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BIRMINGHAM LABOUR

BRIEFING

INCORPORATING NATIONAL SUPPLEMENT

No. 27 December 1986

RIGHT WING OFFENSIVE !

Labour right wingers have launched their long awaited counter offensive against the growing strength of the left in Birmingham.

Any illusions that the traditional 'old guard' no longer had the stomach to resist the left's advance have been dispelled by a rapid sequence of events aimed at forcing the left onto the defensive. The centre-piece of the assault is a major attempt to discredit the new Birmingham Summerfield Group.

For some weeks, left wingers have picked up indications that 'something was afoot'. The right's decision to go on the offensive has been precipitated by a combination of circumstances. Nationally, the pre-election mood has created an atmosphere within which the traditional party establishment has been able to reassert an almost autocratic authority. One example was the imposition on the Knowlesley North constituency party. The right's 'invisible' organisational machine within the major trade unions has been reassembled and is understood to have had a major influence in getting Birmingham's old guard to stand and fight.

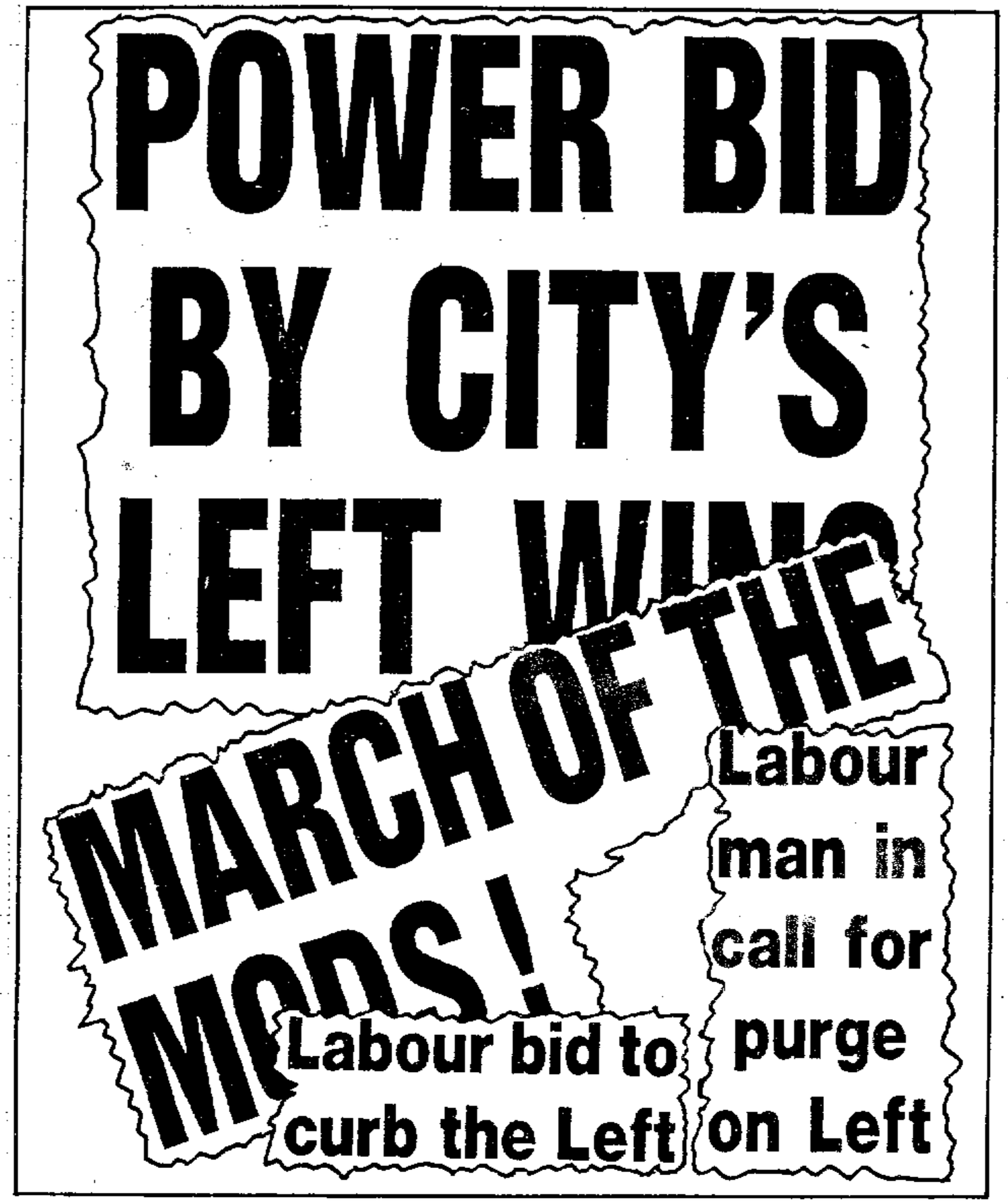
Within Birmingham itself, they have at last woken up to the fact that, on a simple head count, the broad left alliance now centred on the Summerfield Group will have won a majority on the LAbour Group of Councillors by the AGM in May 1988.

