

Working Class History Podcast: John Barker on the Stoke Newington 8

Posted on [March 9, 2018](#)



“Working Class History” has existed for a few years as a [social media feed](#) highlighting often neglected events from the past to inspire us now.

They’ve just launched a new podcast. [The debut episode covers the Grunwick strike and is a great listen.](#) It was particularly good to hear some critical discussion about the strike is being absorbed into mainstream history whilst being shed of some of its collective radicalism.

The latest edition is the first half of an interview with John Barker on the Angry Brigade/Stoke Newington 8. As usual John is very insightful and I enjoyed hearing him talk about his early life, political development and the sixties/seventies counter culture generally:



[Working Class History](#)
WCH E2: The Angry Brigade, part 1

 SOUNDCLOUD

[Cookie policy](#)336

You can get more information about the project on its website:

<https://workingclasshistory.com/>

(The site also has links to their twitter, Facebook and Youtube feeds as well as a Patreon page for financial support)

You can also subscribe to the podcast on [Itunes](#).

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Hackney Museum: Making Her Mark: 100 years of women's activism

Posted on [March 9, 2018](#)



Hackney Museum is currently hosting an excellent exhibit in the history of radical women and women's activism in the Borough. (Obviously if I had my act together, I would have posted this yesterday on International Women's Day)

The exhibition has been organised in collaboration with the East End Women's Museum who have [details on their website](#). There is also some information on the Council's website [here](#).

A visit is recommended – there is a great spread of material from the Suffragettes through to the peace movement and even [Nicola Thorp's shoes](#).

There's an interview on East London Radio about the exhibition too:



Interviews w/ Hackney Museum - Mak...
by East London Radio

[Hackney Museum](#), 1 Reading Ln, London E8 1GQ.

- 9.30am – 5.30pm Tues, Wed, Fri
- 9.30am – 8.30pm Thu
- 10am – 5pm Sat

Nearest station: Hackney Central

The Museum is also currently working on an exhibition of black music in the borough and seeking contributions and input.

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Posted in [events](#), [feminism](#) | [Leave a reply](#)

Hackney Peoples Press, 1976 – opposing the NF

Posted on [December 12, 2017](#)

Another instalment in a very occasional series which looks at a year in the life of radical community newspaper *Hackney People's Press*. We last saw [HPP in 1975](#), with a focus on health, Hackney Mental Patients Union and lots more.

The paper was itself in good health in 1976, managing to publish four issues after a brief hiatus caused by a lack of people getting involved:

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

May 1976 no.19 5p

WE'RE BACK!

It's been a long time since the last issue of HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS - we hope you missed it! The reason for this delay is quite simple: there have just not been enough people around who have been willing to give us the odd hour or two, occasionally to help us produce a new issue.

It's not your money we're after - if we sell all the copies that we produce then we can break even with each issue.

We want YOUR interest and YOUR enthusiasm to make this truly YOUR paper: the Hackney PEOPLE'S Press, produced by people in Hackney for people in Hackney.

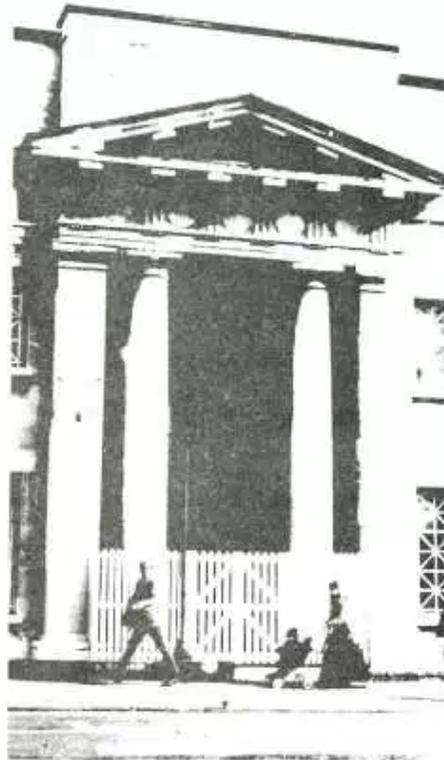
We need people who can help us do anything - write articles, type them out, do the design and layout, take photographs, distribute and sell the finished copies. It doesn't matter if you've never done anything like this before!

The few of us who are involved aren't asking for medals for what we do. But we think that Hackney needs the People's Press - and if no one agrees with us then we might as well pack up and go home.

So we are going to try and make HPP a more lively and exciting paper for you to read - we'd like your letters and your ideas if you just can't spare us your time. We hope that this issue will make you want to buy HPP again. If you want to hear what we will be doing in future issues, then contact us. Tell us if you agree or disagree with our ideas. But don't just sit there or this could be the LAST ISSUE!

For details of our next meeting to plan future issues leave a note for us in Centerprise, or ring Charles Foster on 249 0511.

**but not for long
unless YOU help!**



The old public library in Brooksby's Walk. See p.4 inside for the new plans for the old building.

INSIDE

- p.2 WANTED! More nurseries!
The Hackney Nurseries Campaign speaks out.

- p.3 PRIVATE TENANTS - learn to fight for your rights.

- p.4 HOMERTON PROJECT - new life for an old library.

- p.5 THE MARSH MAIL goes to press.

- p.6 ABORTION - the fight is still going on

- p.7 INFORMATION

- p.8 FUN FESTIVAL heads for the Wild West.
CENTERPRISE - many happy returns!

The May issue is the skinniest at 8 pages, covering:

A demand by the Hackney Nursery Campaign for **More Nurseries** - "There are 4000 children under five years old in Hackney whose parents both work (or in the case of single parent families, whose one parent is at work). To cater for this immense need, there are 379 Council day nursery places at the moment..." the campaign emerged from discussions between Hackney Under Fives, Council nursery workers and the women's subcommittee of the Trades Council.

As well as more nurseries, demands included:

- Negotiated pay scales for nursery workers
- Hackney Council to convert houses and large flats on estates to use as nurseries
- Speed up long term plans for purpose built nurseries.

This was to be an ongoing issue and was part of the reason for the emergence of radical nurseries such as [Dalston Children's Centre](#) in the early eighties.

Hackney Private Tenants Association – *“Tenants of private landlords face some of the most difficult housing problems in Hackney. Housing conditions are terrible. 1 in 3 has no hot water. 1 in 2 has no access to a bath or shower. 1 in 3 share a toilet. Only 1 in 5 of the 30,000 plus households living in private rented accommodation have all these facilities. In return they pay enormous rents. Illegal evictions and unlawful harassment are widespread. Often tenants have to fight long drawn out niggling battles to get even minor repairs done.”*

“In the words of a local newspaper reporter: ‘It’s a story when someone in Hackney is living in decent conditions’.”

Membership of the association was 5p a year and most of its work revolved around raising awareness about bad housing with councillors and MPs and taking up individual cases. But *“we recognise that, in the long run, the housing crisis can only be solved when the economy is run for the people not for profiteers – and landlords become extinct.”*

Unfortunately landlords are very much still with us 41 years later, so this sort of campaigning is still sorely needed. Luckily we have [Hackney Renters](#) to take up the gauntlet.

Homerton Project: new life in and old library – A centrespread on plans for a community centre being developed in the old library building on Brooksby's Walk. The old library had been closed in 1974 when the new library opened (it's still there on Homerton High Street). The Citizens Advice Bureau had been using the old library building but the article mentions an impressive array of plans for educational, social and cultural activities. Many of these did actually take place as the old library reopened as [Chats Palace](#) later in 1976.

Plus – *The Marsh Mail* launched (a magazine started by users of the Hackney Marsh adventure playground), Abortion – opposition to the [James White Abortion Amendment Bill](#), listings of local groups, Hackney Marsh Fun festival announcement. Centerprise five year birthday celebrations,



HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

July 1976 no. 20 5p

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22 THIS WEEK	30 NEXT WEEK	38 SOMETIME	48 NEVER
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In the old days, the Highwayman was a lone figure waiting at the roadside to rob the stagecoach. These days the position is reversed. It is the bus, the stagecoach's modern equivalent, which comes to rob the waiting figure - or more likely the dozens of you who have been waiting since God knows when . . .

See HIGHWAY ROBBERY ON THE BUSES
pages 6-7

ALSO INSIDE:



Things hot up in July with an expanded 12 pages.

Cover feature / lead story on the **National Front in Hackney:**



The piece covers the work of Hackney Committee Against Racism and also covers NF activity in the borough:

In the general election of 1974, NF candidates received 1044 votes in Hackney North and 2544 in Hackney South and Shoreditch (the latter being almost 10% of the vote). After this they announced that fascist grandee John Tyndall would stand for MP in Hackney at the next election (which he did in 1979, with reduced vote share of 7.6%).

Inevitably, fascists did not just stick to the ballot box. The article also highlights racist stickering, attempts by NF members to get involved with tenants associations, NF leaflets being delivered to Hoxton residents as well as a more general increase in day to day racist abuse on the streets. And worse: *“On Colville Estate black tenants have parcels of faeces and burning paraffin soaked rags pushed through their letterboxes. Some black women recently took out a summons against Derek [sic] Day – the local NF boss who lives in Hoxton – for assault. [...] In Hoxton market, the locals say that there are some stalls which only sell vegetables to white customers.”*

Four hundred local trade unionists and anti-racists marched through Hoxton (taking in the market and Derrick Day’s house). There was a small NF counter protest which stuck to shouting racist slogans.

You can read the full article by clicking on the image above. There was a lot more work to do. [In 1978, the National Front opened its headquarters, Excalibur House at 73 Great Eastern Street in Shoreditch.](#)

Also in this issue:

Pollution: The Socialist Answer – a report on the inaugural meeting of the Socialist Environment and Resources Association.

