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APPENDIX 1

Minutes of Militant meetings in Blackburn and Preston

Minutes of Blackburn Militant meeting on 12.12.1982.

Minutes of Blackburn Militant meeting on 09.01.1983.

Minutes of Preston Militant meeting on 22.11.1982.

Minutes of Blackburn Militant meeting on 28.09.1982.

Minutes of Lancashire aggregate meeting on 20.10.1982.

Minutes of Blackburn Militant meeting on 24.10.1982.

BLACKBURN BRANCH MILITANT

MEETING 12.12.82.

To Commence factory sales after New Year.

Sent £173.70 to Centre (£130 was target)

Programme for New Year is to be centred around Asian sub committee and LPYS

Drop Harry Atwal as he is unreliable, put Paul ? onto Ethnic Sub committee.

Launch YS campaign early in New Year particularly concentrating on Youth unemployment.

Full-timers

Peter Harris not employed by District yet, but to remain "unemployed" whilst training, and will become paid once contributions are increased.

Racist Sub committee

Peter has been told by District to keep the Chair - Des/Michael/Paul/ Peter/Kay to caucus on it before next meeting - must have a meeting to keep GMC off its back.

Phil Frampton who is a black comrade coming in January to give some direction on above.

The Asian Brotherhood has never materialised.

Felt that Harry Atwal is just using his position to attack Frank Higham - MT to steer clear of this.

However, must still maintain contact with the Asian Brotherhood - it doesn't matter if it is religious, there will be those with potential who can be recruited.

Paper sales in Jan/Feb at Blackburn Rovers ground.

Also, YS must be selling and going into youth clubs talking to young people.

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BLACKBURN MILITANT BRANCH

ORGANISATION

Members:
P. Harris
R. Harris
S. Bush
K. Wright
D. Mulcahy
Michie Thornton
also her husband
Stuart? (in Navy as well)
Damien ? (LPYS chairman)
Tony ? (tall Irish lad)
Julie ?
Dave Eastham

Mary Orange (Mill Hill Ward press officer)
and Paul ? (Queen's Park ward)

Blackburn:	Chair	P. Harris
	Secretary	K. Wright
	Treasurer	Julie ?
	Paper Sales	K. Wright
	Fighting Fund Organiser	Michie Thornton

Executive Committee:
R. Harris
K. Wright
S. Bush
D. Mulcahy

Delegates to District:
R. Harris
S. Bush
D. Mulcahy
K. Wright

Chairman of Lancs District: R. Harris

Lancs Organiser (paid) Jerry Learner;
and Peter Harris (training)

MILITANT TENDENCY BLACKBURN BRANCH
MEETING Sunday 9.1.83.

a) Ordinary business
b) Marxist discussion
c) Reorganisation of Blackburn Branch

Now that MT in Blackburn have 17 comrades, on instructions from HQ the Branch is to split into 2 autonomous branches - "A" and "B".

A will be Blackburn to Ewood and Revidge and Mill Hill. B will cover Accrington, Shadsworth, Highercroft and remainder of Darwen.

Will be 7 members in Blackburn. "A" - Officers to be

Chair: R. Harris
Secretary: Mary Orange
Other officer: Des Mulcahy
Others: Michael Gregory and 3 LPYS members

"B" Branch will be:

Chair: P. Harris
Secretary: K. Wright
Officer: Paul ?
Officer: Simon Bush
Fighting Fund
Organiser: Michie Thornton
and remainder of LPYS members

There will be a joint committee of 6 people - P. Harris, R. Harris, K. Wright, S. Bush, D. Mulcahy, Paul ? - or Tony (tall Irish lad).

The 2 branches will meet weekly. A Branch at Rossina's in Dukes Brow - Sunday 6 p.m. (10 members)

B Branch at Kay's or Michie's on Sunday 6 p.m.

The joint committee will deal with all business and report back to their respective branches for ratification, etc.

It was stressed that there was no trial period, and that each branch had to elect its own fighting fund organiser and other officers, paper sales organiser etc. at its AGM in February.

Each branch would be completely separate and not dependent on the other. The joint committee will coordinate plans for Blackburn, Darwen and Accrington.

Was some strong dissention from this, and Branch was very concerned with S. Bush. Also, Des Mulcahy.

(At a private meeting with R & P Harris and K. Wright, I was asked to"take Des under my wing" - whilst there were doubts about my actual footwork, it was accepted that politically I could serve the Tendency by sending reports to Militant as a regional reporter for the paper - writing and collecting material for the paper).

At the same private meeting (on 10.1.83) it was suggested that Simon be expelled as the Branch is strong enough to cope without his actual physical presence and his political consciousness was destructive to other, newer comrades.

Expulsion procedure

a) Branch votes
b) Member has right of appeal to District
c) Member has right of appeal to Central Committee
d) Member has ultimate right of appeal to Annual Conference.

Anti Racist Sub Committee - Blackburn

Caucus on Thursday 13th January 7.30 p.m. before LPYS at 8 p.m.

Call meeting for 7 p.m. on Friday, 7 p.m. before GMC

Delegates to Regional Conference

Concern at Steve Weaver being nominated

M. Gregory to be proposed at EC (that didn't come up at the EC) - and at GMC, together with P. Harris.

R. Harris is women's delegate; K. Wright is LPYS delegate.

P. Harris worried about his nomination because it has to be made for him to be nominated as a regional committee member.

However, if P, Harris doesn't obtain delegation, R. Harris to be nominated as a Regional Committee member.

Dates

Regional (Lancs, Manchester, Liverpool) Caucus

1. Youth meeting 15.1.83 at "Star and Garter". Fairfield Street. 12 p.m. - 5 p.m. (in Manchester) on Youth perspectives.
2. 23.1.83 - Preston Aggregate - Annual District General Meeting - Perspectives on Ireland and Great Britain; International REport. - in Preston 1.30-4.30pm
3. MT Day School in Wigan on Marxism; Stalinism etc. and so forth - crash course 12.2.83.
4. 20.2.83 - Mass canvass in Edgehill by all comrades in Region for MT PPC.

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PRESTON BRANCH MEETING 22.11.82

REPORT FROM MT CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Is a national YS committee of MT - looks at youth perspectives.

Regional and national YS conferences are being definitely organised.

Conference is in Bridlington. Target is 2700 - N. West should send 250 people. Will be a campaign of anti witchhunt/fight the Tories theme.

Main progamme will be MT proposals - basically this will be seen as a recruiter to YS, therefore inevitably MT.

WITCHHUNT

A new significant development is that is is suspected on Wednesday, YS members will be able by a rule change from NEC to have 2 delegates if YS branch is over 20 members.

Should be over 600 actual delegates for YS conference.

Is a National MT Youth caucus on 26/27 Feb, 1983, in MT Centre in London, prior to conference.

YS by end of June should have sorted out all accommodation and transport etc.

District Youth Bureau to take on this responsibility.

£5 will be charged for delegate credentials, and also £5 per visitor - this will finance YS Summer School if funds are stopped by NEC.

Youth Dept, at MT Centre will draw up resolutions for YS conference. and send individual ones to each District. Send them back to Walworth Road by registered post, or to MT Centre to be delivered by hand so they can't be said to be "lost" etc.

Delegates must all attend the caucus to ensure political success at the conference.

WITCH HUNT GENERALLY

The immense victory in past few weeks by MT has been on our tactics - very successful - particularly with the alarm bells via legal problems and press - has sent right wing running for cover.

Therefore tactics in applying the threat of legal action has once again shown our tactical plans to be right.

MORTIMER PROPOSALS FOR 24.11.82.

We have had a copy of this in MT Centre. His proposals are contradictory. He is saying that whilst it is an organisation are also supporters. Therefore impossibility of indentification.

In the document he clearly doesn't decide which way to go. Register is unworkable, useless so far as the right wing is concerned.

They now propose action under S. 2(3) and (4). Cl. 2(3) prevents affiliation - 1920's clause. Cl. 2 (4) is proscription clause.

Right wing are proposing to go back to these and introduce proscribed list.

But MT have always denied existence of organisation - we have never applied to join organisation. He has never proved we are an organisation receiving money from abroad.

Mortimer has said that MT will be ineligible for affiliation and also to interview 5 members of editorial board to give them a "fair hearing".

PPC's have all renounced organisational links with MT. This is our biggest victory, because it was this that provoked the witchhunt. The right wing can now do nothing about our PPC's.

Union leaders could not drum up enough support for proscription therefore it can't ever come into effect.

In relation to YS - on report - recommends no purges or expulsions - Labour Party needs the "foot soldiers". He proposes all YS literature would be in support of party policy.

This would hamper us. We now need to undertake resolutions to all CLP's GMC's (to NEC) calling for support for LPYS - particularly publication of document, eg. "Northern Ireland - which way forward?".

This must be a systematic campaign.

Mortimer also says the campaign budget will be put under the control of LP campaign budget. This means us raising money ourselves.

Therefore the LPYS branches that are MT controlled, must raise its own funds.

Must recruit apprentices and young workers in TU's.

Also, Mortimer says all YS members must not support or promote MT.

This should be fought at every stage of the way.

Publicity has been tremendous. Has great potential. Central Committee has reported membership now 3500. In past 2 weeks, 104 people have joined MT.

Target of 6000 members has been revised at last week's CC meeting. - now 4000 by December, and 4500 by end of January 1983.

Therefore every branch has to increase on average by one-third.

Paper needs to be more often. This brings into question finance.

FINANCE

Nationally, the organisation is in a bad financial position.

(By the way everything is computerised - saw some of the readouts. Also, all regional organisers are linked by radio channels in case of telephone difficulties. Is a set at MT HQ powerful enough to get urgent messages if hampered. Suggested local branches ought to look at use of CB).

Presently the bills of MT are £18000. We do have £10000, therefore deficit of £8000.

Also, running at a deficit of £800 per week. Therefore fundraising has to be taken more seriously.

In 1974, total income of MT was @443 per week. Expenditure was £478 per week.

1982 income averaged £8574 per week
Expenditure £9387 per week
Therefore deficit again.

(How do they cover these deficits?)

Minimum subs is therefore to be raised to £4 for all comrades, so that the projected full timers can't be cut back.

Inside the year, the paper must go daily and full time organiser must double as a result.

Income from subs. has remained fairly static. This is really vital that we examine it. Branch treasurers should tell all unemployed and student comrades it is £4 per week from now on.

Also, every comrade is to immediately donate an extra week's subs - whatever it is they pay. This will relieve present deficit and could become a regular feature.

All YS branches are to have a regular collection for MT FF at each weekly meeting. YS comrades to appoint a collector to do this - to send to HQ in London.

Has been launched a national campaign fund of £1000 per month (National Youth). Therefore comrades in N. West should contribute £100 per month in addition to all other subs. etc.

District Youth Bureau should organise this starting December.

Also, CLP's should be asked for donations if they support anti-witchhunt resolution.

Each YS branch should also have at least £50 in bank.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

All money P. Harris received for conference went straight (£40) to Fighting Fund as he stopped at a comrade's house.

The sponsored walk (given as an example) in Blackburn by Peter is a good PR exercise. We can raise money at GMC's in this manner and then get it diverted.

YOUTH WORK IN DISTRICT

Has been a lack of coordination in district between branches - this is first one between Blackburn and Preston.

Financing via TU's must be increased - bucket collections etc. Could concentrate on YOPS.

Youth Bureau must me supported. Has fallen down in past because 1) of Simon Bush being incapable (he is to be brought before disciplinary committee for his attitude); 2) because there is no secondary leadership in branches - no "shoe filling" training provided.

Must be a district youth meeting every month. Branches must become less "Branch" orientated - must be more "District" coordinated.

District Youth Bureau in past has met 3 times - gives report backs from all YS branches. Helps coordination. Breaks down isolationist YS branches.

Preston; Blackburn; Burnley; Nelson and Colne will all work together.

Are now 2 contacts in Darwen - this gives possibility of opening doors there.

Youth Bureau could set up Darwen.

Asking for money from CLP's - this should be seen politically. Propose YS under attack - show it is being hampered - play on sympathy - say money is being used to help LPYS's defence. Also get people in GMC's to sign appeal forms and hold official collections in GMC's and unofficial ones at the door.

National YS appeal letter is going to all TU's and local letters must be produced to local TU's.

Daily paper is under a feasability study by Central Committee - they will report to National Conference of MT. This will be in late February/early March.

It seems likely the paper will go bi-weekly before daily.

GENERAL

Members reminded of military style leadership of MT. Examples given of Chile - failure there. Comrades need to prepare themselves in long term for possible use of force - possibly M. Gregory to give a lead off on use of violence - a socialist perspective - how can it be justified: how can we organise previous.

Jack Straw - due for reselection. If there is a control physically of GMC will definitely put opposition to him.

Would even oppose him via someone like Graham Chadwick if only have political control of GMC - that would avoid a defeat for us because he (Straw) would win in these circumstances.

Leo to try and obtain info. about Jack's activities in his ward, his attitudes, movements etc. - possibly could be of use later to embarrass him - eg. when he was a cllr. - look at this more. Get minutes etc.

Look at his attitude when he was in same CLP as Peter Taffe. His personal attitude could be used against him in a political sense.

All comrades were to mix socially, not just at meetings.

Particularly Michael Gregory (it seems I intimidate comrades, particularly younger ones because of my general knowledge and blunt approach to foolish statements.) Must be more tact from leading comrades. Weaker comrades must be given special seminars.

Political development - possibly some kind of district seminars on a classroom basis rather than the Marxist discussion at each meeting. This would advance everybody.

A special meeting to be convened to decide on S. Bush. Could be expelled from group; certainly he has to be disciplined in some way - his attitude is bad; lazy; not paying enough subs; not coming to all meetings; not taking his responsibilities seriously

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MILITANT MEETING: BLACKBURN BRANCH

28 September, 1982.

Agenda

a) District Committee REport
b) British Perspectives
c) Witchhunt
d) Organisational matters
e) Papers etc.
f) Business
g) Reports
h) Fund Raising
i) A.O.B.

Members Present

(See attached members' list)

District Committee Report

This is a report from S. Bush, R. Harris, K. Wright who represent Blackburn Militant Tendency (MT) Branch on the Lancashire District Committee (LDC) of MT.

The District Committee (LDC) meet every 2 months. The full time organiser is Jerry Learner.

There are 3 areas to report back on here: i) British perspectives; ii) witchhunt; iii) organisational matters.

British Perspectives

Re-emphasise crisis of capitalism. France has devalued franc 3 times. UK upturn of economy is very slight.

The dithering of MIchael Foot has been shown. There is a possiblity of a hung parliament due to SDP.

There is a complete unaccountability of our leadership.

There is a run-down of industry (Bill Mullins is a MT full time industrial organiser).

Many of MT's ideas have found their way into Labour's Programme '82.

However, do not underestimate trade union right wing leaders.

Prepare for unofficial strikes by workers who are trying to bypass the leadership.

Beware of sectarian groups who call for dual unions.

Collapse of world economy predicted.

WITCHHUNT

From September 11th Conference there is a reluctance of left reformists (Bennites etc.) to defend MT.

However, some trade union leaders are approaching MT leaders for compromise if MT promise not to enter.

The NEC will only go for the "inner core" - ie. editorial board - but look to the right wing on the NEC - they may go for a few more.

The MT is going to call a national 2/3 day assembly shortly.

Also, be prepared to see candidates saying that they won't sell the paper. This is only a tactic. It is not a "give in " on idealism.

It is because of its strength that MT has gone ahead. The setback is only temporary - there will be a swing back to the left in 1-2 years.

ORGANISATIONAL

The LPYS Broadcast:

306 people applied to join the Labour Party (LP)
112 joined LPYS
12 joined MT

1200 people have left the MT since formation.

Figures in MT:	November 1981	2,056
	29 Aug. 1982	3,179
	10 Sept. 1982	3,267

Target for Lancs. District is: 122
Presently is: 65

National target for 1982 (by Dec,) = 6,132

22 MT members attended TUC.

73 MT members attended LP conference.

Paper is to go daily by mid or late 1983. A resolution for national conference is going to be drawn up on this.

Aside, any opening of the annual conference will be a ploy. There will be another secret one at a venue given 2-3 days before it is held. Delegates informed only by regional organiser.

Presently, are 4 depts. on paper, with 4 staff in each.

On Daily publication, would be 12 staff in each dept.

Also, each comrade will be required to sell 10 papers per week.

Business

Not noted.

MEETING LANCASHIRE AGGREGATE of MILITANT (Preston Textile Centre)

20 October, 1982.

WITCH HUNT REPORT

The witchhunt has put the MT on the map. As a result, millions of people have heard of the MT.

Many are looking to MT as a force.

Labour Party conference press attendance was unprecedented. The right wing were upset by its attendance.

If Benn had made a stand on the register, the right wing would have been forced to back down. He has been distancing himself from MT.

The fact he wouldn't speak on 11.9.82 was significant.

Continue to deny the organisation, but let the right wing draw their own conclusions.

Labour Party Conference was a success. There was no single bad speech by any comrade - many points were hammered home; sold more papers; largest readers' meetings ever.

The problem we need to face up to- no matter what the right wing do, they can't win, in the long term.

There is uncertainty among comrades - who is going to be expelled etc.

Tactics and strategy are being formulated.

NEC has a right wing majority (Healey's NEC).

Must stress it is a rigged NEC - delegations were rigged.

Theoretically, they have the power to do what they want.

But in reality, no - look at legal action.

Who might go? - Editorial board
Full timers
PPC's
LPYS
Paper sellers

John Golding is particularly rabid.

However, many of the right wingers will be controlled by the moderate rights.

If the editorial board is expelled, it will make no difference.

NB: they will have to expel the editorial board for face-saving. But full timers may very well go.

There may be a "League of Expelled Militants" - this will attempt to get support from such as Benn etc.

If this happens, it could in many respects be a blessing for MT.

It could free full time organisers from ward, CLP activities etc. to allow them to continue contact, therefore enterist work elsewhere.

But at a local CLP level, the right wing could engage in a "war of attrition". NEC might well be willing to endorse expulsions.

All expelled members must be prepared to fight it to the limit.

The nature of the right campaign against MT can be hysterical or personal - political understanding of this is necessary.

Even if they proscribe the paper, it will still be kept going.

Local right wing leaders will now have "hit lists" and will try to continue it through to the end.

The "black box" at Walworth Road only contains a minority of information - was reports by J. Straw and F. Field and some organisers. (Contact on NEC is Lawrence Coates - he has seen the contents.)

LPYS is completely controlled now. NOLS is also controlled with just some loose ends to be consolidated.

If the paper is proscribed, it won't have much effect. 90% of CLP's will go against proscription of this nature.

In fact MT may actually have to hold back some CLP's from opposing the right wingers.

Must ensure that no comrade leaves the Labour Party if he feels threatened.

The paper must be sold tactfully and tactically.

Choose the comrades carefully who are going to sell.

Find other avenues to sell the paper. May even have to risk expulsions over selling of it

Can distinguish present witchhunt from Bevan's days. Bureaucracy is much weaker today than it was.

If the fight is left just to CLP's, then could easily lose out to the NEC.

The struggle must be taken into the Trade Unions.

A full timer will be appointed for every trade union.

If expulsions start must campaign vigorously. The right wing will obviously expect these conferences etc. to fizzle away.

Must make sure there are good attendances at any conferences. Momentum must be maintained.

Until 1984 will be a concentrated effort against witchhunt. Certainly for the next 3 months.

There might be a further National Conference called.

Contacts must be brought within the movement.

Whilst we are totally opposed to the register - a letter will go to NEC next week saying we disagree with register and an explanation why. However, will offer to give a list of full timers on grounds it will not be a hostage report. Only about one-third to a half of full timers names given.

It is almost ruled out that NEC will reject the compromise. But it will be seen that it is the right wing that is maintaining the fight against the left - must play on this,

Must make it clear we are prepared to compromise - but that we will not give up the paper or to sack any staff or give up ideas. ie. there is no real concession anyway.

Even people like D. Skinner can afford to be lax now they are not under threat.

PPC's

Publicly, we are totally opposed to expulsions in MT and will fight them all along the line.

There is going to be a different position by PPC MT comrades. We understand the closing down of a CLP and the replacement by a stooge party would be a power base for the right.

Where this happens, conduct opinion polls in the CLP constituency together with mass campaigns in that constituency and questionnaires to all voters.

If they say a PPC has to go, he will step down and an interrupted GMC will elect a similar candidate. Therefore battle continuously.

Any expelled PPC will be raised to a stature. Will be great publicity - all representing Marxism.

LPYS

Could be disbandment of YS. The MT is its backbone. Much stronger now in YS than in previous years, therefore will be very hard for closure etc. of YS.

Even so, if YS is frozen etc. most CLP's will allow them to continue.

Stamina and attention to detail is important as that can count in any factional battles in CLP's.

Membership now 3,327
in Nov, 1981 2,556

Also now are contacts to be followed - contact meetings being organised in next few weeks. Only security risks to be excluded. But no organisational details to be given.

The paper is to go daily next year.

By 1984 will need in addition to HO staff, full time distributors, own vans etc.

We will have 5,000 MT members by December.

Lancs District target is 130 MT members. However, not feasible therefore 100 is nearer. 60 at present in MT.

All members must be in unions. Must attend union caucuses and meeting. The union bases must be concentrated upon.

Do the NEC know of 130+ workers instead of 60-70?

Do we take on the right wing particularly J. Straw in Lancs. - that could create reaction from the right wing. Could be hostility.

MILITANT MEETING BLACKBURN BRANCH

24.10.82

Minutes of last meeting read and approved.

Ewood Ward

Could become a focal point for CLP activity - if Shadsworth is upset by expulsions etc. Start paper sales etc. on ward estates, together with ltd. leafletting. Be prepared to organise it. Also look at other moribund wards in case they are easier than Ewood.

Finance-District Committee Meeting

There is going to be legal problems in enforcing the register. However, even though MT has applied to join, too late - they will not be accepted.

Jim Mortimer - although he should not be attacked on a personal level, he is making hard line attacks on MT re. disarmament and USSR. Therefore could be exposed as a Stalinist.

How will they go in for expulsions? Have already given some names (67) on condition they will not be expelled. In fact, are now 138 full time organisers.