Based on its present strength, the left will win a majority by virtue of its dual strategy of picking up most of the selections in the 'marginal' seats which the Tories are still losing to Labour, and at the same time carving inroads deep into the safe inner city wards like Soho and HAndsworth, once the heartlands of the old right wing.

These simple calculations show that the broad left will control the council in less than two years, even if its political influence in the branch parties makes no further advances. To stop this happening, the right wing cannot be content merely to contain the left to its present strength and influence; they must counter attack and regain ground.

This explains the co-ordinated series of incidents starting with the provocative sacking of Phil Murphy from the Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Committee. This was followed by the Yardley/Northfield attempt to boycott the District Party and declare it unconstitutional. Most recent is the decision to use the *Evening Mail* in a systematic and co-ordinated effort to discredit the Summerfield Group. As we go to press *'Briefing'* is informed that these actions may simply be a 'softening up' exercise, paving the way for a major intervention by National Party officers. The aim ultimately is to weaken support for the left amongst the wider membership by portraying it as a vote losing source of trouble and bad publicity.

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How the press reported the offensive.

...continued from page 1.

It is no coincidence that the focus for the right's counter offensive should be the District Party and the new Summerfield Group. Stewart Stacey, secretary of the Summerfield Group is probably more surprised than anyone to be dubbed by the *Evening Mail* as a "Labour rebel". Yet he typifies the broad-based, non-sectarian and pragmatic characteristics of the left's influence in the District Party and in the Summerfield Group. These qualities make it a far more dangerous threat to the right than any other more ideologically coherent grouping. It also shows the qualities necessary for government and therefore makes the left credible as the basis for a new administration capable of taking and holding on to power.

Against this backcloth, the Birmingham Summerfield Group makes its public launch on Saturday 13 December, between 10.30 and 12.30 at the Summerfield Centre, Dudley Road. Timed to capture maximum benefit from the political momentum, the challenge now is for the Summerfield Group to keep cool, hold its nerve, stay united and prepare for power.

Rob Pocock (Perry Barr CLP).

AMIR KABUL DEFENCE CAMPAIGN

Amir Kabul Khan is a Kashmiri, living under constant threat of being deported from this country. A campaign has been set up to defend him in his fight to remain here with his wife, who is herself a British citizen, and their baby daughter.

Amir first applied to come to the country in 1978 as the fiancé of Zahtoon Begum, now his wife. He was refused permission in Islamabad and lost an appeal in this country in his absence. The authorities refused to believe he was the son of his claimed father or that the couple would get married and live together.

Amir then came to this country for a holiday. At last, in July 1983, they were able to get married. MP Denis Howell then advised Amir to return to Kashmir and apply to come to Britain again as Zahtoon's husband. So, just a week after his marriage, Amir voluntarily left the country.

