# CAMDEN LABOUR BRIEFING

HOLBORN & ST PANCRAS JAN GMC SPECIAL

## UNITY & DEMOCRACY - A REPLY TO GRAFTON BRANCH'S RESOLUTION

Camden Labour Briefing is an open forum for members of both Hampstead & Highgate and Holborn and St Pancras CLP's. It is dedicated to making the Labour Party a campaigning party, capable of winning the next general election on a socialist programme.

- CLB has a monthly speaker-meeting to discuss issues of general political interest.
- It also has monthly editorial meetings - open to all Labour Party members - to discuss the content of the next month's meetings and leaflets.
- The CLB 'bulletin' is distributed free to Labour Party branches and members on a monthly basis.
- The money to produce the bulletin comes from collections at meetings and donations.
- All members of the two Camden CLP's are welcome to write articles for the bulletin. Provided the articles are signed they will be published unedited.

The CLB editorial group believes the bulletin to be a useful contribution to debate within the party - on policy, theory and practice.

The open editorial meetings usually agree a statement on a current issue. This 'editorial' is unsigned. Only unsigned articles can be taken as reflecting the position agreed at editorial meetings.

The last Briefing bulletin contained an article criticising Kinnock and Hattersley for their conduct during the NGA dispute. Fred Leplat, author of the article in question, replies to Grafton Branch's resolution tabled for discussion tonight:

> When trade unions are engaged in industrial actions against the Tories it is the responsibility of the Labour Party to seek the maximum possible unity for them in order to ensure success.
> The NGA had a good chance of winning their battle against the Tebbitt union laws. The Industrial Relations Act in 1972 was defeated by similar unlawful industrial action and laid the basis for the return of a Labour government. Our history shows that the NGA lost primarily because the TUC and the leaders of the Labour Party refused to support them and criticised them for breaking the law. The defeat of the NGA's struggle happened because the movement was not united behind them.

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The NGA's defeat has created resentment and bitterness. Socialists who are committed to defending the working class should criticise those in our party who sabotaged their struggle - otherwise no lessons will be drawn for the next fight.

If the lessons of the NGA's defeat are not discussed we can have little hope of a Labour government committed to defending the oppressed.

Unity in the Labour Party is essential to fight the Tories - but it cannot be imposed to stiffle discussion and criticism.

Fred Leplat