LONDON LABOUR 20p

BRIEFING

No 9 MARCH 1981

SPECIAL BUMPER ISSUE!

FOR A SOCIALIST LONDON!

NEVER BEFORE has London Labour used such a thoroughly democratic process to produce its election policies. The result is the most radical programme ever offered to Londoners. Never before has so much preparation gone into ensuring that, having won an electoral mandate, the new Labour Group, in majority in the GLC, immediately implements "A Socialist Programme for London".

ARTHUR LATHAM
Chairperson
London Labour Party

We cannot afford fainthearts. There will undoubtedly be obstruction and opposition from the Tory government. Our aim is to fight anti working class policies and so speak for the people of London.

AUTHORITY

That is why we need to be armed with a clear authority from the voters. This means more than a marginal victory and high turnout on polling day.

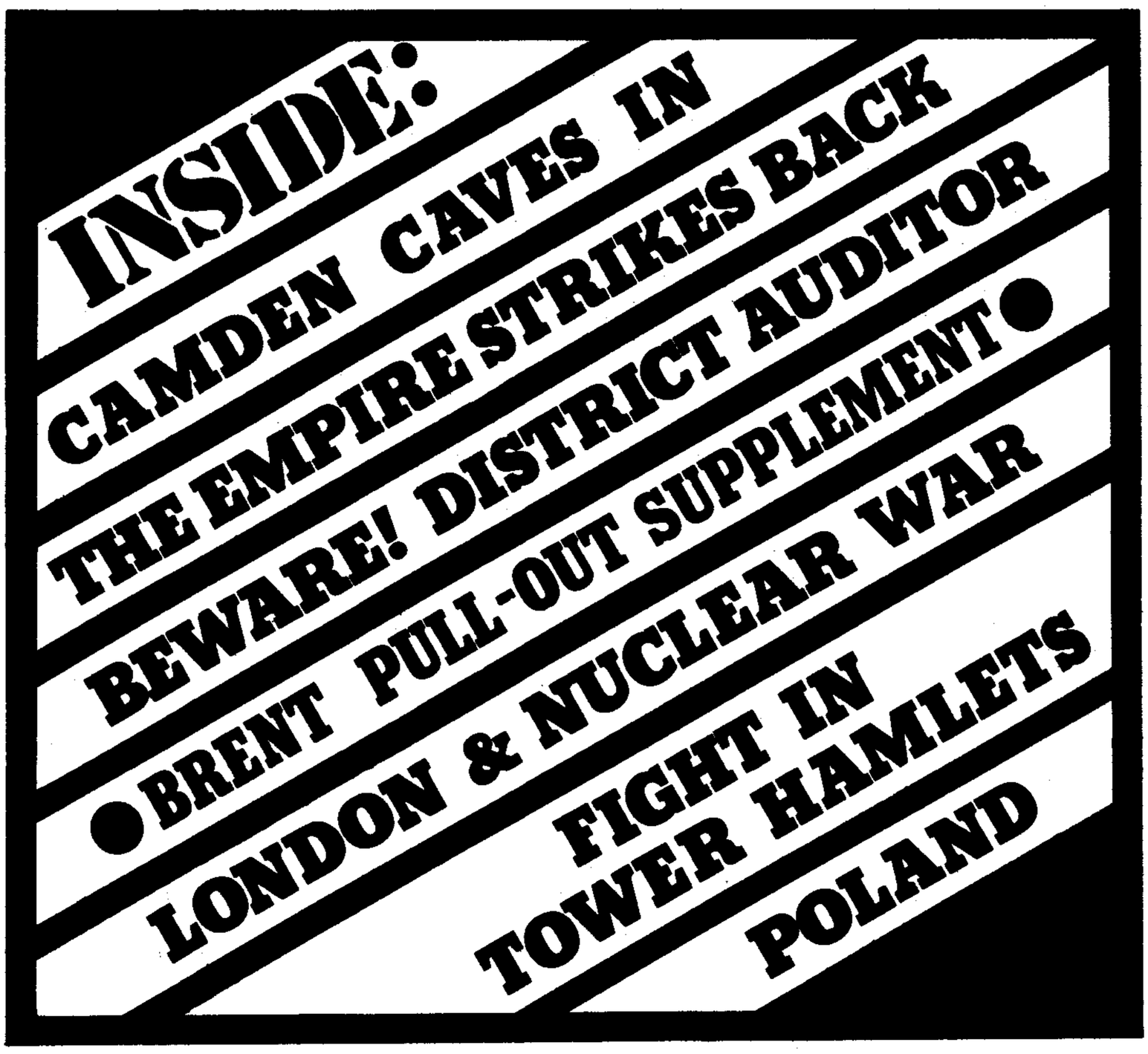
Let no one suppose we can sit back and simply win on an anti-Tory tide—with or without the blurring of issues by intervention from any erstwhile friends.

We have to argue positively our policies for bringing prosperity to the capital, creating employment, making public transport the service it should be, and accepting the community's obligation to resume the attack on the housing scandal.

CONTRAST

Our approach to all these vital matters is in direct contrast to the traditional Tory market "solutions" or the pussyfooting of the Labour right establishment (some of whose ex-members now wear different hats!).

The Labour Party in London has a dual role in this. Clearly we shall be concerned to keep a new Labour GLC moving in the direction our manifesto sets out; and we must see that the public and Labour voters are informed about what we are doing. We have increasingly become more than "a regional council" and instead are making a major political contribution as well as an organisational one. I believe much of what we are doing is an excellent national model. Let London Labour lead the way.



Labour—Take the Power!

The Social Democratic Alliance and the G.L.C. Elections

THE NIGHT George Brown announced he was quitting the Labour Party he was photographed prostrate in the gutter outside the House of Commons. In the political sense he has never since risen above it and with his recent appointment as President of the Social Democratic Alliance he has now found a few more right wing friends to keep him company.

The Social Democratic Alliance (SDA) founded in 1975 is a shadowy extreme right wing organisation which, until very recently, was inside the Labour Party. It is essentially the creation of two individuals, Stephen Haseler and Douglas Eden. Both are lecturers with a fanatical hatred of the Labour left.