Bad Deal for Backward Kids – a slightly excruciatingly worded article by today’s standards, but obviously well meaning. Cuts to resources and bad planning at the new “Educationally Subnormal School” at Nile Street in Hoxton.

Broadway Market Is Not A Sinking Ship – It's A Submarine – attempts by squatters and other locals to reclaim some waste ground opposite Brougham Road and Brook Road which was due for redevelopment by the GLC. The hope was that the space could be turned into an adventure playground.

Highway Robbery on the Buses – fares go up, even though there are less buses. A mixed bag of proposals including mention of the [Italian "autoreduction" campaign](#) in which unions issued passes to passengers at the old prices, which were endorsed by drivers. Less excitingly there is also talk of trade councils passing resolutions and sending letters of complaint to the London Transport Executive.

Law Centre open – (at 236 Mare Street, where it was for many years before becoming [Hackney Community Law Centre](#) and moving to Lower Clapton Road.)

And: Health cutbacks and closures, Claimants Union, appeal to rebuild a hospital in Ky Anh Vietnam to treat victims of the war, listings, Hackney Marsh Fun Festival.



HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

Sept/Oct 1976 No 21 5p

400 JOBS SLASHED!

It is now quite obvious that the local Area Health Authority is treating Hackney like a terminal patient, as indeed it has become due to the incredible neglect and idiot planning reshuffles of the last few years.

The latest chunk being incised out of the local hospital body is being made by that well-known surgeon with the big scalpel: the Government Cuts in Public Spending.

- 400 full time jobs are to be cut in the next six months. That's 1 in 17 of the present staff. There will be 20 doctors, 140 nurses and 240 other workers on the dole in this area. Many of these workers were especially invited to this area in order to help out the NRS.
- The number of Accident and Emergency Units open in the evenings and at weekends will be reduced. Probably St Leonard's will close (that's the one they've just opened!)
- Overtime will be reduced or cut completely. They admit that this will lead to a deterioration in services. Overtime is essential to keep the service at its present level.
- E Block in Hackney will be closed immediately. Obstetric services will be transferred to the Mother's. This is a reprieve for the Mother's, which was to have been closed -- instead they will increase the number of patients by 50% and turn it into a "baby factory".
- Absent doctors and surgeons will no longer always be replaced by a locum. So when consultants are away, new patients and serious surgery will just stop.
- Expensive techniques and methods will be "scrutinised". This means that Boris Cancer Unit, St Leonards kidney machines and Intensive Care Units all over the Borough will probably be axed.

There have been angry reactions to these cuts from health workers in Hackney. For details of their protest, see pages 2 and 3 inside.

CUT!

PAGE 3

Unemployment goes on rising

CUT!

PAGE 3

Nursery stays closed

CUT!

PAGE 2

Fighting Fare increases

Also inside:

PRA: workers sacked for striking
PAGES 4-5

Hackney Committee Against Racism
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John Dawson ESN School - ILEA reply
PAGES 5-6

Centerprise PAGE 10

Liverpool Street Station - the end of the line PAGES 6-7

Information PAGES 10-11

Who Benefits? Your guide to Social

The Agony Gazette - all this month's murder and mayhem PAGE 12

Another 12 pager, with a cheeky insert inciting people to bunk the bus fare and arrange an ad hoc credit account with the London Transport Executive:



Themes from previous issues continue- cuts to health services, unemployment up, nursery provision down, benefits claimants get a poor deal.

Workers Sacked for Striking – The Psychiatric Rehabilitation Centre was a Hackney based organisation that helped “ex-mental patients find their feet in society”. Its staff had a number of grievances with the trustees, including no written contracts or pay scales, no grievance procedure, poor communication, etc. They unionised and were about to strike when they were dismissed. There is an account of a discussion with PRA Director John Wilder and some rebuttals to his account from workers. The PRA became the [Centre for Better Health in 2010](#) and is now based on Darnley Road off Mare Street.

The End of the Line for Hackney? – redevelopment of Liverpool Street station including office blocks. Also some proposals for more stations and their impact on the local community.

Hackney Committee Against Racism reports on canvassing local residents, removing NF graffiti and demanding that the Council ban fascists from using public property to pedal racism including markets. Gay centres in Shoreditch and Finsbury Park were vandalised by fascists and a Labour Party anti-fascist canvasser was beaten up near Manor House.

There’s a bizarrely fish-themed parody of the Hackney Gazette on the back page:

Nov/Dec 1976 No 22

5p

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

MERRY CHRISTMAS ISSUE

all the cuts you can't afford



Well, here we are again, it's Christmas, and the goose is getting thin...

No doubt those International Financiers would tell you that it's the season of goodwill to all men... unless, of course, you happen to be old, sick, pregnant, unemployed, a council-house tenant, or in fact anything other than rich and healthy -- 'in which case they just don't want to know!

Despite all the gloom and despondency Hackney People's Press wishes all its friends and readers a happy Christmas.

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NEW LIFE FOR THE HALF MOON	P.9

Rounding the year off with another 12 pages:

Health cuts:

- Junior Doctors put out a statement pointing out that the situation is already pretty dire –
“Conditions are so bad at F Block, the psychiatric block at Hackney Hospital that the Royal

College of Nursing won't allow student nurses to train there."

- Occupation of Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital in central London.
- Health Hierarchy – a more analytical piece about the power imbalance in the NHS and calls for more democratic control.
- Hackney Abortion Campaign and the effect of the cuts on women.

GLC Tenants in Slum Housing: conditions on the Pembury Estate: *"whole blocks of flats empty, boarded up, vandalised and left to decay. One block, Adisham House, has been empty for three years."* Also general disrepair for flats which are occupied – by residents which the article notes are primarily BME, squatters or former squatters.

Exposed! Who Are The Hackney Flashers? A great one page introduction to this feminist/socialist women's photography group:



People Before Roads – opposition to a new road from Hackney Wick to Highbury.

Christmas Award – for the architect of the Trowbridge Estate for putting a "french window" door into a flat with a 14 floor drop on the other side...

Also – opposition to education cuts, campaign against Dublin anarchists [Noel and Marie Murray](#) being hanged for robbing a bank, Regents Canal – a new walk in Hackney, Friends of the Earth forms, Half Moon Theatre, Hackney Women's Aid asking for furniture etc for new premises, Gingerbread (assistance for single parents) plea for donations.

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Posted in [1970s](#), [Hackney People's Press](#), [health](#), [housing/squatting](#), [racism / fascism](#) | [Leave a reply](#)

Today in London's parklife: 1000s destroy enclosure fences, Hackney Downs, 1875

Posted on [December 11, 2017](#)

Essential piece by our comrades Past Tense on struggles around keeping Hackney Downs public. An entry in their London Rebel History calendar – the 2018 version of which is [out now](#) and would make a great Xmas present for radical friends and relatives.



[past tense](#)

On December 11th 1875, a crowd of several thousand people assembled on Hackney Downs, East London, to take part in the destruction of fences newly built around enclosures on what was traditionally regarded as common land.

By the early nineteenth century Hackney Downs had long been established is custom as lammas land, which gave locals rights to pasture their animals from Lammas Day, August 1st (though this may have dated from August 12th locally), for a number of months – usually until April 6th the next year. The ability to graze livestock on common land was long a vital part of subsistence for hundreds of thousands of the labouring classes in rural society, and its gradual (and later, on a large scale) restriction by enclosure of agricultural land had a huge impact, increasing poverty and hardship, and contributing to mass migration into cities over centuries.

Even...

[View original post](#) 3,784 more words

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Posted in [1800s](#), [green / environment](#), [Hackney Central](#), [Homerton](#) | [Leave a reply](#)

Fighting Sus: Resisting and Repealing Stop and Search 1970-81

Posted on [November 4, 2017](#)

On The Record concluded an excellent [oral history project about Centerprise](#) this year with the publication of a superb book, audio tour and other resources.



They now have a new project on the notorious “Sus Laws” which empowered police officers to stop and search people purely on the grounds of “suspicion”. The effects of this at a time when the police were institutionally and endemically racist should be fairly obvious. The Sus Laws were infamously used to search 1000 black youth in Brixton as part of “Operation Swamp” in April 1981, triggering the Brixton riots...

On the Record is recruiting a freelance Youth Coordinator for their exciting new project [Fighting Sus: Resisting and Repealing Stop and Search 1970-81](#). We are looking for someone with experience of both youth work and drama production.

Download the application documents [here](#) and read the project’s press release [here](#).

Please send queries and applications to us at [info\(at\)on-the-record.org.uk](mailto:info(at)on-the-record.org.uk)

They are also interested in hearing from you if you are:

- A 16-25 year-old interested in taking part
- Over 25 years-old with memories of the ‘sus’ era
- A theatre, school or community group interested in hosting or helping with the performance.

The press release (linked above and well worth read) starts with a poem from Hackney / Antiguan poet Hugh Boatswain:

'Hey boy, what have you just done?'
'Me officer – nat a ting.'
'Why you running then?'
'Late sa', gotta meet de dartah?'
'Sorry son, going to have to take you in,
lots of crimes in this area
come on down to the station for questioning.'
Nex' morning black boy come from station,
No bookings, no charges, just a heap full of bruises.'

The Sus Laws were also covered by Boatswain's fellow poet Linton Kwesi Johnson:



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Posted in [1970s](#), [police](#), [uncategorized](#) | [Leave a reply](#)

Ridley Road oral history project

Posted on [August 10, 2017](#)



<https://ridleyroadpostcards.wordpress.com/>

What does a Ridley Road Book need?

Any suggestions, thoughts or stories are much appreciated.

Tamara Stoll is working on a book about Ridley Road market and is seeking contributions. See the link above for more information and contact details.

From my perspective this kind of “history from below” of working class areas is radical in itself, but Ridley Road also has a history of more explicitly radical activity...