It is difficult to say what NEC will do re. PPC's. Will perhaps "disendorse" - but with general election approaching, they may appoint some other official LP candidate just prior to the election.

Clair Doyle - National MT Finance Officer organised the meeting. She stressed not to be complacent.

Times Saturday 23.10.82 - do they have a list of names?

Target for Liverpool Conference will be 3000. and other regional conferences that day - total 25,000 people.

300 are going from Lancs to Liverpool.

Trade Unions still weak - which is why their leaders got away with it at conference. TU caucuses must be encouraged.

Pat Wall in Blackburn - definitely Nov. 16th. This will threaten and intimidate the right wing. 70-80 people should attend. Make sure all names are followed up.

He will give legitimacy and encouragement. GMC will be completely controlled by next AGM. Eric Smith to go. Possibly allow Allan Douglas to step in.

Not yet in a position to stand cllrs. in Blackburn. But next year 2 or 3 candidates is a certainty. Comrades should be prepared for the work this will place on them.

We will now take initiative on all matters re. the press.

On discussion of finance, is a desperate need for another full timer. This will be Peter Harris who is now in training.

Therefore finances need reappraising.

Money coming in is paid to Rossendale less 25%.

£½ million in so far this year with subs; sales; fighting fund etc.

Paper will definitely be going daily next year.

All individual subs. contributions have to be increased.

Lancs. needs another £80 per week for its present full timer. To employ P. Harris a further £45 is needed, He will concentrate on Blackburn, Blackpool, Hyndburn, Burnley.

Therefore this involves more sacrifice by members of MT.

In Blackburn, last quarter for fighting fund only raised £88 - target was £130.

Subs. unemployed and students, minimum of £3 per week.

All others should give 10-15% of income as a minimum. If they aren't prepared to make this sacrifice they shouldn't be here.

Report from L. Coates - J. Straw is a leading member behind expulsions of MT.

Preston - Tuesday night - mass contact meeting (This was in T.Hinale's house - Preston MT now has 14 members).

All those not a security risk will be there.

3 people were brought in to Burnley MT as a result of the demo. in Liverpool.

In Blackburn, didn't take advantage of YOPS demo.

Political understanding of comrades in Burnley isn't as high as in Blackburn. They have haphazard meetings - but they have a better spirit than BLackburn comrades.

Will be a greater emphasis on recruiting from now on. All comrades to leave off any ward business or other activities in LP. Could be asked to help out all over Lancs.

Meetings will now be held every Sunday evening.

Note control of Ethnic Sub. Comm. - this is a power base for recruitment, and embarrassment of people like Frank Higham.

Blackburn is now reaching a critical stage.

Asian Brotherhood (keep secret - 500 members) - is going to invite Ethnic Minority - specifically P. Harris - to its meeting to speak.

H. Atwal will be brought into MT - will bring others with him. Get GMWU to branch and GMC's.

The LPYS in Blackburn must be restructured. Remember, it is purely a ½ way house for contacts before the MT.

Get them to do more practical work. Also, must be more political culture.

Is a Black/Asian caucus of MT at the Centre (MT Centre) on 4/5 December.

Also, numerous TU caucuses (national) in December at Centre.

Papers - June, July, August - 43 papers per week sold in Blackburn.

September - 59 papers sold - highest since December, 1981.

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APPENDIX 2

Underhill Report

1. Revolutionary Workers Party.
2. International Socialists.
3. Militant.
4. International Marxist Group
5. Other Trotskyist and Marxist Groups.

    Workers Socialist League.

    Workers Fight.

    Revolutionary Communist Group.

    Chartists.

    Big Flame.

    Revolutionary Marxist Current.

45 page

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

N.E.C. 26 NOVEMBER 1975
NAD/92/11/75

ENTRYIST ACTIVITIES

The Organisation Committee reported to the September meeting of the National Executive Committee that the National Agent would present to the next meeting a document on entryist activities within the Labour Party.

Entryism (or enterism) is the tactic adopted by an organisation which because it is ineligible for affiliation to the Labour Party, decides that its members, or some of them, shall enter the Labour Party as individual members to carry out activities within the Labour Party as directed by the outside organisation.

A distinction has to be drawn between bona fide pressure groups which seek to put forward and secure influence for particular policies and viewpoints, and those political organisations whose members do not proceed in the Labour Party from the standpoint of individual action but in concert directed from outside the Party.

To deal with this type of situation the Party Constitution includes the following provisions in Sections 3 and 4 of Clause II - Membership:

> (3) Political organisations not affiliated to or associated under a National Agreement with the Party on January 1 1946, having their own Programme, Principles and Policy for distinctive and separate propaganda, OR possessing Branches in the Constituencies OR engaged in the promotion of Parliamentary or Local Government Candidatures, OR owing allegiance to any political organisation situated abroad, shall be ineligible for affiliat ion to the Party.
>
> (4) Individual Members shall be ..... persons .....
>
> (b) who subscribe to the conditions of membership and are not members of Political Parties or organisations ancillary or subsidiary thereto declared by the Annual Conference of the Labour Party (hereinafter referred to as 'the Party) or by the National Executive Committee in pursuance of the Conference decisions to be ineligible for affiliation to the Party.

Over many years Trotskyist organisations have split, re-grouped and split yet again, not only for doctrinaire reasons, but also because of differences in tactics about entryism into the Labour Party. Various Trotskyist organisations have from time to time adopted the tactics of entry into the Labour Party for the purpose of trying to influence the Party along their own ideological lines and to create a mass revolutionary Marxist Party. These organisations have their own programme, principles and policy with their own membership and committee structure and some have their own printing press and full-time organisers.

REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY.

This organisation was until 1973 called the Socialist Labour League which was proscribed in 1959. Its secretary is Mr. Gerry Healey. The SLL sought to gain a foothold in the Labour Party through its association with the paper 'Keep Left' whose supporters tried to gain control of the Labour Party's youth organisation, The Young Socialists, soon after its establishment in 1960. The SLL had its own press and paid organisers.

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It has to be mentioned that the true nature of the 'Keep Left' organisation and its association with the SLL was not fully understood by some in the Party until 1964 when their activities became more outrageous and brought very damaging bad publicity to the Young Socialists and the Party. Eventually in August 1964 the seven members of the 'Keep Left' faction on the Young Socialists National Committee called an unofficial meeting from which they published a document which attacked the Labour Party's General Election policies and leadership and held a demonstration in Trafalgar Square on the eve of the election which furthered that attack.

In 1965 the Trotskyist leadership convened a national conference which was intended to be a take-over of the Party's Young Socialists. The SLL announced the Young Socialists to be its own youth organisation with 'Keep Left' as its official paper.

The National Executive Committee took action and re-named the Party's youth organisation as The Labour Party Young Socialists and a number of constituency labour parties closed down their YS branches, which were under control of the 'Keep Left' faction.

Shortly after this the SLL dropped its tactics of entryism into the Labour Party, believing its work amongst the Young Socialists had served its purpose.

Subsequently all the seven 'Keep Left' members who had been on the YS National Committee declared their membership of the SLL, and one, Mr. D. Ashby, writing in the SLL's 'Newsletter' (now The Workers' Press) on 28 August 1965 admitted "We went to the YS deliberately to wage the struggle ..... we had no other purpose ..... If we did not announce ourselves as Trotskyists when the Young Socialists was part of the Labour Party, that was because we saw Trotskyism not as a debate but as a struggle to build the movement."

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS.

This organisation is the successor to the Cliff Group or Socialist Review Group which published 'International Socialism'. It was associated with the paper 'Young Guard', the supporters of which at one time competed with the SLL and 'Keep Left' for control of the Party's Young Socialists. When the SLL ceased its entryism into the Labour Party, the 'Young Guard' faction secured control of the LPYS. Subsequently, the 'Young Guard' link with International Socialists, which now also publishes the 'Socialist Worker', was made apparent and a few years ago IS abandoned its tactic of entryism into the Labour Party. It is now concentrating on activity within the unions.

It is understood that there have been discussions as to whether or not the International Socialists should resume entryism into the Labour Party but so far it has decided not to do so. It is known that the IS has a number of branches and full-time organisers. Its membership is believed to be about 3000.

MILITANT.

The leading figure of what is termed the Militant tendency is Mr. Ted Grant. The editor of 'Militant' is Mr. Peter Taafe. Those who support the Militant tendency openly declare that support, that it is Marxist, and claim that all but one of the eleven members of the LPYS National Committee are supporters of the Militant tendency.

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The impression has always been given that Militant is a tendency of like minded persons within the Labour Party. Reference has never been made to any organisation with its own membership being behind 'Militant'. 'Militant' has its own printing works and is associated with 'Workers' International Review Publications' and 'Militant Irish Monthly'. The scale of the tendency's activities is such that it requires direction by something more than an editorial board (that was the claim always made by 'Keep Left' with a denial of any association with the SLL).

For some time the National Agent has received reports that there were full-time organisers operating within the regions on behalf of 'Militant'. There has been a belief that the Revolutionary Socialist League was really directing 'Militant' but the office has no firm evidence to substantiate this.

However, the name of any such organisation is of little consequence. It is understood that in 1964 the R.S.L. considered launching a paper under the title 'Militant - For Labour and Youth' which is the title heading of the present paper.

The office has a photostat copy of a document which it is understood was issued by the National Committee of the RSL which discussed The Problems of Entryism and set out how entryist tactics would be pursued. In 1965 the RSL was expelled from the Trotskyist 4th International.

The office also has photostat copy of a 45-page document British Perspectives and Tasks 1974, issued on 26 May 1974 and which is stated to be a Discussion Document. It carries no imprint and no name of the organisation responsible for it, but there are numerous references to it being produced for discussion in Militant tendency.

This document confirms beyond any doubt whatever that there is a central organisation associated with 'Militant' with its own membership and full-time organisers.

The first nineteen pages are devoted to a political analysis in three sections - International Background, Crisis of Capitalism and Labour in Power. The next section is headed 'The Labour Party' and the following are some extracts:

> "The Constituency Parties are assuming more and more importance for our work. A striking feature of the situation is the weakness of the Tribune tendency as an organisation..... They have no organised tendency - at the present moment..... Every attempt at organisation within the Party during the last decade has ended in a fiasco. 'Victory for Socialism', 'The Socialist Charter' and other feeble attempts. Their political flabbiness and wooliness as a concomitant has also organisational incapacity"

> "At Regional Conferences in areas where we have an influence in the Labour Party, we have been the Left Wing ..... Thus, we have the early beginnings of influence and support within the Labour Party"

Referring to possible changes in the direction and control of the Labour Party, the document comments

> "In this event we would become the Left Opposition within the Party. Already at Regional Conferences we are the only organised and articulate Left Opposition..... We can assist

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in correcting - within limits our weakness in the Unions by contacts in the Labour Parties, in G.M.Cs and Wards, at Regional Conferences, and as the struggle hots up, at National Conference. Already at National Conference we make a sizeable impact and are recognised as a tendency which is part of the broad Labour movement."

"The main struggle would be between us and the Tribunite Left. That is why we must seriously endeavour to establish a group of half a dozen or so M.Ps identified with the tendency. This would powerfully reinforce our appeal as a national tendency."

"At the same time we could attempt to organise broad ranging discussions regionally of Labour Parties, Union Branches, District Committees, etc., We must take the initiative in organising schools on subjects of interest to Labour workers and Trade Unionists around the journal as has been done with modest success for Trade Unionists in Birmingham and other areas."

"We must dig roots in the wards and constituencies as we have in the Y.S. Many are still shells dominated by politically dead old men and women. They are now ossified little cliques. They will begin to change with an influx of new members."

"The Y.S. Branches where we have support, are already a springboard for work in the wards and G.M.Cs. We must draw the Y.S. into the work in the constituency parties. A period of upheavals and changes on a far more extended scale is opening up in the Labour Party. Enormous opportunities will open up and we must be ready organisationally and politically to take advantage of them."

"It is this ineffectiveness and weakness of the Right Wing which makes reprisals against us at this age unlikely. However, we must be firmly against any adventurous courses, and ultra-left gestures. The Chartists and the Workers Fight are horrible examples of how not to work. We must proceed unsensationally and calmly, 'patiently explaining' building up in the Party and the Unions".

"Witch-hunts against us in the period ahead are unlikely, especially if we keep our nerve. But as we begin to gather more and more support in the Trade Unions and the Labour Party, and become a powerful tendency like we are in the Y.S., more and more "accidents" and provocations are likely."

"We must remain firm. At the same time we have to be scrupulously sure that we do not in any way give these gentlemen an excuse to take action against us. Better to be cautious, while clear in expressing our views. We must cling to the L.Ps. and T.Us. at all costs. As yet our gains are still very modest. We will reap a big harvest by consistent work in the future."

There follows further sections on The Conservative Party, The Liberal Party and The Communist Party. The following are a few extracts from the next section on The Trade Unions:

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"We must never forget to train our cadres to the theoretical possibility of the Unions as organisations being thrust aside, in a period of revolution, or prior to an insurrection and that workers committees or soviets could take their place, but that is a theoretical possibility only, as Trotsky says we do not make a fetish of any organisation."

"Work in the Unions must be linked to work in the Y.S. and in the Labour Party, and of course vice-versa."

"We must cover every National Conference of the Unions with pamphlets, on the lines of the G & M.W.U., the paper and members where possible a full-timer....." A full-timer devoted mainly, if not exclusively, to industrial work, as an industrial organiser is urgently required when we can raise the necessary funds."

"In this connection, it is vitally necessary that regular political and industrial reports should appear in the bulletin and paper. Our paper is the best in the World, but it is still not sufficient of a workers paper..... We need more pages or to produce it more often, but the necessary resources and finance must be found and will be found in the coming period. We must organise industrial caucuses and schools nationally and regionally to discuss problems from time to time."

There is next a section on The Young Socialists, of which the following are extracts:

"We have made big gains in the last period. The control of the Y.S. nationally and in most regions, next year probably all, is an enormous weapon in our hands nationally and internationally."

"The other work of the Y.S. must be as a spearhead in the Trade Unions and Labour Party wards and constituencies carrying the ideas of Marxism into the wards and constituencies, trade union branches, and shop stewards committees, by involving youth not only as members, but as being workers, a basis can be laid for the tendency in the mass organisation. In order to do the work of the Y.S. it is necessary that every Branch should have a cadre of 3 or 4 members. This serves a dual purpose of making the Y.S. viable and turning the Y.S. into a bastion for the tendency."

"Involving the Y.S. branches in selling of the paper and raising finance is a means - a necessary means - of integrating the Y.S. with the tendency. It is a political task as well as being an organisational one. In branches of 10, 15 or 20 members it should be entirely possible to raise 100p, 150p, or 200p and more regularly each week by persuading every member to contribute 10p at least. This would put the Militant and the tendency on a sound financial basis. It would raise the loyalty of the Y.S. to Marxist ideas because only on the basis of understanding the ideas would it be possible to get members to contribute regularly, as a political duty."

(National Agent's note: This is a proposal to use the Party's Y.S. branches as a means of financing the 'Militant' paper and the tendency.)

"With 3 or 4 members in every YS we would have the necessary ideological stiffening to prevent political disintegration. As the crisis of the sects develops they will fall or stagger

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into the Labour Parties and the Y.S..... In branches where we have not got members, the IS, IMG and WRP or the remnants of these organisations, can do great harm, especially with their policy of "Rule or Run" they can confuse or drive out potentially good people. But where we have built solid support they will bounce in and bounce out, without much harm being done to the Y.S.....This is why we must harden our cadres politically in order to make the Y.S. impregnable against political and organisational manoeuvres."

The following is just one extract from a section on Students:

"When we have firm control of NOLS, which should be the next objective we can use the YS and NOLS in tandem in the waging of campaigns."

Further sections deal with BLACK WORKERS AND YOUTH AND WORKING CLASS WOMEN. Another section THE SECTS deals with other Trotskyist groups and their attempts at infiltration and entryism and what is described as their 'craven opportunism when they worked in the Labour Party'.

"Thus enormous sums were donated to the three main 'Trotskyist' sects. The very name of Trotsky gave them a virtuous glow as they went to one or other of the sects. They never considered a tendency 'buried' in the mass organisation."

"Already the first of the sectlets has partially staggered into the Labour Party."

The following are extracts from the final section devoted to PERSPECTIVES AND ORGANISATIONAL TASKS:

"Contact work is the key to the growth of the tendency and to all other work: Agitational propaganda and theoretical work must be geared to the winning of members as the aim of all our activity in the present period. Not on the lines of the LP and the sects - "Sign on the dotted line and you're a member, as that is the road to demoralisation and the watering down of theoretical basis of the tendency."

"Workers willing to accept our programme and perspectives and willing to work actively for our aims once their level is raised sufficiently should be brought in .... For the first 6, 12 or even 18 months new worker members should be treated as contact members. Individual discussion with leading comrades in the branch should continue regularly, comrades should be integrated socially as well as politically."

(National Agent's note: This explains why many supporters of the tendency may not know the true nature of the body directing its work.)

"Now that our horizon is extended, we should hold international schools involving members and contacts internationally. YS schools also, but in addition, cadre schools under the banner of the tendency..... National or Regional schools for our own members and close contacts to prepare them, and the YS: or maybe better because it will not take so long to get off the ground, a school around the paper."

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"This amounts to an extra expenditure in addition to the expense of 20 full-timers. We urgently require a full-time industrial organiser; full-timers for the Southern, South West, Eastern, East Midlands and most regions; a full-time youth organiser. We need new full-time workers on the press and for editorial work."

"If we work correctly, we should reach the target figure of 1,000 membership by the end of the year. These must form the indispensable framework for the tremendous expansion of the future."

"We are at an entirely new stage in the development of our tendency. Once we gain 1,000 members our pre-history will be ended. We will be beginning the history proper of Trotskyism in Britain. Then the main task will be training these cadres, fusing, steeling them, raising their level to the political necessities of today, the future tasks of the Socialist Revolution."

"Boldness and audacity, in all fields, must be the landmark of the intervention in the Labour Movement, but we must combine this with the necessary caution. The Transport House bureaucracy is alarmed at our success and trying desperately to hamper and even destroy our work. The right wing is debilitated - but the Tribune reformists also fear us."

"We have gained a foothold in the mass movement. We are weak in the unions, Labour Parties, Shop Stewards Committees and factories. There are more constituency parties than we have members at present, leaving aside the wards ..... there are 350,000 shop stewards alone, the majority of whom have not even heard of 'Militant'.

"It is now imperative that in the immediate future we get a webb-offset machine so that we can react with the immediate speed to events and prepare a more frequent appearance of the paper."

INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP

It is understood that this Trotskyist organisation, which has taken the place of the R.S.L. as the British affiliate to the 4th International, has between 800-1000 members. A regional bulletin indicates that this body has decided to follow a policy of entryism into the Labour Party. The following are extracts of a resolution on Work in the Labour Party:

"The need for work in and around the Labour Party flows from our understanding of the combined nature of the class struggle in the present period."

"....fraction work is not a question of local 'smash and grab' raids where there are interesting forces in the local LPs, but rather a national project designed to insert the IMG's programme into the debate inside the Labour Party."

"....it would be the height of stupidity for local branches to swagger into their local LP branches - take no notice of bans and proscriptions - and make the building of a fraction on a national scale that much more difficult. Until the National Organisation has properly discussed out the question of work in and around the Labour Party, branches should restrict themselves to laying very basic groundwork: develop contacts with useful organising cadres in local LPs.....

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"If there exists the possibility of sending unknown comrades (who won't be denounced/expelled etc., by the 'Militant' or right social democracy etc.,) into LP/LPYS branches with a'watching brief', to develop contacts, begin to take up a few issues in a not-too-conspicuous-way with this end in view, then this should be considered, (obviously, in very special local circumstances, we might consider a big intervention in the LP etc., but this would be done only in very close consultation and under the guidance of the national leadership)."

Details of various branches are given. These would appear to be based on universities.

OTHER TROTSKYIST & MARXIST ORGANISATIONS

(1) Workers' Socialist League.
A break-away from the Workers' Revolutionary Party (formerley SLL). No more than 200 members.

(2) Workers' Fight.
Break-away from International Socialists with about 80 members.

(3) Revolutionary Communist Group.
Group based mainly on Bristol with some 90 members expelled from International Socialists.

(6) Chartists.
Based mainly in London - originated in LPYS with 300 members.

(4) Big Flame
Appears to be break-away from International Marxist Group in Liverpool area with some 100 members.

(5) Revolutionary Marxist Current.
Another break-away from International Marxist Group based mainly in Liverpool and Manchester areas with 100 members.

APPENDIX 3

Labour Party and the New Left, Fabian Tract 477

This is a complete edition please follow contents information on its own index page.


the labour party
and the new left
David Webster
fabian tract 477
90p
CAMPAIGN
for labour party dem
Tribune
NEW
STATESMAN
Socialist Challenge
Socialist
Worker
FABIAN NEWS
Labour
Weekly
NO.17 MARCH 1980 15p
Socialist Organiser
Paper of the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory
Militan
THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH
LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE -
LABOUR
SOLIDARITY
new left rev
also: The Car Industry's
France Politics of Cancer
Marxism
Today
Theoretical and discussion journal of the Communist Party
August 1981 60 pence
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fabian tract 477
the labour party and the new left

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Introduction

Since the May 79 Election, as the "Left" in the Labour Party have scored one victory after another, many people have become aware that this "Left" is different in character from the familiar Tribunite or Bevanite left, or from the old Communist left. Its protagonists are said to be intolerant, to have an appetite for class conflict and to be opposed to Parliamentary democracy. Talk of Trotskyists has become increasingly common. In speaking of a "new model" Labour Party, Peter Shore voiced a widely shared view that this new left is changing the whole nature of the Labour Party – a view corroborated by Paul Foot of the Socialist Workers' Party who wrote "large numbers of socialists have joined the Labour Party, which is being transformed before our very eyes" (*Socialist Worker*, 30 May 1981).

The object of this pamphlet is to examine the new Labour left as a political phenomenon: its nature, ideological origins, social roots and processes of growth. How close is it to control of the Labour Party? And where would its ideas lead, if it were to win governmental power?