In a climate of political reason this small bunch of political fanatics would not even deserve a mention, but with the overwhelming right wing bias of the British media every statement by the SDA is given the full treatment. Especially since they confine themselves to attacking the Labour Party in a way that well serves the interests of the Tory Party and other enemies of the Labour movement both at home and abroad.

The policies which concern the SDA most, other than attacking the left, are the maintenance of the mixed economy and the NATO Alliance. In the past the SDA has championed the cause of threatened MPs such as Reg Prentice and Frank Tomney—a clear indication of the group's politics rather than evidence of a lack of political judgement.

COUNTY HALL LINKS

The SDA's original founders, Messrs Haseler and Eden, were members of the GLC between 1973-77 and held senior office at County Hall from which both maintained they resigned in 1975 in order to campaign against "left wing excesses". In fact they 'resigned' in order to avoid being sacked which they knew was an inevitable consequence of their group's bungled attempt to take over the main GLC committee chairpersonships. In the 12 months following their enforced resignation both concentrated their energies on consistently attacking the Labour Party and voting with the Tories at County Hall. It was this latter offence which eventually led to a group decision to expel them in 1976—an event in which again they tried to portray themselves as some form of tinpot martyrs victimised by what they described as a combination of "extreme leftists, opportunists and placeholders".

McCARTHYITE SMEARS

After the GLC defeat of 1977 Haseler and Eden went on to a better class of treachery with regular articles and features in the *Daily Mail, Daily Express, Daily Telegraph, The Times, Encounter, East-West Digest,* etc etc. Lecture tours of the USA and speeches to a variety of extreme right wing organisations kept them busy up to the 1979 general elections.

Just prior to that election they published a sordid, McCarthyite document, "The Mutation of Labour" which listed MPs and candidates whom the SDA considered to be on the "extreme left". Not much evidence of life was necessary to secure a place on the SDA's "death list"—a greetings message in *Voice* newspapers; support for planning agreements; advocating the Alternative Economic Strategy were all cited as evidence of "extremism". The main complaint about the list within the labour movement came subsequently from candidates who had been omitted, although the right wing gutter press made great play on the grubby little document which was, of course, the SDA's real objective in publishing it.

AN OFFER NOT TO BE MISSED

Although the SDA has always claimed to have "around 2,000 supporters" this is clearly nonsense. The only names ever to have appeared were those on the original "manifesto" published in June 1975. This list of 42 consisted in the main of Labour Party right wingers whose Parliamentary or town hall aspirations had come to a grinding halt either because of unacceptable political views, utter incompetence or old age and in a number of cases, a combination of all three.

It would be too tedious to list all those on the original list with London connections, but a stamped addressed letter to **LABOUR BRIEFING** will secure a copy of all 42 together with the SDA's manifesto of political cliches and anti-socialist clap-trap. This is an offer not to be missed, particularly by insomniacs!

EXPELLED BY LABOUR

In January 1980 the SDA announced it would be putting up in national and local elections against official Labour candidates who, in the opinion of the SDA, were "left wing extremists". Since most people to the left of Neville Sandleson are believed by the SDA to be extremists this could involve them in a major electoral exercise. However, to date they have chosen only some 40 potential candidates. The NEC, after much hesitation, has ruled that membership of the SDA is incompatible with membership of the Labour Party, not in itself a surprising conclusion, but it does mean that Haseler and Eden are now on a one-way ticket out of the Labour Party.

There is, of course, a London dimension to all this in that the SDA has also announced it will be putting up candidates in the GLC election. So far the group has named Norwood, Hayes and Harlington, Paddington, Islington North and Vauxhall as its prime objectives. Candidates in other constituencies who feel they are being unfairly discriminated against should write directly to the SDA at 5/20 Shepherds Hill, London N6 5AM and protest. In the meantime it must be pointed out that a number of the SDA's likely candidates for May still retain Labour Party membership, as indeed do many on the original 1975 list of SDA supporters. Clearly this is an intolerable position and involved CLPs should take immediate steps to ensure that named SDA members in their parties are either no longer involved in the group or, if still active, their expulsion sought from the Labour Party.

LINKS WITH THE CENTRE PARTY

At a meeting in London in early February this year, the SDA voted to join with another renegade band of right wingers, the Association of Democratic Groups led by two former Labour MPs, Colin Phipps and Michael Barnes. The stated aim of this born-again collection of pathetic has-beens was nothing less than an outright majority at the general election. However, before they had sorted out who was to be prime minister the Council for Social Democracy announced its own intention to form something or other when they eventually got round to it.

In the list of 100 CSD supporters published in the *Guardian* appeared the names of Haseler and Eden—surely the first reported case of rats actually joining a sinking ship.

RELATION WITH JENKINS

Seeing the SDA founders enthusiastically supporting the CSD led me to my first feelings ever of sympathy for Roy Jenkins. Perhaps next time Mr Jenkins opens a bottle of 1931 claret he might care to read with it an article by Dr Haseler that appeared in *Tribune* on 26 November 1971. Commenting on Roy Jenkins narrow election as Labour's deputy leader, Dr Haseler wrote: *"The Parliamentary Labour Party, for its part, seems to be rewarding those who threaten to smash party unity in the future and in so doing it has established a new rule for Labour historians which runs as follows: 'If you defy an overwhelming decision of party conference, the declared policy of the National Executive Committee, the policy and Whip of the PLP, majority opinion in the Shadow Cabinet, the views of the party leader and overwhelming public opinion, then you should offer yourself for the position of deputy leader of the Labour Party and you will probably get yourself elected'."*

The article concluded with a comment that now seems strange coming from the pen of Dr Haseler. He wrote: *"No number of scares about the party moving left, no amount of press support for those who defy party decisions, no amount of chat about 'ability and integrity' can now stop us from the urgent re-appraisal of British socialism that is so desperately needed."*

Dr Haseler's analysis was largely correct in 1971 and therefore he should have little complaint that so many people inside the Labour Party today are anxious to see the back of the SDA, the Association of Democratic Groups, the CSD and others who are nothing more than watered-down Tories. Socialists in our Party should not seek to hinder their departure and should bear in mind that amongst them are those whose intention is to seek office under the Labour banner in the May elections before revealing their true affiliations.