From the [43 Group physically attacking Oswald Moseley's British Union of Fascists in the 1940s](#), to paper sales by everyone from [Hackney Communist Party](#) to the [Black Unity and Freedom Party](#) – as well as the multicultural essence of the market simply helping cohesion in working class communities:

What was different about Dalston? Because of Ridley Road Market, which had a lot of West Indian stall-holders and customers, most of the pubs there did not operate a Colour Bar. So it had this strong effect. Partly because of Ridley Road and so on. It was because Dalston was a centre of Caribbean life, because of the market, but also because the pubs there were much more tolerant. And I don't think people have given enough credence to how institutions like pubs and bars structure the geography of a place. So much as something like an informal Colour Bar that

pushed West Indians towards and around Ridley Road, and the pubs around there. Dalston pubs were much more tolerant.

(Excerpt from a [Ken Worpole interview](#) courtesy of Hackney Archives.

Anyone with stories or memories of Ridley Road is welcome to [contact Tamara](#).

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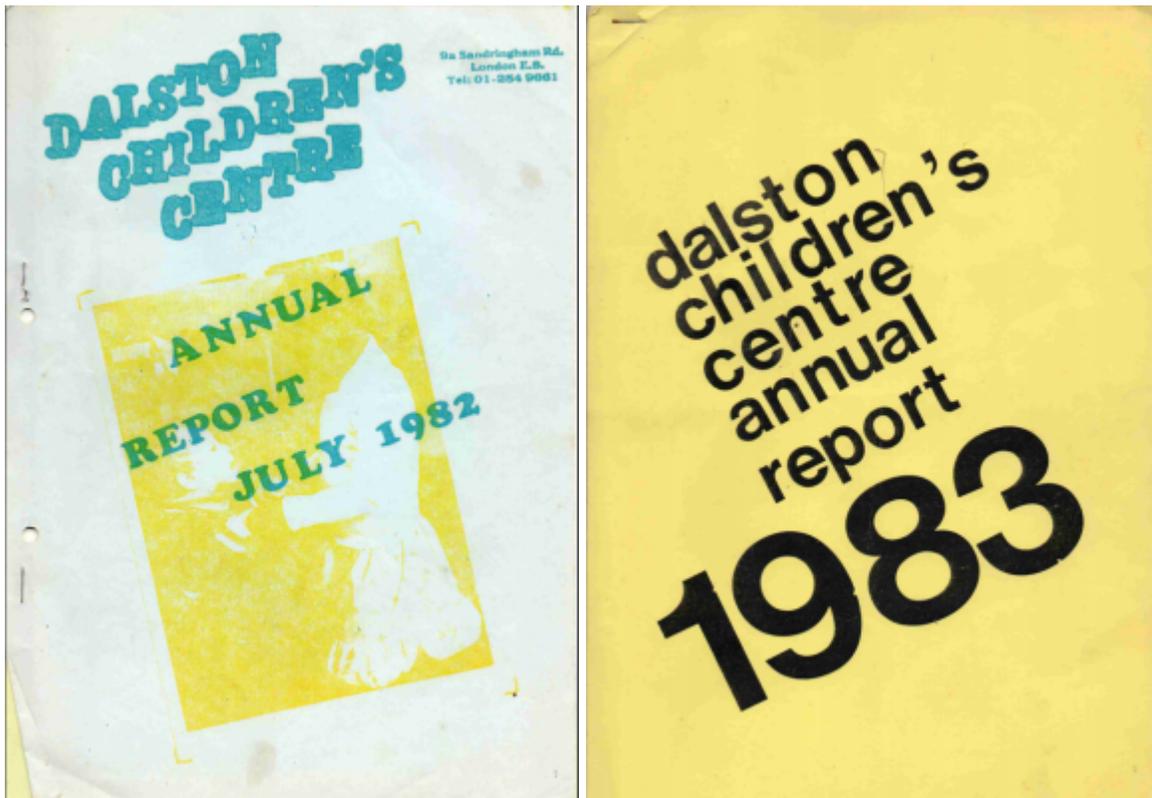
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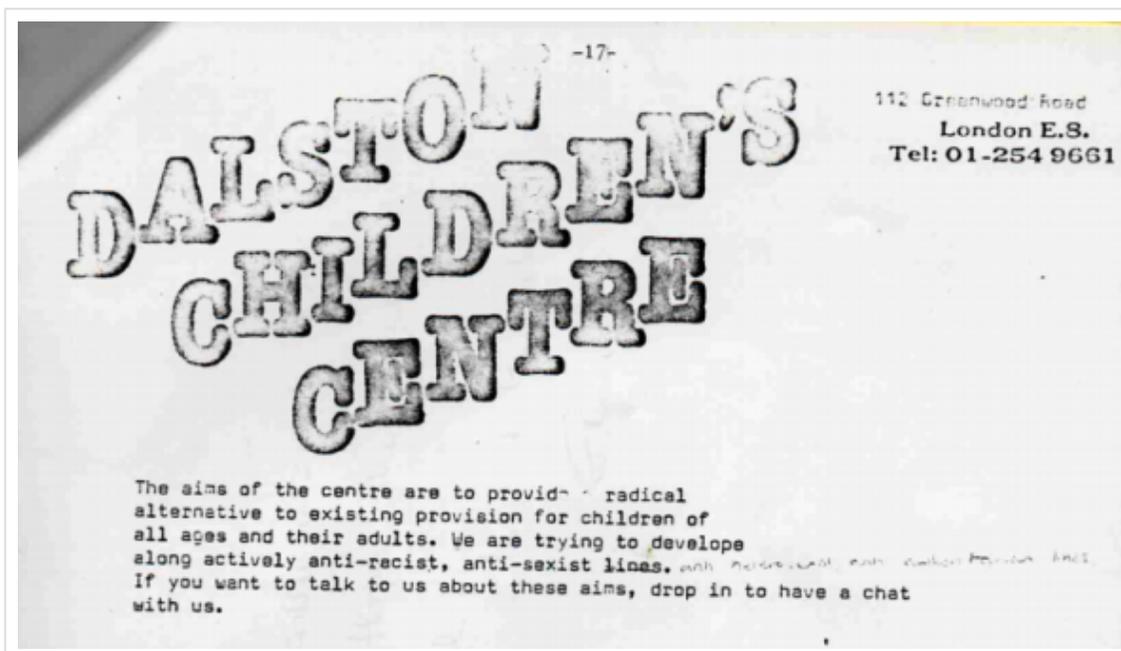
Dalston Children's Centre 1982/3

Posted on [August 9, 2017](#)



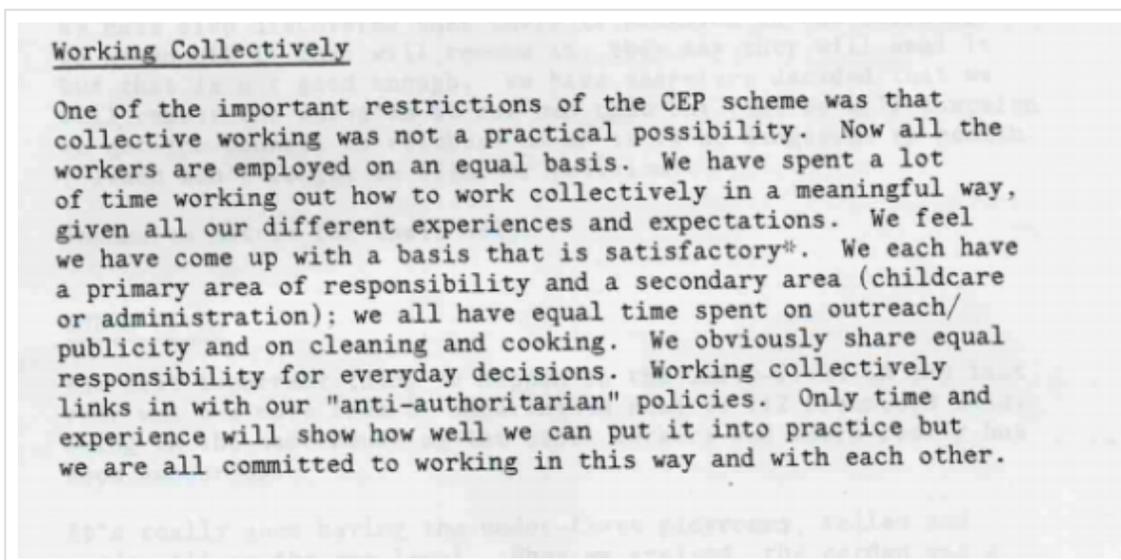
The comrades at [Lesbian History Group](#) have uploaded the annual reports of Dalston Children's Centre from 1982 and 1983 as PDFs.