The pamphlet will look first at the ideological currents at work in the Party and then at the relationship between them. It then examines how far the key ideology of Trotskyism is reflected in the policies and values of the Labour Party and at how its rise has come about. There is a brief discussion of the consequences of Trotskyist policies, were they to be implemented, and finally, the prospects facing the Party are considered.

It is hoped that the pamphlet will be of value not only to those aware of the dangers, but also to many presently influenced by Trotskyist ideas. For, while the ideas may be flawed, their revival has real social roots and their proponents are often sincere and idealistic, moved by a genuine spirit of enquiry.

1. Three ideologies: ultra-democracy, modern British trotskyism, social democracy

There are three main identifiable systems of ideas in the Labour Party and unions at present: here called *ultra-democracy* and *modern British Trotskyism*, and *social democracy*. *Trotskyism* and *social democracy* are both varieties of socialism and offer more or less complete philosophies, or worldviews, while *ultra-democracy* is more limited in scope, and is compatible with a variety of other ideologies. This list of three does not exhaust the ideologies found in the Labour movement – others, such as orthodox Communism and the newer "ecologism" are also important. But these three are crucial.

Ultra-Democracy

Since the mid 60s, there has been widespread acceptance of the idea that, whatever the economic or political system, power should so far as possible be passed downwards, or "decentralised". Where, for practical reasons, decision making must remain at higher levels, full dissemination of information should take place from higher to lower levels, with people at the lower levels being consulted before decisions are made. Many political developments in the last 15 years have been organised around this theme: Welsh and Scottish devolution, demands for industrial democracy, constitutional changes in the Labour Party, Community Health Councils, the Skeffington Report on participation in local planning, tenant participation in housing management, the revival of the cooperative idea, the demand for a Freedom of Information Act, "open access" in the media, wider disclosure rules in the Companies Acts, parent, student and pupil representation on governing bodies. **Ultra-democracy** has also featured as an element in the opposition to the Common Market. Similarly, its guiding spirit, that people should make decisions for themselves, is seen not only in the area of collective decision-making but also in that of private behaviour, so that the decriminalisation of homosexuality and abortion are part of the same trend.

The term **ultra-democracy** is used not to disparage, but to differentiate this ideology from more traditional ideas about democracy, in which "rule by the people" was not usually thought to involve much direct participation by the ordinary man or woman in the street. The term "ultra" is used to indicate that this ideology, in itself, implies the furthest possible downward extension of decision making: limitations and exceptions are only reluctantly admitted, if at all.

Ultra-democracy has been a potent political force and, since the reform programme implicit in it is uncompleted, it remains so. Its rise is due to higher living standards, the spread of further and higher education, the growth of leisure, technological changes making the dissemination of information easier, and a reaction against bureaucracy. There is no need to go into this here: it is sufficient to establish the political potency of **ultra-democracy**. For this is the key to much of the jockeying for position of other ideologies within the Labour Party.

Modern British Trotskyism

The essence of **Modern British Trotskyism**

(so called here in recognition of its historically specific character) lies in the claim that the failure of Marxist-Leninism in Russia and elsewhere was due not to any essential feature of the doctrine itself, but to accidents of history. The corollary of this claim is that the theory and political strategy may be applied without any essential revision. It is therefore very much a fundamentalist variety of Marxism – essentially a revival of Bolshevism. In case this characterisation seems overdrawn, let us quote the Marxist writer Ralph Miliband, writing about organisations such as the Socialist Workers' Party (SWP) or Workers' Revolutionary Party (WRP): "All these organisations have a common perception of socialist change in terms of a revolutionary seizure of power on the Bolshevik model of October 1917" (*Socialist Register*, 1976).

Classes

The notion that society is divided into *classes*, whose essence lies in their relationship to the means of production, is basic to any form of Marxism. **Modern British Trotskyism** is distinguished by its peculiarly crude and rigid view of the class structure. Trotskyists believe that Britain is run by a small, homogeneous and immensely powerful ruling class, formed of the owners of the means of production and their principal agents, which among other things exerts tight control over the media. Dominated and exploited by this small capitalist clique is the "working class".

For sophisticated Marxists, a basic difficulty in the conceptualisation of the "working class" is the analysis of the extensive middle strata of highly educated non-manual workers. Trotskyists follow Trotsky in insisting that it is industrial manual workers *alone* who can bring about revolutionary change. This class must emancipate itself, without relying on allies from any other social groupings. The concept of a "broad progressive alliance", favoured by Eurocommunists, is rejected. This narrow view of the "working class" leads to great difficulties for Trotskyists who are not manual workers. Such difficulties are frequently resolved by resort to "workerism" – the conscious and artificial adoption of styles of life, including dress, speech and types of entertainment, which are typical of the traditional industrial working class.

Class Conflict

Modern British Trotskyism is a doctrine of conflict: struggle and violence are wholeheartedly accepted. It is believed that capitalism (the economic and social system based on private ownership of the means of production) is bound to collapse sooner or later. Trotskyists tend to believe that this collapse is imminent. They conclude that any intensification of class conflict is unequivocally good, in heightening the contradictions within capitalism and bringing about a "raising of consciousness" and mobilisation of the working class for revolution. This is the reason for the unremitting appetite for industrial conflict which distinguishes Trotskyists in the unions and in the Labour Party, and for their otherwise apparently irrational choice of trivial or (from the workers' point of view) self-destructive issues on which to fight.

It is also the fundamental reason for the remarkable "economism" of Trotskyist tactics – that is the pursuit of narrowly financial goals at the expense of wider political objectives. Economic issues are those on which it is easiest to mobilise struggle, since it is relatively easy to win support among non-socialist and non-political trade unionists. This concern overrides any doubts about the justice of supporting groups defending positions of

affluence and power – for instance, the upper ranks of the civil service and local government. Within a Trotskyist perspective, all that matters is to overthrow the capitalist system. The machine of history will ensure that socialism will follow. "Workerism" and "economism" together imply uncritical support for unions and, in particular, union militancy. This contrasts with the view of Lenin and the classical Bolsheviks, who were most insistent upon the limitations of "trade union consciousness".

The pursuit of conflict leads to a conscious disregard for truth, the most important instance being the practice of *the politics of exposure*. Ralph Miliband comments: "Supporters of a 'revolutionary' as opposed to a 'reformist' strategy have generally tended . . . to press for reforms which they did not believe to be attainable, as part of a 'politics of exposure' of capitalism – and also of 'reformist' labour leaders" (*Marxism and Politics*, 1977).

The Revolutionary Party

The key role in carrying through the overthrow of capitalism is attributed to the revolutionary Party whose basic model was set out in Lenin's 1902 tract *What is to be done?* The Leninist Party is extremely tightly disciplined, secretive and, in practice, authoritarian. Lenin attempted to reconcile the need for authority with the desire for democracy with his concept of "democratic centralism". This is merely verbal resolution of the dilemma: effectively the model is elective dictatorship. The history of the Bolshevik Party showed how power really lay at the top, and could be monopolised by a determined General Secretary in the form of Stalin.

Insurrection

The term "revolution", within Marxism, need only imply the transfer of state power from one social class to another. Violence is not a necessary feature of this transfer. But Trotskyists believe in the overthrow of the state by force. They insist that a socialist society cannot come through Parliament, and they therefore believe that Parliament must be overthrown. Subsequently, the rule of the working class through the Party will be enforced by violence on the rest of society – the "dictatorship of the proletariat". However, *within* the working class, direct rule by the masses will be ensured through the workers' councils or "soviets" which will spring up everywhere during the Revolution. Trotskyists have never resolved the contradiction between the desire for a strong centralised authority to smash their enemies, and the commitment to direct rule by the masses.

The Socialist Planned Economy

After the seizure of state power, all the means of production would be nationalised, markets abolished, and production organised through state central planning. Nationalisation before the seizure of state power cannot, it is believed, bring about socialism, but is favoured because it weakens the capitalist ruling class. This emphasis on the dominant role of the state has been labelled "statism" by its critics. In the long run, however, Trotskyists believe, with Lenin, that the state will "wither away" – why, or how, it is not easy to discover.

International Perspective

The international perspective of Trotskyism is distinctive. Usually summed up, misleadingly, in the phrase "socialism in one country", it in fact means that socialism is *not* attainable in one country alone; international working class solidarity will bring about revolution simultaneously in all (or at least most) countries. The almost mystical faith in the working class leads to the belief that working class solidarity can

transcend international barriers – hence policies such as the "solution" to the Northern Ireland problem to be brought by joint working class action in all 36 counties; the slogan "for a united socialist states of Europe" to replace the EEC; and the opposition to any form of import controls.

To sum up: whereas Soviet-orientated communists accept that Russian experience shows that compromises are necessary in the building of socialism, Trotskyists reject all unpleasant aspects of historical experience and cling to a naively hopeful perspective, as if the Soviet Union had simply been a bad dream. The naivety in Trotskyism is well captured by the Marxist, Régis Debray: **"At bottom Trotskyism is a metaphysic paved with good intentions. It is based on a belief in the natural goodness of the workers, which is always perverted by evil bureaucrats but never destroyed. There is a proletarian essence within party and workers alike which cannot be altered by circumstances. For them to become aware of it themselves, it is only necessary that they be given the word, that objectives be set for them which they see without seeing and which they know without knowing. Result: socialism becomes a reality, all at once, without delay, neat and tidy"** *(Revolution in the Revolution, 1967).*

How has the Revival of Trotskyism Come About?

The extraordinary revival of Trotskyism in Britain can be traced back to the growth, since the 1960s, throughout the Western world, of varieties of Marxism hostile to the orthodox Communism of the Soviet bloc.

The break with the Communist Party in 1956 of the original British New Left and parallel developments in the United States had an enormously liberating effect on Marxism. Under soviet control, Marxist ideas had become narrowly dogmatic and routine. The birth of an intellectual centre outside Moscow or Peking was almost bound to produce an enormous development of Marxian ideas, and the rediscovery of deviant Marxian writers including Trotsky and the early Marx.

This development gained impetus from the events of the later 1960s. The Vietnam war was an enormously powerful mobilising influence over younger people, and the French May Events of 1968 and similar developments elsewhere – with their strongly anarchistic character, far removed from the style and ideas of orthodox Communism – also proved influential.

As a result, the Marxist Left is immensely stronger than in the mid 60s. Its ideas are well represented among university and polytechnic teachers, and there is a well developed Marxian literature in most academic disciplines, as well as numerous political monthlies, weeklies and dailies, and a wide range of community newspapers and groups. Few people aged under 30 joined the Labour Party between about 1966 and 1979. Probably a majority of left inclined young people belonged to, or passed through, Trotskyist sects, such as the SWP, WRP (formerly the Socialist Labour League, SLL) and the International Marxist Group (IMG), or Trotskyist-influenced student socialist societies. Throughout the period, the main student socialist society of most British universities and polytechnics was "revolutionary socialist" in character; Labour Party-affiliated or inclined societies were usually in a minority.

Within the Marxist left, the dominant position is held by Trotskyist groupings, as is conceded by Sheila Rowbotham, who writes of the "paralysis of libertarian Marxism as a challenge to the hegemony

of the Trotskyist groups in the British left which is apparent from the mid seventies" (*Beyond the Fragments*, 1979).

This is due to peculiarities of British political history. In Europe, although there has been a growth of Trotskyism and anarchism, the most marked feature has been the development of "Eurocommunism", in other words, the movement of existing Communist parties towards abandonment of the notion of insurrection, to acceptance of Parliament and electoral and legal means of campaigning, and to the search for a broad class base comprising much of the middle class as well as the traditional working class. In Britain, by contrast, while the very small Communist Party has moved in this direction, it could not offer an attractive home to those seeking a left wing alternative to the Labour Party. But Britain did have, during the 50s and early 60s, a number of very small Trotskyist sects, which were well placed to take advantage of the opportunity presented to them, and experienced large scale growth.

The rise of Trotskyism has been aided by certain features of the life experience of the generations aged under about 35 – who provide most of its support. The expansion of higher education produced a crop of first-generation students from working class or lower middle class backgrounds. Although relatively privileged *objectively* by comparison with their parents, they have been acutely conscious of the poverty, narrowness and humiliation of their parents' lives and of their own distinctness, in the characteristic ways of the British class system, from their fellow-students from the "higher" social classes. In such circumstances, an aggressive affirmation of working class identity – corresponding to the 'workerism' mentioned earlier – is, for many, a natural reaction.

Whiteley and Gordon's survey of constituency delegates to the 1979 Party Conference showed that only 30 per cent were blue collar workers, 70 per cent white collar – yet 72 per cent claimed to be working class and only 22 per cent thought of themselves as middle class (*New Society*, 11 January 1981).

"The 1956 break with the Communist Party, the events of the 60s, the strength of Trotskyism amongst students in the 60s (when the left in Europe was moving to Eurocommunism), the growth of higher education, the decline of deference, rising expectations and the absence of experience amongst the young of real violence – all here helped the rise of Trotskyism in the Party."

Higher education was bound to create a strong demand for more theoretical politics than was generally on offer from the social democrats of the Party. Potentially, social democracy has a stronger base in theory than has Marxism. But its political theory is relatively underdeveloped – especially in the Labour Party. The rather isolated work of Anthony Crosland is not open to this criticism. But the drawback is that it does not spring from a first hand experience of being working class; in spite of the acuteness of its analysis, it does not exhibit the required intensity of feeling – it is *too* objective. It could not easily meet the emotional needs of this particular audience.

In its Trotskyist rather than old Communist version, Marxism has also fitted in with important features of youth culture. The violence, or at least violent expressiveness, of much rock music has its

parallel in political insurrectionism. Rejection of "straight" culture in favour of "alternatives" has mirrored the Marxist critique of capitalist society, especially where this has drawn on the elements in Marxism – stemming from the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* of 1844 and the *Grundrisse* of 1859 – which are more humanist and subjective in emphasis.

Some broader influences have also played a role. The decline of deference is obvious: it *must* enhance the appeal of the **ultra-democratic** model of the Party, and of the **Trotskyist** vision of the self-emancipating working class ruling through workers' councils.

For those in work and on decent incomes, Britain in the last 20 years has been a rather self-indulgent culture: the attitudes expressed in the phrase "You've never had it so good", and the experience of the welfare state, have bred high expectations. For many, a perfect new society off the shelf on the morrow of a quick and possibly rather enjoyable revolutionary upheaval simply seemed a realistic expectation.

Finally, this generation have never experienced political violence, or even military violence, except in fringe areas or by proxy. The rather farcical model of the French May Events has made playful revolution thinkable. The appetite for violence has had little chance to turn into disgust at the reality. It would be foolish to deny the importance of Marxist groupings which are not Trotskyist, such as the Communist Party or the intellectual New Left, or to fail to recognise their often deep hostility to Trotskyism. The Marxist, E.P. Thompson, for instance, writes of "Marxisms with which I cannot associate myself" (*Socialist Register*, 1973), and observes that "Some sectors of the organised left have a far greater command of the language of destruction than they do of affirmation. Apart from an extremely vague notion of something called 'revolution' (a notion which should be subjected to a very serious critique), they have very few constructive strategies" (*The Leveller*, January 1978).

But in practice non-Trotskyist Marxists are weakened either by lack of organisation or, in the case of Communists, by their unpopular association with the Soviet Union. In relation to the Labour Party, they inevitably make common cause, most of the time, with Trotskyists, since they have much in common. Even when they do not, their presence tends to reinforce the strength of **Trotskyist** ideas, since the different varieties of Marxism resemble each other more than they resemble **social democracy**.

Social Democracy

The third major ideology in the Labour Party can be termed **social democracy** (as it is also called by contemporary Marxists). It is often referred to as "democratic socialism" – the relation between the two terms will be discussed in a moment. Because it has been taken for granted for so long, there have been few explicit statements of the ideology, political argument having focussed on issues *within* the ideology, not on the principles themselves. It is only now, with the rise of Marxism within the Labour Party, that explicit statements are appearing – by the leading social democrats in the new SDP, and by the many social democrats who remain in the Labour Party.

The central idea of **social democracy** is that of *equality* – equality, so far as possible, of wealth, income and opportunity, equality of esteem, in the sense of the repudiation of class, caste or status differences; and, crucially, equality of political rights and political power. Marxists also aim to achieve these – at the end of a

revolutionary transition – but in the here and now argue that class differences must be emphasised and antagonisms sharpened, and that political rights must not be equal: those of the ruling class must be removed completely and, within the working class, power must be substantially removed from the masses and vested in the leading circles of the revolutionary party.

Social democrats, inspired often by humanism or religious feeling, reject the view that long term good will come of short term evil, and insist on the exclusive use of persuasion, within a Parliamentary system, and on the repudiation of political violence.

Social democracy also involves a commitment to the mixed economy, that is, to private as well as state ownership of the means of production. This is not based on hostility to collective ownership but on the empirical belief that political democracy is not sustainable in a centrally planned economy in which the state has a monopoly of the means of production (see chapter 5).

The concept of "representative" democracy is also basic to **social democracy**. This stems partly from a genuine commitment to Parliamentarism, partly from the belief that elected representatives must be capable of listening and responding to the views of electors other than members of the majority party – essentially a humanistic belief – and partly from the knowledge that good decisions require more intensive study and better advice than is possible in meetings of party activists.

"Democratic Socialism"

If these are the elements of social democracy, what, then, is **democratic socialism**? It is *de rigueur* for Labour politicians to deny that they are social democrats, but to claim the title **democratic socialist**. One typical definition was given by Roy Hattersley: "I am not a social democrat, because I want to change society fundamentally; I am a democratic socialist". While one may accept that some social democrats want more change than others, it cannot seriously be argued that **social democracy** is an ideology opposed in principle to social change. The term **democratic socialist** as defined by Hattersley is therefore without separate content, unless particular types of change are specified.

In fact, there is one plausible definition which has a separate content: a **democratic socialist** is one who believes in a socialist (that is, centrally planned and collectively owned, economy) but wishes to attain this by consent; *and* who believes that political democracy will be sustainable under total state ownership and control. Most people who claim to be **democratic socialists** do not in fact want or believe these things; they believe in a mixed economy and could equally well be called **social democrats**.

Some members of the *Tribune* group probably do qualify as **democratic socialists** in the collectivist sense. But Aneurin Bevan, for instance, who called himself a democratic socialist did not; he believed in the mixed economy and wrote "Where the frontier between the public and private sector should be fixed is a question that will be answered differently in different nations, according to their traditions and stage of historical development . . . In the Western world the extension of the principles of public ownership will be influenced by the extent to which large aggregations of private capital have coagulated into monopolies and semi-monopolies in which profit is a clear tax on the community and no longer a reward for risk. So also, the existence of producer and consumer co-operatives may be expected to exert their influence on the

character and direction of the public domain" (*In Place of Fear*, 1952). Bevan's own definition of "democratic socialism" is remarkable for its vagueness: "not a middle way between capitalism and Communism... It is based on the conviction that free men can use free institutions to solve the social and economic problems of the day" (*ibid*).

It does not seem correct, therefore, to identify **democratic socialism**, in the collectivist sense, as one of the major ideologies active in the Labour movement, although it must have its adherents. To avoid confusion, this pamphlet prefers the term **social democrat** to democratic socialism used in a non-collective sense. Some people who share the ideas will prefer to use the term democratic socialism, but they will need to work hard to rescue it from its present ambiguity.

2. Relations between the Three Ideologies

The three ideologies of *ultra-democracy*, *Trotskyism* and *social democracy* do have certain points in common. These determine which political alliances are possible between their adherents.

Perhaps the most important set of relationships is that between *Trotskyism* and *ultra-democracy*. The emphasis in *Trotskyism* on mass activity and rule through workers' councils has a close parallel in *ultra-democracy*. It will be argued later that this is entirely spurious: in practice, *Trotskyism* is extremely authoritarian, and must be so. But it claims to be *ultra-democratic*, and this claim is widely believed. The economic utopias implied by *Trotskyism* and by *ultra-democracy* are effectively identical. This connection was well caught by Tony Benn: "We too accept that any society requires discipline, though the discipline of the market place and the discipline imposed by the top people are both equally unattractive. We believe that the self-discipline of full democratic control offers our best hope for the future" (*Arguments for Socialism*, 1979).

If *ultra-democracy* is interpreted within a narrow Labour Party perspective, the two ideologies are also in agreement on the changes to the Party constitution which imply (or are held to imply) more control from below. *Trotskyists*, like *ultra-democrats*, are against government secrecy and elite control of the media – when these are a "capitalist" government and "capitalist" elites. Support for "direct action" can also be found in both ideologies.

There are, of course, important differences between **ultra-democracy** and **Trotskyism**: such as the intolerance shown by **Trotskyists**, and their manipulativeness, and the authoritarianism and centralism of the **Trotskyist** state. It can also be argued that the rule of law is an essential corollary of democracy, so that illegal action, favoured in a **Trotskyist** perspective, is impermissible in a democratic one. As far as inner party democracy is concerned, "one man one vote" seems more in conformity with **ultra-democracy** than does the indirect democracy of the Leninist model.

Social-democracy can also claim affinity with **ultra-democracy**: it is consistently democratic, and against concentrations of power. But it has been hampered by its association with phenomena which are unattractive when seen from an **ultra-democratic** perspective: the bureaucracy of the welfare state, "corporatism", Morrisonian nationalisation, opposition to Freedom of Information. And it suffers from another disadvantage. Denis Healey and David Owen (*Face the Future*, 1981) have both quoted with approval the emigre Polish writer, Leszek Kolakowski: "the trouble with the **social democratic** idea is that it does not stock and does not sell any of the exciting ideological commodities which various totalitarian movements... offer dream-hungry youth. It is no ultimate solution for all human misery and misfortunes." They could equally well have quoted Bevan: "The philosophy of Democratic Socialism is essentially cool in temper. It sees society in its context with nature and is conscious of the limitations imposed by physical conditions. It sees the individual in his context with society and is therefore compassionate and tolerant. Because it knows that all political action must be a choice between a number of possible alternatives, it eschews all absolute proscriptions and final decisions. Consequently it is not able to offer the thrill of the complete abandonment of private judgement, which is the allure of modern Soviet Communism and of Fascism, its running mate" (*op cit*).

Thus Trotskyism has been well placed to benefit from the advance of ultra-democracy; social democracy has been much less well-placed.