Before those elections in London we must seek assurances from all GLC candidates of their intention to resign immediately from office should they leave the Labour Party. Those who refuse to give such an assurance must be dealt with by their CLPs. However much fuss there is before May, it will be nothing compared with the subsequent disruption such turn-coats might cause should Labour only have a small majority after election day.

The "urgent reappraisal of British socialism" called for by Dr Haseler in 1971 is now very long overdue indeed and we must not delay it any longer.

TONY BANKS
Tooting CLP

News from Scotland: Accountability in Action (or how to make YOUR Labour Group more powerful)

THERE ARE TWO key rules for producing amendments to Labour Group Standing Orders to introduce workable accountability. Firstly, keep it simple. Standing Orders which end up as a collection of rules which challenge Citrine as the definitive work on the rules of party procedure are soon used to confuse. Secondly, be precise. If the intention is that a clause which allows the group the right to call for a special joint meeting to discuss changes in the interpretation of a manifesto commitment is only consultative, and the party is the only body that can sanction a new strategy—spell it out. Don't leave it vague.

Stirling District Labour Party started the process of change during the run-up to the 1980 District Council elections, and after agreement on the form of the amendments had been reached by the party, the GMC made it quite plain that no candidate would be endorsed to stand who did not agree to support and be bound by the new Standing Orders. We were lucky, as every sitting councillor agreed to support the amendments, but GMCs must be prepared to be firm.

The logic of the amendments are simple. The Group are bound by their own Standing Orders to all manifesto commitments in the present, and past, manifestoes which have not been superceded by party decisions. Voting against manifesto commitments falls foul of the final clause of ALL standing orders based on the Labour Party model, and allows the group to withdraw the whip. Since this is done 'in consultation with the District Party GC' it reinforces the party's right to hold councillors accountable.

The danger that the reactionary elements of the Labour Party might trot out the argument that councillors are being made puppets for the District Party was reduced by the introduction of a consultation system where the group were having difficulties, but with the District Party having the final control over the policy line to be followed. This clause has been used on three or four minor items without acrimony. Indeed, the party GMC have gained in their understanding of the tortuous machinery of a local authority. The GMC members have strengthened our group's hand on some items, by supplying alternative solutions to administrative problems that are more in touch with manifesto policy.

STRENGTH

The election of the group leader and the group's nominee for council convenor jointly by the group and the District Party GMC has been a source of increasing strength and unity. The group aims should be the party manifesto, and the duty I perform is to keep the group fully aware of all the elements of party policy as it makes demands on their committee remits. It has not done away with the need for coaxing and persuading that has always been a part of any group where the motivation for entering public life is as diverse as that found in the Labour Party. What it has resulted in is a 'political' council group, whose policies reflect the politics which face their district party, and not just a group of administrators trying to work the local government machine.

There can be no doubt that Stirling District's solution to the problem of accountability has not yet been tested in the fire of direct confrontation as will be likely when the Miscellaneous Provisions Bill is passed in the autumn of 1981, but so far the record looks good. In reply to the demand for a £2.80 per week rent rise, the District Labour Group stuck by the manifesto commitment to 50% of housing revenue being raised by rents and fixed a rise of £1. After a thorough review of the level of service and manning levels in all departments, the Labour Group decided to increase their manual and skilled workforce by 52, and their administrative staff by 15, in housing and community leisure services. Even after being attacked by the government through a 66% cut in housing support grant, and a 15% cut in rate support grant, the group remain firmer than ever. As the pressure has increased, so group members have discussed the problems more openly with the District Party, and have drawn strength from the party's continued attention and support.

The great benefits to be derived have been proven to us, and I am sure that the benefits to an urban based party will be even greater. I can give no stronger support than the evidence of Stirling District Party's new found political consciousness.

MIKE CONNARTY
Labour Group Leader,
Stirling District Council

BRIEFING mobilizes for London demonstration: HANDS OFF WORKERS' POLAND

CHRIS KNIGHT
Lewisham East CLP

London Demonstration and March—15th March, 1981. Leaving 2pm from Speakers Corner to the Russian Embassy. Called by the Labour-Poland Solidarity Committee. Socialists only—no anti-communist placards or banners.

An initiative from BRIEFING supporters on the EC of the Greater London Regional Council of the Labour Party has resulted in all-London (and national) backing for the "socialists-only" march and demonstration in defence of Polish trades unionism which has been called for March 15th. It is now hoped to secure the backing of Labour's NEC itself for the campaign to be inaugurated from that date.

Our brothers and sisters in Poland are in urgent need of support. And they need more than one or two electric duplicators (a machine worth £600 apparently represents the sum total of British trade union aid so far). The obduracy and corruption of the Polish bureaucratic and governmental apparatus and its complete incapacity to measure up to the demands of the working class have led to a situation of steadily accelerating instability, shortages and chaos. No one believes that this can continue for long. Internally, the political revolution which has begun seems irreversible (the bureaucracy clearly lacking any real social base within the country at all). But unless the solidarity which Poland's workers have achieved can be immeasurably strengthened—to the point at which it connects with our own struggles in the West as a force to be reckoned with and penetrates even into the Soviet Union itself—it is not easy to see how ultimate disaster can be averted. In the absence of such solidarity, the logic of events will lead with virtual certainty to a repressive clamp-down, under the threat or the actuality of military intervention by the Warsaw Pact armies using the pretext of the need to rescue Poland from "counter revolution". The consequences of military intervention could be incalculable. Fierce resistance in Poland itself—even if temporarily successful and involving units of Poland's armed services—would risk blanket retaliation, repression and sufferings beyond those endured by the Czechs in 1968 or the Hugarian working class in 1956. The disaster which this could mean for socialists throughout the world in the ensuing cold war climate of anti-communist hysteria can hardly be stressed too strongly. Yet it is hard to see what other options are open to the Soviet bureaucracy. Recent extremely ominous statements from East Germany, Prague and Moscow indicate that little time for action may now remain.

