

Some measures which will help, and for which I am campaigning are:

(1) The annual election of the Leader of the Labour Group on the borough council by the AGM of the Labour Party Borough Local Government Committee delegates.

(2) A verbatum report of all Labour Group meetings (with votes taken) to be freely available to all Party members in the borough.

(3) The 1982 local council election manifesto of the Labour Party to be written by the Local Government Committee after full consultation with the Labour Group, the borough trades council and trades unions representing the council's staff.

These measures would be a most useful back-up to those being pursued by the "Campaign for Labour Party Democracy" in relation to General Party accountability, and I do exhort all readers to campaign actively so that some of the problem situations we have in the London Labour borough council scene can be eliminated and a real counter attack on the Tories within and without the Labour Party launched.

Yours fraternally,

PETER C. SMITH
Wanstead and Woodford CLP
and CLPD Executive Committee
(personal capacity)

DEAR COMRADE,

The Islington Briefing Supporters' Group would be willing to be represented on the Editorial Board, with each member of the group having a period of time on the board, rather than one member alone representing us.

We shall be very glad if this can be arranged as I understand that an Editorial Board is being formed.

With All Good Wishes
Yours fraternally,

BERT ATKINSON
Briefing Islington Supporters' Group

Members Room,
London Borough of Hillingdon

DEAR COMRADES,

Please find enclosed a cheque for £12 as a donation. I am a Social Worker and as such will be working on May 14th. Please accept the above as my day's pay. Further contributions to follow.

Cllr BOB LEWIS

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