The Thoughts of Tony Benn

The forging of the ideological links between **ultra-democracy** and **Trotskyism** is shown at its clearest in the development of the thinking of Tony Benn, who could fairly be called the principal ideologist of Labour's New Left.

Tony Benn's earliest essay in political thought was the Fabian pamphlet *The New Politics: A Socialist Reconnaissance* (1970). This is an almost pure statement of **ultra-democratic** ideology, and while the ideology was running strongly – as shown, for instance, in the upsurge of the Liberal Party's "community politics" – Tony Benn was the first national politician to espouse it fully. Many familiar themes are already there, including industrial democracy, abolition of government secrecy and democratisation of the mass media.

There is little sign of any anti-capitalist feeling. The only exception is this comment: "The potentiality of greater industrial democracy in the mass media forcing the owners of existing outlets to share their power with those who work for these papers, or on their stations, may have a significant part to play."

Benn's successful advocacy, later, of a referendum on EEC membership fits the same **ultra-democratic** pattern. But during the early 70s, a second element entered Benn's thought and was for a long time his most distinctive position. This was the economic programme of the AES (Alternative Economic Strategy): import

controls, planning agreements, action against multinationals, extensions of state ownership. Commitment to this strategy was the main theme in his hostility to the EEC.

Much more recently, a third element has shown itself: Marxism.

The 1976 speech which provoked the famous exchange with Shirley Williams argued that Marxists were entitled to play a role in the Labour Party (*Arguments for Socialism*, 1979). At that time Benn's own thought was clearly not Marxist. But the Marxian element in his thinking has become increasingly prominent. In the *Debate of the Decade*, 1980, for instance, he says: "The reality is that we have come as far as can possibly be advanced within the basically capitalist system. Indeed we have come now to the point where the capitalist system cannot even allow us to sustain the gains that were made before". It may be doubted how far Benn's Marxism goes beyond rhetoric. For time and again he seems to get to the point of revolution but then draws back. No specific proposals for the transition to socialism appear in this or other speeches; his commitment to parliamentary democracy is reaffirmed. The weakness was identified by Eric Hobsbawm: "Democratic socialism as you (Benn) put it is neither a policy nor a structure; it's a political style, democracy combined with an aspiration, socialism and social change. But what's in between?" (*Marxism Today*, October 1980). Nevertheless, anti-capitalist declarations of this kind are bound to attract Trotskyists within the Labour Party and outside it. And the affinity of Benn's thinking with modern British Trotskyism is not merely superficial.

The two elements which were present before Benn's thinking became explicitly anti-capitalist, – participatory democracy and centralist statist economic policies – correspond to the main elements in Modern British Trotskyism. **Both are equally naive in believing that centralisation and decentralisation can be pursued at the same time.**

3. Modern British Trotskyism and Labour Party Policy

If our assessment of the potency of the *ultra-democratic* ideology is correct, we would expect to find the Labour Party's policy and ideology moving in this direction. However, if an *ultra-democratic* advance were all that were involved, this pamphlet would never have been written. What is alarming is the extent of the inroads made, especially since 1979, by *Trotskyist* ideas.

A preliminary word is needed about the nature of the changes. It is vital to look beyond formal, official policy *statements*, important though these are. Such statements tend to use soft, evasive formulations: in any case they come at the end of the process of policy formation. We must also look also at the nature of the *demands* which are gaining support, and at the speeches of leading politicians. More fundamentally, since we are talking about the growth of a new worldview, we need to examine *statements of belief*, and at the *values* implied by people's behaviour and by the symbols they adopt.

Let us begin, with the **ultra-democratic** ideas. Later in the chapter, some of these will be reinterpreted from a **Trotskyist** viewpoint.

"Ultra-Democratic" Policies

Some of the most important **ultra-democratic** demands are those which the 1974-79 Labour Government has been most attacked for not carrying out: abolition of the House of Lords, introduction of a Freedom of Information Act, large scale introduction of industrial co-operatives and industrial democracy. The programme of constitutional changes (automatic reselection, widening the franchise for the election of Party leader, and the writing of the Manifesto by the NEC) has also drawn on **ultra-democratic** support, although the specific proposals do not fit as easily within an **ultra-democratic** framework as would possible alternatives – especially "one-man-one-vote" for reselection and for the election of the Party leader.

There are a number of other issues where **ultra-democratic** support is likely to fall clearly on one side (the "left"): the EEC, incomes policy, unilateral nuclear disarmament, nuclear energy, reform of the Press, and the ending of a British presence in Northern Ireland. A distinguishing feature of all these issues is their complex nature: in every case, it is possible for a wholehearted democrat – or even a Marxist – to oppose the "left" position for excellent reasons. For example, in the case of the EEC, there is a strong current of pro-European feeling within the Marxist left (John Palmer, "Europe's Left Opposition," *New Statesman*, 7 November 1980; Tom Nairn, "The Left Against Europe?" *New Left Review 75*, 1972) and even among **Trotskyists** (Ernest Mandel: *Europe versus America?*, 1970).

On all these issues, a simple-minded approach fits more easily with an **ultra-democratic** perspective. One of the less fortunate implications of the rise of **ultra-democracy** is that populism must be expected to grow correspondingly. Hence any politician who takes up a more complex approach tends to find his democratic credentials being challenged; this has been partially responsible for the difficulties experienced by the Labour Parliamentary leadership in the last two years.

Trotskyist policies

Let us now turn to explicitly **Trotskyist** ideas. The most important of these are the rejection of Parliament and the rule of law, and the acceptance of insurrectionary methods.

Parliament and the Rule of Law

The most striking example of an insurrectionary policy becoming official was the adoption at the 1979 Party Conference, virtually without debate, of the commitment to *renationalise without compensation* public assets hived off by the Conservative government. This policy reappeared in the NEC Statement, *Peace, Jobs, Freedom*, approved at the May 1980 Special Conference, without being separately voted upon.

Expropriation has long been demanded by Trotskyists within the Party. It is essentially insurrectionist because it makes no sense except in a revolutionary perspective, so high is the level of conflict it would precipitate. It would obviously make the sort of collaboration between public and private sectors envisaged in the Labour Party's "Alternative Economic Strategy" (AES) impossible. It is also profoundly "statist" in that it elevates into a crime the shifting of any activity from the public to the private sector, instead of viewing the boundary as involving two-way traffic; and it is inconsistent with the rule of law in creating retrospective penalties for acts legally done. It is significant how cautious the Communist Party has been, by comparison, in handling the concept of expropriation. The 1978 edition of its programme *The British Road to Socialism* states that "In all cases (of nationalisation) only limited compensation should be paid to shareholders".

The implications of "renationalisation without compensation" were spelled out in the *Briefing* issued at the 1979 Party conference by the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory (SCLV): "It involves a *revolutionary* measure, for in all probability a Labour Government which even attempted to nationalise industries without compensation would be met with refusal of the Royal Assent to its Bills... To go forward, the Labour Government would have to defy the Crown, defy the Armed Forces chiefs... and base itself on *our* movement's combined industrial and organisational strength to take the power. And if our leaders faltered, we would have to take the power ourselves on behalf of and in defence of the elected Government."

More recently, a similar policy – a commitment to the cancellation of local authority debt – was inserted into the Labour Party's 1981 GLC Election Manifesto. The implications of this policy are similar to those of the preceding one, although it makes even less sense either in purpose or in mechanism. Once again, negligible debate occurred – the policy was simply inserted into the Manifesto by the Executive and never separately voted upon. More recently, the 1980 Party Conference adopted a resolution calling for the repurchase of council houses bought under the Conservative "Right to Buy", at a price set to recover the value of the discount. Statist, punitive, retrospective and deeply insensitive to ordinary people's feelings, this policy has now been rejected even by the NEC as totally impracticable. But its adoption shows the strength of the Party's newly found confiscatory impulse.

More direct attacks on Parliament and on the rule of law can be found in statements by leading politicians, if not in formal statements of policy.

For example, at the 1979 Party Conference, Joan Maynard MP, speaking for the NEC, commented: "... we have to bear in mind that the law has never been on our side. It was made by the other people for their people and not for ours. Let us hope that we can stop these sales (of

council houses) and these cuts within the law. I am personally doubtful, but one thing is certain, that the sale of council houses and the cuts must be stopped." At the 1980 Party Conference, Tony Banks, now chairman of the GLC Arts Committee, declared, to applause, that "the streets in the end are going to be as important as Parliament in building socialism in this country."

More recently, an article in the *London Labour Briefing*, attracted national attention. Commenting on the Brixton riots, it said: "An alternative view would be that the street fighting was excellent, but could have been (and hopefully, in future, will be) better organised! Some of us feel that there are occasions when, in defence of genuine legality and democracy, insurrectionary methods become necessary" (*The Guardian*, 3 June 1981). The *Financial Times* reported Michael Foot's view that the actions of "extreme left wingers in the Labour Party, including supporters of the *Militant* Tendency and self-styled Trotskyists" in support of the rioters in London, Toxteth and Manchester had been "deliberately inflammatory" (10 July 1981).

The Appetite for Conflict

There is other evidence of the Labour Party's growing appetite for conflict: the *clenched fist salute*, now often seen at Party conferences and gatherings; and the greater emphasis put on *marches* as opposed to debate and discussion. This is especially apparent when those marching are MPs, who have much more effective methods of persuasion open to them. The march by 100 MPs on the Department of Employment was one striking example; the threats made by Colin Barnett, North West Regional Secretary of the TUC against MPs not taking part in the "People's March for Jobs" managed to highlight both the militancy and the intolerance of the new Left (national press, 11 May 1981).

Shirley Williams is no longer alone, as she was in October 1980, in drawing attention to the incidence of intimidation, together with a more general intolerance and abandonment of debate. In his reproach to Tony Benn, Michael Foot wrote: "Our appearance will not be improved by examples of sectarian intolerance or by the ruthless pursuit of internal feuds". (*Guardian*, 4 June 1981). John Silkin, Denis Healey and Janey Buchan MEP have all made similar comments.

We must also consider the changed values in the unions as evidenced in the "winter of discontent". The willingness of so many trade unionists to extend industrial conflict into hitherto sacrosanct areas of life – leaving the dead unburied, the sick untreated, schoolchildren untaught – profoundly shocked many in the Labour Party and outside it. Here was a hardening of feeling which had never been seen before in the Labour movement. And the excesses of the closed shop – bitterly defended by Trotskyists – have cast the unions in the embarassing role of persecutor, instead of defender, of the ordinary man or woman.

Economic Policy

The main outlines of the Alternative Economic Strategy (AES) were laid down in the early 70s. While Marxist in approach, the AES could not be described as Trotskyist: indeed it has been bitterly criticised by Trotskyists outside the Labour Party, and supporters of *Militant* regularly put up resolutions embodying their own policy. In some respects, the AES draws on much wider, and non-Marxist support, particularly in its stress on import controls, which is shared by Wynne Godley's Cambridge Economic Policy Group.

The strategy is attractive to the Left because of its emphasis on state ownership and control. It would involve a massive intervention in people's choices if implemented in full. On the other hand, it

explicitly accepts the continuation of the mixed economy, although speeches by Tony Benn have undermined the commitment of the AES to a mixed economy and therefore undermined its coherence. At the 1979 Party Conference, he argued that "compassion in administering decaying capitalism does not make that system work." In the same speech he declared that to restore full employment "means taking on, I fear, the business and banking community.... There will be a tremendous battle."

The difficulty with this attitude, which fits perfectly the **Trotskyist** conflict model, is that it is incompatible with the basic philosophy of the AES, which is that while state influence over the economy should be increased, the non-state sector should be positively aided to function effectively, and (implicitly) profitably, in order to contribute to economic growth. It is clearly not possible simultaneously to sponsor prosperity in the private sector and to fight a war against it. The attitude expressed by Benn (and presumably taken also by those who applauded him) makes sense only in an insurrectionary perspective.

In fact, there are many new writers on the Marxist left who do see Labour's AES as being about conflict. In the journal *Capital and Class*, the London Group of the Conference of Socialist Economists wrote: "the central demands of the AES... would necessarily conflict with the interests of big capital... the response (of the AES)... is essentially *aggressive*, attacking the power of big capital domestically and through its foreign connections... The perspective would then be for further and more decisive struggles" (Summer 1979). Francis Cripps quotes Bob Rowthorn, "a persuasive supporter of the Strategy", as supposing "that it could eventually lead to confrontation with the power of capital on such a scale as to end in Chilean-style destabilization and a military coup" (*New Left Review*, July-August 1981).

Pressure from rising consumption demands can lead to inflation. The AES is particularly vulnerable to inflationary pressures, because of the desire to shift resources into investment and because import controls reduce real national income. While some Marxists have always been willing to consider incomes policies favourably, **Trotskyists** have been one of the main centres of opposition to any acknowledgement that some form of incomes policy is unavoidable in the AES. Their position is that there should be no class collaboration of any kind – only intensifying conflict; some also perceive that a competitive wages struggle reduces profits, investment and economic growth, and should therefore be encouraged as hastening the onset of economic crisis. At the 1980 Wembley Special Conference, Tony Benn made some genuflection to this view in his ringing declaration that "no incomes policy or wage control can revitalise capitalism when it has declined to the level that it has in this country."

Trotskyist opposition to any form of wage restraint is due not only to a commitment to class struggle but to a belief in the efficacy of the "politics of exposure". For the Labour Party to accept an incoherent set of economic policies is positively advantageous, since their inevitable failure will discredit "reformism" in favour (it is believed) of insurrectionary socialism. Another important example of the "politics of exposure" at work is the recent adoption by the NEC of the demand for a 35 hour week with no loss of living standards. This has long been campaigned for by the *Militant* Tendency. It is incapable of being realised quickly, and even over time could only be achieved if substantial economic growth were forthcoming.

The **Trotskyist** perspective involves, during the revolutionary transition, a

drastic extension of state ownership. Present Labour Party policy on nationalisation is intriguing. Tony Benn does not appear to envisage a fully state-owned economy. Indeed, he has written explicitly of Clause IV of the Labour Party Constitution: "The phrase 'common ownership' is cast widely enough to embrace all forms of enterprise, including nationalised industries, municipal and co-operative enterprises" (*Arguments For Socialism*, 1979). The NEC's new policy statement, *The Socialist Alternative*, even adds to this list "ownership by Workers' Capital Funds". Yet rhetoric from the NEC and at Labour conferences still stresses massive extensions of state ownership. Arthur Scargill recently called for "a commitment by the Party to take into common ownership (without compensation) the means of production, distribution and exchange in the weeks (not months and years) following the election of a Labour government" (speech to Labour Co-ordinating Committee Conference, 18 July 1981) and has made it clear that this means nationalisation.

The Battle over Local Government Spending Cuts

An increased emphasis on statism and on conflict has been evident at local government as well as national level.

Since 1979, much of the political running has been made in the course of struggles over local authorities' response to the Conservatives' pressure to cut spending. Two policy "lines" have stood out: "no cuts" and "no cuts and no rent or rate rises". The former need not necessarily be specifically Trotskyist, but does fit into a **Trotskyist** framework much more easily than into a **social democratic** one. It is essentially statist and insensitive to individuals' needs. It asserts that *any* state spending, no matter how marginal in terms of priorities, must take precedence over *any* private spending. New carpets for the Town Hall are more important than a new pair of shoes for a working-class child. A resident was shown on TV putting the point very effectively at one of Ted Knight's public meetings: "You talk of 'No cuts' – but there *are* cuts: all you are doing is forcing *us* to make the cuts instead of you."

"New carpets for the Town Hall are more important than a new pair of shoes for a working class child."

The policy also exhibits the economism of the Trotskyists' trade union practices: it suits the short term interests of the largely middle class trade union, NALGO. And Ted Knight has made it clear that the policy is about confrontation: "Let's say to Heseltine and the Tories, we have gone so far, we go no further, we are prepared to threaten your existence!" (Speech to the 1980 Party Conference).

The policy of "no cuts, no rent or rate rises" – which has received much support in the last two years – is very expressive of the characteristic outlook of modern British Trotskyism: taken literally, it implies the sharpest possible confrontation with central government. Its logic is the abandonment of elective office (regarded as worthless anyway) in favour of bankruptcy and direct mass action. At the same time, it has the characteristic naivety: the assumption that mass support would be forthcoming and, for some of its supporters, the assumption that resources can always be got from somewhere to sustain unaltered real levels of spending in the face of reduced real revenue.

Policies with a double meaning

Some policies which are fundamentally **ultra-democratic** in impetus look different when seen from a **Trotskyist** prospective. Perhaps the most important of these is the programme of constitutional changes.

Although some changes are, or could be, liberalising, the salient point is that their overall effect is to bring Labour closer to the Leninist model of the Party. *The basic features of representative democracy are largely abandoned;* instead of being open to influence by people at large, the elected Member becomes a prisoner of the Party, through reselection, exclusive control of the Manifesto by the Party, and loss of the right even to elect the Group or PLP leader. Demands are being pressed to make the Member subject to direction by the Party between elections; in the case of a Prime Minister, this is already so, since he or she can now be subjected to a contest for reselection by a simple majority vote of the Annual Conference.

"The overall effect of the constitutional changes is to bring Labour closer to the Leninist model of the Party. The basic features of representative democracy are largely abandoned."

To compound the exclusion from influence of the ordinary voter, the Labour Party and unions are both already characterised by an extremely indirect form of democracy. In the Labour Party, conference delegates are elected by GMC delegates who are in turn elected by the usually tiny meetings of activist Party members. At the lowest level, election of GMC delegates is often effectively self-selection by those who are interested. In a typical trade union, the pattern of indirect election normally involves at least as many stages and sometimes more.

There are only two important respects in which the new constitution diverges from the Leninist model: entry is still open to all who wish to join and, although refusals of membership do occur, the rules are weighted in favour of the applicant; and trade unions are given the dominant role, both in Party conference votes (at national and regional level) and in the new Electoral College for the election of Party leader.

The leading role of the trade unions fits in well with the **Trotskyist** perspective which, as already noted, differs from Leninism on this point.

Trotskyists have attacked Parliamentarism on the grounds that it gives the citizen nothing more than a single vote once every five years; ironically, the Labour Party's constitutional reforms reduce his role exactly to that and no more. Even where an extension of democracy is sought within the workplace – through "industrial democracy" or "workers' control" – nominations will be controlled by the same tight apparatus of the trade unions.

A consistently **ultra-democratic** position on the constitutional reforms would have come much closer to that pursued briefly by Frances Morrell and Brian Sedgemore (*The Guardian*, 26 November 1979): rank and file election for all trade union Conference delegates, parity for CLP and unions in voting at Conference, selection of MPs by all Party members, two day single subject policy making conferences. That such proposals have not been pursued by the Labour Co-Ordinating Committee (to which both authors belong) shows how the **ultra-democratic** impulse has been forced to accommodate to less democratic perspectives.

Abolition of the House of Lords assumes a very different meaning within a **Trotskyist**

perspective from that which it has had in the past. The unpleasant fact is that a single chamber Parliament, elected on a "first past the post" system, in a state without a written constitution or any entrenched safeguards (such as are provided in the USA or West Germany by the existence of a constitutional Court) would be ideally suited to the seizure of power by Parties either of the left or of the right (see Stuart Bell, *How to Abolish the Lords*, Fabian Society, 1981). In Britain, little over one-third of the popular vote would be required. A second chamber is not the only possible guarantee of the constitution – but there has been negligible discussion in the Party of any alternatives.

One other ideological connection is worth a brief examination. This is the relative Trotskyist success, in the Labour movement, in gaining support from an apparent espousal of *ecological issues*, especially opposition to nuclear energy. In reality, as the split and subsequent electoral collapse in 1980 of the West German "Greens" suggested, this is not a feasible long run marriage, any more than is that between Trotskyism and ultra-democracy. This is due not only to the essential centralism of Trotskyism, but also to its economism. Pressure for higher wages and salaries in pursuit of higher material standards is simply not compatible with the economic self-abnegation objectively required of a genuine ecologist. For the time being, however, this incompatibility has not been recognised.

4. The Growth of Trotskyist Influence over the Labour Party

So far, the discussion has been mainly about ideas. But organisation is also crucial, and we now turn to the mechanisms which have aided the growth of *Trotskyist* influence over the Labour Party.

It has been shown how the potential existed for an ideological alliance between *Trotskyism* and *ultra-democracy*. For this potential to be realised, a practical political alliance had to be based on it.

The essential precondition for this alliance was the abolition by the NEC in 1973 of the Labour Party's list of proscribed organisations – that is, of organisations membership of which is incompatible with membership of the Labour Party. In practice, most of the main Marxist political organisations – the Communist Party, SWP, WRP – have remained proscribed as a result of the automatic ban on those

contesting elections in opposition to Labour candidates. But this has left unaffected many other Trotskyist groupings and the very large number of Trotskyist-influenced people not in any Trotskyist organisation. More fundamentally, it has meant the disappearance of any *ideological* boundary separating a *parliamentary* Labour Party from *insurrectionary* socialist ideas. There is, unfortunately, nothing in the Labour Party constitution which explicitly commits the Labour Party to the defence of Parliamentary democracy and the rule of law. Clause IV, 1, "To organise and maintain in Parliament and in the country a political Labour Party", is not a sufficient statement.

The Labour Party has been left wide open *both* to "entrism" *and* to the growth of **Trotskyist** ideological influence.

"The essential preconditions of an alliance between Trotskyism and ultra-democracy was the abolition in 1973 of the Labour Party's list of proscribed organisations... there is, unfortunately, nothing in the Party's constitution which explicitly commits the Labour Party to the defense of parliamentary democracy and the rule of law."

Entrism

Much attention has been paid to the question of "entrism" – the pursuit of a *conscious* strategy of infiltration of the Labour Party by members or supporters of Trotskyist or other far left groups, with varying degrees of approval by their parent organisations. There can be no doubt that entrism *has* been extremely effective. The "fools" of the *Militant* Tendency, who rushed in where the "angels" of the more intellectual Trotskyist groups feared to tread, have had a major impact on debate within the Labour Party, and succeeded in maintaining their identity. They now have at least two Parliamentary candidates. But it is important to realise that *Militant* forms only a small part of the Trotskyist forces; many other sects helped to build up the hegemony now enjoyed by Trotskyist ideas. This hegemony is now making entrism a phenomenon of a wholly different kind and scale from that seen during the 1970s. Conspiratorial entrism is now less important. What matters is the *spontaneous* arrival in the Labour Party of new members influenced by Trotskyist ideas. An article in the Communist Party magazine *Comment* says : "The leftist organisations that are openly Trotskyist... have lost their attraction – and membership – to the Labour Party. But those who have entered the Labour Party have taken their politics with them" (8 August 1981).