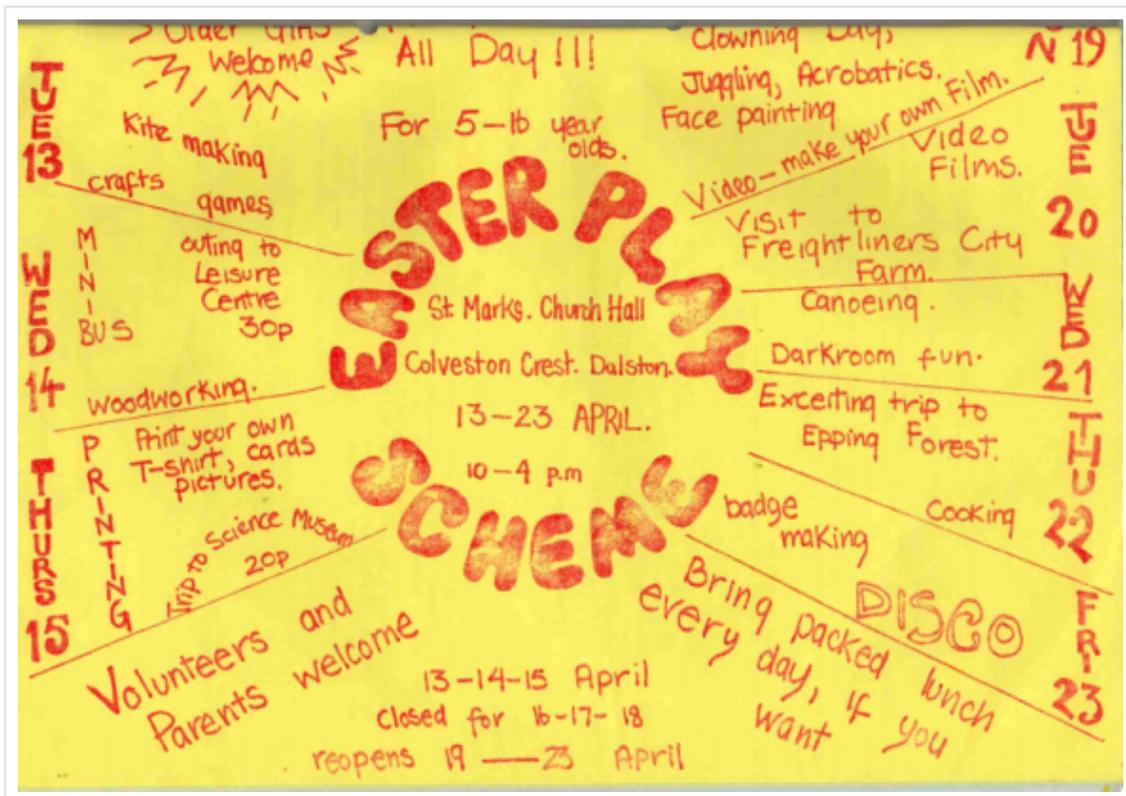
The text below sums up its radical ethos:



The Centre was based firstly at 80 Sandringham Road and then latterly 112 Greenwood Road (near Dalston Lane). They also used a number of other venues for activities including St Marks church hall.

The reports are an interesting combination of the expected problems with funding (and the usual tussles about compromising the radical aims of the group to meet funders' objectives) as well as accounts of the activities of the group, letters from Centre users etc.





The 1983 report includes an appendix of Centre policies, including anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-heterosexism and anti-authoritarianism – and how these might be applied to education, training and food.

Direct links to the PDFs are here:

<https://lesbianhistorygroup.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/dalston-cc-1982.pdf>

<https://lesbianhistorygroup.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/dalston-cc-1983.pdf>

Also of interest might be this report of a recent meeting of the Radical History Network on [radical childcare struggles in North London](#).

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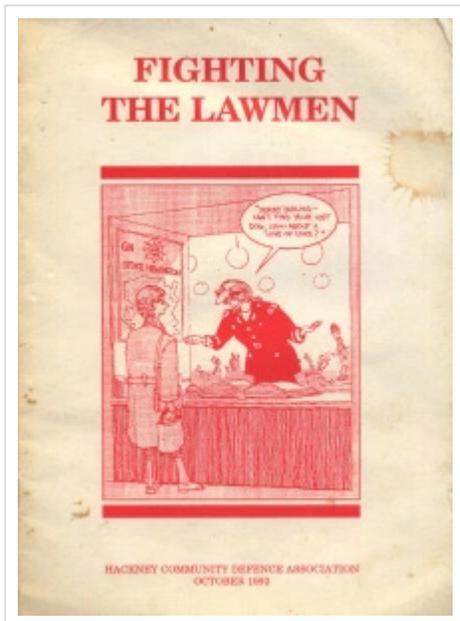
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Posted in [1980s](#), [Dalston](#), [feminism](#), [LGBT](#), [schools](#) | [1 Reply](#)

Hackney Community Defence Association

Posted on [February 27, 2011](#)



I've added a page to the site [introducing Hackney Community Defence Association \(HCDA\)](#):

"HCDA is a self help group for the victims of police crime. It investigates allegations against the police, provides mutual support for victims and campaigns against police injustice."

The organisation was active from the late eighties to the mid nineties. The page includes details of all their publications that I'm aware of. (If you know of any more, leave a comment...)

I've also scanned in the HCDA booklet "[Fighting The Lawmen](#)" which deals with their extensive and inspiring investigation into crimes committed by cops based in Stoke Newington police station.

SHARE:



One blogger likes this.

Posted in [HCDA](#), [police](#) | Tagged [HCDA](#) | [2 Replies](#)

Hackney Against The Cuts: Number Two, Summer 1991

Posted on [February 20, 2011](#)

HACKNEY AGAINST THE CUTS

NUMBER TWO.
SUMMER 1991.



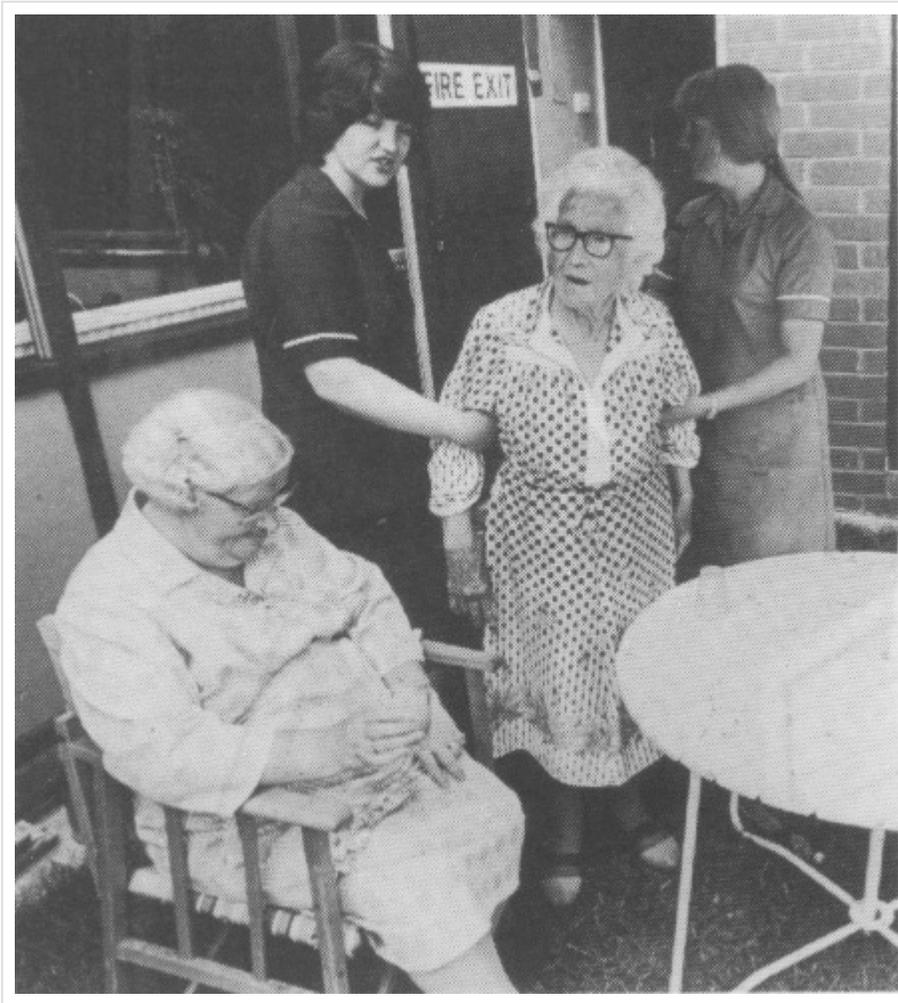
Since the last issue of 'Hackney against the cuts' in March our worst fears have been confirmed. Following the half-day strike on March 6th there has been no follow up action & nothing appears to be planned for the future. The leadership of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee have refused to try & increase the resistance against cuts in local services & have, once again, returned to their monthly discussion meetings with McCafferty at which they have no strategy to oppose what the Labour council is doing in Hackney, never mind the Tories at national level.

The resistance by workers at Marsh Hill Old People's Home collapsed the day after the strike. Meanwhile the council refused to budge over Mentmore Industries for the disabled, it has forced through massive increases in nursery fees including charging unemployed parents £5 per child, it has used its highly paid & relatively new friendship with the police to attack squatters and there are now rumours that it intends to sell, or rather give away, a number of estates to housing associations.

This bulletin, which we hope can be a forum for discussion & activities by all those who are concerned about what is happening within Hackney includes articles on cuts in education, cuts in the voluntary sector, cuts in housing, attacks on squatters, the council's friendly relationship with the police, as well as a call by Councillor Tom Silverlock for the development of a new forum for the left, socialists/trade unionists/unemployed in Hackney.

We hope to be able to publish every 3 months (a minimum, we hope!) and articles, photographs, comments, letters are welcome. Send them to:- 'Hackney Against the Cuts', Box No 1, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8.

We hope to help unite all those who want to fight for a better Hackney through the involvement of the mass of workers, tenants, students, squatters and unemployed. Strike action must be a key to this and will need linking up with others across Britain. Lastly, thanks to everyone who helped produce this magazine & hopefully more will help next time!



The closure of Marsh Hill Old Peoples Home was part of the continuing destruction of Local Government Jobs and services.

WHICH WAY FORWARD?

A STATEMENT OF INTENT – BY COUNCILOR TOM SILVERLOCK

While it is true that there have been some fightbacks against cuts in the Council, and it is true that these were indeed heroic in their own way, they have not really ended the continual onslaught on local government services that has been and is taking place in Hackney by the local councillors, whether Labour or otherwise.

There is definitely a need for a new approach, a gathering of those forces that have proved themselves in the struggles that have taken place in the last few years, and a complete re-evaluation of the enemy, its scope and power. In my view the enemy has swelled its ranks over the last few years & consolidated its power.