It is therefore in *our* interests to act with speed, perhaps particularly in the light of the post-Wembley press campaign to depict the Labour Party as a whole as having turned to an "East European" interpretation of "democracy". A good many lies and press slanders—not all of them from the Kremlin and its allies—need exposing. The Labour-Poland Solidarity Committee therefore stresses that it has no connections whatsoever with the "solidarity campaign" sponsored by (among others) Kate Losinska of the CPSA, and has in fact made stewarding arrangements to ban any non-socialist or anti-communist presence from the march and demonstration. This is in direct response to *Solidarity's* own requests. With *Solidarity* in Gdansk, we will give the Kremlin as little ammunition as possible to depict us as "pro-imperialist" or "anti-socialist". We are among the hardest defenders of Clause 4 of the Labour Party Constitution—inserted in 1918 under the impact of the Russian Revolution—and stand for workers' power in Britain as firmly as we defend it in Poland. We believe that our struggle for power in this country is the best support we can give to our Polish allies in the fight for genuine democracy and socialism.

Labour-Poland Solidarity Committee
SUGGESTED MODEL RESOLUTION:

"This General Management Committee calls on the NEC to support and help organise the March 15th 'socialists-only' demonstration and march called by the Labour-Poland Solidarity Committee in defence of independent trades unionism in Poland."

LONDON: THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER

THE PREPARATIONS for a Labour GLC are going ahead on all fronts. Working groups of candidates have been set up to prepare a detailed plan for the first three crucial months and a Broad Left Forum has been set up which is open to all candidates to attend. This body (nicknamed "The Briefing Group" by the press) will continue throughout the life of the next Labour GLC and at its second meeting on 11th January 1981 had a general discussion based on the following paper which was submitted by Ken Livingstone.

LABOUR'S FIRST YEAR AND THE TORY RESPONSE

The Tory Government's Options

Since the Local Government Act became law and Heseltine introduced his cuts in the Rate Support Grant and the new block grant there has been a wave of defeatism amongst borough councillors who are beginning to question the value of having Labour controlled councils under the present conditions. This paper sets out the reasons why we must reject this defeatism and how we can move rapidly to implement our manifesto.

The GLC campaign will be fought against the background of massive rate increases in April caused by Tory government policies. At the end of our first year the London borough elections will also be influenced by rate increases in April 1982 and by how effective our policies have been in improving the quality of life for Londoners. Unless we can show a measurable improvement in service rather than just another increase in the size of the bureaucracy, we could suffer a massive loss of support. Thus it is vital that all our key policies are started in the first three months following the election. Given the inertia within this building this will require a major time commitment from members.

This will also mean that expenditure rises above the budget left us by the outgoing Tory administration. The Tories may consider the abolition of the GLC and return to the idea of breaking up the ILEA, but it is likely that they will want to see how we react to their financial panalties before trying more drastic measures which would involve new legislation.

The 1981-2 GLC/ILEA Budgets

The new act gives the government almost total control over all GLC/ILEA/London Transport capital spending. Unless a loophole is found then the government has the power to prevent us building new housing, extending the tube, buying new buses or undertaking any works of improvement to housing or the environment. The new council will have no alternative but to lead a massive and continuing campaign to mobilise public opinion and force the reversal of these policies.

The GLC housing programme required a minimum allocation of £140 million from government but has only received £95 million. Thus we need to find another £25 million to continue existing contracts.

The new council will inherit a GLC budget which is unlikely to cover even the outgoing Tories' commitments. London Transport will face an as yet unfunded deficit of between £35 to £55 million.

Revenue Expenditure

The new act does not prevent councils increasing the rates, indeed the government's allocation to London will force many councils to increase them by over 50%. The 1981-2 Tory GLC budget will be nearly £600 million but to qualify for the full RSG entitlement of £137 million will require the Tories to make a 9% cut in the present levels of spending. It is unlikely that even Cutler can do this and the Tories could end up with between £95 and £120 million if they fail to cut enough.

The government has decided that the ILEA budget should only be £468 million and if we could cut spending by the 30% required to reach this level then we would qualify for the full £141 million RSG. As the ILEA budget for 1981-2 will be between £680 million to £710 million the ILEA will lose at least £135 million, and possibly all of its RSG. This is because for each £1 we spend over the amount the government believe we should spend they claw back the RSG we are entitled to as a penalty. Thus if we spend £100 million over the government's target we lose about £60 million grant.

The GLC also will receive about £70 million Transport Supplementary Grant in addition to RSG. Thus the government *could* withdraw grants which will total somewhere between £165 million and £214 million as Labour starts to implement its GLC/LT/ILEA policies. When the GLC increases the rate by 1p it gets in £20 million. Each 1p on the ILEA precept produces £11 million. The average domestic ratepayer has to pay another £2.50 a year with each 1p increase in the rate. The GLC rate base is 62% commercial and 38% domestic. The ILEA rate base is 75% commercial and 25% domestic. Each 1p increase in the rate produces £3 million from Westminster, £2.7 million from the City of London, £1 million from Camden and an average of just under £500,000 from each of the other 30 London boroughs.

The cost to the average ratepayer of the government withdraws all grants would be between £20 and £25 next year. Thus the GLC is very close to being free of the government penalties which can cripple individual boroughs. The ILEA having lost all its grant in this first budget under the system will be free of further revenue penalties unless the government takes further powers. The government can start to apply its clawback penalties as soon as they see projected overspending. They do not have to wait until the end of the financial year.

Immediate Policy Changes

The working groups now being established by the GLLP executive will be drawing up detailed plans for the changes we need to make at County Hall in the period between the election and the August break. The decision of the ILEA Labour Group (since reversed) to implement the cut in school meal prices from 35p to 25p will take effect before the election and should help to build public support for our policies and show that we have a genuine commitment to the manifesto. We must ensure that our other policies are implemented in a way that makes an immediate favourable impact on Londoners in the areas that affect their daily lives so that before the government can move against us we have won popular support for our programme.

Transport

Clearly the fares cut will be the major issue. We need to have worked out the zonal fares scheme so that it is introduced at the same time as the fares cut and avoid the confusion that would be caused if it were introduced separately. The earliest date for introduction would be 1st August. We must be ready to offer British Rail subsidies for OAP free travel and a reduction in BR fares within the GLC area in line with the 25% LT cut. Failure to do this would divide Londoners on the basis of which transport service they use. Any resistance from government can be overcome by a campaign directed at Tory MPs in seats with large numbers of BR commuters.