Differential Recruitment

What could be called "differential recruitment" has been proving vital in the struggle for control of the Labour Party,and will be more so in the coming years. Every victory for the left makes it *more* likely that those in the large reservoir of Trotskyist-influenced younger people will actually join the Party. At the same time, those victories make it *less* likely that social democrats will join. The setting up of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) has removed from activity in the Party some of the most active opponents of the left. The new left's widely-criticised intolerance and intimidating tactics have the same effect, often intentionally.

Many people, including the bulk of the Parliamentary Labour Party, political commentators and older Labour Party activists, have until recently been unaware of the sheer scale of the upheaval which has been taking place, for two reasons. Firstly, broadly speaking, it is only people in their 30s or younger who have been affected (that is, those who had their intellectual formation since 1966). Secondly, until 1979, the change largely occurred away from the structures of real political power. Politicians and commentators took no more than a passing interest in the activities of the Trotskyist sects, the student socialist societies or (less sensibly) Labour Party GMCs or Regional Conferences. But the people concerned are nonetheless alive, thinking, and often politically active. It could only be a matter of time before they made their presence felt at national level in the Labour Party and in the trade unions.

The Party's Vulnerability

A tentative glance at the arithmetic of the various groupings will make clear how vulnerable the Labour Party is, as a result of its decline. The Party's actual membership in 1979 was estimated by *Labour Weekly* at only 284,000, although by 1980 the Party's own figures showed an increase to 358,950 (*New Society*, 16 April 1981). It seems likely that only about 80,000 of these are active members (see Whiteley and Gordon, *New Statesman*, 11 January 1981). Thus to win a majority among Labour Party constituency activists probably requires only about 40,000 people. This is an order of magnitude probably smaller than, and at any rate commensurate with, the number of convinced Trotskyist or other revolutionary socialists.

At any one time the SWP has around 5,000 members – but the readership of its newspaper, The *Socialist Worker*, is about 30,000. The number of people who, while not members, have been influenced by it must be much larger. The other Trotskyist sects have fewer members. The WRP has around 2,500, with several thousand more in its own Young Socialist organisation, and the IMG has between 500 and 1,000. There are various other Trotskyist groupings outside the Labour Party, such as the Revolutionary Communist Tendency and Big Flame, which must total several thousand more. Once again, all of these groupings have influenced many people who are no longer members. Then there are the Trotskyist groups active within the Labour Party. *Militant* has around 2,000 "subscribers", but most of the membership of the Labour Party Young Socialists – approaching 8,000 – must effectively be counted in. Various other Trotskyist groupings within the Labour Party such as the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory (SCLV) and the Workers' Socialist League (WSL), an offshoot of the WRP, may in total have several thousand more. The Communist Party, now standing at 18,458, compared with 25,284 in 1977, has been losing members rapidly, and must have contributed several thousand seasoned activists to the Labour Party in the last few years.

By contrast, the Fabian Society affiliates 3,001 members to the Labour Party, and the number voting in the recent ballot on SDP membership – probably a good measure of total activists – was 2,887. The Campaign for Labour Victory (CLV) (which had a mailing list of 4,000) and the recently proscribed Social Democratic Alliance (which claimed 3,000) have been decimated by the setting up of the SDP.

Whiteley and Gordon showed that, in 1979, 36 per cent of the Conference delegates opted for the description "Left of *Tribune*/*Militant*" as best describing their political position, and a further 24 per cent

chose "*Tribune*/Left of Centre" (*ibid*). There can be little doubt that by 1979 the inflow of the revolutionary left into the Labour Party had not gone nearly so far as it has done now.

The Role of the NEC

The Parliamentarist left on the NEC have been encouraging the movement of insurrectionary socialists into the Labour Party. The most notorious example is the appointment in 1976 of Andy Bevan, a *Militant* supporter, as the Party's Youth Officer. A more recent example was Tony Benn's invitation to Trotskyists to join the Labour Party: "These debates (on the manifesto and reselection) are now going on in as interesting a form inside the Labour Party as well as inside the ultra-left groups. That is why some on the left are saying this might be the moment to join. This week (the Party Conference) will have started a tremendous debate with the left groups . . . I wish they wanted to join us . . . I would like to make us a party those people would like to join" (*The Leveller*, November 1979).

Usually, the encouragement has been less overt. It has most often taken the form of a defence of the right of "Marxists" to join the Labour Party. Tony Benn has usually been careful enough to say that they should accept Parliamentary democracy – but has been unmoved by the manifest fact that all too many do not. In line with this stance, the NEC have refused to confirm any expulsion of Trotskyists from the Party – even in the most flagrant cases. For instance, Oxford Labour Party were not allowed to expel Ted Heslin, who is admitted by the IMG's *Socialist Challenge* (25 June 1981) to be a supporter of the WSL and a seller of its newspaper *Socialist Press*, and who, according to the *Daily Mail* (14 July 1980) is actually a member of the WSL's National Executive.

It has also been common for NEC members to deny that there are any but a negligible number of Trotskyists in the Party. In taking up this postion, they have reinforced the taboo which already prohibited open discussion of Trotskyism within the Labour Party.

By a striking dialectical process, the period of right wing dominance in the 50s and early 60s with the expulsions of Communists and other insurrectionary socialists led to a reaction among ordinary party members against *any* criticism of the far left. This position has become increasingly absurd as the strength and aggressiveness of the anti-parliamentary left has grown, and it has rendered parliamentarists in the party completely defenceless. Trotskyists have made the most of this advantage by never putting more of their cards on the table at any one time than they have had to.

The most important encouragement to Trotskyists to join the Labour Party has been the adoption of policies such as renationalisation without compensation, which conform to a Trotskyist but not to a social democratic worldview.

Trotskyism in the trade unions

Paul Foot has stated that "The extent of the leftward movement among active rank and file trade unionists has been seriously underestimated everywhere, even in *Socialist Worker*" (*op cit*).

Political commentary generally has paid far less attention to changes in the unions than to those in the Labour Party. Yet the simplest assumption is almost certainly correct: that the character of union activists has been changing in the same way as in the Party. Some of the unions in which Trotskyist activity has been most apparent (CPSA, NUT, NATFHE, NALGO) are not affiliated to the Labour Party and play no direct role in its affairs. But only very

strong assumptions about the mental isolation from the rest of their generation of the blue collar workers who make up the membership of most of the Labour-party affiliated unions would justify the view that they could have remained unaffected by the ideological hegemony exercised by modern Trotskyism.

It could only be a question of time before trade union votes at annual and regional Party conferences began to reflect the new outlook, as younger workers gradually took over the key positions on divisional and regional committees, national executives and conference delegations. Many people, including some union leaders, have been surprised at the growing difficulty those leaders have had in "delivering" union votes for the parliamentary leadership. But in view of the fundamental differences in ideology and values which are involved, no other result was to be expected.

The Labour Party has added absurdly to its own vulnerability by allowing members of organisations ineligible for affiliation, including the Communist Party and all the Trotskyist groups, to play a full role in the choice of union delegates to Party conferences and of resolutions for submission to the Party. Entrism has never been necessary in the unions: every Communist or Trotskyist has already been an "affiliated" member of the Labour Party simply as a result of paying the political levy. Publicity has given recently to the role of three Communist members of the UCATT executive in swinging the union's vote behind Tony Benn in the election for the Deputy Leader. But this is only one example from what is a universal and consistent pattern.

Mechanisms of Influence

The use of "front organisations" is a time-honoured tactic of the revolutionary left, still in much use. Organisations within the Labour Party act to similar effect. The so-called "Rank and File Mobilising Committee for Labour Party Democracy" formed in 1980 brings together both "legitimate left" and Trotskyist groupings: of the ten organisations included, three are clearly Trotskyist – the *Militant* Tendency, the *Militant*-controlled LPYS, and SCLV, which according to Tom Forester (*New Society*, 10 January 1981), is an offspring of the WRP via "Workers Action" and the "Chartists".

Trotskyist influence is also strong in the National Organisation of Labour Students, another member of the Mobilising Committee. The Tribunite *Briefing*, a daily broadsheet circulated at National and Regional Labour Party conferences, and an extremely important ideological and tactical influence over delegates has, since 1979, merged with the explicitly Trotskyist rival daily broadsheet of the "Socialist Campaign for Labour Victory". Other similar alliances have been operating within the Labour Party – for instance in relation to the selection of candidates for GLC and London Borough elections.

In July 1981 the Labour Co-ordinating Committee set up an apparatus similar to the Mobilising Committee, to work within the trade unions. The description of this in the press as a "broad left" alliance is rather misleading: the term "broad left" has normally meant an alliance of "Eurocommunists" with left social democrats from the Labour Party *against* Trotskyists. Here it means an alliance which includes Trotskyists.

The tactical voting discipline made possible by arrangements of this kind has been very important. It is not always realised just how strong is the position of a minority which knows what it wants *vis-a-vis* a majority that does not. A single coordinated block of votes within a much larger total can win most of the time if the

remaining votes are cast randomly – and there has been no united opposition in recent years to Trotskyist propositions.

The block of around 50,000 to 60,000 votes in the constituency section of the NEC which can be clearly identified as Trotskyist controlled, together with the larger number swayed by the Rank and File Mobilising Committee, have proved remarkably effective at keeping the left in line, given the presence of a considerable number of candidates clustered aound the 250,000 to 350,000 level. *Briefing*, at the 1979 Party Conference, for instance, had this message: "USE YOUR VOTE WISELY! The *Briefing* team will vote: Allaun, Benn, Heffer, Kinnock, Richardson, Roberts, Skinner. (We cannot support Joan Lestor this year – she blotted her copybook last year by her conduct of the Chair.)" And the penalty meted out to Ian Mikardo for compromising over automatic reselection is well-known. Each NEC member knows that if he or she develops doubts others are ready to take their place.

Campaigns against individuals taking a social democratic line (for example the attack by *Militant* on John Golding which led to his libel suit, for which he was again attacked) have served to *encourager les autres*. Since the 1981 Wembley Conference, the use of "hit lists" has become routine.

The Effects of the "Generation Gap"

The difference in age between those holding the new ideas and those continuing to hold social democratic views has added the sharpness of a generational conflict to what would already be a bitter clash. Matters of lifestyle unrelated to political differences have increased the sense of distance between the antagonists, and reduced the possibilities for dialogue. A review in *The Leveller* of the 1979 Labour Party Conference illustrates this sense of distance: "(the Conference) had none of the fringe culture characteristics of the extra-Parliamentary left, no discos... no theatre, no happenings, no life." The age gap has had another effect. People may lose some of their energy and freshness of response as they age, but they do gain in their understanding of the complexities of politics and of the defects of apparently simple solutions. The naivety of many of Labour's new left policies does not prevent them from winning the support of the younger and newer members of the Party, but obviously leaders in, or close to, power, simply cannot afford to go along with them. If such policies are pressed by the left, they can be used to bring the leadership into conflict both with "left" backbenchers in their council or Parliamentary group and with the Party outside. The leadership can, in the last resort, even be successfully ousted. This device must be as old as politics itself; it can also be seen as another form of "the politics of exposure" already mentioned. Whether consciously or not, it forms an essential part of the battleplans both of Tony Benn in relation to the Parliamentary Labour Party (still in progress) and of Ken Livingstone in relation to the GLC (already successful).

Existing Features of the Labour Party and Trade Unions

Various characteristics of the Labour Party and of trade unions have also aided the advance of **Trotskyism**. There are long standing elements in Labour Party ideology which correspond more closely to a Marxist than a social democratic perspective. In 1956, Anthony Crosland noted the unusual strength in Britain of class resentment, and of an ideology of class betrayal – "the touchy, defensive, almost neurotic fear that

'the class enemy' will somehow fatally weaken the working class" (*The Future of Socialism*). He concluded that "our class stratification is a direct incitement to social antagonism and resentment" (*ibid*). Sadly, this is equally true today.

Social democrats in the Labour Party, other than Crosland and his followers, have been victims of their own ideological vagueness. The Party's aim has been universally agreed to be the achievement of "socialism". But this has rarely been given a clear content other than the collective ownership of the means of production. The deference paid to the term by almost everyone in the Party has been bound to work in favour of those who do believe in what they see as the "real thing".

Some events in the Party's recent history have also played a role. The dominant interpretation of the 1970 election defeat was that the Party had lost not because of economic mismanagement, but because traditional working class labour voters, alienated by wage restaint and anti-union proposals, had stayed at home. The inference was that closer links were needed with the trade unions. This view, deeply held in the Labour movement, and apparently confirmed by the election victories of 1974, has conformed with some of the fundamentals of the Trotskyist worldview and aided its growth. In fact, these closer links have not improved the Party's electoral performance, but the first-past-the-post electoral system enabled the Party to ignore its declining electoral support, since the prospect of government has remained intact.

Events of the last 15 years have also promoted a climate within trades unions favourable to the growth of Trotskyist influence. The two attempts (In Place of Strife, 1968, and the Industrial Relations Act, 1972) at curtailing trade union power, by invoking the sanction of imprisonment against shop stewards, created a feeling of persecution which fitted perfectly the Trotskyist worldview. Penal sanctions and industrial militancy fed and justified each other.

"The first past-the-post electoral system enabled the Party to ignore its declining electoral support, since the prospect of government has remained intact."

Debates and stuggles over incomes policy have favoured the Trotskyists. The rational case for incomes policy is strong – but it makes the role of a trade union ambiguous and complex. Trotskyism legitimates economism, which makes the unions' role clear and simple, and tends to maximise membership.

Finally, modern Trotskyism has been a more convenient ideology for the trade union movement to adopt than ultra-democracy pure and simple would be. The latter would in many ways be profoundly threatening – suggesting universal postal ballots, abolition of the closed shop, which would dilute the power of union apparatuses and of activists. Trotskyists have benefitted from that most powerful of political forces –inertia.

5. Where Do Trotskyist Ideas Lead?

It is not difficult to show that the promise offered to many in the Labour Party by the ideas of Trotkyism is false. Since this pamphlet is addressed as much to those who have encountered the influence of Trotskyist ideas as to those who have not, use is made here of Marxists' own writings in order to demonstrate that, in reality, Marxism and, with it, Trotskyism is disintegrating intellectually – ironically, at the very same time that the Labour Party is succumbing to it.

Class Analysis

Undoubtedly, a traditional manual working class continues to exist in Britain, probably to an extent greater than in other industrial countries. There is a very sharply differentiated working class culture and lifestyle, distinguished most of all in modes of speech, so that it is very easy to tell exactly which social class someone belongs to and say, for instance, that playing football, eating a main meal in the middle of the day, and drinking beer are all working class things to do. Snobbery is endemic and ferocious. Furthermore, a recent study by Goldthorpe has shown that upward social moblility within an occupational structure in which the number of higher status jobs has been rising has left a large part of the manual working class completely untouched (*Social Mobility and Class Structure*, 1980). Thus, with few entrants from the downwardly mobile, it has remained extremely homogeneous and relatively isolated. For socialists or social democrats, the reduction of such social class divisions must be one of the most important issues on the political agenda.

There are, however, two fundamental difficulties with the political conclusions drawn by the Trotskyists from the continued existence of a traditional working class, even supposing that Trotskyist ideas had much popular appeal: firstly, the small size of this class and, secondly, the nature of its presumed allies.

The general level of skill in the workforce has been rising, so that by 1978 only 28.8 per cent of male employees were classed as semi-skilled or unskilled manual workers, compared with 45.0 per cent in 1951; foremen and skilled manual workers had risen to 40.0 per cent in 1978, from 35.3 per cent in 1951; professionals, managers and administrators had risen to 31.9 per cent, from 12.8 per cent. The trends for women workers have been similar (Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth, *Report Number 8*, 1979). Important geographical changes have been occuring also: industrial production has been moving out of the cities into smaller towns and peripheral areas, in which working and living conditions tend to be better. Thus the proportion of the population who would identify themselves with the traditional working class has been falling, and is clearly now in a minority. And the traditional working class is less powerful than it once was. To some extent, the decline of the traditional manual working class may be seen as offset by the growth of unionisation amongst white collar workers. The question is: does unionisation imply that white collar workers can be expected to throw in their lot with the manual workers?

There are many militant Trotskyist-inclined socialists active in white collar unions which consequently appear to have policies indistinguishable from those of a manual union. This, however, is not

surprising, since hierarchies of authority are as important an organising principle as ownership of the means of production – and it is quite easy for a white collar worker in a junior grade to see himself as being in the same position as a manual worker. But the crucial question is whether white collar occupational groups as a whole have the same economic interests as manual workers.

Statistics do show that a small proportion of the population owns a large proportion of total wealth; for instance in 1978, 5 per cent owned 44 per cent of all personal wealth (although their share falls to 25 per cent if occupational and state pension rights are included). But over 40 per cent of personal wealth was in the form of owner occupied housing, which yields no return in the form of profit or interest, and a further 4 per cent was in the form of other non-interest or -profit yielding assets. As a result the share of national income going in the form of profits and interest is relatively small, at 11 per cent in 1979 (*National Income and Expenditure*). The amount available for consumption is very much smaller, since the bulk of income from profits and interest is reinvested. Total consumption out of profits must have amounted to less than 5 per cent of national income over the last decade. It is this alone that is available for redistribution. But divided up among wage and salary earners it would make very little difference to them; on average, there would be a once-for-all gain of perhaps 1 per cent – less than would be yielded by one good year's economic growth! And even this calculation exaggerates the benefits to be obtained by raiding profits, since occupational pension schemes now control over £20 billion of funds, and together with life insurance schemes take over one-third of each year's profits and interest.

The conclusion is of fundamental importance: objectively, the important differences of economic interest in our society are *among* those whose income comes from employment, and not between the owners of wealth and the rest.

The notion that it is the ownership of capital which is the main source of inequality in income can be rehabilitated if the concept of capital is extended to include human capital – that is, the productive powers formed in an individual as a result of education and training. But while this is helpful to the Trotskyist case in one sense, it is subversive of it in another, more important, way. For it reinforces the view that the effective reduction of inequalities can only come from the redistribution of wealth and income among those in employment. **This means that the idea of a broad political alliance of manual and white collar groups against a capital owning ruling class, on a programme of expropriation of property owners, is simply not feasible.**

If the political trends of the last 20 years in Britain are examined, it is hard not to conclude that the revival of the Liberal Party is partly the effect of the new middle groups finding their own political voice. It is only the "first past the post" electoral system which has given the impression of great instability in the Liberal vote: if the overall share at general elections is examined, it shows a succession of waves, reaching steadily higher at each peak. From 2.6 per cent in 1951, it rose to 11.2 per cent in 1964, falling back to 7.5 per cent in 1970 but rising again to 19.3 per cent in February 1974. Its decline in 1979 was only to 13.8 per cent. The corresponding long run decline in the Labour vote was from 48.8 per cent in 1951 to 36.9 per cent in 1979 (a mere 27.7 per cent of the electorate). Why would these developments have been occurring if the effective result of changes in the economy was to extend, rather than shrink, the scope for political mobilisation around a self-consciously working class party?

"A broad political alliance of manual and white collar groups against a capital owning ruling class and programme of expropriation of property is not feasible. However, the Trotskyist road – though militant action by a minority working class party with few allies from other classes cannot lead to success via an electoral majority. The electoral system may produce a parliamentary system of only a third of the popular vote – but in carrying through major changes, there is no substitute for real popular support. Such changes would be reversed after the next election."

The Strategy of Conflict

The Trotskyist road, through militant action by a minority working class party with few allies from other classes, therefore cannot lead to success via an electoral majority. But one of the consequences of the "first past the post" electoral system is that an outright parliamentary majority can be gained with many fewer votes than 50 per cent – certainly under 40 per cent, and perhaps as few as one-third. In the long run, however, the comfort derived from the electoral system is illusory. In carrying through changes in society, there is no substitute for real popular support. Unpopular policies would almost certainly be reversed at the election following a minority victory. In fact the conscious aim of Trotskyists, rather than their fellow-travellers, is not to rely on electoral support at all, but upon industrial action, other forms of coercion and intimidation, and eventually violence (for instance, through the "workers' militia" called for by *Socialist Worker*).

But why should a minority be thought likely to succeed? Why should not the majority be able effectively to use violence against this minority? History shows numerous instances where it has been right wing violence which has prevailed – as in Nazi Germany or Chile. The logic of the pursuit of an insurrectionary strategy is to hope for a successful putsch, or *coup d'état*, in which small forces are used selectively and the majority of the population are not involved. This is exactly what occurred in Russia in 1917 – and the consequence is plain to see: for a minority to perpetuate its power over a majority all the apparatus of totalitarian suppression (and bureaucracy) must be brought into use. Trotsky was as much in favour of this as any of the Bolshevik leaders, both early in the revolution (see *Terrorism and Communism*, 1920) and in the middle 1920s, when the object of the proposed coercion was the peasantry (Stalin later put this into effect). What Trotskyists call Stalinism was therefore the inevitable result of the revolution in the circumstances of the time; it would also be the inevitable result of any insurrectionary seizure of power by a working class party in modern Britain, and for essentially identical reasons. The claims of the Trotskyists that they are offering something different from Stalinism are thus exposed as a cruel fraud. Put in these terms, the stark unreality of the path the Labour Party is embarking upon is unmistakable.

Unfortunately, this Trotskyist programme is already implicit in the posture of parts of the trade union movement. It is precisely an alliance of all employed groups against the owners of capital which trade unions have been

attempting, with brief interruptions during periods of incomes policy, to put into effect in the period of industrial militancy since the end of the 1960s. All trade unions together – including doctors, senior civil servants, university professors, top broadcasters and journalists, and so on – attempt to press for higher real wages, while preserving differentials among groups. In 1865, Marx wrote in *Wages, Price and Profit* that "A general rise in the rate of wages would result in a fall of the general rate of profit, but, broadly speaking, not affect the prices of commodities." It was true then that such pressure could tap large reserves of profits or of luxury consumption (for instance, there were several millions of domestic servants in the labour force, who could be switched to more productive use). But in the conditions of Britain today, the only consequence of such a broad trade union alliance, on these terms, can be and has been inflation. There is very little potential for redistribution in this way.

