

DEVON LABOUR BRIEFING

No. 29 March 1988 10p

THE WAY FORWARD FOR LABOUR in Exeter

1. Our general approach.

Before the last election Margaret Thatcher declared an intention to 'destroy socialism'. Since the election her meaning has been made clear. The Conservative government have announced measure after measure which concentrate power in the hands of ministers and which abolish local democracy. The aim is to ensure that, even where Labour has a majority and where local people support Labour policies, nothing shall stand in the way of Conservative ideology.

In other words 'destroying socialism' actually amounts to dismantling local government and building a strong authoritarian state. This attack on local government is of a new intensity and it requires a rethinking of traditional Labour policies. In Exeter, as elsewhere, we cannot bury our hands in the sand and seek to continue as if nothing had changed.

In the past Labour politicians argued that it was of the utmost importance for Labour Councils to stay in power. If the Conservative government cut the rate support grant and made it necessary to make cuts in services and jobs then Labour, however reluctantly must carry them out - while, at the same time, explaining the Tories' responsibility for these cuts. The reason, it was suggested, was that the alternative was

even worse. If Councils tried to defy the government and refused to bow to their regulations they would be surcharged and barred from office. Then either government officials or even Conservative politicians would take over the Council and impose far worse cuts. This was dubbed the policy of 'a dented shield'.

Whatever one thought of this policy in the past - and it was a source of furious controversy - it is simply no longer applicable. This time round the Tories are not simply forcing cuts, they are taking Housing and Education and other services out of local hands. If these policies go through Labour will no longer even be in a position to shield people from Conservative government. So it cannot be argued that we must carry out Tory orders because the alternative would be even worse. This time there is no 'worse'. This time it is not a choice between greater or lesser cuts, it is a choice between the life or death of local democracy. Do we participate in our own execution or do we fight back?

We believe that Labour should oppose the Tory policies. Moreover we see the aim of that opposition being the defeat of the proposals - not some hollow 'moral' victory in which people are persuaded that the Tories are wrong but have to suffer their policies anyway. Of course the Tories claim a 'mandate' for their

LABOUR—TAKE THE POWER!

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL The Local Government Bill is an attempt to gag any opposition to its policies. While the government spends millions promoting militarisation, promoting nuclear power and nuclear weapons it wishes to make it illegal for Councils to state any opposing views. Moreover, the Bill seeks to make it illegal to promote policies of justice and equality by, for instance, stopping councils withholding contracts from companies who have racially discriminatory policies. We propose:

i) That Labour in office uses the Council to give voice to the ideals of justice and equality of all people; that the council promotes disarmament and international justice and declares itself publicly and unequivocally a nuclear free zone.

ii) That the council pursues these policies in practice. The Council should refuse contracts to firms who discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion or creed. The Council should also refuse to deal with South African firms or take any South African products.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES Government policy is steadily eroding the position of all those groups traditionally suffering from discrimination. Racism is on the increase, womens rights are under attack, gays and lesbians are subjected to massive bigotry, moves to help the disabled are steadily curtailed. The Council must seek to make Exeter a better place to live in for everybody. This means pursuing a policy of equal opportunities. We propose:

i) Labour should facilitate groups of women who wish to gain greater control over their own lives. This involves supporting groups like the Womens Centre, the Refuge, the Rape Crisis Line. It also means Opposing the Alton Bill and campaigning for improved facilities for early abortions in Exeter hospitals.

ii) There is disturbing evidence of racial abuse and even racial attacks in the Exeter area. The Council should initiate an investigation into the problems of black people in Exeter and consult with the Black community as to how any difficulties can be dealt with.

iii) In view of the liklihood its helping the development of racist groups in Exeter, and the harrassment of Black people, the William of Orange Celebrations should be abandoned forthwith.

iv) The Council should not be cowed by Clause 28 of the local government bill into abandoning support for gay and lesbian culture. The council should take a lead in explaining the dangers of intolerance and bigotry.

v) The Council should initiate a plan for the disabled, with a view to improving the prospects for employment of disabled people in Exeter and ensuring disabled access to all public buildings in the City.



YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE UNEMPLOYED The facilities available for those without resources are increasingly scarce. The farce involving an unemployed centre is adequate illustration of this. At the same time luxury developments like the Plaza are beyond the reach of many people. We propose

i) The Council should prioritise the provision of facilities for young people to use and over which they have control. There should be no ban on political activities in these places

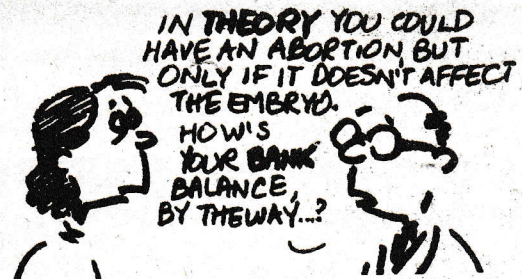
ii) Future facilities should be allowed on the basis that they are priced so as to be accessible to young, unwaged and low-paid people.

DEVELOPING EXETER Many major changes to the centre of Exeter are currently either planned, or in the pipeline. In many cases the major rationale behind these changes is the promotion of tourism. While tourism is an important part of the local economy and is to be encouraged, it should not be promoted at the expense of local people. We propose:

i) That there is no need for more luxury shopping centres, such as the 'Harlequin Centre' that largely contain goods beyond the means of ordinary people.

ii) That developments of Exeter City Centre should retain a mix between residential and commercial units.

iii) That any developments of the Exe banks should not create a 'Docklands' in Exeter, where local people are forced out by spiralling prices. Planning permission should only be granted if developments are amenable and affordable to the local population.



POLL TAX The Poll Tax represents the key to Tory attacks on local government. By forcing through a thoroughly unjust system in which the millionaire and the poor pay the same tax, the Tories seek to alienate people from the Council, to place an intolerable burden on those least able to pay and therefore to allow

EXETER'S WITCH-HUNTING PATHOLOGY

THE RIGHT WING LEADERSHIP OF EXETER LABOUR PARTY HAS SUCCEEDED IN WITCH-HUNTING PETER BOWING, AND HAVE MAN-OEUVRED EXETER LABOUR PARTY INTO RECOMMENDING TO LONDON THAT HE BE EXPELLED FROM THE LABOUR PARTY. THE ONLY CRIME PETER BOWING IS ACCUSED OF IS WRITING ARTICLES THAT HAVE QUESTIONED THE UNDEMOCRATIC RIGHT WING HOLD ON THE CONSTITUENCY. BOWING EXPLAINS THE CASE...

On February 19th delegates to Exeter Labour Party's General Committee met for what is New Year in the party, that is the Annual General Meeting. On the door to the meeting room was a large notice which read "Do not enter until credential checker is present". Did the powers-that-be really believe that Devon Labour Briefing or other "subversive" organisations would attempt to sneak people into the meeting? Indeed, had we or anyone else so desired, we could have produced credentials with the aid of pink paper and a photocopier; no, the purpose of the notice was not straight forward, it was to convince the delegates that the party was under threat from alien elements, and that the witch-hunt fires had to be kindled.

NUR1

The present chapter in Exeter's perennial witch-hunting saga began last summer, when the several thousand pound legal cost bill from the last witch hunt was being discussed by the General Committee. The man most singularly supportive of the witch-hunting process, Mr. C. Long, the Labour leader of Exeter City Council, vigorously informed a GC meeting that he would sell his house to get Peter Bowing out of the Labour Party. Although, this remark was obviously uttered in a fit of pique, it contrasted distinctly with his normal obsequious legality in City Council affairs, lest he lose his house as a consequence of surcharge. In the autumn of 1987 the NUR1 branch, of which Mr. Long is a member, called upon the EC to "consider disciplinary action against Peter Bowing" on account of "the recent letter written by Peter Bowing in the Exeter Flying Post and also his past letters in Devon Labour Briefing". Thus there was to be a witch-hunt based entirely on the socialist writings of P. Bowing; no criticism could be tolerated. Mr. Long's fiefdom, NUR1, had spoken; the last time it had made any proposal was in 1984, when it proposed that the Labour candidate in the ward of St. Leonards be

withdrawn to make way for a Liberal victory. NUR1 must surely be living in one of the largest glass houses.