We must renegotiate wages and conditions of LT staff in order to get more use from the existing bus and tube stock in order to provide the extra capacity needed when fares are cut. The bus lane programme must be the first priority of the Planning and Transport Committees to ensure that the increased service is not defeated by traffic congestion.

Unemployment

The level of unemployment will be a key factor in our campaign and I think we must introduce a 35-hour week for all manual staff as a firm policy for job creation. This will require agreement with the unions that the 35-hour week does not mean increased overtime for the existing workforce but a reduction in London's mounting unemployment figures. Camden Council introduced this policy in 1979 and if the GLC should become the second council to adopt this policy it will then reinforce those trades unions campaigning for a 35-hour week throughout the economy.

The Industry and Employment programme has been more fully detailed than the other manifesto areas and that working party should concentrate on bringing forward all the revenue based aspects which can go ahead quickly. Those areas subject to government capital controls will be part of the campaign referred to elsewhere in this paper.

Housing Transfer

The remaining 95,000 properties in the eight resisting boroughs will not have been transferred before the election although it is likely that Parliament will have agreed a transfer order for a date such as August 1st. The incoming group must refuse to process the transfer and start an immediate major maintenance programme of revenue funded improvements on these neglected estates whilst withdrawing the request for transfer. The manifesto proposals for district housing committees to run the estates without any central County Hall interference should be established at the first GLC meeting with tenant representatives comprising one third of the members. All revenue funded improvements must be agreed in full consultation with tenants who would have a veto power over any particular scheme. Rents should be frozen.

Local Projects

Throughout London the GLC and other councils have been cutting back on grants to Law Centres, Community Relations Councils, tenants and other community organisations. The GLC should step in and take over the funding of these bodies. The decision of Ealing to stop funding its CCR because of CCR policy on the Southall riots is just a well publicised

Continued next page

Racist attacks in Hackney

CLLR DINAH MORLEY

THROUGHOUT this country people are living.in very real fear that their homes and families will be the victims of racist attacks. Hackney Council has been slow to respond to families living in these conditions, but at its last full meeting Hackney Asian Association demonstrated forcefully that this state of affairs will no longer be accepted.

In November of last year Jarnall Singh and his family were out one night staying with relatives with whom they had been celebrating the birth of a nephew. Racist attackers took this opportunity to set fire to the front porch and hallway of their vacated home. The family, Jarnall, his wife and five young children under seven years of age, returned to find that the house was no longer secure and that all the rooms were affected by the smoke damage. Hall and stairway were completely blackened and several windows shattered.

The police response was unhelpful to say the least—it was even suggested that the family had set fire to their home on purpose to get a transfer. The Council said the house was not fit for habitation and the family went to stay with relatives, hoping to be offered alternative accommodation. However the home was "made safe" and the family were obliged to return. In no way was the damage repaired and windows were simply boarded up. Only a new door was fitted and wiring made safe.

MUTUAL PROTECTION

Racist threats to this family continued and they were forced to sleep in one room for mutual protection. One parent stays awake all the time in case of further attack. The children only attended school spasmodically, their mother having been attacked on more than one occasion when taking them to school.

The family begged for a transfer to an area where they could feel safe, but the Council refused to make an offer that would have been acceptable to the family.

A meeting was called by the Hackney Asian Association, at which the Singh family's case was outlined and where Winston Thomas, whose family had also been victims of racist intimidation, told of his two year struggle to get rehoused—after a fire, attacks on his children, losing his job through taking time off to protect his family ect. Militant action was decided on in view of the Council's negative attitude towards its tenants living in these circumstances.

UPROAR

The Asian Association with many supporters packed the January Council meeting and when the chairperson of housing refused to answer questions on the case, a woman member of the Association walked into the middle of the chamber and refused to be moved. Uproar ensued and the meeting was adjourned for half an hour. At the resumption of the meeting it was agreed that Jarnall Singh meet with the officers and the chairperson to resolve the problem. However this meeting broke up in disarray as the Council side refused to allow the chairperson of the Asian Association and the Asian worker for the CRE to be present, despite some attempt by other sympathetic councillors to barricade both parties in a room until there was some solution reached.

As chief officers and the chairperson left, the deputy leader gave an undertaking that he would personally handle the case. Jarnall Singh met the officers a few days later and has been promised a safe home within the week. If this promise is adhered to the Singh family should be able to sleep safely again at nights within a few days of this article being written.

Various opposing factions have attempted to present this event as an underhand attempt to get rehoused. This can easily be refuted. The Singh family had lived happily enough at their home for six years—although it is in poor condition. The Thomas family had just been moved onto a brand new estate and were thrilled with their home, until the racist attacks started. We do not want to see the racists pushing people about in this way and our first objective must be to remove racism and its violent manifestations from our society. Whilst undertaking this task we must not allow people to live in fear for their lives and those of their children.

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and excluded from public house building.

The GLC and Labour boroughs must co-ordinate their attack on the vast housing problems and draw the Voluntary and Cooperative housing movement into their strategy.

* The building trade at union and management levels must be involved in planning essential building programmes.

* The majority of properties in disrepair are in the private rented sector and will have to come under public control or they will not be improved.

* The GLC must have an executive housing function as well as a coordinating one. If it merely plans what others should do it will not be taken seriously.

THE CRISIS

All this is whistling in the dark unless we have the resources to deal with the mounting crisis that is staring us in the face. The 1980 national house-building figures reveal a slump of dramatic dimension. Only 152,000 homes started (public and private) the lowest number in peacetime for over half a century. Waiting lists have rocketed and in London there were over 100,000 new applicants in each of the last two years. Homelessness is increasing with families in expensive bed and breakfast accommodation which is squalid and miserable, while houses stand empty which could be used on a short term basis if only some cash was available. One in seven dwellings in Inner London are statutorily unfit and about a quarter of London's total stock needs substantial repairs.

It is the ultimate insanity to leave people in despair and let the housing stock rot while builders go bankrupt daily and skilled workers are pushed onto the dole.