Any fighting left that did exist within the local Labour Parties has effectively been destroyed & demoralised while there has been a resurgence of anarchistic politics on the left with its rhetoric & activity attracting active but desperate working class socialists who are becoming more estranged from the traditional left currents that existed in the Labour Party, Militant and the SWP. All these

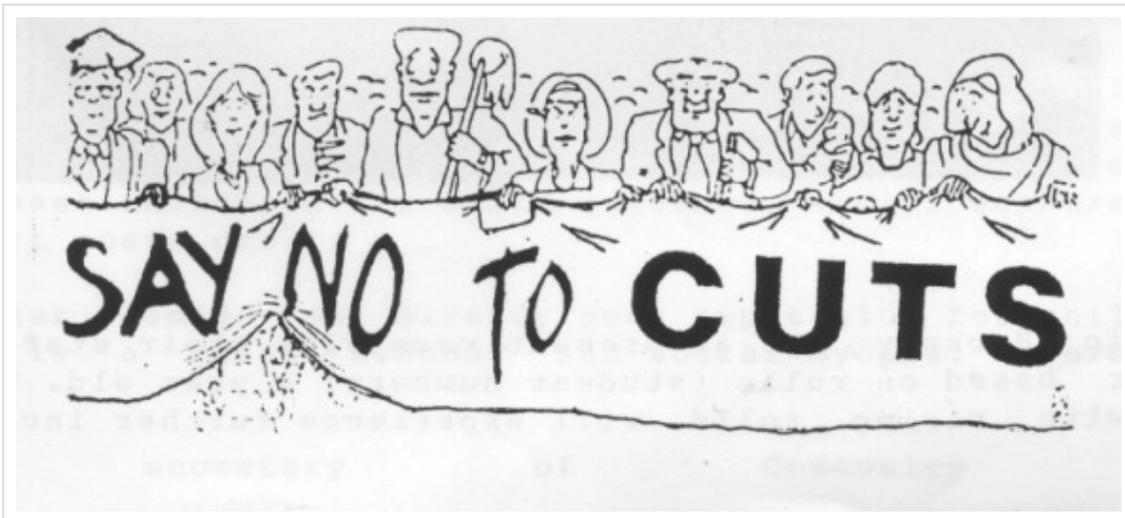
groups only help to make the left a murky uninviting mire that it is, confusing & dividing working class activists.

There is a need therefore to create some kind of forum that challenges the established left, that unites some of those anarchistic elements that have developed over the last few years & have a progressive orientation to the working class and their organisations, some Trotskyist elements that have proved their metal in the past and independents who cannot claim to be either.

The potential for such a forum to exist in Hackney is not only great but absolutely necessary & it is a Labour Councillor, a revolutionary Trotskyist & a working class socialist who has been involved in many campaigns & struggles in the last few years that I call for such a forum to develop in Hackney.

A statement of intention of such a forum will be completed in the near future which all activists must read and decide whether to participate or not. While those sectarians may not see the necessity of such a forum, it is that which makes them sectarian. The left must no longer be divided as we do not only have to contend with the Capitalist ruling class, and its state but also its agents whose ideals and method have infected the left and is festering like a cancerous growth.

Interested? Then contact Hackney Against the Cuts and we can begin the discussion.



CUTTING BACK ON EDUCATION

After numerous letters to staff and parents denying cuts, Hackney Education Directorate & Hackney Council finally admitted they had been planning to cut school teaching posts. Strike action on March 6th, together with much publicity, persuaded the Directorate to reconsider. They offered to:-

- (a) Restore 30 TAAN's (Teachers above authorised numbers) in secondary schools.
- (b) Restore 44 curriculum & organisation posts in primary schools.
- (c) Restore the school incentive allowances.

This was achieved at the expense of 20 curriculum support posts, advertising, and the heads & deputies discretionary pay rise.

Other cuts in the education budget are still in place. These include:-

- School meals rising 20 pence a day.
- Cuts in support staff.
- Up to 50% cuts in cleaning and maintenance. (services which are already at a minimal level.)
- A worsened TAF (the ratio of teachers to students) level to 1:30 in primary schools, 1:20.9 in secondary schools and 1:13.5 in the age group 16 to 19.

The worsening of TAF has meant a reduction of 60 teaching jobs & resulted in larger classes.



Schools in Hackney are at present receiving their staffing levels for next year based on rolls (student numbers) a year old. This means that schools with rising rolls will experience further increases in class size.

The prospects for delivering a quality education service in Hackney will be severely undermined if this situation continues. With local management of schools just around the corner, cuts & job losses are likely as has been seen in other parts of the country last year.

A fighting campaign across the education unions will be needed to restore these cuts & to prevent further attacks on jobs & the education service as a whole. Trade Union activists must organise and build for strike action to defend the education service while it is still worth defending.

A.French, NUT. (personal capacity.)

Further education

Cuts in the Further Education sector include over £1 million from the Hackney College budget, an imposition of a 18% staff vacancy rate (though there are no vacancies at the moment) & a vicious increase of fees for unemployed students on benefits, from £4.50 per annum & E1 per exam to £25 per annum, plus £5 for materials, and £20 for exams.

By a NALGO steward at Hackney College.

ROBBING THE POOR !!

Speaking on behalf of single parents in Hackney my reaction to the new £5 a week nursery fee for my child is one of despondency. I am very hard pressed to find this money out of my already inadequate income of £60.50 a week. However much I love my child, the bills must be paid & the stomach needs filling – this is already difficult enough.

I feel the additional stress of trying to creatively employ my bright & active child at home on top of the financial stress of life would be damaging to myself and my child. Children need other children & a structured safe, happy and nourishing environment, with facilities I could never hope to provide at home.

The child care facilities we have been fortunate enough to benefit from have saved me from a possible breakdown and my child from probable abuse. If these facilities are removed then I can only see:

1. Wasted Lives.
2. Deterioration in family relationships.
3. Increased child abuse.
4. Poor social skills in pre-school age kids
5. Diminished intellectual ability.
6. Failed cost efficiency due to a likely increase in demand for child guidance, social workers, care orders, court costs etc...

Need we further damage our already poor reputation for child care in Europe? This is a false economy and social myopia. Reverse the fee increases.

By a secretary of Community Nursery.

THE COUNCIL & THE COPS

One local 'service' which is not under attack from either central or local Government is the police. Why?

Through most of the 1980's Hackney Labour Council played an important part in campaigning against police abuses of power in the borough, and for an accountable Metropolitan police force. In the 1990's councillors are most definitely siding with the police against the people who elected them into office.

Hackney Council was the first London borough to set up a police committee in the Summer of 1982. Full support was given to the Roach Family Support Committee following Colin Roach's death in January 1983. The Council went so far as to vote to refuse to pay the police precept in opposition to Colin's death & the police's attitude to the Colin Roach campaign. The council provided a substantial amount of money to help the Family & friends of the Trevor Monerville campaign get off the ground after Trevor had emergency brain surgery after being held in Stoke Newington police station in January 1987.

In general, the council took a firm & principled position against police injustice & placed its resources firmly alongside the people of Hackney who suffered at the hands of the police. Their policy was best illustrated by their attempts to set up a democratically controlled police liaison committee & their refusal to participate in the stooge Hackney Police Community Consultative Group, one of the groups set up by the police across London as a public relations office.

Two events in the spring of 1988 pointed to a change in direction by the Labour council. In March, a non-eviction policy against squatters was reneged upon with mass eviction of over 100 squats on the Stamford Hill estate. 100 police officers were used by the council to back up the bailiffs. In April, deputy Labour Party leader, Roy Hattersley, visited Hackney to launch the council's "A Charter for Better Policing." At the time the Labour Party was trying to 'mend' its relations with the police after senior police officers had questioned whether the police could work with a Labour Government. Hattersley advised the council to stop knocking the police & participate in the consultative group. During the past 3 years Hackney Labour Party has slowly but surely drifted to the right. The radicalism associated with the GLC years has been replaced by the realpolitik of a Labour Party which has capitulated to Thatcherism.



If we look at the Labour Council's present attitude to the police we find that it is determined by their need to use the police to control anti-poll tax demonstrations and protests against council policies. Their decision, made last October, to join the consultative group does not represent an attempt by the council to exert pressure on the police. The simple fact is that the council cannot criticise police injustice one day and expect them to turn out & support them the next.



Hackney Labour Council's U-turn came in a year (1990) when Hackney Community Defence Association dealt with 69 cases of police injustice in the borough. Already in 1991 the police have attacked peaceful Turkish and Kurdish strikers and justified their actions with wild allegations about "anarchist agitators" and "mobs threatening to storm Stoke Newington police station". The Labour council's decisions to give their support to the police will contribute to the marginalisation of protest in the borough, and strengthens the police's power immeasurably.

Graham Smith, Hackney Community Defence Association.

HOUSING: COUNCIL ATTACKS SQUATTERS AND HOMELESS

By getting people off the homeless waiting list to sign up tenancy agreements the council can legally evict squatters with no notice whatsoever by saying the flat is pre-allocated. By lowering the number of offers from 3 flats to 1 estate & without the right to view the flat beforehand the homeless are getting a raw deal. If the homeless person/family doesn't accept the offer they are chucked off the waiting list.

Hackney Council plan to evict over 3,000 people from all of its squatted properties by April 1992. Rather than challenging illegal occupants through the courts, as is normally the case, the council now serves PIO (protected intending occupiers) notices on squatters. This legislation is used as a safeguard against squatters moving into premises already allocated to someone else.

Housing officers were meant to be employed to escort families around estates but the council couldn't fill the posts. Instead the council have sent homeless families, many with little knowledge of English, around estates on their own & some squatters have had families knocking on doors asking to look around! The contempt the council has for squatters & the homeless is obvious.

Making the most vulnerable people deal with any possible aggravation is a deliberate attempt by the council to play 1 group of homeless off against another.