"For a minority to perpetuate its power over a majority, all the apparatus of totalitarian suppression (and bureaucracy) must be brought into use."

Marxist writers have been well aware of this fact. Some have correctly concluded that to organise working class action around illusory goals is dishonest and must in the end be counterproductive. Thus there has always been an undercurrent of support among Marxists, especially on the Eurocommunist wing of the Communist Party, for an incomes policy of some kind linked to socialist political demands: examples of writers taking this view are Michael Barratt-Brown and Royden Harrison (*New Left Review* 37), Bill Warren, Mike Prior and David Purdy (*Advanced Capitalism and Backward Socialism*, 1975, and *Out of the Ghetto*, 1979) and Sam Aaronovitch (*The Road from Thatcherism*, 1981).

The destructiveness of wage and salary militancy across all employed groups is, however, openly welcomed by Trotskyists. Andrew Glyn, one of the principal economic theorists of the *Militant* tendency, co-authored in 1972 *British Capitalism, Workers and the Profits Squeeze*, whose gleeful message was that a combination of industrial militancy at home and stiffer competition abroad was leading to a decline in profits which in turn must produce declining investment and real wages, increased conflict between employers and workers and eventually the collapse of the capitalist system. Trotskyist writers and organisations continue to advocate the same programme.

Relatively few of those who have been responsible for the self-defeating wage struggles of the last decade – or those who brought down the last Labour government in the "winter of discontent" – actually intend to overthrow Parliament and the capitalist system. Unfortunately, Trotskyists can rely on the essential character of trade unions – their "economism" – in order to get the desired result. The fact that unions are actually doing what fits in with the Trotskyists' overall strategy is a source of enormous strength to them – but it is not bringing prosperity to ordinary people.

Marxian Politics

Modern British Trotskyism, like classical Bolshevism, is bitterly hostile to the institution of Parliament. Universal suffrage suffers from the defect that, since the ruling ideas in any society are controlled by the owners of its means of production, it is difficult for a political party

representing working class interests to obtain a Parliamentary majority; even if it did so, the ruling class would probably resort to violence against it; and even if it survived these two threats, its parliamentary representatives would succumb to the pressure of the existing establishment to conform with its ideas.

What the argument boils down to is in fact a truism: that there *is* a real structure of power in society which does not necessarily correspond to the formal structure of power which emerges from the results of Parliamentary or local elections. The essence of Parliamentarism, and its value in any democratic or even humanitarian perspective, does *not* lie in any suggestion that the formal political power and legitimacy conferred on political leaders by the ballot box can in all circumstances and in an unlimited way override all the other sources of power. Rather, it lies in the belief that the use of the power which lies outside Parliament, and especially the use of violence, must be controlled and regulated through the rule of law, and that law must be made in a considered and careful way, after thorough and open debate, by representatives elected by a majority of the of the people. The only alternative to Parliament is the untrammelled struggle for power of the various actually or potentially organised groups in society, which must in the end imply the resort to violence and civil war. The Trotskyist wager is that the working class, organised by a revolutionary party, will prevail in this struggle. Not only is this unlikely, but if it were successful, the result would be Stalinism.

The British writer who has contributed most to the dissemination of the contemporary attack on Parliamentarism is Ralph Miliband, whose book *Parliamentary Socialism* (1961) was a lengthy catalogue of the alleged betrayals of the Labour Party (or of the working class) by Labour's parliamentary leaders, from the day the first Labour MP set foot in the House of Commons up to 1959. Although interesting as a narrative history, its theoretical content is extremely weak, amounting to little more than an assertion that since the Labour Party did not bring about a fully socialised economy during the period and, since it was a Parliamentary party, the former must have followed from the latter. Rather absurdly, the book takes it for granted that mass support was really there all the time for the revolutionary establishment of a socialist society. Nevertheless it has been extremely influential in fostering a climate of hostility to Parliament, being the true prototype of the betrayal theory which has since been deployed so successfully in Labour's constitutional battles.

Interestingly, when in 1977 Miliband examined the Marxian alternative, he had to concede its extreme weakness (*Marxism and Politics*). Marx and Engels wrote little of a prescriptive nature about the *practice* of revolutionary politics, as opposed to critical history or economic analysis.

Little of value has been written by Marxists subsequently, and Miliband is forced to write of "the absence in Marxism of a serious tradition of political enquiry." He goes on to provide a devastatingly effective criticism of all the key ideas which the modern British Trotskyist programme relies upon. The notion that in revolutionary politics there is genuine rule from below, by the class rather than by the party, is sharply rejected: "*some degree* of 'substitutism' (that is, the substitution of a higher for a lower level) is bound to form part of any kind of representative organisation and of representative politics at all levels... the notion of the party achieving an organic and perfectly harmonious representation of the class is nothing but a more or less edifying myth". "Revolutions, even in the best of circumstances, are not *made* by majorities, least

of all revolutions which are made by way of insurrection . . ., revolutions are made by minorities, and have usually been the work of relatively small minorities."

Miliband goes on to highlight the weakness of the argument that "workers' councils", or soviets, can function as an effective means of asserting popular power (this is what Trotskyists propose as the alternative to Parliament). He points out that neither Lenin nor Trotsky had the slightest idea how these councils would relate to the revolutionary Party and writes: "Nor can it be contended that the pyramid of councils, of the kind which Rosa Luxemburg projected in 1918, resolves the question of direction and democracy. For the structure which she proposed was, very reasonably, to be capped by an Executive Council 'as the highest organ of legislative and executive power': and it is clear that, whatever her intentions, this organ would have been, and would have had to be, an extremely strong *state*, possibly representing the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', but not amounting to it" (*ibid*).

There is, therefore, no coherent basis for the view that there are somehow alternative socialist political institutions which are better or more effective than Parliament.

After noting "the extremely strong attraction which legality, constitutionalism, electoralism and representative institutions of the parliamentary type have had for the overwhelming majority of people in the working class movements of capitalist societies", Miliband opts for a model of socialist change which oddly enough, corresponds remarkably closely to that traditionally held by the Labour Party! Legislative action by an elected government is to be supported by a "a flexible and complex network of organs of popular participation operating throughout civil society and intended *not* to *replace* the state but to *complement* it". This is to involve "a vast extension of democratic participation in all areas of civic life" (*ibid*).

It is silly to suggest that anyone in the Labour Party ever thought that Parliamentary action *alone* could do much to change society; a whole range of activity by groups such as trade unions, pressure groups, voluntary associations and tenants' and residents' associations, has always been necessary to show what changes are possible, and to make them work. If there is anything which characterises social democrats rather than modern Trotskyists, it is the belief in the need for such an extension in participation. Trotskyists, with the Labour Left, believe in a *narrowing* of power, especially within trade unions and the Labour Party. The constitutional changes in the Labour Party, and the model of trade union democracy, which are being pressed by Labour's New Left, cannot be reconciled with "a vast extension of democratic participation in all areas of civic life", or with the desire, noted by Tony Benn at the 1979 Party Conference, of "people . . . . impatient with the centralisation of power . . . to play a larger part in the control of their lives in their communities and at their place of work."

The Socialist Planned Economy

We now turn to the nature of the socialist society which, in the Trotskyist view, is to supersede capitalism. It is a centrally planned economy, democratically controlled, which operates entirely without markets. We are asked to believe first of all that such an economy is feasible, and secondly that it would yield better results economically and politically than the mixed economy which we currently have.

Tony Benn and Labour's Trotskyists share the same view of how such an economy would operate. At the 1980 Annual Conference, Benn spoke of "self-

management as an alternative either to market forces or the hideous bureaucracy"; at the 1980 Special Conference, Ray Apps, of *Militant*, spoke of enabling "the next Labour government . . . to involve working people democratically in planned production."

The difficulty is that centrally planned economies suffer from certain inherent, and not accidental, weaknesses. These may be summed up as follows. First the problem of *information*. To function at all, a complex economy requires phenomenal amounts of information to be transmitted between consumers and producers, and among producers, about needs and preferences, production possibilities and the availability of supplies of finished goods, materials and labour. In a capitalist or mixed economy, it is the price mechanism which conveys information of this kind, and automatically lets the rest of the system know the results of any decisions by individual consumers or producers. Central planning limits the amount of information which is made available.

Second, the problem of *incentives*. Why should anyone in a socialist economy attempt to produce more or better? Even if it were sensible to expect a permanently high level of political commitment from workers and enterprises, the effect of their trying harder may be counterproductive, upsetting the planned programme of production. But if they are not committed, it is all too easy to fulfil production plans in ways which conform to the planners' specifications but are wasteful or unsatisfactory (for instance, volume may be emphasized at the expense of quality, materials may be used wastefully, innovation may be avoided as inconvenient and disruptive).

A third characteristic of a planned economy arises from the problem of *decisions* about production quantities and methods. In an economy without markets, the task of ensuring consistency between the activities of the various producers and consumers must fall to a central body. Hence a planned economy must be characterised by a high degree of centralisation and bureaucratisation. Once again, the emergence of the much-abhorred phenomenon of Stalinism is not an accident, but a structural necessity. It was Trotsky who first argued that bureaucracy was *not* a necessary characteristic of a planned economy; Trotskyists today argue the same. But, as Assar Lindbeck argues in *The Political Economy of the New Left* adherents of this stream of thought simply do not reflect much consciousness of the necessity to make a choice between markets on the one hand and bureaucracy on the other (1971). This dilemma was recognised in classical Marxism. But the answer given then – in the optimistic climate of the late 19th Century – was that abundance (that is, the existence of enough wealth to satisfy *all* imaginable demands) was not far away and would quickly be attained under a rational organisation of society. Who could seriously argue this now, as we face acute shortages of raw materials and energy sources? In conditions of scarcity, there are only two ways in which an individual or group can acquire goods: they can be free to buy them (in a market economy) or be obliged to ask permission (in a planned economy).

The model put forward by Labour's New Left is based on an evasion of these truths. It means that to the cumbersome process of plan-making will be added a further complex and difficult process of consultations, with the certainty that not all will be satisfied with the eventual outcome, which *must* still be decided centrally. The truth is that those who want decentralisation, and democracy exercised in smaller units, must be in favour of the use of markets to some degree.

It has also to be remembered that, in the

words of Aneurin Bevan, "If confidence in political democracy is to be sustained, political freedom must arm itself with economic power" (*op cit*). Just as Marxists argue that under capitalism political freedom is worthless to the poor, so it must be conceded that under fully collective ownership no one could be independent of the power of the state bureaucracy.

"Centrally planned economies have three inherant weaknesses: the impossibly high level of information required to plan sufficiently; the centralised bureaucracy needed to take decisions, and the lack of incentives in the system."

It is time that socialists recognised that the whole notion of a choice between "capitalism" and "socialism" is in reality outmoded. There *is* such a thing as pure or almost pure capitalism, in which almost all capital is privately owned and almost all production is for the market. It is unattractive, we do not want it (nor do we have it or have to have it). There is also such a thing as pure socialism, that is collective ownership of the means of production, with central planning and the abolition of markets. No democrat could seriously want it.

What we do have is a mixed economy, with elements of collective ownership and of private ownership; elements of central planning and extensive use of markets. We need to change elements in the mix, but not to abandon it. Some form of mixed economy is the best attainable form of economic system, so far as can presently be seen.

It is significant that there is a powerful emerging criticism of the "statism" which is indissolubly linked to the demand for central planning, coming from both Marxist *and* social democratic writers. On the Marxist side, examples are Phil Leeson's "Capitalism, Statism and Socialism" (in *The Popular and the Political*, edited by Mike Prior, 1981); and Hindess *et al*'s *Marx's Capital and Capitalism Today* (1978), which includes the comment: "State spending does not as such contribute to the development of non-commodity and co-operative relations. Arguably, 'private' co-operative bodies and popular mutual aid may make more of a contribution in that direction."

On the social democratic side there is Evan Luard who in *Socialism without the State* (1979) consciously draws on earlier elements in the socialist tradition in reaffirming the necessity for non-state initiative, by both private and community groupings. Many of the genuine goals of those who regard themselves as either "social democrats" or "democratic socialists" could be realised by changes in the nature of the authority and ownership relations *within* individual enterprises, without any extension of the boundaries of state activity – and even with a shrinkage.

6. Prospects

It would be wrong to suggest that the outcome of the struggle for control of the Labour Party must necessarily be a simple victory for one side or the other. It has been argued that modern British Trotskyists an increasingly dominant element in the Left coalition; but there are many elements in that coalition which would reject some of their key ideas. It has also been shown that there are crucial contradictions at the heart of the Trotskyist ideology, which must eventually lead to political divisions.

The possibility of victory for the Left coalition but the dilution of the Trotskyist elements is a real one and is what many parliamentarist left wing leaders are aiming at. The chief difficulty in their way, however, is that they are vulnerable to exactly the same processes of ideological compromise and differential recruitment as the social democratic right has been. It is difficult to maintain the support of the Trotskyists without making concessions to them; but the more concessions are made, the more the support is lost of those to the right, and the more Trotskyist supporters are encouraged to come into the Party.

The practice of politics is essentially about forming alliances with those with whom one disagrees. However, the tactical alliance of the Labour "left" with insurrectionary socialists is a peculiarly unprincipled one. Some principles are more fundamental than others, and to compromise, by obfuscation, the most fundamental political freedoms, for which generations of working people have struggled, may be considered as extreme a betrayal as can be imagined. No doubt many on the "legitimate left" argue that they can keep the upper hand. But who is to say that, having emulated Faust, they will not suffer a similar fate? Unhappily, given the balance of forces we have discussed, it seems likely that they will.

What Is To Be Done?

Since the argument of this pamphlet is that the strength of the Trotskyist position in the Labour Party stems primarily from the widespread acceptance of the worldview it implies, it follows that any fightback must be based first of all on a direct challenge to that world view, and a reassertion of social democratic values. Those who have left the Labour Party to set up the SDP have obviously recognised the importance of doing so. The social democrats who have remained in the Labour Party have usually been content to prevaricate about fundamental principles. This is fatal.

Only repeated, open statement of social democratic principles can permit the clear identification and rejection of ideas which belong exclusively in a Trotskyist framework. Trotskyists have gained enormous tactical advantage from their ability not to identify themselves as such. This has permitted a gradual erosion of the Labour Party's traditional values, by the insertion little by little into inner-Party debate of ideas which are in conflict with a social democratic worldview. To force out into the open the Trotskyist worldview as a totality must erode the support it has from people who have never thought things through.

The most obvious place to start with an assertion of social democratic values is the Party constitution. At present, this lacks clear commitments to Parliamentary democracy, the primacy of public elections, and the rule of law, and any repudiation of political violence.

That it might be difficult to get appropriate changes to the constitution is revealing – it shows how strong within the Party is the position of those who oppose these principles. Indeed, it may already be too late. But the call for such changes would

be a rallying point and could, if successful, split the Trotskyists from their fellow-travellers. This call would need to be accompanied by others, some relating to organisation, and some to policy. In either case, it is essential that they should unambiguously express a genuinely **social democratic** worldview: anti-elitist organisational measures in the unions and the party (such as postal ballots, one-member-one-vote and reform of the block vote) and policy measures which involve a commitment to the mixed economy but also to social democratic values – a genuine and far reaching redistribution of wealth and of incomes, including through an incomes policy; equality in all aspects of life, at home and at work; protection for individual liberties and an increase in involvement in decision making, including through industrial democracy. Furthermore, those elements in the Left programme which have been opposed out of conservatism should also be accepted and fought for. Freedom of information and automatic reselection, for example, really are more compatible with social democracy than with Trotskyism.

Fortunately, but probably not accidentally, a collective statement of **social democratic** ideas – of democratic socialism in the non-collectivist sense – has been taking shape, by various hands, although up to now relatively unnoticed. Whatever the appearance on the surface, real intellectual debate has been moving away from insurrectionist varieties of socialism. But the underlying strength of social democratic ideas represents only a potential. The battle for values, attitudes and beliefs in the Labour Party still has to be fought. For there is much at stake. Permanent control over the Labour Party of the degrading and inhuman ideas of political Marxism, the totalitarianism and intolerance, the acceptance of violence, the glorification of conflict, could set back for a very long time any hope of achieving what generations of Labour supporters have really meant by socialism: **a society in which freedom is real, in which people really do emancipate themselves, but at their own pace and in their own way; not a utopia, but a society in which the sources of inequality are constantly counteracted; a tolerant society, in which contrary beliefs are respected, and rational argument and the pursuit of knowledge are valued as much in politics as in other areas of life. For men and women to delude themselves that they are merely cogs in a Marxist history machine, and to lose, or fail to develop, the capacity to respond to the personal reality of other people, is to forego part of their humanity.**

October 1981 ISBN 7163 0477 5 ISSN 0307 7535

Cover design by Dick Leadbetter/Printed by Blackrose Press (TU) 01-251 3043/Typeset by Range Left (TU) 01-251 3959

The Labour Party and the New Left

The pamphlet examines the three main ideologies currently commanding support in the Labour Party – named by the author as "social democracy", "ultra-democracy" and "modern British Trotskyism" and considers the extent to which Trotskyism is now reflected in party policy, values and terminology. How Trotskyism has grown so rapidly is detailed as are the potential effects of its proposals should they be implemented. The author believes that many of the beliefs of Trotskyists are fundamentally in conflict with those of the traditional Labour Party and he calls on the Party to add to its constitution a commitment to parliamentary democracy as the only vehicle of change and also a renunciation of violence. David Webster sees the trends towards a Leninist model of a political party in the Labour Party – where an elite minority control the apparatus and the policy – as a danger to its continuation.

The Author

David Webster has been a member of the Labour Party for 17 years. He is a former Chairman of St Pancras North Constituency Labour Party and ASTMS Branch Treasurer. He has served on the Labour Party NEC's Housing Sub-Committee and is a member of the Fabian Society's Social Policy Committee. The author of many articles on housing, he was a contributor to the Fabian book, *Labour and Equality*, 1980. He works in local government.

This pamphlet, like all publications of the Fabian Society, represents only the views of the author and not the collective view of the Society. However trenchant these views appear to some, they are, in the view of the Society, worthy of consideration in the Labour movement. Other assessments of the role of certain sets of ideas current in the Party would be welcomed by the Society and, hopefully, this pamphlet will be just the start of a debate that should take place.

Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth Street, London SW1H 9BN

APPENDIX 4

Militant's National Membership growth

	1964	40 members
	1965	100
	1971	217
	1972	354
March	1973	397
July	1973	463
	1974	517
	1975	775
	1976	1,000
	1977	1,193
	1978	1,140
	1979	1,621
July	1981	2,360
Dec	1981	2,500
Sept	1982	3,034*

*(Wembley conference 3034 delegates and 1000 visitors)

1982	3,438
1983	4,313
1984	6,000
1985	7,000

Appendix 5

Militant's Membership Distribution by Region
Based on Militant's Published Targets

Regions	Target	%age of Total
Eastern	£2900	4.7
East Midlands	£3550	5.8
Humberside	£1850	3.0
London East	£3200	5.2
London West	£2150	3.5
London South East	£1950	3.0
London South West	£1650	2.7
Lancashire	£1950	3.2
Manchester	£2200	3.6
Merseyside	£6100	10.0
Northern	£4400	7.2
Scotland East	£2950	4.8
Scotland West	£3650	6.0
Southern	£5100	8.4
South West	£2150	3.5
Wales East	£2550	4.2
Wales West	£2550	4.2
West Midlands	£4300	7.1
Yorkshire	£5350	8.8

Table of Militant Distribution of Members by Labour Party Regions Based on Militant's Funding Targets

Region	Target	%age of Total	Ranking
Eastern	£2900	4.7	10th
East Midlands	£3550	5.8	9th
London	£8950	14.4	2nd
North West	£10250	16.8	1st
Northern	£4400	7.2	7th
Scotland	£6600	10.8	4th
South East	£7250	8.4	5th
South West	£2150	3.5	11th
Wales	£5100	8.2	6th
West Midlands	£4300	7.1	8th
Yorkshire and Humber	£7200	11.8	3rd
Regional Total	**£60,500**		

Appendix 6

Militants Strength in Parliamentary Constituencies

Greater Manchester, Manchester Withington

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Greater Manchester, Oldham

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Lancashire, Morecombe

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Lancashire, Chorley

Source **(collective, 1986)**

Merseyside, Liverpool Edge Hill

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Merseyside, Liverpool West Derby

Sitting MP Bob Waring supported by Militant, the constituency has a significant Militant presence.

Source **(Kilfoyle, 2000, p. 97)**

Merseyside, Liverpool Garston

Sitting MP Eddie Loyden supported by Militant, the constituency has a significant Militant presence.

Source **(Kilfoyle, 2000, p. 98)**

Merseyside, Liverpool Kirkdale

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Merseyside, Liverpool Riverside

Sitting MP Bob Parry supported by Militant, the constituency has a significant

Militant membership.

Source **(Kilfoyle, 2000, p. 99)**

Merseyside, Liverpool Toxteth

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Merseyside, Liverpool Walton

Sitting MP Eric Heffer supported by Militant, the constituency is heavily dominated by Militant.

Source **(Kilfoyle, 2000, p. 100)**

Merseyside, Liverpool Wavertree

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Merseyside, Liverpool Broadgreen

Sitting MP Terry Fields, member of Militant, the constituency is heavily dominated by Militant.

Source **(Kilfoyle, 2000, p. 101)**

Merseyside, Liverpool Mosley Hill

Sitting MP David Alton Liberal Party

Labour Candidate, Joe Devaney, supported illegal deficit budget as a City Councillor and voted with Militant in the Broad Left of the Labour Group.

The Constituency has Militant members in all wards, but they are not dominant.

Merseyside, Bootle

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Merseyside Bebington and Ellesmere Port

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Merseyside, Birkenhead

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Lancashire, Blackburn Constituency

Sitting MP Jack Straw, opposed to Militant,

In January. 1984, the Blackburn GMC voted by a margin of two to one to expel six of eight members who were charged with being members of the Militant Tendency.