In November 1983, Zahtoon went to join him in Kashmir. She stayed for seven months before returning to Britain for the birth of their daughter Arzoo. Yet when Amir applied to come to Britain as her husband, the authorities in Islamabad again refused permission. The Home Office appointed adjudicator in Birmingham upheld that refusal. This time the authorities agreed that the couple were genuinely married and even conceded they were first cousins. Now, however, they are saying that Amir's primary purpose in marrying was to settle in Britain.

Today Amir is here as a visitor. It is the first time he has been able to see his wife since their daughter was born. But the Home Office say he is here on 'temporary admission' and are threatening to remove him.

What you can do:

* affiliate to the Amir Kabul Defence Campaign and send a delegate to campaign meetings (£10 organisations, £1 individuals);
* write in protest to the Home Secretary, your MP, local councillors and the press, with a copy to the campaign;
* invite a speaker from the campaign to your Labour Party or trade union.

The campaign meets every Wednesday at 8.00 pm. For more details contact:
Amir Kabul Defence Campaign, c/o East Birmingham Family Service Unit, 723 Coventry Road, Small Heath, Birmingham B10.

DEFEND SUMMERFIELD, DEFEND THE DISTRICT PARTY

City of Birmingham

From COUNCILLOR DICK KNOWLES
Leader of the Council

The Council House
PO Box 17
Birmingham B1 1BB

your ref
our ref DK/MH
date 21 November 1986

Dear Comrade

There are a number of issues which have recently been reported in the press regarding the relationship between the Labour Group and the District Labour Party and we felt that it would be helpful to let you have the Labour Group's position on these.

The Labour Group and the District Party

Perhaps it ought to be made clear as to the position regarding the Labour Group and the District Party. There have been a lot of stories in the press regarding this situation.

You will get an appeal from the Leader in the next few days. We believe that it is not possible for the Labour Group to be divorced from the Labour Party, but the Labour Party in this city must place itself into conformity with the Labour Party constitution. Therefore, we hope you will send your contributions to the Labour Party. But more than that, you should see that the Labour Party in this city represents the broad views of the Labour Party and not a minority, so that we place ourselves in a position where the tail is wagging the dog.

Yours fraternally

Councillor Dick Knowles
Leader of the Council

Councillor Ken Barton
Deputy Leader of the Council

Councillor John Charlton
Group Secretary

Councillor Bill Gray
Chief Whip

Many comrades will recently have received a letter signed by Dick Knowles as Leader of the Council, Ken Barton as Deputy Leader, John Charlton as Group Secretary and Bill Gray as Chief Whip. Lack of space and the fact that many comrades will have already received or read the letter - even though it is not clear exactly to whom it has been sent - mean that it is not reprinted here. It is clear that this is part of an orchestrated campaign involving the press.

It is equally clear, however, that the letter cannot go unchallenged. The following is an initial response.

In the section on the Labour Group and the District Party there is one central point which is not brought out. That, put quite simply, is that it is the District Party who has the final say on the content of the manifesto. That is why the committee to decide the manifesto has more representatives from the party than it does from the group.

The leadership of the Labour Group did not like all the policies that the party proposed for conclusion in the manifesto. For that reason, the Labour Group leadership saw fit to ignore the democratic process. Instead of a District Party Manifesto we had the Labour Group leadership's manifesto. This included only those elements of policy with which they were happy.The points about election victories and the launching of this 'manifesto' are of course completely irrelevant.

The letter also refers to a delegate from Selly Oak. Again, the situation here is simple. The District Party has no jurisdiction over membership of individual constituencies. Its purpose, as has been made clear on several occasions is to discuss and make policy on local government affairs. Selly Oak CLP has, quite rightly, informed the District Party that all its delegates including the person concerned are members of the party and accredited delegates. The vicious witch hunt being carried out by the right is outside the jurisdiction of the District Party.

But, of course, the right is just using this as an excuse to attack the District Party because they do not like the policies it makes. They are using it to disrupt the democratic process of policy making. No longer, it seems are they content to ignore party policy. Now they want to prevent it being made in the first place.

With regard to Phil Murphy, the letter goes nowhere towards justifying the comrade's scandalous removal from the Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Committee. No-one who knows Phil Murphy will credit for one moment the allegation that he is opposed to increasing the staffing of the Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Unit.