Not surprisingly the Executive meeting of December 18th decided to recommend to the GC that "investigators be appointed to examine the alleged unconstitutional behaviour of comrade P. Bowing". The next stage in the process was to get the General Committee to ratify this motion. To facilitate matters, the General Committee meeting of January 9th was not to be given any explanation by the Executive; no Executive member was to speak on the matter. Instead, the whole matter was to be presented in terms of trusting the Executive and to make that easier, the Executive's recommendation was to be part of the wider Executive report, so the meeting was unable to give the matter separate consideration. In the event P. Bowing did challenge that part of the Executive's report, but no recognition of that fact was given in the minutes of the meeting produced for March 4th.

Instruction

Following the GC, the CLP secretary, Mr. J. Skinner, circulated an "instruction" to the branch secretaries stating that there be no discussion of the disciplinary action at branch meetings. The reason behind the instruction was not hard to find. Even by stretching the imagination the worst charge that could be levelled against P. Bowing was that his writings had not shown the leadership of Exeter Labour Party in the best possible light. For the leadership with their municipal careers and the City Council Lib/Lab pact in mind, the criticisms in Devon Labour Briefing and elsewhere were a nuisance, which they felt unable or unwilling to tolerate, but for the rank and file the last thing Mr. Long and his supporters wanted was to draw attention to the views expressed in Devon Labour Briefing. Clearly, there was no basis for that instruction in the rules of the Labour Party, so how was the instruction justified? Two arguments were put. First, it was argued that to discuss the matter would prejudice the General Committee delegates, who would make the decision on whether to refer the case to the National Constitutional Committee. Yet, the General Committee delegates were not to hear the evidence, but merely to decide on political grounds whether to refer the case.

Indeed, if General Committee delegates have to walk out of meetings, lest they be prejudiced by the discussion at their branches, democracy in Exeter Labour Party is in even more serious trouble than anyone has suggested so far. Second, and much more silly, was the argument that the Regional Labour Party in Bristol had written a letter to the Exeter party saying there could be no discussion of the matter. The rules of the Labour Party are not made by the writing of letters, but unfortunately it would seem that in Exeter an illegitimate instruction has about the same force as a legitimate one.

Opposition

Motions opposing the witch hunt were tabled in six of the branches. The first was on February 9th in the Rougemont/St. Leonards branch. The chair of the branch, Mr. P. Giblin, previously a victim of an Exeter Labour Party witch-hunt, ruled that, as there was no rule preventing discussion, a motion opposing the disciplinary action was "in order". The motion was passed by six votes to four and was sent to the GC for consideration. The secretary, Ms. J. Lloyd, a right wing loyalist declined to participate for reasons explained above.

An identical motion opposing the disciplinary action was presented to the secretary of the Pennsylvania/St. Davids branch, Ms. A. Lester. Without informing the proposer or seconder of the motion, she declined to circulate the motion to the branch membership. A meeting of the officers of that branch held on February 14th endorsed the decision of the secretary on the grounds that the "instruction" from the CLP secretary reflected the rules of the Labour Party. On learning to the contrary, the chair of the branch, Mr. D. Regis, reversed the ruling at the branch meeting on February 18th. The secretary of the branch and two other GC delegates walked out of the meeting in response to ruling. The motion was passed unanimously, and sent to the GC for consideration.

On February 15th, an attempt to oppose the disciplinary action in the Exwick/Cowick branch by means of a resolution was "ruled out of order" on account of the "instruction" from the CLP secretary. But on February 17th, the Labour Party Young Socialists Branch of Exeter CLP passed a motion condemning the disciplinary action, and sent it to the GC for consideration. And on February 22nd, P. Bowing was invited to speak at an Exeter University Labour Group meeting. After he had spoken a motion condemning the disciplinary action was passed unanimously.

The last attempt to discuss the matter in the party branches was on February

25th, when a motion opposing the witch hunt was tabled in the Polsloe/Stoke Hill branch. The resolution was "ruled" out of order on account of the "instruction" from the CLP secretary, but also on account of the fact that the branch had policy of not accepting written or pre-formulated resolutions. The point should be made clearly, however, that, notwithstanding the antics of the right, every branch that was allowed to discuss the witch hunt opposed it.

