POLYDROME DEMANDS OF THE OCCUPATION (finalised after discussions at mass meetings on all 6 occupied sites)

1. That there be no victimisation of any person involved in this action.
2. That the Polytechnic returns to at least 1990/1 staff-student ratios — this would include the reinstating of all posts which have been cut.
3. The immediate reopening of all sites as a teaching site and assurance that no other site will be closed.
4. A significant improvement in educational facilities and student support services.
5. That the management deal with their financial crisis without further detriment to students.
6. That management give a written public acknowledgement (acceptable to the student body) through the national press of their mismanagement and stating that educational provision is inadequate.
7. That steps are taken to reduce overcrowding on all sites.
8. Restoration of all benefits and grants....

SECRET BALLOTS AND OTHER ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE OCCUPATION

Several students who opposed the occupation have complained that it would have been fairer to use secret ballots to decide whether or not to occupy. This sounds more democratic, but elections for union posts, involve secret ballots and they never attract anything like the huge number of students who attended the six occupation meetings we had last term. There were so many that students could not fit into the room at the Enfield meeting, showing again the inadequacies of that overcrowded site; the large hall at Enfield was converted into the library so they could pack in more students when they closed All Saints.

Some who opposed last terms action argued that union meetings attract pro-occupation students and not those that oppose action. But if this were the case how do they explain the overwhelming vote against occupation amongst the Boudicea Green engineers or the fact that Trent Park voted against a 24 hour occupation a few weeks before they voted to go into indefinite occupation. Others argued that the Trent Park and Enfield meetings were hectic and disorganised; there is some truth in this, people were very heated and even the most experienced chair would have had problems coping. However all views were openly aired at the meetings and clear majorities voted for the action.

The most absurd argument against the occupation vote was the one implying that Cat Hill students swamped the meetings and swayed the vote for occupation. Cat Hill students were there only to see if people would vote as many local students as possible along to the meetings to make it as democratic as possible. There were of course far too few of them to swamp anything, especially as at Trent Park they were standing in the mansion doorways to prevent them from being locked. Cat Hill was always in the past the least politically active site and the image of extreme left wing Cat Hillians manipulating other sites for their own evil ends is too ridiculous to contemplate.

The strength of the wave of occupations last term came as a surprise to many of us, but it is not surprising that, after twelve years of Tory rule many students would rather keep their heads down, look after number one and oppose any collective attempt to save the benefits of this education for themselves and future generations. Perhaps I am being unfair to those who opposed occupation but it seems the reason that many are so obsessed with the technical detail of how the vote was taken is that they have no effective alternatives to stop the destruction of all that is worthwhile in Higher Education.

WHAT'S IT CALLED WHEN THE MINORITY RULES? FREE ENTERPRISE.