Then there is the attack on the Summerfield Group, an attack that has been carried out not just in this letter but in the pages of the notoriously anti-Labour Birmingham papers. The press has been used in a completely cynical way to attack the left and the Summerfield Group in particular. For their part, the press has needed no prompting to continue the attack. Yet what the Summerfield Group stands for is District Party policy. All its policies are those which have been agreed by the District Party. They propose a process of democratisation long supported by *'Briefing'* to ensure these policies are implemented. Far from being a small and unrepresentative minority they actually represent the voice of District Party policy in the Labour Group. Any organisational measures taken against councillors in the Summerfield Group will not make the political issues go away.

The District Party must respond to this unprecedented attack on its integrity. A detailed response should be agreed by the party and circulated to all members of the party in Birmingham. The leadership must be called to order for the way in which it has chosen to make internal disputes public.

The fight for a socialist Labour Party and Council in Birmingham is now well and truly underway.

SINN FEIN IN BIRMINGHAM



Caomhghín ó Caoláin, Tariq Iqbal and Avtar Jouhl.

October saw the visit to Birmingham of two Sinn Fein councillors, Lily Fitsimmons from Belfast and Caoimhghín ó Caoláin from Monagnan. At the same time other Sinn Fein representatives toured other parts of the country.

The Birmingham based part of the tour was busy although the reception in Birmingham in no way matched events likethe Civic Reception put on by the Labour Council in Manchester and the welcomes given by several of the London boroughs.

Death threats from loyalist/fascist groups which caused late changes to a Leamington Spa meeting, could not prevent a whole series of important meetings taking place. Contacts were made which will be crucial in developing work on the issue of Ireland in the Labour Party and the labour movement generally.

Two constituency parties - Ladywood and Perry Barr - invited speakers to meetings but contact with Birmingham Councillors was limited. It had been hoped to organise a formal meeting with representatives of the Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Committee. Despite the efforts of some councillors this proved impossible. Nevertheless, a meeting did take place between the Sinn Fein councillors and some Birmingham councillors on the Thursday of the tour.

At the Trade Union Resource Centre a meeting was held with trade unionists. Also on the intinerary were meetings with Youth CND, Wolverhampton Polytechnic Labour Club, the Miners Wives Support Group in Stoke-on-Trent some councillors in Sandwell and a visit to the West Midlands Prevention of Terrorism Act project.

In particular links were made with the Black community, especially at a meeting sponsored by the India Workers Association and addressed by Avtar Jouhl and a representative of the Handsworth Defence Campaign.

The specific struggle of women was also emphasised at a Saturday afternoon discussion sponsored by Women and Ireland and Labour Women for Ireland.

Sinn Fein's socialist policies were clear throughout the tour. It is just a pity that socialist policies on Ireland, like on so many other issues, are not a crucial component of the Labour Movement in Birmingham. Hopefully this tour, by broadening the discussion and by exchanging experiences, will have gone some way towards changing that situation. The struggle for socialism in Birmingham - and indeed elsewhere in the country - has a lot to learn from the struggle of Sinn Fein.

