

LAMBETH NALGO

CUTS BULLETIN

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100,000 MARCH AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT

A 40-strong delegation from Lambeth travelled to Liverpool last Saturday, 29 November, to join with tens of thousands of others from all parts of Britain in a massive protest against unemployment.

There were about 100,000 people on the demonstration, which took over three hours to pass any point. Official estimates ranged from 50,000 (from the police) to 120,000 (from a Labour party spokesperson). But speakers at the rally 'after' the march had finished long before the marchers at the end of the demonstration arrived.

It was certainly the biggest protest outside London since the 1930's. There are over 100,000 unemployed on Merseyside, jobs are being lost every week, and the whole city is affected.

The rally was addressed by Michael Foot, Denis Healey, Tony Benn and Alan Fisher (General Secretary of NUPE). Pat Phoenix (or Elsie Tanner) was there. So was Geoffrey Drain, NALGO General Secretary, and other members of the National Executive Committee.

An electronic scoreboard over the platform at the rally, set in motion at the present total of unemployment, clocked up another every 15 seconds - the current rate at which jobs are being lost every working day. At the end of the demonstration the scoreboard read 2,175,967.

Save the Belgrave Childrens' Hospital

Demonstration

Sat. 6th December

Civil service unions rally

Fifteen thousand civil servants from all eight civil service unions, attended mass rallies in different parts of the country last Tuesday, November 25.

Bill Kendall, secretary general of the Council of Civil Service unions, warned in London that the Government has 'declared war on pay, jobs and conditions in the civil service'. He called for 'maximum co-operation with other public sector unions in the front line'.

Education cuts reduce standards

Cheshire County Council has decided to cut its education budget by 1.4 per cent next year at the cost of 335 teaching jobs and 90 non-teaching posts. The education committee had warned that the measures would reduce standards in the county's schools and colleges. They threaten larger classes, fewer subjects and examination courses abruptly abandoned.

'Co-operation'!

The leader of the county council, Allen Richardson, said "With the amount we pay heads and teachers, surely we can have some co-operation."!

Government declares open war

It must be clear to everyone now that the 'phony war' period of the Government's attack on the public services is over and open war has been declared. The cuts are a double jeopardy for NALGO members. The public services that are part of the standard of living of all of us are under attack - education, health care, services for the old and handicapped and social services of all kinds, clean and well-kept towns and cities, transport . . . And under constant and increasing attack are NALGO members' jobs in providing these services.

'Privatisation'

Most options open to councils are not going to be sufficient to meet the Government's requirements. The Tories don't just want 'trimming' of budgets or the loss of a few jobs here and there.

What the Tories would actually like to do is to put many of the services of local government back in the private sector. A motion passed at the Tory conference called for the privatisation of council services - refuse collection, street cleansing, parks, transport, construction, legal services, etc., etc. Michael Heseltine, in his finishing speech, welcomed privatisation. There must be more government cuts and town hall workers should expect single figure wage rises next year. The Government has started work on all three aspects of this new age.

Back to the days of Victoria

The Chancellor, Sir Geoffrey Howe, wants to go back to the days of Victoria. He told the Association of Metropolitan Authorities in September: "In 1881 there were only some 70,000 local government employees. Of course modern local authorities have wider responsibilities, notably in education, so that no direct comparison is possible with present-day numbers. But it is still striking how small local government was then."

Branch meeting backs strong stand

The 1,600 members who attended the Special Branch Meeting last Tuesday, 25 November, voted in favour of the Executive Committee's recommendations for a strong and united campaign against the cuts, and to set up a levy to finance industrial action.

Members also voted to continue blocking the sale of council housing, noting the decision of the National Emergency Committee to give us national backing on the basis that the Council had not consulted housing members about any new procedures and has refused to employ any additional staff for the extra work.

Six amendments to the Executive's motion were debated. Two amendments which sought to make the Executive take a so 'softer' line were rejected after Mike Waller, Branch Secretary, explained to members that, for the time being, the E.C. needed to adopt an uncompromising stand. Such a stand would leave the union in a much stronger position to fight any threat to members' jobs. An amendment calling for a one-day strike in support of the housing workers was also rejected.

The final resolution adopted by the meeting (see right of this page) reaffirms all existing policy on the cuts and adds a number of important new points relating to actions to be taken to protect and support members.

Gardners strikers win jobs back

Workers at Gardners factory in Manchester, who have been occupying the factory for seven weeks in a fight to save jobs, have voted to return to work after 590 redundancy notices were withdrawn.

STOP PRESS

Fire strike off

The fire service unions have called off their threatened one-day strike called for this Wednesday (December 2) after securing an offer approaching 18.8%. The deal has yet to be ratified by a delegate conference.

NALGO's National Executive Committee gave its full support to the fire service workers in their fight against the imposition of a 6% pay limit for the public sector. It also agreed to continue to co-operate with other unions to defeat the public sector pay policy.

SPECIAL BRANCH MEETING

1. This branch re-affirms Lambeth NALGO policy on the cuts:

- a) Total opposition to redundancies
- b) No cover for unfilled posts
- c) No redeployment
- d) Non-cooperation with measures to introduce cuts
- e) No natural wastage, early retirement or voluntary redundancies which lead to cuts in staffing levels
- f) Non-cooperation with the introduction of new technology to the detriment of conditions and/or jobs
- g) Non-implementation of council houses sales
- h) No agency staff to be employed
- i) No increase in the use of outside consultants
- j) Co-operation with other local Unions in opposing the cuts.

And ratifies those additions adopted at the last General Meeting:

- k) Industrial action if redundancies are threatened which could include withdrawal of cooperation, Union meetings in working hours, lightning walkouts, strikes, and occupation of premises
 - l) No crossing of picket lines
 - m) The levying of branch funds, the amount to be decided at a special branch meeting
 - n) Immediate escalation of industrial action should management take disciplinary action against any member involved
 - o) Non-cooperation with members who do not undertake the above programme
 - p) Non-cooperation with non Union members during industrial action.
 - q) Non-cooperation with sub-contractors or consultants.

Furthermore, this branch meeting declares its total opposition to the present Government's continuing attack on Local Government.

2. This branch meeting also recognises that existing policies alone will not prevent redundancies and agrees with the conclusion of the "Local Government in Crisis" Conference that a campaign of industrial action in conjunction with other Trade Unionists will be necessary to alter Government policy.
3. National backing for such a course of action should be sought from both the National Executive Council the Local Government in Crisis Conference Steering Committee, and the TUC
4. This meeting therefore instructs the Branch Executive Committee to immediately set up an Industrial Action Committee to coordinate such a campaign.

The E.C. to urgently consider the need to develop a local campaign in the community in defence of council services, and to consider:

5. i) the holding of public meetings to discuss the Union position and gain active support.
ii) buying space in the South London Press to put the Union's position to the public.
6. This branch takes note of the decision of the National Emergency Council to oppose council house sales on the basis of 1979 and 1980 Annual Conference Cuts Policy and resolves to continue action on that basis.

INTRODUCTION OF LOCAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

With effect from 1st January 1981, this branch agrees to introduce an additional branch subscription of 10% of the monthly or weekly NALGO subscription currently being paid by members in order to raise funds for a special reserve to finance industrial action taken in defence of members' job security. Use of funds from this reserve will only be made after specific authorisation by a branch meeting.

stop the cuts

nalgo