The history of the four resolutions was a sad one. Contrary to the standing orders of Exeter Labour Party, at the General Committee meeting of February 19th, the Chair of Exeter CLP, Mr. M. Duff, declined to circulate the motions opposing the disciplinary action, which by that time had been submitted by three branches. He "ruled" any discussion of them "out of order", although there was no basis in the Labour Party rules or the standing orders of Exeter Labour Party for that decision. And again at the General Committee meeting of March 4th this so-called ruling was repeated. Quite clearly, Mr. Duff was under pressure to twist rules, and when that would not do, he had to invent them.

Investigators

Meanwhile, the Executive meeting of January 16th established a three person investigating team consisting of Mr. M. Snow, Ms. D. Baldwin, Ms. S. Abraham to examine the "alleged unconstitutional behaviour of Com. P. Bowing". At no point did the investigators attempt to speak to P. Bowing or people opposed to the disciplinary action, or indeed, as far as we know to people, who might have anything independent to say about P. Bowing's eight year membership of Exeter Labour Party. The whole enquiry was conducted in the absolute secrecy, and, as was revealed later, the investigators were concerned only with P. Bowing's writings, which stretched the eight year period. In the view of kangaroo investigators P. Bowing's writings constituted a "sustained course of conduct prejudicial to the Labour Party". This charge was based entirely on P. Bowing's writings: any pretence of freedom of speech and expression in Exeter Labour Party had been abandoned.

The next meeting of General Committee was March 4th. With the disciplinary case on the agenda the hard right, and particularly the right wing councillors, were drawn like flies by the smell of expulsions. Mr. M. Snow, speaking for the investigators, told the meeting that there was a prima facie case against P. Bowing on the basis of his writings alone, and that his writings, first, brought the party into disrepute, second, broke the confidentiality of

Exeter Labour Party meetings, and third, constituted "a sustained course of conduct prejudicial to the Labour Party". By 44 votes to 7, the meeting decided to refer the case to the National Constitutional Committee.

Recommendation

It was then sprung on the meeting that they had to make a recommendation of what was to happen to P. Bowing, if he were found guilty. One uncommitted delegate said that the whole process was out of control; and as the delegates to the General Committee were prevented from seeing any of the evidence, how could anybody make a recommendation. The prospect of any logical debate clearly angered the hard right. Mr. P. Hutchings, deputy leader of Exeter City Council, told the delegate that he wanted P. Bowing out and if he did not shut up, his membership would be in doubt. The message was clear: the City's Labour bosses were not to be challenged. Councillor Lloyd rose to speak; so severe was P. Bowing's crime that there could be only one punishment, expulsion, and by 34 votes to 16 the General Committee recommended that P. Bowing be expelled from the Labour Party.

The substantially lower anti-witch hunt vote on the expulsion recommendation indicated the growing unease about the whole sordid business. Several points should be made about this expulsion.

Rules

The "rule", which P. Bowing is alleged to have broken is so imprecise as to be meaningless, ie. "a sustained course of conduct prejudicial to the Labour Party". Any conviction based on this "rule" could only derive from political opinion or prejudice. Other "rules" which P. Bowing is found guilty of simply do not exist. There is no "rule" about bringing the Labour Party into disrepute. Does that mean that one can be expelled from the Labour Party for telling the truth if that truth is ugly. If indeed the truth is ugly, all the more reason to tell it.

There is no "rule" either concerning the confidentiality of Labour Party meetings. The constant violations of democratic procedure that occur at the General Committee should be made known to the rank and file of the party, and indeed this invented rule exists purely to stop that happening.

The violation of democratic practices in the handling of the case should also be noted. Most important is the groundless

"instruction" sent out by the CLP secretary proscribing all discussion of the matter in the branches, and the failure of the CLP chair to circulate or allow discussion of properly submitted resolutions from the branches. Thus the membership of Exeter Labour Party was disenfranchised over what is a wholly political question, ie. whether to take a case to the NCC. Moreover, to hide the recommendation, which established investigators in a composited EC report and to offer no separate vote or any explanation of the matter seriously disenfranchised GC members. The intimidation of General Committee delegates should also be a matter for investigation.