When Labour wins the GLC election, they must mount a housing campaign of such strength that it will have to be heeded. Only a rapid and radical U-turn in housing policy and a major increase in resources can begin to cope with the crisis.

Wembley

Continued from page 5

it. For the PLP is simply not prepared to give up the independence which has prevented it from being the political instrument of working people and a vehicle of socialist change. The establishment might have been defeated, but it is still there determined to do and say what it has always said and done.

ACCOUNTABILITY

And yet the rank and file now have the tool of change. One of the most significant, but little reported, events at Wembley was the launching of a pamphlet entitled "How to select or reselect your MP". It is not a guide to getting rid of MPs although it covers that, but to the mechanics of reselection as a tool of accountability. It covers in detail the process of selecting a parliamentary candidate, but also has a section on "working together". It outlines the need for (and problems with) information about an MP's activities; it discusses an MP's reports to and consultation with his or her constituency party. Any party member who has a Labour MP should have a copy.

It must be remembered that no MP is above accountability (even in a leadership election under a wider franchise). Many of the members of the Tribune Group are amongst the 150 who signed a resolution to a meeting of the PLP describing the Wembley decision as a 'mistake' which should be reversed. Any MP will do what he or she can get away with. The onus is on the members of his or her party.

Parliamentary selections are about to take place throughout the country. Some MPs will have to go; but those who remain must change too. However it is achieved, the time has come to radically change the political complexion of the PLP. There is no alternative.

[How to Select or Reselect Your MP by Chris Mullin is published by CLPD and IWC. It is available for 50p plus 15p p&p from 10 Park Drive, London NW11 7SH.]

242,410 reasons for Londoners to kick out the Tories

NARENDRA MAKANJI
Wood Green CLP

ACCORDING TO JANUARY UNEMPLOYMENT figures, nearly one in 10 of all unemployed live in the Greater London Area. The total of registered unemployed stood at 242,410—a staggering increase of 87% over the same figure in May 1979 when the Thatcher government came to power.

The South East, which has traditionally been cushioned from the effects of economic madness, has an unemployment rate of 6.8% of the total working population. Whilst this, as a statistic, is not as horrifying as the percentages from other areas such as Northern Ireland (17.3%), Scotland (12.7%) and the North East (13.5%), it is the highest figure this century.

The policies of the government and the GLC are the main cause of this upswing. The high interest rates and the level of sterling has meant that the manufacturing industry has become uncompetitive. Numerous factories in the industrial estates of North London have closed down, whilst others have "rationalised" their operations out of London.

The tourist trade, which in the past has provided a cushion for the jobless, has been seriously affected. The number of people registered at the Hotel and Catering Job Centre in Denmark Street has increased by over 50%. The restaurant trade is down by nearly 25% and many hotels and restaurants, whilst not making redundancies, are not filling vacancies. Philip Pearson of T&GWU's Hotel and Catering Branch commented: "The work force is fearful of losing their jobs and members are reluctant to come forward with grievances concerning wages and working conditions."

SHAMBLES

Meanwhile, Horace Cutler's GLC continues its inaction. The transport system is in a shambles with London Transport's investment down to the barest minimum. The road building and maintenance programme has been cut back, thus making the movement of goods and services within London extremely expensive. Add to this the continual threat of redundancies from the GLC, local authorities and British Rail and the picture of the future becomes very gloomy indeed.

The school leavers in the London area are particularly affected. The total number registered at the ILEA's 25 careers offices stands at 6,640—an increase of 250% over 12 months. In addition, 2,250 young people were placed on the Youth Opportunities Programme. Thus the shortfall of jobs in Inner London for school leavers is nearly 9,000. In stark contrast, the number of vacancies notified to the Service dropped to 643, compared with slightly more than 5,000 vacancies a year ago.

Of course, there are many more unemployed than the official figures indicate. Part-time workers and married women, who may not qualify for supplementary benefits, do not bother to register. Black youngsters, experiencing the racism of the youth and employment services, are also not represented in the statistics.

It's not all bleak! The financial sector (banking, insurance and money-lending companies) is still profitable and expanding. One of these companies recently created a new part-time post for a retired Eurocrat at the rate of £10,000 per year.

12 WORST AFFECTED JOB CENTRES:

	Jan 1981	May 1979
Camberwell	6,053	3,715
Camden Town	5,617	3,288
Croydon	7,588	3,925
Fulham	5,278	3,362
Hackney	8,447	4,333
Hammersmith	8,501	5,080
Holloway	8,160	5,261
Lewisham	5,899	3,227
Leyton	5,380	4,065
St Marylebone	7,739	4,843
Tottenham	5,532	2,655
Woolwich	6,390	3,666

Wandsworth win 'No Redundancies'

OFFICER AND MANUAL workers in hard-line Tory Wandsworth returned from Christmas holidays this year to be faced with up to 700 redundancies.

The local branch of the white collar union NALGO had been preparing for this threat for the previous 18 months, and immediately brought its plans into action.

It had been decided in the summer of 1979 to set up a local strike fund in order to pay the wages of NALGO members on selective strikes. The identification of key workers was then begun and key groups were prepared for the no-redundancy fight.

The NALGO action began with an all-out strike on 14 January. Every library, swimming pool, and district office was closed. Pickets out at 4am stopped the refuse. Only 100 town hall workers, mainly in finance, crossed the picket lines. UCATT members on building sites walked off in sympathy.

In the days that followed most members were ordered back to work where highly disruptive "blacking" action could be pursued at the Council's expense.

The strike action of one man on the petrol pump brought the whole council fleet to its knees. Striking telephonists, typists and housing cashiers hit at communications and cash flow. And the strike action of the house sales unit dealt the Tories a severe political blow.

Lightening one-day strikes in libraries and swimming polls brought the action firmly in front of the public.

DECISIVE

But in the end the **essential** factor was probably the support given to the union by Directors and Chief Officers. Given the non-union directors did nothing to undermine or frustrate NALGO action.

So after two weeks the Tories climbed down from what was a political act in making 700 workers compulsorarily redundant.

But what was, for a conservative white collar union, a highly successful action, ended in bitterness and division.

Towards the end of the dispute an attempt was made to change the basis of the dispute from no redundancies to no cuts.