Council figures show that there are 3,200 empty properties in Hackney with 1,400 occupied by squatters & 1,800 empty. The council's priority in kicking out squatters whilst leaving hundreds of homes empty is designed to shift the blame for the scandal of empties from themselves onto the squatters; who are being blamed for 'jumping the queue,' taking other people's homes & keeping flats empty!

The council aren't even keeping to their own rules as it was stated in their own report that 'squatters believed to be potentially in priority need will be asked to complete a special form in order to be assessed under the 1985 Housing Act.' This hasn't happened with families & people who fall under priority need being evicted, sometimes in dawn raids backed by police.

Only then do the council recognise them as homeless, putting them into bed & breakfast or temporary accommodation. There have been instances of licences being given to certain families but this is arbitrary & at the discretion of individual housing offices/officers, leaving the system open to abuse (nod & a wink, know what I mean!)

There is already opposition to the evictions from tenants & squatters on some estates & Hackney Squatters Aid is providing a council wide focus for action. It now appears that some council workers are also beginning to see the logic of our arguments as well because on the afternoon of

April 26th squatters, supported by a some local trade unionists, were able to persuade UCATT members to down tools & refuse to carry out the clearing of flats previously occupied by squatters. The result was a motion passed by the Joint Shop Stewards Committee condemning the councils use of PIO's & refusing to help with evictions until there's a proper initiative to fill the emptys. This is the key to the fight as without the support of council workers – both white & blue collar – the councils plans would collapse.

With the council shoving the homeless into run down properties, without doing any repairs to bring them up to standard, the entire housing stock is being further run down. DLO workers should be doing what they do best, providing a decent repair service for tenants & bringing back empty properties to the housing pool, not employed as 'furniture removals', clearing flats of squatters property. This is a housing issue which affects all council workers & needs their urgent support to stop all evictions until all the emptys are filled.

Justyn, squatting with Kate & their 22 month child. Facing eviction.

A WASTE OF STAFF TIME

As a result of the Director of Housing (DOH) 'squatters initiative' report in February 1991 hundreds of housing staff hours are being spent allocating & evicting, without due regard to the council's statutory responsibilities towards priority homeless.

In effect councillors have been deliberately misled by the DOH into believing the evictions would only involve those who aren't priority homeless. Council officers are being asked to take part in this disgusting exercise, incensing squatters to such an extent that District Office 2 became the scene of an occupation & protest.

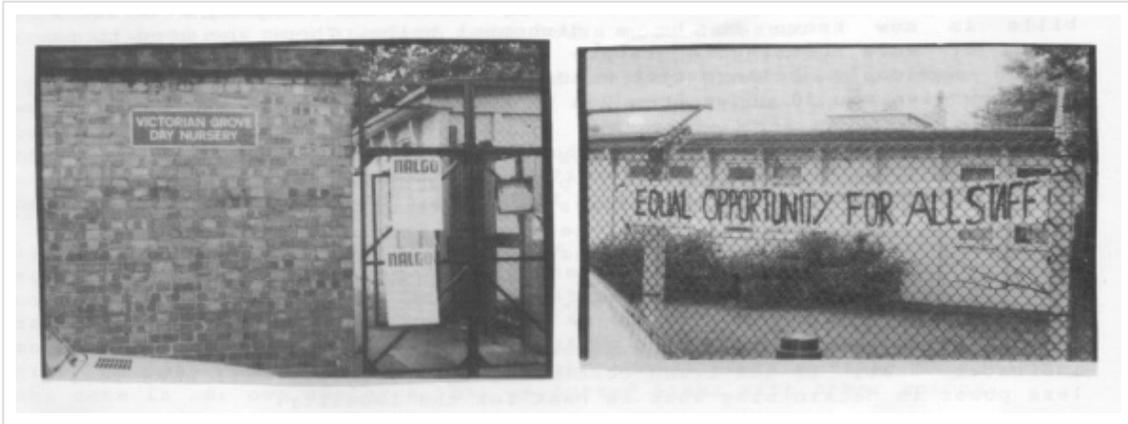
More evictions were due to take place on May 15th, & we still have no provision for assessing & advising potentially homeless people except for a few 'volunteers' from Housing Emergency Service (HES) on the day. This leaves the already overworked staff at 287 Mare Street with less resources to deal with the large numbers calling at HES.

Housing workers know that time would be better spent on bringing back into use those empty properties that aren't squatted, & that funds from Central Government should be demanded for this purpose. Also the wrecking of unoccupied properties by the council to make them uninhabitable is an absolute disgrace when thousands are homeless....

Council officers are bound by policies & procedures agreed by elected Councillors, & the current practice of mass evictions goes against agreed policies. Councillors should make the DOH accountable for his actions & stop blaming the homeless for living in empty properties. Stop the evictions – homelessness isn't a crime.

Written by a council housing worker.

UNITE, FIGHT & STRIKE



Last years 6 week occupation of Victorian Grove by staff, parents & local people showed that some workers are prepared to fight what is happening. These struggles must be developed & links must be made between workers in different unions & different boroughs in order to organise country wide industrial action against what is happening to Local Government jobs and services.

PAY NO POLL TAX

DIFFERENT MONKEY SAME TUNES



In the financial year 93/4 we are going to be subjected to the new 'Council Tax.' What this actually is & what it will mean to people's bills is shrouded in mystery. What it means for local government & services is much easier to see.

Under the tax bills will be calculated on the rebuilding costs of a property as determined by insurance companies. This will then be placed in 1 of 7 bands & a single bill issued to the head of the household; who will be responsible for collecting the money from the other occupiers. The bill assumes that 2 people live in the household; there will be a discount for single people.

There won't be a poll tax register; the council will have to check on the number of occupiers by referring to the electoral register or rely on people offering the information. Some people currently on 80% rebates may be ruled exempt.

However the poll tax will remain for the next 2 years, meaning more big bills, reminders, summonses, court appearances, bailiffs & the threat of imprisonment. The recently announced sweeping £140 cut in bills is now known to be a dishonest bribe. Those who used to pay rates or were getting a rebate may not be get all the £140. Does anyone seriously believe that Wandsworth has a 'minus' poll tax – that they now give you 10 pence when you go swimming or walk across a park!

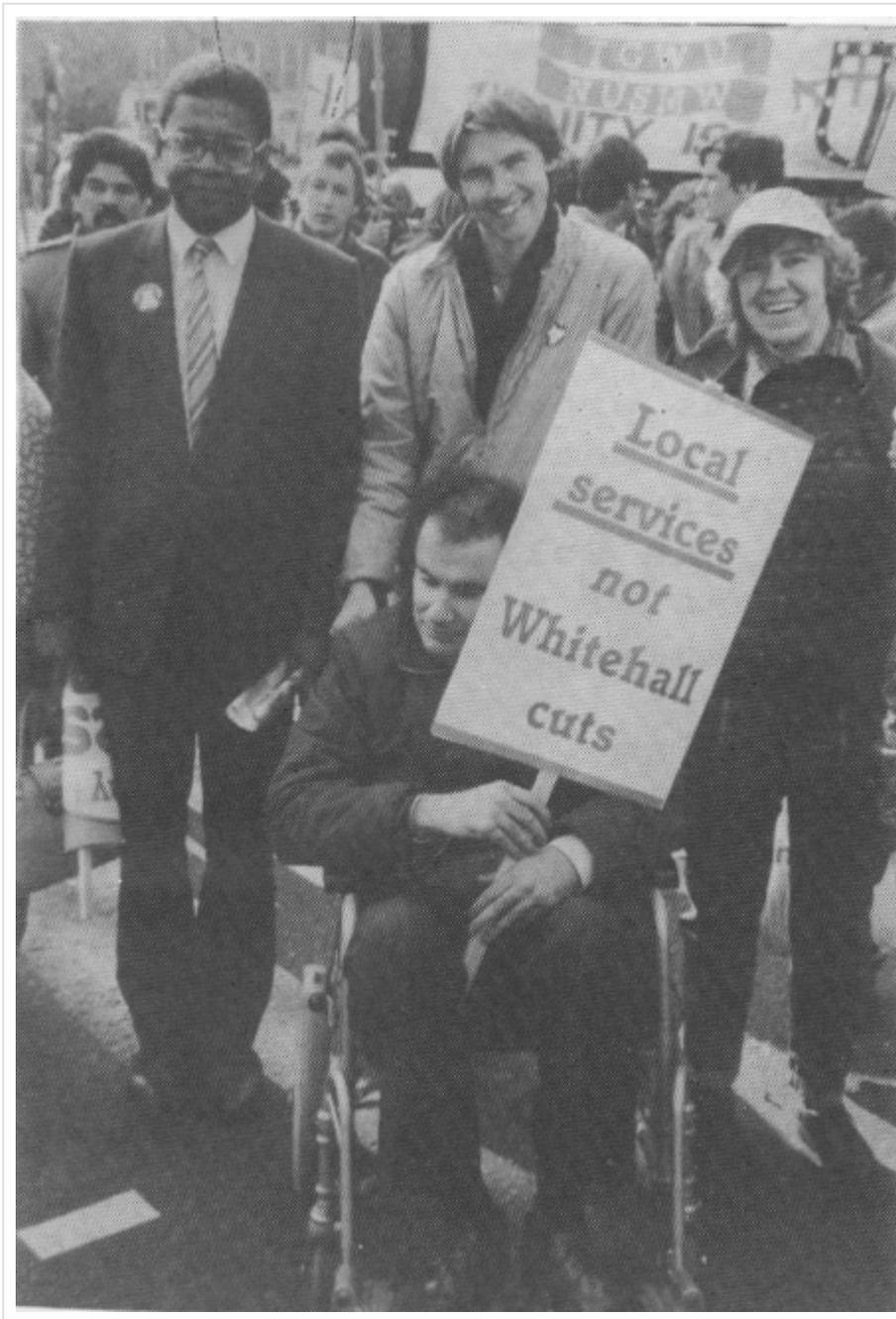
Continuous under-funding from the Tories has meant that councils have never had sufficient money to provide decent services. It could be argued that the poll tax has always been part of the Tories master plan to destroy local councils. Long-term under funding means that councils can't afford to provide services. They are forced into a process of collecting money at a level that is unworkable. Hackney people simply don't have £500 to pay the Poll Tax.

