CAMDEN LABOUR BRIEFING

Police and the Council

The Police Consultative Committee: not the solution, but part of the problem.

By Woody Haut, Kate Allen, Sandra Plummer, Angela Birtill, Graham Shurety, Steve Taylor, Steve Bevington.

UNTIL THE police give assurances that they are willing to be accountable, that plastic bullets and CS gas will not be used, and that they will no longer harass black and working class communities, we must continue to oppose participation in the Police Consultative Committee.

For the Labour Group to ignore decisions of non-participation taken by Hampstead & Highgate GC, Holborn & St Pancras, Local Government Committee, Borough Conference, and a majority of groups consulted within the community, has serious implications about how policy is made within the Labour Party. It is potentially more damaging than any embarrassment the Labour Group might face in reversing its decision, taken without adequate consultation, to participate in the Consultative Committee.

With police action in black communities and mining villages fresh in our minds, non-participation in a committee set-up by the police is a point of principle.

Rather we should escalate our campaign, through the Council's Civil Rights Unit, for police accountability, the need for which is evident more than ever in the new Public Order Act, the Chief Constable of Manchester's refusal to get rid of plastic bullets, the death of Cynthia Jarrett, or the shooting of Cherry Groce.

Accountability cannot be achieved in the Police Consultative Committee where all the 'operational matters' are kept off the agenda. In Tottenham, where the Labour Group decided against participation, Bernie Grant was able to speak on behalf of those on Broadwater Farm, making the political implications of those events clear.

Taking part in the Consultative Committee means accepting the agenda and terms of reference set out by the police which, in the end, means supporting activities in the community. We in Camden don't want to find ourselves with a Council that is forced to support the police rather than the people. The political expediency that participation in the Consultative Committee represents cannot be worth the price we must pay for it.

NEXT CAMDEN BRIEFING MEETING
Tuesday 3rd December, 8 pm
Camden Town Hall.
with Silent Night Striker and
John McDonnell.

Stand by Liverpool

By Frederic Leplat (GLC NALGO & Somers Town LP)

AFTER HAVING refused to organise a campaign in support of the councils defying the Rates Act, the leadership of the major unions, and of the Labour Party in particular, are making sure that Liverpool's campaign ends. Kinnock and Willis have allowed Liverpool to be isolated, and despite knowing that it is one of the most deprived cities in Europe, they now want to pass on the financial burden of the crisis on to the backs of the working class of Liverpool.

This is what a special 15% rate rise, a rise in rents, a freeze on recruitment, and a 'capitalisation' of the housing repairs programme mean.

These are the sort of measures the Tories would like to see implemented, but they have left it to Kinnock and Willis to advocate them. Whatever tactical disagreements socialists may have with the Liverpool Labour Group, we have to stand by them against the government, just like the people of Liverpool have done through their massive demonstrations.

A short term financial solution may be found, but it probably will force the Liverpool Council to break with its electoral commitments to provide jobs, housing and all the services that the working class need at a price it can afford.

The defeat of the NUM, the successful abolition of the GLC and the Met Counties and now the implementation of the Rates Act, have taken place because of the deliberate attitude of the Labour and TUC leaders who left these struggles isolated.

Miners Amnesty Campaign

MINERS WHO were sacked during the strike are still fighting for an amnesty and are suffering hardship as they will never get a job with another employer. The sackings were done against the provisions of the Employment Act and were designed to cripple the NUM's organisation and ability to be the leading union in the labour movement.

At both the Labour Party and the TUC conferences, the NUM motion calling for the reinstatement of sacked and jailed miners and repayment of NUM funds lost during the strike, was carried in spite of opposition from the NEC and the General Council.

The Amnesty Campaign is gaining momentum in the labour movement after the failure of the Orgreave riot show trials, and has had some successes on reinstatement. Support the campaign by getting speakers to your branch and and coming to the rally. The speakers will be - Billy Etherington NUM NEC, Bernie Grant, Jack Collins, Sian James (Women Against Pit Closures).

RALLY FOR A CAMPAIGN FOR SACKED MINERS

THURSDAY 28th NOVEMBER - 7.30pm - CAMDEN TOWN HALL.

The Amnesty Campaign is sponsored by the Campaign Group of MPs, Jimmy Knapp NUR, Ray Buckton ASLEF, Jim Slater NUS, Alan Sapper ACCT.

For further information telephone Ed 607 4773