Kafka

The resemblances between this attack on P. Bowing and Kafka's "The Trial" are two numerous to elucidate. Yet the irony here is that this attack is for real: the only advantage that P. Bowing enjoys is that Mr. Long does not have prisons and gallows at his disposal. The "catch-22" logic is horrifying; P. Bowing is an "enemy" of the party because he "attacks" the leadership of the party. If P. Bowing sits back and accepts what the right wing call the "democratic scrutiny" of the General Committee, then the monopoly of leadership propaganda proves his guilt. If on the other hand P. Bowing fights back, reveals the corruption and protests his innocence, then he is attacking the party and can be proclaimed guilty. Does the right wing leadership realise this? Yes, I think they do.

The purpose of the witch-hunt is very clear. First, P. Bowing can be kicked out and that alone is designed to serve as an example to any other critic of the Exeter Labour machine. Second, the arguments put forward by P. Bowing do not have to be listened to; he and people who think like him are the "rotten elements" and a cordon sanitaire is placed around them. The over-riding purpose is, thus, to preserve the municipal careers of Mr. Long and his supporters against democratic socialist pressure inside Exeter Labour Party.

Finally, it must be remembered that this kafaesque disciplinary action against P. Bowing is based only on his writings, which have questioned the Exeter Labour Party leadership and the lack of democracy in the CLP. To expel a member of the Labour Party for doing this attacks Labour Party democracy. If this type of witch hunt succeeds there will be no democracy, no free thought and only a mere echoing of leadership statements throughout the Exeter Labour Party. It is surely a top priority to stop this happening.

Orange Celebrations

1988 is the tercentenary of the landing in Brixham in Devon of William of Orange. The Labour-led Exeter City Council have linked with the "William and Mary Tercentenary Trust" and have allocated £60,000 towards civic celebrations in his honour.

William of Orange, following his victory over the Catholic Irish in the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, became the historical figurehead for the Protestant political and economic domination in Ireland. And, the name of William of Orange was taken by the masonic Orange Order in 1795 to justify their campaign to maintain Protestant hegemony in all spheres of Irish life. Today, William of Orange remains the dominant symbol of Protestant hegemony, with his victory of 1691 still being celebrated.

Initially, the Labour Group on Exeter City Council was too politically ignorant to realise what they were doing. But following a broad-based campaign against the celebrations, in which even Exeter's Conservative MP expressed his reservations, the Labour Group became well informed on the matter; yet, they still decided to press ahead.

The National Front have congratulated the Labour Council leader, Chester Long, for promoting the celebrations. They say that they intend to "bring their supproters from all over the country to Devon". Threatening mail has been sent to the press officer of Exeter Anti-Fascist Action which is leading the fight against the celebrations.

In September the English lodge of the Orange Order are holding their annual convention at the Crossmead Conference Centre, which is part of the University of Exeter. At the same time the World Triennial Convention of the Orange Order is being held in Torbay.

The University of Exeter, backed by Exeter City Council, is attempting to mount a conference to discuss the so-called Bill of Rights, which William's accession to the English throne brought about. Exeter Anti-Fascist Action has already persuaded the influential lawyer, Lord Gifford, not to participate in the William of Orange celebrations. Exeter City Council has thus faced a major defeat in its attempt to give respectability to the Orange celebrations.

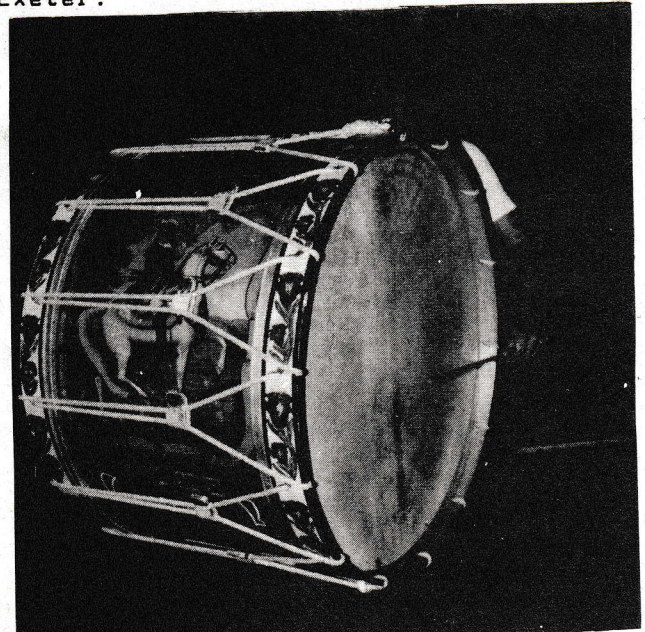
National Anti-Fascist Action have made opposition to the William of Orange tercentenary celebration one of the three major campaigns in 1988 and have launched a publicity campaign.