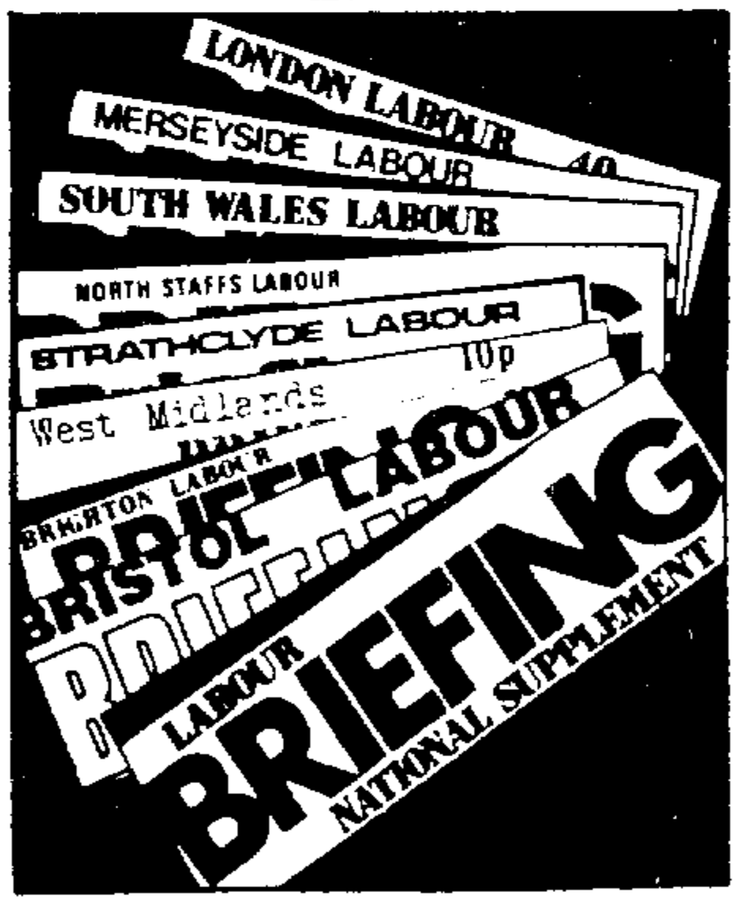
(Tour organised by TOM, LCI and IBRG)

BRIEFING

Send all articles and letters for *'Birmingham Labour Briefing'* to:
48 Thornhill Road
Birmingham
B21 9BS
or telephone (021-) 551 9174.

'Briefing' meets regularly on the second Monday of each month. Next meeting on Monday 8 December at 7.30 pm. Phone for details.

The next issue of *'Briefing'* will be out on 23 January 1987. Deadline for articles is 16 January - write them over the Christmas holiday!



Conference on Trade Union Sanctions

11.00 - 6.00
13 December 1986
Carr's Lane Church
(off High St, City Centre)

Supported by Public Services Liaison Committee for City Council Workers representing NUT, NALGO, UCATT, TGWU, NUPE and GMBATU.

Anti-racist education - is the council serious?

Race and education is set to be one of the main political battlegrounds in the run up to the general election. The repeated attacks on Brent by the media and the Tories demonstrate vividly the fate of any local council trying to implement effective anti-racist policies in education (and that is a fundamental issue in the Brent affair, whether ot not they made a tactical error in suspending McGoldrick).

At the end of October, the 'race spies' smear campaign was taken up in Birmingham in a series of articles in the local press attacking the local education authority's Multicultural Development Unit (MDU - a support team of some thirty teachers. Local Tory politicians compared the MDU to "the army of classroom race spies" in Brent. The most heroic posture was struck by Roger King, MP for Northfield, who said, "I hope I am around if an observer (sic) turns up at the primary school my two boys attend so I can sling him (sic) out bodily."

This hysteria is of course completely synthetic. The MDU has been working in the same way for the past three years. This racist backlash is the first shot in what is likely to be a bitter struggle around the authority's proposed new city-wide multicultural education plans. The right recognises that there is a lot of electoral mileage in targeting the alliance of anti-racist teachers, black activists and Labour councils implementing anti-racist policies.

How radical is the new policy? It is a serious attempt to challenge racial inequality in education, drawn up by senior education advisers. But it does suffer from a number of weaknesses. It is far too vague on racism itself and the concrete measures schools need to take, going beyond simple 'cultural diversity'. It needs a lot more support teachers to help schools put it into practice. (These and other important points are contained in the new policy document from the Ethnic Minorities Liaison Committee and in amendments from *'Briefing'* supporters to the draft Education policy document for the 1987 District Party policy conference).