The fact that 16+ education is to be taken out of the hands of councils indicates that, if the trend continues, that councils will have less & less power in determining what is best for the locality.

Hackney council seems reluctant to realise the long-term implications of the poll tax. It seems happy to send bailiffs onto our streets & estates, at enormous expense, while tucked up in their offices making cuts across all aspects of local services & removing their very reason for existence. Hackney Council will go the way of the GLC & our local affairs will be under the complete control of Whitehall.

Gwen/Andrew of Victoria Anti-Poll Tax Union, personal capacity.

LET'S LINK UP AND FIGHT ALL CUTS



The latest & by no means final cuts have taken place within Hackney's voluntary sector. Amongst the T&GWU organised projects 10 members were made redundant, making a mockery of the deputy council leader, Tommy Shepherd's, statement that the cuts wouldn't mean redundancies.

The TGWU/ACTSS branch aimed to fight the cuts by linking with the Town Hall unions in fighting all cuts in jobs & services, but there were problems. Firstly, most non union voluntary groups – & some unionised – played no part once they found they were not on the 'hit list.'

Secondly, by campaigning around Mentmore Industries Marsh Hill, instead of against all cuts, many of those threatened by cuts didn't forge links between each other. When the cuts in Mentmore & Marsh Hill were pushed through there was nothing in reserve to resist the attacks.

Thirdly, it was obvious that once strike action had been called for March 6th, many of the town hall unions didn't put in the work needed to ensure that their members took action. Indeed without the teachers the turn out would have been pathetic. Since then there has been no effort to escalate the action or to form links with other threatened council workers. This attitude will cause more defeats.

Despite the Poll Tax's demise the Tories have made it clear that attacks on councils will continue, whatever the system of local taxation. The same 'street level' resistance that developed against the Poll tax is needed to defend local government. To do this we will also have to fight many in the official union movement who did their best to ensure that the Poll Tax fight was kept off the union agendas.

As for the voluntary sector, it looks as if there will be major battles against cuts in the near future. The sector appears to be seen by the council as a soft option who hope that projects around the borough will feel isolated & that there will be no support for the sector from the town hall unions. That is why whilst we lost some of the battles this time it was important that we fought a high profile campaign against the cuts in our own sector & that we forged links with other unions.

The consequences of doing nothing is being seen with services & jobs being decimated in Haringey & Lambeth. We must break out of the 'save our bit' mentality & start having a broader outlook on how to defend local government, involving workers & users of the services. This could be expanded to link with other public services such as post, transport & health, with mass strike action being the ultimate aim.

John Lang, Hackney TGWU/ACTSS 1/477 branch secretary.

Affiliation Form

This organisation believes that the local services provided by Councils have reached a crisis point due to years of government cuts in revenue support, begun under the Callaghan Labour Government, continued as a central policy issue of the Tories, & capped by the Poll Tax. Standards of service have declined, staffing levels & wages of workers have been depressed, and complete closure of services are escalating rapidly.

Although central government is ultimately to blame for this state of affairs, local Labour Councils have chosen to wait for the dubious promise of restoration of lost finance from a future Labour Government. They have not fought the cuts, but have actively collaborated with the Tories to ensure some kind of say in what gets axed. Council union leaders have played a similar role, refusing to wholeheartedly fight cuts for fear of losing a token say in how cuts are implemented.

The tactics used have been to divide & conquer – squatters against other homeless people, DLO workers against Library services, council workers against the community sector. We must unite to fight all cuts & recognise that those who have done the Tories dirty work – council leaders, Management & union bureaucrats – & protected themselves are the enemies of the workers, groups & service users who have borne the brunt of the cuts.

In affiliating to Hackney Against the Cuts, this organisation recognises that all areas face the same problems & agrees to sponsor a conference on the future of Local services which HATC is

planning, along with a number of different organisations & union branches. We also agree to support HATC by taking copies of the bulletin to distribute/sell to all our members/users/affiliates.

We enclose affiliation/sponsorship fee of £ (£10 organisations under/£25 over 1000 members, additional donations always welcome.) to add to the £420 already raised by HATC.

We will take copies of the bulletin to sell.

Return to: Hackney Against the Cuts, Box Number 1, 136 Kingsland High Street, London E8.
Telephone:- 081 533 5506 (Tom or Pam) or 071 254 4815. (Mark)

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Hackney Heckler issue 1, March 1990

Posted on [February 19, 2011](#)



Poll Tax In Crisis!

April's Fool Day is when the Poll Tax bills come thudding through the letter boxes in Hackney. What the government doesn't realise is that the laugh will be on them as all over the borough thousands of people are already pledging not to pay the Poll Tax. In some areas the figure is as high as 65% in support of non-payment. In Hackney there are some 25 anti-Poll Tax groups set up to spread the word that the Poll Tax isn't welcome here, and to encourage mass non-payment. They have been active having regular street stalls, holding public meetings and door to door calling to make sure people aren't left isolated in their stand against the hated Tax.

There's also been successful pickets and leafleting of the Poll Tax and unemployment offices to show workers there that the community will back any stand they are able to make against the Tax.

When Hackney Council sent out its army of snoopers to intimidate people into registering, the harassment and opposition they were met with forced the council to back down and not issue any fines for those not registered. Not only were the snoopers met with hostile crowds but on a number of occasions had their files confiscated and were escorted off estates! No wonder they're having difficulty in getting our names.

In November Tory Minister Christopher Chope thought he would brave the odds and visit Hackney Town Hall to quieten fears among top businessmen about the effects of the Poll Tax. He was met with the reception he deserved: an angry group of protesters managed to dodge security precautions and storm the public gallery in the middle of his speech. A **flour bomb** sailed across the chamber and exploded above his head engulfing him in a cloud of flour. That he met in Hackney Town Hall was no surprise as so far the council's response to the Tax has been predictable.



— Their Charge Or Ours?

There has hardly been a murmur of protest other than complaining to the government about what an unfair position they've been put in as the people who have to implement and collect the Tax. Their opposition amounts to showing the Poll Tax in their "information campaign" as a dark cloud ready to engulf us all. The reality is far from this with people knowing that this time Thatcher and her cronies have gone one step too far. This time they're not taking on isolated groups of people but the whole working class on mass! This is where our strength lies. A mass campaign of non-

payment which will strangle the Poll Tax and its supporters before it has a chance of getting off the ground.

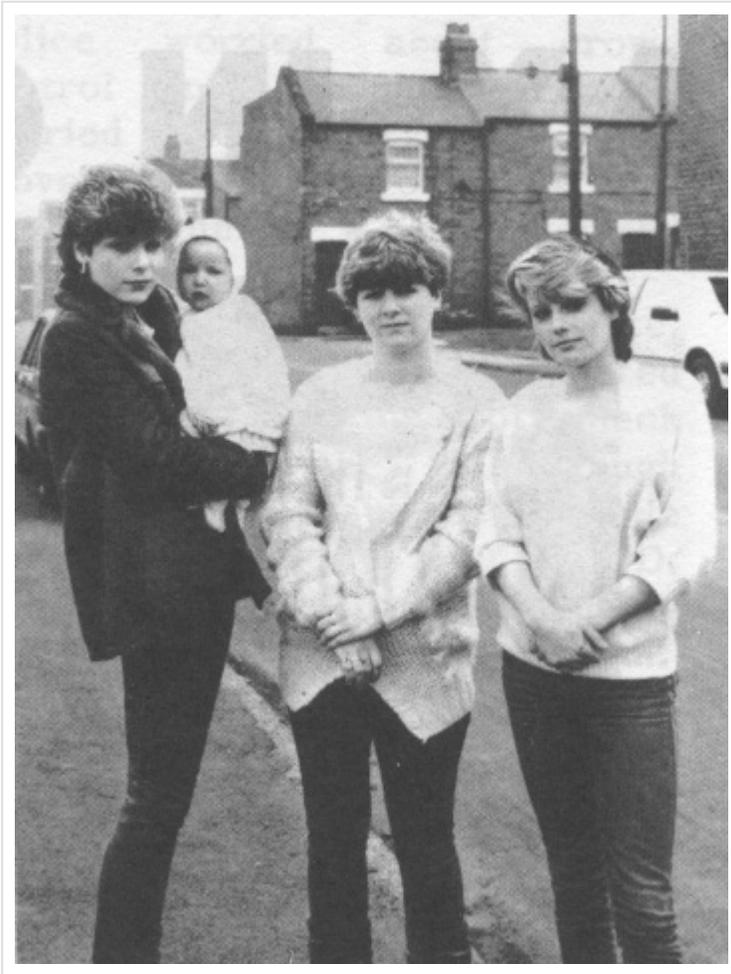
This has shown itself to be the way in Scotland where, with the Poll Tax being introduced a year earlier than in England and Wales, mass non-payment is a growing reality. In some areas such as Glasgow 1 in 3 haven't paid a penny! Despite all the intimidation and threats that the government and councils have thrown at people, the level of non-payment has grown in the last nine months. This means that there is well over a million people not paying the Poll Tax in Scotland. If the same figures were applied to England and Wales, there would be well over ten million non-payers nationally.

WE ARE MANY
THEY ARE FEW
WE'RE GOING TO WIN

WAR AGAINST SINGLE PARENTS

The latest government attack on ordinary people is the plan to enforce fathers to pay maintenance for their children. The reasoning behind this is to cut the amount of money paid out in social security to single parent families.