Clearly, the campaign is growing beyond Exeter. Many branches and Constituency Labour Parties, including the Regional Party in Bristol, have condemned the Exeter City Council Labour Group for its promotion of the celebrations. Chesterfield City Council in Derbyshire has also decided to promote the celebrations on a smaller scale than Exeter. It is worth noting that Tony Benn, Labour MP for Chesterfield is vigorously opposing the celebrations.

The Exeter Constituency itself initially opposed the celebrations, but reversed its position under pressure from the Labour Group. Many rank and file Exeter Labour Party members are involved in Exeter Anti-Fascist Action. Mr. Long, Labour leader of Exeter City Council, told the "New Statesman" in February that those campaigning against the Orange celebrations were "students, stupid bastards and headbangers". He has refused to apologise.

The action of the Exeter Labour Group reveals the imperialist attitudes, particularly towards Ireland, within much of the Labour Party. They claim that the Irish connection of William of Orange can be forgotten, although this is hardly logical given that the National Front and the Orange Order intend to come to Exeter precisely because of the Irish connection.

The campaign against the William of Orange celebration in Exeter is being stepped up; the celebrations are an insult to the people of Ireland. The campaign in Exeter is being led by Exeter Anti-Fascist Action, 1 Parliament St., Exeter. Resolutions and letters opposing the celebrations should be sent to Exeter Labour Party, 26 Clifton Hill, Exeter.



"Croppie lie down": King Billy's big drum remains the symbol of Loyalist power.

policies. It is unclear what mandate means: it certainly doesn't mean popular support. A large majority are opposed to what the government propose to do with local government. But while a majority of the population may be on our side, they retain an equally secure majority in parliament. There is little doubt that they can force through their legislation. Even if their arguments are unconvincing they simply curtail discussion - by employing a parliamentary guillotine.

So, if we want to save local democracy, it cannot be done by contenting ourselves that we have the best arguments. It cannot be done by depending on parliamentary procedure - if we do that, the councils will have been dismantled long before the next election. It can only be done by counting on our single asset: mass disapproval. That disapproval must be mobilised into mass opposition.

Our proposals are based on the belief that Labour must stand and fight the Tories, that doing so entails defying Tory regulations and that successful defiance is mass defiance. In saying this we are well aware that Exeter could not take on this government on its own. It would be foolish to suggest that our city could exist as an island of socialism while all around Thatcher does her worst. Instead local Labour councils must unite and integrate their work with the Labour Party's struggle for socialism. By standing up for the interests of working people they will show in practice the value of Labour in power. The only other alternative is for councils to become the local administrative apparatus of the Tory government.

The policies

2. Our policies.

HOUSING Housing is one of the major areas of Council activity. The government intend to try and take housing out of Council control. They hope to break up estates and persuade people to give themselves over to private landlords. The proposals will lead to higher rents for ordinary people and higher profits for property companies. But the government still believe they can succeed by building on the hostility that has arisen between many tenants and the Council Housing Department. This hostility is the price of obeying Tory policies in the past. The Tories cut the rate support grant and forced up rents. They forced the sale of council houses but did not allow the proceeds to be spent on new housing, so repairs and servicing and - above all - new council house building became more difficult. But while the Tories bear ultimate responsibility, it

was Labour who presided over the deterioration. Current Tory policy is only possible because of Labour's past capitulation. Therefore, if we are to oppose the new legislation it is necessary to show people that they can expect better things from Labour in the future. We propose:

i) Labour spends the some 8 million pounds frozen by the Tories in order to ensure that rents are frozen, major repairs carried out immediately and that the program of council house building is expanded.

ii) Labour organises tenants in the estates against the new legislation. Where tenants associations do not exist people should be given assistance to help form one. Where they do, Labour should support them. Special meetings should be arranged to explain the implications of the legislation and to oppose it. The Council should refuse to cooperate in any way with procedures which would allow the breaking up of Council estates.

iii) If the sale of council houses entails a loss of housing stock and leads to an increased problem of homelessness or accomodation in substandard housing then such sales should be opposed.

iv) An investigation should be carried out into rented accomodation in Exeter in order to ensure that housing is fairly priced and that health standards are not at risk. In cases of abuse the Council should assist tenants in fixing a fair rent.