But the real danger right now is that the Labour Group will reject the policy even as it stands. They don't mind policies on multicultural education just as long as no-one has to do anything about them if they don't want to. But the 'delivery' document, accompanying the new policy and detailing now the policy is to be implemented in schools, contains a plan for every school in the city to put the policy into practice. Birmingham is not Brent. When the inevitable onslaught comes from the right, this council will back down. Any lingering doubts should have been dispelled by the sacking of Councillor Phil Murphy from the Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Committee. It sent a message to all doubtful headteachers; don't worry; we're not serious about anti-racist education. And a message to every teacher; you can risk your neck trying to put anti-racist policies into practice, but don't rely on us to back you against opposition from white parents, Tory politicians and the Evening Mail.

So we have to improve and sharpen up the policy. But most importantly, we have to build the sort of organised popular support among parents, black and white, in the unions and in the Labour Party that is capable of pressuring the Labour Group into implementing this policy and unequivocally backing teachers putting it into practice.

Richard Hatcher (Ladywood CLP, Socialist Teachers Alliance).



RACE SPIES SHOCK

By PETER DOBBIE and PETER DAY

RACE commissars in a Left-wing borough are recruiting 180 Thought Police to patrol schools for prejudice.

And they will be paid out of a £5 million Government grant intended to promote racial harmony.

But teachers in the London borough of Brent — who say they already work in a climate of fear — believe the classroom spies will cause lasting damage in the drive for equality and will lower education standards even further.

...rnment ministers, who are power-... money being

COMMISSARS IN CLASS

...Page 12-13

Will the council back down in the face of headlines like this?

Phil Murphy - the truth behind the headlines

Two years ago, if you spoke to any 'veteran' of the Birmingham Labour Group they would have told you that the period of Clive Wilkinson's leadership was a 'reigh of terror'. If you were to ask those same veterans why it was that a supposedly democratic party allowed such a cult of the individual to prevail for so long they would tell you that he was good at dealing with the Tories. After a few drinks, however, they might tell you that Wilkinson would 'destroy' any individual who opposed him. They would also tell you that the coming of Knowles brought the end of the Wilkinson nightmare and installed a new liberal regime.

Knowles was once heard (in private) explaining one of the cardinal principles of conducting the internal affairs of his regime: appoint a few 'leftists' to important positions as chairs of committees and you kill any potential left opposition and ensure a trouble free reign. Apparently Knowles suggested Albert Bore as one 'lefty' he had thus neutralised.

Having mapped out this machiavellian method of deflecting opposition, how come Knowles agreed to throw off the only Afro-Caribbean member of the Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Committee? How come Knowles has had to sanction the right on the Labour Group denouncing the 'loony left'? What has happened to Albert Bore to make him reveal himself to the District Party as an appologist for an spokesperson of the right? What has happened to reduce the Labour Group to a state of panic when its approach was designed to prevent such disarray?

The answer is simple. Knowles and company believed that the simple establishment of a Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Committee in May 1984 was all that needed to be done to tackle racism and racial discrimination and disadvantage. The appointment of successive right wing chairpersons was calculated to ensure nothing positive would be done.

However, as is widely known, the struggle waged by Birmingham Labour Party and its Ethnic Minorities Liaison Committee and supporters has succeeded in revealing this fraude perpetrated against the Black Community. The most recent attack was the decision to upgrade a member of the Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Unit to the level of assistant Chief Officer without observing normal recruitment procedures. When this move was opposed by Phil Murphy and Roy Benjamin and the Ethnic Minorities Liaison Committee it was decided that Phil Murphy was too dangerous and had to go. Such opposition could not be tolerated.



Coun Phil Murphy

The second reason for the panic is the fact that a number of Labour councillors decided that they would no longer tolerate the way the Labour Group ignored District Party policy, particularly in the field of race relations and equal opportunities. Thus the Summerfield Group was formed to fight for the implementation of party policies. The fight was joined against the machiavellian regime.

If we recall Knowles' basic principle of neutralising opposition the reason for the panic is clear. The Group has no idea how to relate to individuals who take a serious and consistent anti-racist stance. Their response is to try to 'destroy' such individuals. They are forced to repeat the methods of the Wilkinson era against anti-racists and all those committed to socialism and District Party policies.