At present single unmarried mothers face some scrutiny regarding the father of their child. Under a new system which is being investigated, the courts could force men who are 'suspected' of being fathers to take blood and genetic tests. This is part of an American scheme which Tony Newton, the Social Security minister, is studying which may be copied or adapted for use in Britain.



American women who refuse to be intimidated by paternity investigators are having their benefit stopped. When forced to comply they face rigid questioning about their personal lives in order to justify the pathetic poverty inducing payments.

If this system is adopted, fathers may have their wages docked. Whilst women left with children need a way to ensure they are paid maintenance, the judges and courts who set the rates have no idea of the hardships often faced by both parties. Although the government seeks sympathy for single mothers, they are in fact only making savings which benefit the rich and ruling class.

Victory!

On Monday 22nd January Glenford Lewis appeared at Snaresbrook Crown Court and was told that he could go free. He had been charged with possession of cocaine. But the charge was nothing more than a total frame- up. No drugs were found on him and there was no forensic evidence.

The police claimed that the case could not go ahead because one officer was too ill to turn up. But this was really because they knew that their case was too weak to stand up in court.

The impact of the charge on Glenford Lewis has been enormous. When he was arrested, he was savagely beaten up in the back of a police van and he is lost work since the arrest. As he said: "I feel really bad about this whole thing. I've twice lost a job over this – it has cost me a lot".

There have been many cases of fabricated evidence and beatings by the Hackney police. They seem to think they can get away with anything. But Glenford Lewis has shown that we don't have to be intimidated and that we can defeat them when they step out of line. Glenford Lewis now plans to sue the police for wrongful and malicious arrest. Many other people have taken the police to court and won.

The crucial thing is not to be intimidated by the police. As this case shows, they aren't invincible and can be defeated. Don't let them grind us down.

If you want more information about the case, contact Hackney Community Defence Association, 50 Rectory Road, N16.

“TRAINING”

British bosses are so impressed by the highly skilled workers the government's E.T. programme is turning out, that the CBI, the employers' federation, has convinced the government to extend the scheme. The new change, expected sometime around October, will mean that the maximum length of 'training' will be extended to 2 years. The present system of a minimum of 20% off the job will be abolished; i.e. it will be a 100% 'work experience' for 2 years for £10 a week. No wonder the bosses like it so much!

STUFF IT

Here comes the Poll Tax and we're getting ready for it. As they say in Scotland, one million Scots can't be wrong. On Saturday 31st March there is a massive demonstration against the Poll Tax: meet Kennington Park (5E11), 12 noon. Don't miss it! And on Monday 2nd April there is a lobby of the local Poll Tax office at Stoke Newington Town Hall (Stoke Newington Church St) from 12 to 2.

WHITEWASH

Hackney Council's latest scheme is to paint the Town Hall...with money supposed to be spent on our estates! No wonder our estates are such dumps. Hackney Tenants' Fed Chair, Terry Edwards, said "It's bloody madness". We couldn't agree more...

DAYS QUOTE

"I've been mucked about all my life and I'm sick of it...I've no chance of paying the Poll Tax...they can threaten me and do whatever they like but there's one thing they can't try and that's take away my dog Jamie". Nellie Freshwater, 69 year old pensioner against the Poll Tax.

Know Your Rights

Domestic Violence

'Domestic violence' is a general term that can mean physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse. Women's experiences are usually a mixture of all three. A lot of men use humiliation, threats and/or force to control the women and children they have access to.

Women from every class, race and religion are abused. The first step in dealing with it is to recognise it for what it is and stop denying or downplaying it. The abusive man is responsible for the abuse. It is not a woman's fault, despite unhelpful myths and stereotypes to the contrary.

You have the right to live free of fear, threat or abuse. These are some organisations who will help you if you need it:

London Women's Aid: 251 6537 (24 hours, answer machine with emergency numbers outside office hours). They will give you details of refuge space including refuges for Asian, Afro-Caribbean and Latin American women. They will also put you in touch with someone sympathetic and knowledgeable to talk to if that's what is needed.

Rights of Women 251 6577/6575 (24 hours, answer machine at night). Will put you in touch with experienced, sympathetic local solicitors, offer legal advice sessions and give advice about Legal Aid, injunctions, custody and immigration laws.

London Rape Crisis 837 1600 (24 hours). Phone counseling, advice and support.
The following numbers may be useful. but are not run solely by women: Hackney Council Housing Department emergency number 533 3244. Emergency DSS 986 3266/6428/6251.

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS HAPPENING?

1989 saw massive changes in Eastern Europe. Elections in Poland saw Eastern Europe's first non communist leader in 40 years. In Hungary the communist party gave up its constitutional right to power. In Czechoslovakia a general strike brought down the government. In East Germany mass demonstrations toppled the government and the Berlin Wall. In Romania, bloody insurrection ended Europe's most repressive dictatorship.

The most amazing feature of this series of events has been its speed. But the process has been developing over a number of years, as the old leaders became increasingly unable to cope with the world recession.

The strikes and demonstrations in Poland in 1980-81 were the forerunners of today's movements. It was the massive strike wave in Poland in 1988 that forced the first retreat by the old regimes, the seeming collapse of government and promise of free elections.

The people brought the change. There occurred from one end of Eastern Europe to the other an immense mobilisation of people power. As the events in Eastern Europe have shown, the people do have a massive amount of power. People in Eastern Europe have learnt that ordinary people are not powerless.

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— Cracks in Eastern Europe Shatter the Berlin Wall

Ordinary people *can* change things – if they get together.

However, as the dust begins to settle, there is much talk of democracy and the free market in the countries swept by revolution. So what is the reality of Eastern Europe? In Poland there is a massive escalation of the price of basic goods. Solidarnosc declared that living standards must be reduced by 20% in 1990. On top of this, mass unemployment looks set to follow, as 1/3 of all workers will be made redundant if all “non profitable” (sound familiar?) companies are forced to close, according to the Solidarnosc government.

With the government's ban on strikes and demonstrations, for the people of Poland the only thing that's changed is the government!

In Romania there is a government ban on impromptu meetings and demonstrations. But the people who made the revolutions are showing signs of dissatisfaction with this situation. Romania sees repeated demonstrations against the government. In Poland strikes and protests are continuing. And in East Germany elections have been brought forward for fear of the country being made ungovernable. Its leader, Hans Modrow, is warning of the dangers of demonstrations and the disruption of the work process. He fears that the measures needed to ‘transform’ the regime will provoke a backlash that cannot be controlled.

The only thing certain is that the power of the people will have an important part to play. As the recession deepens and people everywhere start to fight back, the power of the people can bring about change, both east and west. But, as the people in Eastern Europe are finding out, a change in government is not necessarily a change of life. This can only be guaranteed if we by-pass governments altogether and bring about change ourselves.

Power to the people!

RENT RISE SHOCKER

Council rents are due to increase by up to £22 a week in April This massive increase has been caused both by government cuts and changes in the council's housing policy. Over 3,000 tenants face increases of more than £1.0 a we. Overall, the average increase is £5.23 a week. But Hackney Mayor Peggy Edwards said, "We shouldn't increase rents when we're providing such a poor service." Yet Hackney Council has never listened to council tenants and it's not going to start now. The only way to make them listen is to hit them back.

Already, thousands of tenants are on unofficial rent strike (commonly criticised as rent arrears). There's over £12,000,000 owing to the council in rents. Let's extend and unify this rent strike. Make it a collective movement against both the council and the government. It's the only way we can get anything.

'Hackney Heckler' is a free news-sheet produced by people living and working in Hackney. We welcome contributions, donations, reports, help with distribution. What's happening on your estate? Which councillor is corrupt? Write to us at 'Hackney Heckler', c/o Hackney Solidarity Group, 61 Leswin Rd, N16. We plan to bring out the Heckler once every two months: next issue May.

TORIES STUFFED 5-0

Football fans all over the country were delighted with the resounding defeat of the Tories madcap ID card scheme. Despite a strong first half performance where Thatcher attempted to rout the working class with her forwards, the state, police and media, a strong second half comeback by football fans saw the true blues wide open defence crumble.

1-0: despite employing Tory Judge Taylor to "fix" the report he couldn't even give the ill-thought scheme the thumbs up.

2-0: pet hamster and hockey hooligan Colin Moynihan was totally crap. It became obvious that he knew F.A. about football and we're not talking about the Cup.

3-0: Dutch fans showed the way when an attempt to introduce the scheme there ended in riots and the schemes' withdrawal.

4-0: football fans organised themselves superbly, putting pressure on their clubs to oppose the Bill and standing together regardless of who they supported. Of 92 clubs, only Tory run Luton and Brentford supported the Bill.

5-0: pressure from the Police worried about crowd control and Football Directors worried about the cost of it proved to be an own-goal for the Government as both advised against it.

On a more serious note, the Taylor Report admitted that the kind of crowd bottleneck which led to the Hillsborough disaster would have been made much more likely by an I.D. Card scheme, with fans taking much longer to enter the stadium.

The Bill was defeated because fans everywhere were sick of their game being used as a scapegoat for all the System's failings. Football hooliganism is greatly exaggerated, for the most part taking place away from the grounds with rival "firms" out to "do" each other. The ordinary fan has more chance of being beaten up by the Police who use soccer as a training ground for crowd control.

The Judges report recommended all-seater stadiums; this must be resisted, they're our clubs and we can stand if we want to. One thing the Judge did get right was slamming the Boards of Directors who infest the game; so lets make the I.D. victory a start and kick them out, taking control of our clubs ourselves: we could give the Luxury Boxes to O.A.P.'s and disabled fans. Now we've stuffed Thatcher, lets sack the Board – forever!!

-Here We Go-





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