EDUCATION Education may not be within the remit of the City Council, yet it remains an issue of major concern for Labour in Exeter. Again, the Tories wish to build upon a history of underfunding and the resulting frustrations in order to break up local democratic control. They wish to put the colleges in the hands of governing bodies dominated by business and allow schools to choose Whitehall over County Hall. The result will be massive division and an inability to plan education for local need. At the same time the government wishes to take more control over what is taught. Attempts to provide any alternative to the narrow and one-sided traditions are to be outlawed as political. We propose:

i) That Labour joins in active opposition to the Bill; that we affiliate to 'Exeter for Education' (EXE) and put our resources behind its campaigns.

ii) That Labour remains committed to a broad education that opposes racism, sexism and bigotry of any kind. Labour should resist attempts in the local government bill to banish attempts to promote acceptance of gay and lesbian people

all services to be dismantled. That is why the Tories proudly dub the Poll Tax their 'flagship' in their third term of office. Labour must play no part in implementing this legislation. We propose:

i) The setting up of an 'Exeter Against the Poll Tax' Committee consisting of all those opposing the tax. We should take particular care to involve those sections of the population who will be worst hit by the Bill; the low paid, the elderly, students, the unemployed etc.

ii) Labour should lead a campaign of non-registration. This does not mean disenfranchising people since the electoral register will be separate from the poll tax. Instead, this would be a campaign of mass civil disobedience.

iii) Labour should support local government workers who refuse to administer the tax. The Council itself should refuse to cooperate in any way with the implementation of the tax.

The future

These policies are not designed to be comprehensive. They constitute more a direction than a manifesto. If Labour shows a firm commitment to stand up to the Tories and fight for the interests of the majority of Exeter people - if we cease to complain that we don't like what's going on but we can't help it - then we believe that more and more people will see that a Labour vote, and supporting Labour campaigns, can change their lives. These, we believe are not only the conditions for electoral support, but also the conditions for defeating the Tory attempt to kill our Council.

However we recognise that, in the immediate term, an adoption of the policy direction advocated in this document would break the present 'working relationship' with the Liberals/SDP/Alliance on Exeter City Council. There is little doubt that these parties would oppose any genuine strategy to fight for the interests of working class and oppressed people. However if we allow ourselves to be limited to a strategy they find acceptable then, in the long term, it only weakens our appeal and strengthens the belief that there is no alternative to right-wing politics. If Labour presents the bold strategy that we outline, we can then present a clear challenge to the Alliance parties: either support us or reveal yourselves as opponents of Exeter people. Whatever the short-term decision the long-term effects would be to establish Labour as the only party to promote jobs, services and rights. We therefore present this strategy as a path to electoral success as well as a strategy for opposing the Tories.

STOP PRESS

Watch out for

HONITON CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTY

PUBLIC MEETING

Ken Livingstone

*and supporting speakers
including Livie Reid,
District Secretary of the TGWU*

Exmouth Pavilion,
Friday April 22nd at 7.30 pm.

Bar available

Organiser:

Ray Davison, Secretary Honiton CLP.
55, Salterton Rd., Exmouth. Tel. 277481

and

Fringe Meeting

SOUTH WEST REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The Campaign Group of Labour MPs, CLPD and Labour Left Liaison Fringe Meeting will be held during Saturday lunchtime in the Queen's Hotel.

Speakers: Anni Marjoram (Chair)
Pam Tatlow (LWAC)
Jeremy Corbyn M.P. (Campaign Group of Labour MPs)
Ray Davison (CLPD)

BRIEFING

LABOUR - TAKE THE POWER!