CAMDEN LABOUR BRIEFING

SUPPORT THE MINERS:

The NUR,ASLEF and the National Union of Seamen's executives have given a lead to the entire labour movement.By banning movements of coal they have taken the action that can win the Miners strike.By defying Thatcher's Anti Union laws they are showing united trade union action can defeat the Government's policies and the courts.

The vital task is to ensure that the executive resolutions are turned into action on the ground to make sure that all movements of coal are brought to a halt.SOLIDARITY IS THE KEY.Miners need to be brought to speak to rail and transport workers.Workplace meetings should be organised.Collections of money and levies- such as that of £1 a week from the teachers at Barnsbury school in North London-are vital too.

The strike is beginning to bite.Its up to every Trade Unionist and Labour Party member to argue for solidarity.THE MINERS CAN WIN,BUT THEY NEED ALL OUR SUPPORT.

Holborn and St Pancras Labour Party:RALLY FOR THE NUM

Also supported by Hampstead LP,Camden Trades Council and the Greater London Labour Party.

WEDNESDAY 18th April- Council Chamber,CAMDEN TOWN HALL,7.30pm.

Speakers for the rally include Jack Collins Kent NUM, Jeremy Corbyn MP,a Kent Miners wife,a member of the Rail Unions.

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MINERS STRIKE:FINANCIAL SUPPORT NEEDED!

Current benefit legislation means that strikers face great financial hardship.Furthermore the miners have had no wage increase since November 1982 and the overtime ban,in force since November 1st has cut deeply into miners earnings(and savings)-Weekly payslips rarely rose above £80-£90 a week.

Benefits are slow to come through and difficult to claim.The DHSS form 871D to claim benefit in a strike is 5 pages long, contains 77 different questions-many of them sub-divided and requiring multiple choice answers.As one miners wife remarked- "It's like a game of monopoly-If the answer is Yes,advance 3 spaces and go to jail".

Supplementary Benefit levels are low enough to begin with ,But.

-Section 8 of the Supplementary Benefits Act 1976,Passed by a Labour Government,bars strikers from claiming benefit for themselves. They may claim only for their families.

-Benefit payments are reduced by £15 a week,which a trade union is deemed to be giving in strike pay-whether it is or not. The NUM is not paying strike pay,but £15 is still deducted.

-Child benefit is deducted-£6.50 per child.

-Benefit payments dont start til expiry of any outstanding payments, such as payments for working a week in hand-and if these payments are twice the requirement level fixed by the DHSS,the extra will be taken into account for another week.

This means that a family assessed as requiring £39.75 a week would receive £11.75.
The NUM needs cash for its hardship fund and to finance sending speakers and pickets around the country.
THE MINERS NEED THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE ENTIRE LABOUR MOVEMENT, NOT JUST MORAL SUPPORT,BUT FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

Next Camden Labour Briefing Meeting.

At the Cock Tavern,Phoenix Rd,Somerstown,at 8pm on Thursday April 26th

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STOP STRIP SEARCHES IN ARMAGH.

Women political prisoners in Armagh are subject to a humiliating and degrading form of sexual harassment by the prison regime,namely strip searching.One woman prisoner was strip searched 5 times within a 24 hour period,although she was under constant surveillance,and came into contact with no-one except the prison officers.The strip searches are most frequently used on remand prisoners-some of them are strip searched up to 4 times for a court appearance that might last only 5 minutes.
The remand prisoners are those held under the infamous paid perjurer system-people convicted on the uncorroborated evidence of one person. The system has introduced a new style of internment for republican prisoners.
Holborn & St Pancras LP is donating £25 towards a delegation to Armagh in early May.Branches are asked to help too.

Steph Green.