Two years of hard trade union work went into getting key workers in administration, finance and engineers to take industrial action against redundancies. They are not yet ready to strike against cuts per se, quite apart from the tactical question of changing your objective in mid dispute from the achievable to the unachievable.

If there is to be industrial action against the cuts the lead must come nationally. At the moment all we get is leaflets and posters. The only way leaflets will stop the cuts in Wandsworth is by dropping ten tons of them on Christopher Chope's head.

COLIN MOORE
Branch Chairperson
Wandsworth NALGO

Campaign for Labour Party Democracy

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTION COMMITTEE

further details
Neil Nerval
48 College Road, Wembley HA9 8RJ
904 8483

APOLOGIES:

In our last issue, we should have included the name of Elsie Horstead on the list of members of ILEA's Labour Group who supported the amendment to improve the education service.

LONDON LABOUR AND NUCLEAR WAR

IN THIS GLC ELECTION campaign, London Labour has an opportunity to alert London voters to the meaning of nuclear war, and to offer them a clear choice between a vote for Labour—the only hope of survival, the abandonment of nuclear weapons—and a vote for the Tories and for hideous death and disaster. It is an almost unique opportunity for political education on an enormous scale.

The GLC election is coinciding with a tremendous groundswell of feeling of horror for the implications of nuclear war. And there is growing indignation against the government's willingness to allow the Americans to use Britain as their advanced base, and so put us all in the front line to suffer from the results of their hysterical war-mongering.

Labour must press home to the minds of people, **first** its message of implacable hostility to nuclear weapons; and **second,** that it is necessary to vote against nuclear war, as well as to hate and fear it: and that means it is essential to vote Labour.

The Importance of the Film "The War Game"

One of the most effective ways of convincing people of the falsity of government claims for "survival" is to show the film "The War Game". The fact that it is in black and white only does nothing to weaken its message of unimaginable horror. Kenneth Tynan of the *Observer,* called it "the most important film ever made. . . . it should be shown everywhere on earth". Its powerful visual images cut a way through the Tories' pompous and dishonest propaganda more effectively than anything else. CND and other groups throughout London have been showing it with great success, in Hillingdon, Bexley, Hornsey, Walthamstow and many other areas. At Walthamstow a hall holding 80 people was filled after only minimal advertising. In Lewisham the borough council organised a showing. In Bermondsey the constituency Labour Party organised a meeting at which the film was shown and Robin Cook MP spoke. More CLPs should do this, especially in marginal seats, and especially in key areas of such seats. Labour borough councils should assist and promote showings of the film in every way, and not only once, but repeatedly, in different areas of their boroughs.

How to Get the Film

Contact Concorde Film Council, 201 Felixstowe Road, Ipswich, Suffolk. Phone Ipswich 76012, OR London Region CND, 11 Goodwin Street, Finsbury Park, N4. Phone 263 4954.

It costs about £20 to hire.

How the Truth about Nuclear War is Suppressed

One aspect of our propaganda should always be to stress how the establishment operates to promote support for nuclear war, and to suppress the truth about it. The BBC and the newspapers conduct a steady, orchestrated, relentless campaign in favour of nuclear war. Further, they prevent their listeners, viewers, and readers from learning the truth.

The film "The War Game" was made for the BBC, and passed for showing, until pressure was brought to bear from "on high", and it was cravenly withdrawn. The BBC will not even allow it to be bought by one of the American broadcasting companies that wanted to show it.

Providing such telling examples of the way the media manipulate people's ideas is an extremely important exercise in basic political education which may stand Labour in good stead not only in this political struggle, but could have a valuable spin-off in other future political struggles.

The GLC Labour Party's Report: "Can the Population of London be Saved in a Nuclear War?"

This excellent report was drawn up in December last year. Its closely reasoned conclusion is, that there is no effective defence against nuclear attack. . . If Londoners are to be protected there is only one alternative and that is to make sure that Britain and London are not bombed. As we have shown, the principal targets are now military and the answer clearly is to remove those targets. This implies the removal of all American bases and the dismantling of Britain's own nuclear capacity. If this can be done in concert with other nations so much the better, but if it means going it alone, in other words unilateral nuclear disarmament, then in the interests of peace, that is the road we must travel.

Material for Campaigning

The CND has a great deal of excellent material. One of the best is a broadsheet map, two foot by four foot, showing all nuclear bases and Civil Defence installations, cost 35p plus 10p postage; and there is an A2 black and white poster advertising "The War Game".

But of course these must be supported by Labour Party leaflets which summarise Labour's conference commitments against nuclear weapons and bases; and which stress the heavy cost to us all of the enormous burden of armaments—£3 per head per week, man, woman and child, is what we are paying in taxation to bring about our own death and destruction.

ELEANOR LEWIN
Finchley CLP

Fighting Tower Hamlets Council

LAST YEAR, Tower Hamlets Council "fined" all its manual workers three days leave for taking industrial action during the low pay strike. It is the only borough in London, very possibly the only one in the country, to have adopted such a nasty, vindictive approach to its employees, and this perhaps explains the cynical attitude of trade unionists in the borough towards the Labour leadership.

To end a bitter nine week strike, an attendance allowance was combined with promises to reduce the working week and introduce a union membership agreement. None of these have materialised, despite two years of discussions. Neighbouring Hackney and Barking have cut the working week. Tower Hamlets haven't. It wouldn't be "self financing". The council is more interested in cutting spending than unemployment.

The union membership agreement wouldn't have cost anything. But it might have made the unions stronger. So the Council hid behind the Tory Employment Act—talking till Prior's plans came to fruition.

NEGOTIATING MACHINERY

The unions have been asking for years for negotiating machinery to be set up so that they can talk direct to councillors. But again the Council stalls. Let the trade unions deal with the council's officers. That's what they're paid for!

The trade unions representing manual workers in the borough have asked to meet councillors to discuss the implications for the direct labour force of the Land and Planning Act. This vicious attack on direct labour—the contractor's charter—is not a matter to involve councillors, apparently. The trade unions have been told they should negotiate changes to bonus schemes with council officers, and make their members worse off—just to fall in line with the legislation.