On 5th, April 1984 the NEC voted fourteen to twelve to confirm the expulsions.

Source **(Straw, 2012, pp. 153-4)**

Merseyside, Knowsley North

Sitting MP Robert Kilroy Silk member of Tribune opposed to Militant.

Much publicised attempt to unseat sitting MP by Militant supporters and install Tony Mulhearn, prominent member of Militant. Constituency significantly influenced by Militant who controlled the GMC. A re selection battle took place culminating in a GMC meeting in December 1985.

Source **(Silk, 1986)**

Merseyside, Birkenhead

Sitting MP Frank Field, opposed to Militant.

Long running battle with far-left elements including significant Militant presence who tried to de select the MP unsuccessfully.

Source numerous articles in the local paper the Liverpool Echo

East England, Ipswich

Source **(collective, 1986)**

Midlands, Birmingham Handsworth

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Midlands Birmingham Yardley

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Midlands, Coventry South East

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Midlands, Leicester West

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Midlands, Mid Oxfordshire

Source, **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Midlands, Birmingham Sparkbrook

Source **(collective, 1986)**

Midlands, Cannock and Burtonwood

Source **(collective, 1986)**

Midlands, Eddisbury

(collective, 1986)

Midlands, Dudley East

Source **(collective, 1986)**

London, Bermondsey

Sitting MP Bob Mellish, retired and replaced as candidate in the next election by Peter Tatchell.

Tatchell's candidacy opposed by Michael Foot but supported by the local party which included far left elements including Militant. Tatchell adopted as a candidate but defeated heavily by the SDP.

Source **(Shaw, 1988, p. 226)**

London, Bethnal Green and Bow

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

London, Croyden, Central

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)** (Shipley, 1983)

London, Hayes and Harlington

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

London, Newham North East

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

London, Norwood

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

London, Stepney and Poplar

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

London, Uxbridge

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

London, Chelmsford

Source (**Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

London, Harrow

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

London, Thanet West

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

London, Deptford

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

North East, Sunderland North

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

North East, Walkersfield

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

North East, Middlesborough

Source **(collective, 1986)**

Yorkshire, Bradford North

Sitting MP Ben Ford. Prospective candidate, Pat Wall, member of Militant Tendency first denied candidacy in a re-selection battle due to irregularities, then approved following a re-run.

Significant Militant presence which led to election of a member of Militant

Source **(Shaw, 1988, p. 228)**

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Yorkshire, Chester-le-Street

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Yorkshire, Don Valley

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Yorkshire, Shipley

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Yorkshire, Sheffield Attercliff

Source **(collective, 1986)**

Hertfordshire, Stevenage

Source **(collective, 1986)**

Hampshire, Brighton Kemptown

Militant Stronghold

Source **(Shaw, 1988, p. 226)**

Wokingham Constituency

Source **(Seyd, 1987, p. 51)**

South West, Eastleigh

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

South West, Littlehampton

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

South West, Isle of Wight

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

South West, Exeter

Source **(collective, 1986)**

South West, Southampton Itchen

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

South West, Torbay

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

South West, Wokingham

Source (**Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

South West, Yeovil

Source (**Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Wales, Cardiff South, East, North, and West

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Source **(collective, 1986)**

Scotland, Bothwell

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Scotland, Aberdeen South

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Scotland, East Kilbride

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Scotland, Glasgow ,Craigton,Garscadden,Proven and Pollock

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Scotland, Edinburgh, East and North

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Scotland West Renfrewshire

Source **(Shipley, 1983, p. 51)**

Scotland, Central Fife

Source **(collective, 1986)**

APPENDIX 7

LABOUR PARTY NEC INQUIRY REPORT into the LIVERPOOL DISTRICT LABOUR PARTY

GS. 64/2/86

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

INVESTIGATION INTO THE LIVERPOOL DISTRICT LABOUR PARTY

REPORT

NOT FOR DISCLOSURE TO THIRD PARTIES PRIOR TO CONCLUSION OF NEC CONSIDERATION OF THIS REPORT

The enclosed Report was agreed by the following members of the Investigation Team:-

Charles Turnock (Chair)

Tom Sawyer

Betty Boothroyd

Tony Clarke

Eddie Haigh

Neville Hough

Larry Whitty (General Secretary)

Audrey Wise and Margaret Beckett have indicated their dissent. There will be a separate note of dissent available to the National Executive Committee.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

NOT FOR DISCLOSURE TO THIRD PARTIES PRIOR TO CONCLUSION OF NEC CONSIDERATION OF THIS REPORT

INVESTIGATION INTO THE LIVERPOOL DISTRICT LABOUR PARTY

REPORT

0. Introduction.
1. Scope of Liverpool District Labour Party.
2. Ordinary and Aggregate DLP Meetings.
3. General Conduct of DLP Meetings.
4. Access and Checking of Credentials.
5. Voting.
6. DLP Agendas and Documentation.
7. Affiliations to DLP.
8. Executive Committee.
9. Local Government Panel.
10. Finances.
11. Relationship between DLP and the Labour Group.
12. Relationship between DLP and Constituencies.
13. Employment Issues.
14. Role of the Militant Tendency.
15. Action Required.

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A. Membership of CLPs in Liverpool
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L. DLP Accounts.

Charles Turnock (Chair)
Tom Sawyer
Betty Boothroyd
Tony Clarke
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INVESTIGATION INTO LIVERPOOL DISTRICT LABOUR PARTY

Draft Report

Introduction and Summary Findings

Introduction

0.1 At the November NEC meeting the National Executive Committee carried the following resolution:

> The NEC., mindful of the resolutions passed in May and October 1985 in respect of Local Government action in confronting central government on their policies of enforcing cuts in jobs and services, notes the decision of Liverpool City Council Finance Committee announced on Monday, expresses the hope that this will result in the protection of services, jobs and the Housebuilding programme and congratulates all those sections of the Labour and Trade union movements who contributed to finding a solution which did not put at risk the people of the city or the standing of the Labour Party.
>
> This NEC notes in particular those parts of the Stonefrost report which highlighted the part played by previous Liberal/Tory regimes in Liverpool, who had contributed to the financial difficulties of that city since the mid seventies, and the particular responsibility of the Conservative government. In line with conference statements and NEC resolutions, the government is charged with complete indifference to the plight of its citizens and the results of their own policies towards the most deprived and desperate inner city areas. As identified in the Stonefrost report, the government have failed to acknowledge and meet the needs of Liverpool and other similar hard hit areas, and have chosen instead to let others cope with the consequences.
>
> In view of the statements made by some Councillors and Party members in Liverpool, the accusations and charges levelled against the Party, the T.U.s and others, and the damaging and deliberately provocative nature of the attacks made through the media,the NEC resolves that an urgent examination be carried out by the General Secretary and eight members of the NEC into the procedures and practices of the Liverpool District Labour Party; and that, pending this report, no meetings or activities of either the District Labour Party or its Executive should be held.

This followed letters from two major national trade unions, and a report from the Regional Office referring to irregularities at the DLP meetings on 14 and 22 November, plus a number of other comments and criticisms which had been communicated both to the office and to certain individual members of the National Executive in the terms of the motion to conduct an urgent examination of the procedures and practices of the Liverpool District Labour Party. The NEC established an Investigation Team of eight NEC members plus the General Secretary. The eight Executive members were:-

Charles Turnock (Chair)	Eddie Haigh
Margaret Beckett MP	Neville Hough
Betty Boothroyd MP	Tom Sawyer
Tony Clarke	Audrey Wise.

Audrey Wise and Margaret Beckett indicated their dissent from the findings of this Repc

0.2 In conducting the examination, the Investigation Team took oral and/or written evidence from the six CLPS in Liverpool, nine of the wards and one Women's Section, 13 affiliated organisations, 5 groups of Labour Party members and 71 individual Party members. Taking representatives, groups and individual members together, over 120 members gave evidence to the Investigation Team. No non-Party members were interviewed. Efforts were made to ensure every member who wished to give evidence had the opportunity. Summary details are included at Annex B.

0.3 The Investigation Team were extremely conscious of the depredations of the City of Liverpool at the hands both of the present Tory Government and of the previous Liberal city administration. We fully appreciate the steps taken since 1983 by the Labour-controlled Council and the Labour Party in Liverpool to achieve a regeneration of the city in the face of those depredations and the disastrous industrial decline on Merseyside.

0.4 We were made rapidly aware of the history of the Labour Party in in Liverpool, of earlier periods of faction fighting within the Party, and of a long history of the Labour and Trades Union Council, and the City Party representing a major force in the politics of Liverpool prior to the formation of the DLP. This history affects the current role of the DLP.

0.5 We also had to take into consideration the dramatic events of the past few months on the Movement in Liverpool, in their opposition to the government's legislation and the District Auditor's current case against the city councillors. Whilst there may be differing views on the tactics employed, the fight to defend jobs and services required major efforts to rally the Labour Movement in the city.

0.6 The Investigation Team therefore recognised that the recent period has been a tense and difficult one for the Party and for the Labour Movement in Liverpool. In such circumstances, and given such pressures, no-one can expect a 100% perfectly functioning Party.

0.7 A wide spectrum of views about the operations of the District Labour Party were contained within the evidence. But what became abundantly clear was that - largely because of the central position of the District Labour party in Liverpool politics - an examination of the practices of the District Labour Party raised much wider questions than the conduct of meetings or a narrow examination of DLP procedures. In view of this situation, we consider that our terms of reference required us to cover this wide range of matters.

0.8 We did, at the same time, receive a substantial amount of evidence which related primarily to matters of the conduct of the City Council which we did not consider germane to this investigation, and hence have not taken into account except in so far as they impinged on the operations of and area of competence assumed by the District Labour Party.

0.9 Nevertheless, making all allowances for the pressure of events and the enormous challenges facing the city and excluding evidence not directly relevant, the examination has led the Investigation Team to conclude that there are very serious and deep-seated problems about the functioning and practices of the District Labour Party and the Party generally in Liverpool

1. Scope of the Liverpool District Labour Party

1.1 The Rules of the Liverpool DLP, approved by the NEC in 19 , reflect the Model Rules for District Labour Parties covering more than one constituency [see Annex E]. They therefore differ little from the Rules of other District Labour Parties in large conurbations. However, these rules differ in respect of the procedure for nomination and endorsement of local government candidates, they also differ in interpretation.

1.2 Clause 2. 1-4 of these Rules clearly limit the role of the DLP mainly to Local Government. The practices and activities of the Liverpool DLP have clearly gone substantially beyond this role in a number of respects. This in part reflects the inheritance from the former Borough (City) Party and from the former Liverpool Trades and Labour Council. But it does not conform to the current DLP Rules.

1.3 In the Rules the DLP is only responsible for the formulation of an 'electoral programme' which would in most DLPs be interpreted as the Manifesto and other broad strategic policy guidelines. In Liverpool the DLP appears to have become involved in a number of situations which should be the prerogative of the Labour Group. These include issues which would normally be decided by negotiation between the recognised trade unions in the council and council officers or council committees. Detailed involvement in industrial relations of this nature appears to the Investigation Team to be inappropriate, particularly since it also often gave the impression of by-passing normal trade unions and industrial relations procedures.

1.4 There were also other Agenda and Minutes issues such as planning permission and the detailed approach of the council in other areas of policy which indicate that the District Labour Party does not simply lay down the broad policy perimeters of Labour Group policy, and expect councillors to conform to that, but also interferes and involves itself in the day to day direct management of the council.

1.5 The Investigation Team recognises the usefulness of a consultative and informational role for the DLP beyond simply drawing up an electoral programme. But in Liverpool it appears the DLP has been regarded as binding on the Labour Group decisions.

1.6 Analysis of the DLP agenda also shows that in Liverpool the scope of the DLP is seen to extend well beyond Local Government issues. Discussions have taken place on Party organisation, constitutional reform, Party leadership, elections, disciplinary action by the NEC, the conduct of conduct of constituencies outside Liverpool, on South Africa, Nicaragua, East/West relations, on FELS, and on other issues way beyond the area of 'local government' referred to in the Party Rules. . In some cases the DLP in discussing these issues was explicitly rejecting NEC instructions or advice e.g. on FLES, on SALEP and on the sale of Militant at DLP meetings. At the same time certain key aspects of local government policy were not included on DLP agendas. Annex G sets out in detail dates of discussion of these wider items.

1.7 These methods of operation do not conform to the Model Rule for DLPs (Clause II, i-iv) or to the approved Liverpool version thereof. Whilst some aspects of this might not cause a problem, the totality leads to a domination and unhealthy relationship between the DLP and the Labour Group, and the DLP and the six Constituency Parties (see Sections 11 and 12 below).

2. DLP Ordinary and Aggregate Meetings

2.1 It is clear that over the past three years, the operation of the DLP meetings has changed. Up until 1983 there was a pattern of monthly (10 times a year) DLP meetings and monthly EC meetings. The following figures illustrate a change in the pattern of meetings, with an increase in the number of EC meetings held, almost to weekly, a shift in the pattern of constitutional DLP meetings and Aggregate meetings. The full dates are shown in Annex D

	Ordinary DLP Meetings	Aggregate Meetings	EC Meetings
1983	10	0	14
1984	13	5	27
1985	9	8	31

2.2 We were frequently informed of the increased participation in DLP meetings over the last two years. However the numbers attending recorded in the ordinary DLP minutes during that period for normal meetings range from 80-120 delegates in attendance. The big increase in attendance is for Aggregate Meetings when recorded attendances range from 220-330 delegates and visitors.

2.3 The "Aggregate Meetings" started in 1984, developing in part from "open meetings" where Party members came as visitors as in the case of a large number of CLPs and DLPs into full "Aggregate Meetings" with an implied position in the structure of the Party. They are meetings theoretically open to all Party members in Liverpool.

2.4 There is no provision in the Rules or in the Standing Orders for an "aggregate meeting". During 1985 and the budget crisis the "aggregate meeting" developed a significant life of its own. The ordinary business meetings of the DLP increasingly did not deal with normal business and in the summer and autumn of 1985 were

largely abandoned, and the "aggregate meetings" substituted - often at short notice. The last DLP business meeting was held on 5 September 1985, all normal D.L.P. business being held in abeyance since that date. Six aggregate meetings were held between 5 September and the NEC decision to suspend the D.L.P.

2.5 Since the DLP has central responsibility in Liverpool, this has caused problems for the running of the party in Liverpool, especially with the drawing up of the Local Government Panel.

2.6 An examination of the DLP EC minutes confirms the evidence received that the timing and venues of the meetings were altered from meeting to meeting, commencing any time from 5.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m., and meeting in different premises. With the frequency of the meetings and breakdown of a regular pattern, some members reported difficulty in attending - the notice given sometimes being only hours before the meeting was to commence. A similar pattern emerges of short notice being given of aggregate meetings and venues being changed without notice.

2.7 Many members interviewed reported that the notification of aggregate meetings to members (non-delegates) was done through the 'grapevine' rather than by any formal mechanism. Ward secretaries responded differently to notice of an aggregate meetings. Some union branches notify some of the members who are Party members but not systematically. Members who are employed by the Council get to know more easily than others. This has meant that notification is selective and excludes members who are not part of that system.

2.8 There is no constitutional position for an aggregate DLP meeting or for the ordinary scheduled DLP meeting to transform itself into an aggregate meeting. Yet this in effect is what occurred. The Investigation Team recognise the importance of ensuring that all members of the Party have the right to information as to what occurs at the DLP. We do not therefore oppose the aggregate meeting in

principle. We are, however, concerned that the aggregate meeting appears to have taken over from the ordinary DLP, and that as a consequence there is dangerous confusion between the two functions. This does not mean that we oppose all member meetings as such. However all member meetings must have a clear relationship with the delegate function of the DLP, and ought to have their own Model Rules and Standing Orders.

3. General Conduct of District Labour Party Meetings

3.1 The Investigation Team's initial area of concern was the conduct of DLP meetings. This arose directly from the original Report of the Regional Office on the November 14 and 22 meetings which was before the November NEC. There was a direct and acute conflict of evidence as to the general manner of conduct of such meetings. A majority of DLP delegates and visitors interviewed gave very clear and almost standard answers that they were satisfied that the chairmanship was conducted and voting was carried out in accordance with the best democratic standards. A standard format for reply had been issued to DLP delegates which could account for the similarity of written replies. These witnesses also claim to have seen no physical intimidation or serious verbal intimidation, and that the minority were always allowed to have a say.

3.2 However, on the other hand, there were a significant number of members interviewed who claimed that at DLP meetings - and particularly at aggregate meetings there was a general air of intimidation; that verbal intimidation was rife; and that there were threats and acts of physical intimidation.

3.3 The Investigation Team find it very difficult to judge the balance of truth. Clearly verbal intimidation can be a highly subjective matter. But we received sufficient evidence of serious abusive language to amount to some evidence of intimidation, including threats relating to the jobs of members who were council workers not following the council line. We are also satisfied that on at least one occasion there was some physical violence in the meeting itself. There was therefore in some of the Aggregate meetings serious breaches of conduct by DLP delegates, and in particular the threats to various union representatives and officers who were also delegates to the DLP.

3.4 One particular aspect of the charges gave us considerable concern. It was alleged by a number of witnesses that members of the 'static security force' were present at the DLP meeting - in what capacity unclear to the delegates concerned - and acted as over-officious stewards. Whilst there was counter evidence, this was referred to so many times that the presence of uniformed security guards in the employ of the city council at Labour Party meetings could be a cause for concern.

3.5 Despite these suggestions, the general view - even of witnesses otherwise critical - was that the Chairmanship was effective and in accordance with the Standing Orders and Rules of Debate. There were however indications that the Standing Orders were not carried out in respect of the right of reply, and time limit for speakers (both covered by Clause II of Standing Orders) and that the 'Platform' i.e. the officers and certain other members of the EC often had the last and dominant word. There do therefore seem to have been some serious lapses in the conduct of meetings.

4. Access and Checking of Credentials

4.1 Following the report from the Regional Office on access to the aggregate meeting on 22 November 1985, questions were asked of DLP delegates to get their view on how delegates and visitors obtain entrance to the meeting.

4.2 The DLP officers informed the Investigation that entrance is usually by delegates' cards which are issued to delegates each year for the Annual General Meeting.

4.3 Evidence from a number of delegates interviewed indicated that if delegates' cards were lost or forgotten, new ones were issued. Other delegates referred to a system of names being ticked off by stewards on the door from a list of delegates.

4.4 In theory, visitors are asked to sign in, but with the advent of Aggregate Meetings, this practice does seem to have largely broken down. It would appear that the system now is haphazard, as there were many discrepancies between the responses from interviewees on the number of meetings that they had attended and that recorded on the attendance sheets.

4.5 The specific meeting of 22 November presented major problems of checking entry in view of the tension and the pressure to get into the meeting. Unfortunately the door stewards on being questioned reported differing methods of dealing with delegates and visitors. Differing views were also given on whether or not delegates were unable to get into that meeting.

4.6 In addition, there were also claims that people were in attendance at the meeting who were not bona fide members at all. At least two wards were claiming that members who came through union branches - specifically the GMBATU branches - were not paid up bona fide members.

4.7 Inside the meeting, there has at recent Aggregate Meetings been no segregation between delegates and visitors, which must raise questions about the voting system used at the DLP and Aggregate Meetings.

4.8 Taken together all of these queries about access to DLP meetings and confusion between visitors and delegates add up to serious charges of constitutional and organisational breaches of standing orders and rules at the DLP.

5. Voting

5.1 Obviously large meetings present special problems of voting procedures. No two witnesses gave an exactly equivalent account of how voting took place. There appears to be some confusion between the delegation cards - issued after the AGM - and the provision of voting credentials at particular DLP meetings. Many different versions of voting at DLP meetings were described by those interviewed:-

- voting by delegate card.
- no voting system until Regional Officers started to attend the meetings.
- voting slips, date stamped, for each meeting and not collected in at the end of the meeting.
- voting slips collected in at the end of each meeting.
- different coloured slips produced for each meeting.
- voting slip issued on the production of a delegate card.

5.2 The Investigation Team found it difficult to establish what in fact were the normal procedures and how credentials were checked. The DLP officers informed the investigation that new voting credentials were issued for each meeting but recently this system had been changed to the provision of a permanent voting credential. The Investigation Team accept that the DLP officers have attempted to regularise this process, but there seems to be substantial problems with it, particularly at Aggregate Meetings.

5.3 It was further heard that some voting slips for the GMBATU delegation were given en bloc to a GMBATU shop steward, for distribution to G & M delegates. This is contrary to any of the other methods outlined above, and raises questions as one G & M delegate was unable to obtain one of these voting slips and another obtained a replacement credential after his had apparently already been given out to someone else.

5.4 At aggregate meetings, two votes were taken, one of delegates only and a "consultative" vote of delegates and visitors to gain a consensus of the meeting. Whilst there was some difference of recollection, the majority reported that the delegate vote was taken first, though this is not recorded in aggregate minutes.

5.5 The Investigation Team conclude that now a clear procedure, embodied in Standing Orders, is needed for both Ordinary and all members meetings of the DLP and standing voting credentials should be issued.

6. DLP Agendas and Documentation

6.1 A number of different problems about the way in which DLP agendas are taken were presented to the Committee.

6.2 Evidence was given (and the minutes of DLP meetings appear to bear this out) that in practice DLP meetings - whether ordinary or aggregate - were totally dominated by the EC Report. In some cases the EC had only met an hour previously so no adequate notification and documentation had been given. It would therefore appear that the real decision making centre for the DLP is in fact the Executive Committee. In many cases no other documentation for the agenda apart from the EC Report was issued, and in some cases the EC Report was passed round or presented orally at full DLP meetings. The frequency of EC meetings indicates the degree of importance that the Executive takes as compared with full DLP. In the case of the Aggregate Minutes no other resolutions were taken.

6.3 One consequence of this is that the constituency resolutions sent on to the DLP (and ward resolutions which are sent direct to the DLP) have failed to be considered in recent months. This partly reflects the enormous pressure of events during the budget crisis. But it also indicates that Constituency Labour Parties are unable to get their business on the DLP agenda if the Executive Committee decide otherwise.