What lessons can be drawn from all this? Capitalism a nd racism were born together. The struggles against racism and capitalism when combined will result in the destruction of capitalism. Thus those in the Labour Party who want to protect and merely manage capitalism will attack anti-capitalists and anti-racists. Comrades should note that the sacking of Phil Murphy is just the beginning. With the first blood spilt, the vampires in the Labour Group are clearly insatiable. They will not be content until they have sucked the blood from all the anti-racists and anti-capitalists on the Labour Group.

Councillor Phil Murphy.

Regional Conference 1987

It is time to be thinking about next year's Regional Labour Party Conference. The deadline for resolutions is Friday 16 January so we should really get our submissions sorted out before Christmas. Some constituencies have decided their resolutions already.

The Labour Committee on Ireland is sponsoring three resolutions. One of these is in support of ther Guildford Four. With even Lord Scarman on television recently casting doubt on their guilt, it is even more pressing than ever that the labour movement should call for their overdue release.

Guildford Four;
"Regional Conference notes that;
1. three men and a woman, known as the Guildford 4, have been in prison since 1974, serving life sentences for the Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings;
2. that four other men have gone on record and given evidence in court to the effect that they were responsible for these bombings and that the Guildford 4 had no connection whatsoever with these

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events;
3. that despite this crucial new evidence and other overwhelming evidence of a miscarriage of justice, the Guildford 4's request for a retrial was rejected by the no-jury court of appeal in 1977;
4. that no further legal route for appeal exists and they can only be released by decision of the Home Secretary.

We therefore resolve to:
1. write to the Home Secretary demanding the release of the Guildford 4.
2. write to the Irish Embassy, asking them to protest to the Home Office.
3. inform local representatives about the case and call on them to support the demand for the release of the Guildford 4.
4. raise the matter with the NEC.
5. affiliate to the free the Guildford 4 campaign.
6. donate £... to the Guildford 4 campaign."

(Note: the six items are adjustable according to circumstances. The address to contact for more information is 'Free the Guildford 4 Campaign', BM Box 6944, London WC1N 3XX.)

Another resolution is from Black Section supporters and has been supported by Ladywood CLP:

"This Conference believes the Labour Party's economic policy and Jobs and Industry Campaign do not take into account the racism faced by Black people. Black people face much higher unemployment than white people, are more likely to be made redundant and face discrimination when they apply for jobs. In this context, it is not enough for Labour to promise one million jobs in two years as these jobs are unlikely to go to Black people in inner city areas.

This Conference believes a Labour [illegible] should initiate a [illegible] city areas [illegible] restoring [illegible] should be coupled [illegible] action programme aimed [illegible] eradicating racism [illegible] market. This programme should include;
a. the adoption of contract comoliance policies by local authorities, central government departments and nationalised industries aimed at ensuring companies which supply the public sector are equal opportunities employers;
b. the adoption of 'equality targets' within the public sector and the use of contract compliance to ensure private firms do the same;
c. the amending of the Race Relations Act to place the burden on employers to prove they are not discriminating against Black people [illegible] companies [illegible] have contract compliance work."

A policy for women

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The Women's policy statement produced for this year's District Labour Party policy conference begins by restating its support for last year's proposals. This is a necessary point to make as the Women's Committee has not received whole-hearted support from some parts of the Labour Group in the past year.

Perhaps the most important new issue is the representation of women councillors on council committees. There are still major committees which have no Labour women members. We believe that there should be women on each major committee, both because we want to see the best possible use of the talents of our women councillors, and because we believe that women's views on, for examole, planning and leisure services have an important part to play in the development of socialist policies in Birmingham.

Admittedly, women councillors are in short supply at the moment. We hope this will improve. We also want to see women councillors' committee preferences respected. Therefore we are also proposing co-options of women to council committees to improve the representation of women. This strategy could also be used to improve the representation of Black people and disabled people on the council.

Rewriting council official documents, such as standing orders in gender neutral language is a further proposal. It is a long time since women got the right to vote, so why should council documents continue to refer to 'he'? The same principle should apply to promotional material, including photographs, films and the like. Birmingham women should be presented in a positive way, not always in the same old stereotyped rôles.