APPALLING ATTENDANCE

The health service trade unions have requested a meeting with councillors to discuss the appalling attendance record—let alone voting record—of its representatives on the Area Health Authority. No meeting has been arranged and the council's AHA representatives did not turn up or even send their apologies when invited to meet trade unionsits and community groups about the future of the latest threatened East End hospital.

The Council is selling council houses and accepted responsibility for all housing through a joint committee. It has made the workers at the Spitalfields Housing and Planning Rights Service redundant on the pretext that its work will be carried out by this committee.

JOINT INITIATIVE

Now the Council is saying that it sees the need for a joint initiative with the trade unions against the Tory attack. Its employees will be wondering if the Centre for the Unemployed the Council has agreed to help establish with SERTUC will be a starting point for a fight or a place for ex-council workers to go in the new year if they have no job.

Of course the Labour councils and their workforces must stand together against the common Tory threat. But the past record of Tower Hamlets, like a number of other London Labour controlled boroughs, does not inspire confidence in it as an ally in the minds of its employees. Given the choice between fighting with or against their employer, it is clear that few workers in Tower Hamlets would be lining up alongside the Labour leadership.

IAN BARBER
NUPE Area Officer,
Tower Hamlets
(in personal capacity)

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

THE TV CAMERAS which gloatingly focussed on Frank Chapple's denunciation of the block vote and trade union wheeling and dealing at the 24 January Special Conference did not perhaps have time to explore the other activities of this exemplary democrat.

On 16 January Chapple wrote to all the members of his union, the EETPU, who live in Bermondsey asking them to join his campaign against the "far left clique" (that's right) who have apparently taken over Southwark-Bermondsey Labour Party. Membership of the Labour Party was not a prerequisite for fighting and fighting again to save the Party you love, according to the tear off slip accompanying the letter.

This is the latest stage in a concerted attempt by the EETPU to pack the Bermondsey GMC with hand-picked right wingers. Thirty other constituencies have also apparently been singled out for the Chapple treatment.

The method employed by this latter-day Pericles is to affiliate EETPU branches from head office and apparently to appoint delegates without the knowledge or consent of the branches concerned. For example, the Bermondsey Party Secretary, Peter Tatchell, was informed that the London EESA branch wished to affiliate and to appoint as delegate right wing Southwark councillor, Charlie Sawyer. Puzzled at this choice of a member of NALGO, working as a housing officer for a London council, and an opponent of a union membership agreement in Southwark, Tatchell investigated further. The branch secretary of London EESA, on being contacted, said he was unaware that the branch had been asked to affiliate and was equally unaware that Sawyer was to be its delegate.

INQUIRY

The Bermondsey Party agreed to ask the NEC for a ruling, after disagreeing with the opinion of the Labour Party National Agent that all was in order, and on 28 January the NEC approved an Organisation Sub-Committee recommendation that there should be an inquiry into the manner in which trade unions were affiliating to local parties. Meanwhile all EETPU affiliations to Southwark-Bermondsey Labour Party are frozen and the AGM in March is postponed.

The Bermondsey Party has insisted all along on maintaining the fundamental principle of delegate democracy: that all delegates to local parties should be elected by and accountable to genuine branches which genuinely elect them. It is now for the NEC to decide whether that principle is to be upheld in the Labour Party.

The moral of this unedifying story is that all CLPs should be on their guard against the gentlemen from Bromley and that the struggle for democracy in local parties is going to be tough and closely fought.

NICK MURRAY
Assistant Secretary
Southwark-Bermondsey CLP

LETTER

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Now that we have a decent line-up of both GLC Labour candidates and policies for the elections on May 7th 1981 it is up to the left in the Labour Party to follow this up with a commitment to get every one elected!

We want a landslide Labour majority on May 8th throughout the country on the basis of the sort of turnouts of voters not that we usually see in local government elections but in general elections.

Let nobody kid themselves that this will be an easy task as not only will we be up against the Conservatives, Liberals, and the National Front, but it is probable that we will see 'Labour Moderate' candidates and Communist Party candidates put up too in areas where Labour can be damaged.

Our first challenge is resources, and as the only London daily evening newspaper will not be backing Labour we will have to get as much direct dialogue between the Labour Party and the voters as possible. This means leaflets, posters, car parades, public meetings and as many other forms of publicity as possible.

Secondly, we should be aiming to win and that will only be done in the *marginal seats* where undoubtedly the Tories will be pushing most of their resources. For example, in my constituency of Wanstead and Woodford a Labour victory on the basis of a lead of minus 42.1% is doubtful, so we will hopefully be helping out in Ilford North and Ilford South which are marginals of course.

Thirdly, we need to push the Regional Labour Party EC to liaise with the London District Council of every affiliated (party) trade union.

There are large numbers of trade unionists who realise the importance of this fight and who could give up an evening or two if any help we can get from them is properly organised at London level.

Perhaps we could commit the Region 1 of T&GWU to providing help in certain CLPs only, the LDC of the UCW in certain other CLPs only and for example, the Regional Committee of the FBU in certain other CLPs only, so that everybody knows where they can be most helpful.

We should also bear in mind that Party affiliated trade union journals have a circulation of three million each month and many unions' London Regions produce a journal of their own.

Yours fraternally,

PETER C SMITH
Wanstead and Woodford CLP

Demonstrations

Hands off Workers' Poland!

Sunday 15 March 2.00 pm
from Speakers' Corner
to Soviet Embassy

C.A.R.L. Demonstration
against the
NATIONALITY BILL
Sunday April 5th
1pm Speakers Corner
March to Rally at
Trafalgar Square

Next editorial
collective meeting:
27 February, 6.00 pm
Ken Livingstone's
room, County Hall.
Deadline for
articles: 7 March.

JOINT CLPD / BRIEFING

Regional Conference
Meeting; Sat. 7 March

12.30pm in Camden
Council Chambers.

Speakers;
Ken Livingstone
Jeremy Corbyn
Frances Morrell

STOP PRESS.....

Labour's new GLC candidate selected for Hornsey is:

Tony Hart

TARGET 1982
Come to the next meeting-
ON: Monday 23 March
AT: 7.30 pm
IN: Room 133 C
AT: County Hall

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