"Apparently he couldn't get a child minder."

Finally, we are asking for the implementation of one small policy; a small 15-place creche in the Council House for use by visitors, councillors and council workers in an emergency. Such a creche would not go very far towards meeting the needs of council workers and councillors for affordable, good quality childcare, but it would be a first step.

Not to carry out this commitment would be a clear [illegible] that the Labour Group [illegible] other [illegible] Birmingham [illegible]

Carol Cummins (Ladywood CLP).

VICTORY!

Amir Khan and myself would like to thank *'Briefing'* readers and *'Briefing'* itself for the magnificent support during our campaign for re-instatement into the Labour Parrty which finally triumphed on 26 November. Sparkbrook GC backed down at its meeting on 25 November and the NEC ratified its recommendation to reinstate us the following day.

Roy Hattersley had been told by Larry Whitty that the NEC would have no alternative but to reinstate us because of a pending legal challenge, due to be heard in court in early December. Whitty told him that he could either persuade Sparkbrook to propose the reinstatement or the NEC would impose it the next day. Having decided the first course was the less humiliating, he came down to Sparkbrook and told his supporters that he had 'a bitter pill' that they had to swallow. They swallowed it despite behind the scenes protests from CLP officers that they had always been assured that the expulsions would stick. At the GC meeting they sat in stunned silence as he told them that the expulsions had breached natural justice on nine counts. The feeling at the meeting was even more acrimonious than usual and at one point a tired and emotional Sir Stanley Yapp told Hattersley to shut up and sit down.

The strength of the campaign wasa that it had managed to unite all sections of left opinion inside the party. In Birmingham, the local *'Briefing'* played a central role in publicising the case and keeping activists informed of developments. The local Labour Co-ordinating Committee, although weak, and despite having one of the leading Sparkbrook witchhunters among its founder members, supported all the local campaigning activities. But, most important of all, the local Labour Party brancjes prioritised our case in the run up to national party conference.

Sparkbrook will take a long time to recover from the witch hunt. Although the party is more divided than ever, the activists have been given a tremendous boost by the success of the campaign and will now attempt to turn the party outwards, away from witch hunting and intolerance. It will not be easy, however, with the current leadership who will have to be forced to step down because of their continuing commitment to expulsions.

Ms Keene, the Sparkbrook chairperson, unwittingly gave a flavour of Sparkbrook right wing politics when she was interviewed by the 'post' after the reinstatement. She said, "I fell like a US policeman who has to let a guilty man go because he forgot to read him his rights." With Dirty HArry alive and dominating Sparkbrook CLP, our task will not be easy.

Kevin Scally (member - Sparkbrook CLP).

BORDERWAY



More than 200 West Midlands trade unionists joined the sacked workers at Borderway factory in Birmingham in a rally on 12 November in solidarity with their right to join a trade union.

Banners from TASS, Metal Mechanics, the firefighters' union, public sector workers and Birmingham Trades Council hung on the wall of the factory. The boss, Mr Nemashangi had closed it for the day.

Speaking to the rally, former Longbridge convenor, Derek Robinson, said the workers were sacked for joining the manufacturing union TASS and then replaced by scab labour. He said "What we need to do here is go out to the factories which deal with Borderway and ask workers not to handle its products. What we need in the trade union movement is solidarity. It is very simple, but very important."

He also went on to say that the Tory government was hell bent on destroying the trade union movement. The answer was a Labour Government that would abolish the anti-union laws.

Jerry Bartlett, representing NUPE, calleed for more cash to be collected for the sacked workers. Local vicar, Richard Bashford said it was time the church got off the fence and joined people like the sacked Borderway workers in the struggle. He went on to say; "If I don't speak out on this matter I am not doing my job."

Encouraged by the turnout at the rally the workers are determined to fight on to win their right to belong to a union.

Meanwhile, Borderway has called in the liquidator, MR terry Pye, Midland district organiser for the Metal Mechanics section of TASS said, "I find it deeply disturbing that the company solution is not to sit down and discuss the matter but cut and run. We will be seeking legal advice on these latest developments."