6.4 There was a frequent assertion that during the very difficult and complicated period of the budget crisis inadequate documentation was put before the DLP. This was the position suggested by the national unions, and also claimed locally. In particular this relates to the documentation presented to the DLP itself during the period leading to the Stonefrost Report. On the other hand, it is suggested that the summary produced by the DLP officers, in consultation with the Labour Group, explaining the Stonefrost Report was a substantial piece of documentation, and was made available to all DLP delegates and Party members. Others query this, and point to the very detailed alternative briefing provided by NALGO. This is not simply a question of alternative analyses and policy prognosis. If the DLP is to take responsibility for the major decisions of policy and strategy of the Labour Group, then adequate documentation must be available to DLP delegates. Although we were told that DLP delegates had access to full versions of the Stonefrost Report, this does not seem to have been widely known. The net result was that at the November meetings, as with earlier stages of the budget crisis, the DLP delegates were not sufficiently well informed to understand the options. Yet is was the DLP which took the key decisions.

7. AFFILIATIONS AND DELEGATIONS

7.1 A number of serious concerns exist about the basis of certain delegations.

7.2 The procedure for collection of affiliation fees is laid down in Clause 11(v) Objects of the District Rules. Delegations and affiliations are requested in November/December of each year, both for the DLP and the constituency parties via the DLP. The number of affiliations and delegates is set out in Annex C. In summary it is as follows:-

Trade Unions	GMBATU	53
	TGWU	35
	Other unions	79
		167
Socialist Societies		12
CLPs		42
Wards		31
Co-op Party		6
LPYS		2
Labour Group		2
Women's Councils		2

(a) Trade Union affiliations

7.3 Different trade unions have a different method of dealing with that request. Examples of the different methods are:

EETPU and NCU	pays fees direct to CLPs
TGWU	bulk forms sent to Regional office and block affiliations received. Nominations for office - come from individual branches through Regional Office for delegations and fees.
GMBATU	
USDAW	notice to branches but delegations and fees come via District Office.
AUEW	block affiliation fee - delegations from branches (affiliate every branch 2 delegates per branch).

7.4 A signficant number of union branches affiliated to the DLP did not in fact send delegates. For those that did, there is a clear majority of the delegations from the GMBATU and TGUW. These two delegations are recorded as affiliated 'en bloc'. This means that on the official list there is no ability to distinguish between branches from which they are delegates. In both cases they affiliate via their regional office.

7.5 The DLP also receives affiliations from the regional office of those two unions, and of delegations of most other unions affiliated, for forward transfer to the six Constituency Labour Parties. The arrangements for the administration of affiliations and the decision to conduct affiliations to CLPs via the DLP reflect the situation up to 1983 when a full time agent was employed by the District Labour Party.

7.6 The DLP is therefore responsible for checking affiliations and for the handling of affiliation fees not only for itself, but also for the CLPs. This is in conformity with the rules. An additional feature in the case of the Liverpool DLP is that, by agreement with the constituencies, the affiliation fees are in fact retained at the DLP level and not transferred to CLPs. This has a major bearing on the balance of power and the relationship between the DLP and the CLPs (see below), but it also means that there ought to be a check on total affiliations to CLPs and to the DLP.

7.7 A number of queries have been raised about the 'over affiliation' of certain GMBATU and TGWU branches. Adding up the number of delegates from certain branches to each of the constituencies (even before allowing for the fact that there are affiliations also outside Liverpool) the membership claimed as members of the Party clearly exceeds the total recorded membership of the branch. The GMBATU at regional level accept that in some cases this is so. The TGWU at regional level were aware that this may be the case. Since it is the DLP's responsibility to pass on these affiliations, there is a serious problem of checking delegations. It is noticeable that certain branches - for example the GMBATU No 5 branch - are significantly over-represented on this arithmetic. See Annex J

7.8 The Investigation Team do not have the full membership figures for all branches. But it would appear that for the GMBATU and TGWU there may also be over-affiliation in terms of the number of delegates they are entitled to at the DLP itself. This does not seem to have been adequately checked either by the DLP or by the unions. Whilst it is primarily the responsibility of the union to give information to the DLP, the issue does

appear to have been queried by the DLP.

7.9 A further problem which again is primarily the responsibility of the union but appears to be a major factor is the concern expressed in many quarters about the operation of the DLP is that in the GMBATU delegation - or a large part of it - there appears to be a domination of one branch. There are suggestions that that branch can in fact secure by its influence on the industrial relations front as the major local authority union in the area the nomination of delegates by other GMBATU branches.

7.10 The combined delegations of the GMBATU and TGWU exceed the total delegations from all wards and constituency parties. This in part results from the effective reduction in CLP representatives after the reduction of the number of CLPs on redistribution. This balance is not in itself an irregularity or indeed a bad thing. The large number of GMBATU delegates also appears to have an unfortunate effect on the activities of the DLP, in that detailed discussion of Council policy by representatives of particular sections of the Council work force. This is further reflected in the general impression that the vast majority of visitors at aggregate meetings are also in effect convened by the local authority unions.

(b) Student Labour Club Affiliation

7.11 A significant number of allegations of irregularities and intimidation in the constitution of student Labour Clubs was presented to the Investigation Team. Reports by national NOLS and by the Assistant Regional Organiser indicate that the Central College Labour Club has no records of delegates being elected to the DLP or CLP, and yet seems to be the centre of activity amongst the CLubs. In the case of the Old Swan College Labour Club there are irregularities on NOLS cards and queries about membership. From the central NOLS records this academic year the Club does not now appear to exist although a delegate is still listed to the DLP for 1985/6.

7.12 At the Liverpool University Labour Club, meetings are reported to have been attended by people who are not Club members, and there is a serious report about the AGM from the Asssistant Regional Organiser, at which meeting the delegates to the DLP was appointed.

7.13 This concern about Student Labour Clubs in Liverpool goes beyond those which are affiliated to the District Labour Party. It involves the role of the Council employed at 'F.E. sabbaticals' who appear to be active as co-ordinators of these Labour Clubs, and two of whom have been elected to the DLP and to CLPs from the Student Labour Clubs. The method of appointment of F.E. sabbaticals was not clearly established by the Investigation Team. There is concern that they act in part as political organisers and use the Student Labour Clubs for furthering their own representation on Labour Party bodies. The Student Labour Clubs' representatives on the DLP dominate the 'other bodies' section for election to the Executive Committee of the DLP, and one of the 'F.E. sabbaticals' is now a member of the EC by this channel.

7.14 It is also alleged that checking of the Liverpool membership of the Liverpool Polytechnic Club by NOLS would suggest over-affiliation.

7.15 In addition to the above irregularities the team were perturbed by allegations of physical violence at the AGMs of the Liverpool University Club and of intimidation at the Central College AGM.

7.16 The above reflects the allegations made by NOLS officers and the Reports of Regional Offices. It has however to be reported that there were also counter-allegations against NOLS officers. The Investigation Team consider it important that there is an investigation of the operation of Student Labour Clubs in Liverpool conducted by Head Office.

(c) Workplace Branches

7.17 Although there is no provision in rule for affiliation or delegation from workplace branches to District Labour Parties, in the delegation list are five to the DLP from the UCW Copperas Hill Workplace Branch. There is further evidence in the minutes of the DLP of workplace branch participation with a resolution from the Liverpool City Housing Department workplace branch being debated and agreed, this organisation is listed as affiliated, though with no delegation. Resolutions should be moved by the organisation responsible for submitting the resolution.

7.18 (d) Women's Organisation

The DLP Rules provide for two delegates from the Women's Organisations in Liverpool to the DLP and one to the EC. These delegates are elected at the Women's Council AGM. The 1985 Women's Council AGM had to be held twice. At the first meeting on 11 March delegates were rules out of order on the grounds that they had not paid a delegation fee, after complaint that this procedure was unconstitutional the meeting was abandoned. Accusations were also made of 'packing' at the second meeting.

There is no provision in the rule for the payment of a delegation fee.

7.19 Since in effect one of the two delegates from the "women's organisations" elected at this meeting will also become a member of the Executive Council automatically, any irregularity in her initial election at the Women's Council needs examination.

7.20 All these different allegations of abuse in delegations for affiliated organisations need to pursue as a matter of urgency - particularly with the GMBATU and TGWU, and, on the Student Labour Clubs, with NOLS.

8. The Executive Committee

8.1. The Investigation Team have considered the minutes of the District Labour Party and its Executive, and of aggregate meetings over the past two years. It is clear both from these and from the evidence received that the business of the DLP is dominated by its Executive Committe Report. The Aggregate Meetings deal virtually only with the EC Report and EC resolutions. This gives immense power to the Executive Committee particularly since most documentation is not circulated in advance, and they have recently been frequent "special" and "emergency" EC meetings compared to the monthly meeting of the DLP.

8.2. The DLP is taking vital strategic decisions; yet many of those decisions have never been dealt with by the DLP as properly constituted. The Investigation Team appreciate that recent events and the difficult situation facing the Council over recent months has caused some serious problems for the officers of the DLP. Nevertheless, the result has not been good for democracy or accountability of the DLP in Liverpool, and nor has it been in conformity with the model rules of the DLP itself. This means the Investigation Team have had to look very carefully at the composition, election and procedures of the Executive Committee itself since that constitutes the centre of decision making.

8.3. The Executive Committee consists of the following:-

Party Officers: (5) -Chair; 2-Vice Chairs; Secretary; Treasurer)

Affiliated Trade Unions: (12 - not more than 1 for any one union)

LPYS: (1)

Co-op Party (1)

Other Bodies (1) This is now dominated by the student Labour Clubs (see above)

Women's Organisations (1). This is elected by the Women's Council and not at the AGM although the rules say that election should be at the AGM

Constituency Representation (6). One for each of the six CLPs. This is decided at the CLP

Ward Representation(4). Four members are chosen from amongst ward delegates.

Leader & Deputy Leader of Labour Group (2)

8.4 The current EC members are listed at Annex I

8.5 It had been customary for the delegates to the various sections represented at the DLP to vote for their own section on the Executive Committee. This procedure had been normal practice until the 1985 Annual Meeting, when the Chairperson is reported in the AGM minutes as announcing that for that meeting all delegates would vote for all sections, resulting in all delegates voting for TU representatives on the EC and for the 'other sections' i.e. Socialist Societies representative. This change in normal practice was not put to the vote of the AGM. Following the meeting protests were made by the T&GWU and the SHA.

8.6 Since the Executive Council appears to be the key body and its Reports dominate the agenda of the DLP it is disturbing that some members of the Executive Council appear not to have rece-ved adequate notification of meetings during the past year. Hence vital decisions taken at the EC - not always reported to the full DLP - relating principally to the budget crisis did not receive the attention of the full membership of the Executive Committee. The Investigation Team were unable to substantiate the reasons for the non-notification. In some cases, this may have been a reflection of the time-scale, since many EC meetings were called at extremely short notice.

8.7 The Investigation Team consider that the Rules for Election of the E.C. should be explicitly written into the Standing Orders so that each section votes only for its own representatives.

9. Local Government Panel

9.1 The rules governing the preparation of the panel of candidates for Local Government Elections, nominations and selections are laid down in Clause VIII of the Rules for District Labour Parties, (Annex.E).

9.2 Nominations

The timetable for requesting nominations is determined locally taking into account, the rule that nominations shall be requested in the year proceding the elections. The rules for the Liverpool District Labour Party specify that nominations shall be requested in July of the previous year with the panel closing in September. There is no clear evidence that that procedure has been followed. Copies of correspondence sent to parties by the D.L.P. Secretary show that nominations were requested in February, 1985, and again in November 1985. Examination of the D.L.P. Minutes indicate that nominations were received for the panel throughout 1984 and 1985, there was clearly no closing date applied.

9.3 The rules further state that nominations shall be secured by Constituency Labour Parties in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Constituency Party rules. The District Labour Party has taken this role upon itself and directly invited nominations from not only the Constituency Parties, but also Branch Parties, Trade Unions and Socialist Societies, so reducing the role of the C.L.P.s and centralising the procedure.

9.4 Nominees for the panel are interviewed by the full Executive Committee of the D.L.P. Many people interviewed by the Investigation Team referred to the set three questions that were put to all interviewees. There was some disparity on the actual wording of the questions but there was clear evidence that the criteria for being put on the panel was the acceptance of the D.L.P. as the supreme Policy making body. The Objects for District Labour Parties lay down that the D.L.P. shall formulate an electoral programme but as shown in Section 11 there is evidence of the D.L.P. taking responsibility for more detailed affairs of the Council. Nominees are therefore be asked in advance of knowledge of the issues to give a blanket approval to those decisions. The only mandate in the Party rules for nominees is that they agree to accept and conform to the Standing Orders for Labour Groups.

9.5 Endorsement

The endorsement of candidates for the panel shall be by the Management

Committee. The interpretation of this rule by the Liverpool DLP is that the Executive Committee shall endorse, and that decision reported to the Management Committee as part of the EC report to the DLP. The minutes show that on one occasion the EC was challenged. In reply it was stated by the EC representative that the nominee would not accept DLP policy. There are on the current list of members of the panel, three persons whose acceptance to the panel has not been reported to the DLP.

9.6. The Party rules were changed to provide for all sitting councillors to be automatically included on the panel of candidates. This rule was clearly ignored by the DLP, irrespective of being informed that it was unconstitutional. There is no dispute between all the people involved that a councillor was only included on the panel after appeal to the Regional Office.

9.7. The constitution further states that the list of members endorsed by the Management Committee shall be submitted to the constituency parties, the DLP has submitted the panel directly to branches.

SUPPLEMENTARY PANEL

9.8 Prior to the reorganisation in 1973, it had been traditional for there to be three panels, 'A' for retiring candidates, 'B' those members with some experience and 'C' those that required training. Subsequently, this was changed to a main panel and supplementary panel, it being alleged that those persons on the supplementary panel were debarred from fighting safe or winnable seats, although it was also stated that the wards could select from either panel. Many interviewees expressed the view, and there was evidence to show, that the criteria for being placed on the supplementary panel no longer related to experience but to the nominee's political stance.

9.9. The District Labour Party have constantly been informed by the Regional Office of this unconstitutional position, but have openly refused to discontinue this practice.

SELECTION

9.10 Because no reports are given to the DLP of selection conferences held, it is difficult to get a clear picture of the procedures adopted, the timetable for selection or if they were conducted correctly. It is clear, however, that selection conferences take place before the closure of the panel, and that selections have been made from persons not on the panel.

CURRENT PANEL

19.11 There are currently 16 names on the current Main Panel, of those, three

have only been approved by the Executive Committee, with there being no evidence of two other names being interviewed and endorsed. There are two names on the supplementary panel. The last interviews for the panel took place in October, 1985, but there are ten nominees still to be interviewed, no DLP meetings were held to enable that to take place, although the closing date for the panel was September. Meanwhile, selection conferences are taking place.

9.12. It is the view of the Investigation Team that the Regional Office urgently take responsibility for the completion of the Panel and the selection of candidates for the 1986 Local Elections. Further that the DLP be instructed that all matters relating to the requests for nominations, the drawing up of the panel and the selection of candidates be carried out according to the Party Constitution and Rules.

10. FINANCES

10.1 The main DLP account as of the last AGM and the account of the Propoganda fund are at Annexe L.

The DLP deals with all trade union and other affiliations to the DLP itself and the six constituency parties. In practice, by a long-standing arrangement, the CLPs do not claim their union affiliation from the DLP. Historically this was in order to finance a full-time agent at the DLP. But under rule, the CLPs are entitled to claim it,and therefore some account should be kept of these entitlements. Moreover, their records should define the basis of affiliation from trade unions to CLPs. Except in two cases (EETPU and NCU) all trade unions continue to affiliate via the DLP, rather than direct to CLPs. It ought therefore to be the DLP which has a definite record of back affiliations to CLPs; this appears not to be the case. The Investigation Team have not received details of the current balance of the DLP account, nor the details of transfers which notionally should be made to the Constituency Labour Parties. This information needs to be available.

10.2. In addition to affiliation fees etc the DLP have a 'delegation fee'. This provision is not in the model rules.

10.3. There are also a number of other accounts standing in the name of the District Labour Party. With the exception of the current Legal Defence Fund and the Propaganda Fund (see Annex L), these are apparently small in size.

10.4. Much of the expenditure over the last years was on campaigning publications and the very commendable alternative newspaper. But a Party which until two years ago employed a full-time agent now has no spare cash resources of any significance in any of its accounts

11. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DISTRICT LABOUR PARTY AND THE LABOUR GROUP

11.1 The relationship between the DLP and the Labour Group is defined in the model rules and the rules adopted for the Liverpool Council. In Liverpool the role of the District Labour party seems to have developed considerably further than in other parts of the country and the balance between clear policy lines laid down by the DLP and the day to day management of Council affairs by the Labour Group has clearly and deliberately moved in favour of the DLP.

11.2. Some aspects of these developments are clearly positive. It means that DLP delegates - and the wider membership at aggregate meetings - receive information on Council matters and are able to give their point of view. But the relationship goes much further than this. It was put to the Investigation Team that the DLP was only responsible for broad policy and implementation of the policy was a matter for the Labour Group. However, both witnesses and the DLP minutes indicate that the Group is regarded as accountable to the DLP for what is often very detailed policy. In a complex and difficult situation such as the Labour Group and the City Council have had to go through the past few months, this represents a major confusion of roles. The DLP has become involved in a number of detailed decisions of the Council.

11.3. Moreover, because of the lack of convening of ordinary DLP meetings, in fact what has happened is that those decisions have been taken either at Executive Committee level, or at aggregate meetings which - whether or not the key votes have been taken by delegates only - are not in accordance with the standing orders or model rules, and are indeed themselves dominated by reports from the Executive Committee.

11.4. In practice, this means that the Executive Committee of the DLP are taking key decisions which are then ratified on occasion not by the ordinary 'business' DLP but by an Aggregate Meeting.

11.5. This in turn means that issues which might normally be considered beyond the scope of the NEC investigation into the practices of a DLP in fact become relevant. The DLP apparently becomes involved in a range of issues which would normally be industrial relation issues dealt with between the City Council and the recognised trade unions. Certain trade union officials in the City representing unions with members in local authority came to regard this as extremely damaging to an effective system of industrial relations. The key convenors for the manual unions tend also to be delegates to the DLP. Some of the key leaders of the white collar unions, although such organisations

are not affiliated, also are delegates via constituencies or socialist societies to the DLP. Both decisions on Council industrial relations policy, and inter-union issues therefore tend to be conducted in the course of DLP and EC meetings. In view of the Investigation Team this is an extremely unhealthy development, particularly if aggregate meetings are disproportionately dominated by members of the Party from the Council unions and individual membership is not adequately checked.

11.6. All this reflects the degree to which the DLP is seen as the 'sovereign' body over the Labour Group. Not only industrial relations issues but issues such as planning permission have at times in effect been determined at DLP meetings or the line has been decided at Executive Committee meetings of the DLP. These are areas which ought to be the prerogative of the Labour Group itself, always reporting back for reasons of general information and accountability to the DLP and constituency parties.

11.7. In the view of the Investigation Team, there should be clearer demarcation of roles between the DLP and the Labour Group written into Rules and Standing Orders.

12. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DLP AND CLPs

12.1 In addition to the responsibilities relating to local government, Clause 2.5 of the Liverpool DLP Rules gives the DLP the responsibility "to co-ordinate constituency activities as may be required by the Constituency Labour Parties within the area, including the collection of affiliation fees and appointment of delegates by affiliated organisations for transfer to the appropriate Constituency Labour Parties." The relationship between the Liverpool DLP and the constituencies in the city has in practice developed somewhat differently from other parts of the country. Whilst the constitution of the DLP does not stray from the model rule the fact is that the DLP operates with a degree of 'sovereignity' over the CLPs and the wards which is to say the least unusual.

12.2 This in part reflects the fact that affiliation fees are paid via the DLP and in practice retained by the DLP. All resources are therefore at that level, and the CLPs are in part at least administered from the DLP office. This reflects the previous existence of a full-time agent at the DLP and the existence of a DLP office. This in itself is not a bad thing, but it has political as well as organisational and financial consequences.

12.3 It would appear to the Investigation Team that in Liverpool a decision of the DLP is vastly more important than the decisions of individual Constituency Labour Parties. Yet constitutionally, the DLP should be only a co-ordinating committee of CLPs to deal with local government matters.

12.4 As outlined above, the minutes of the DLP indicate that the DLP's decisions obviously go way beyond the area of local government. CLPs, and wards, consider it sensible to submit motions on a wide range of subjects to the DLP. It is unusual that wards should directly submit motions to a DLP.

12.5 At the same time, there were complaints that resolutions submitted by wards and CLPs sometimes did not in practice find their way onto DLP agendas. This is partly a reflection of the non-occurrence of 'ordinary' DLP meetings in recent months, but appears to be a more general issue of concern about the way the Executive Committee control not only recommendations but what matters go to the full DLP.

12.6 The assumption of the superiority of the DLP over branches and constituencies is further evidenced by the fact that we received clear evidence from at least one ward and CLP that the DLP was prepared to organise leaflets and the membership drives and campaign on issues (in this case the race relations adviser appointment affair) to which both the ward and constituency were opposed. Members of the LPYS in other ward and constituencies were used rather than ward members. Whilst the DLP sensibly has responsibility for electoral organisation across the city and some responsibility for membership, etc., this overriding of constituency or ward membership wishes is not acceptable.

12.7 The degree of centralisation implied by the role of the DLP in Liverpool has in effect meant the 'downgrading' of constituency and ward level activity. This is in particular a pattern of recent years, and has been acute during the period of the budget crisis.

12.8 It is the view of the Investigation Team that in the case of Liverpool the relationship between the DLP and CLPs should be spelt out more clearly in their Rules, and that affiliates to CLPs should be clearly separated out from affiliates to the DLP.

13. EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

13.1 It is a widespread impression in Liverpool that certain jobs in Council employment have been awarded on a political basis. The Investigation Team were only concerned with this issue in so far as it related to the operation of the DLP and the Party in Liverpool. Because of the close relationship between the DLP and the Labour Group, most of these issues have in fact been discussed at the DLP.

13.2 This is not simply a question of appointment of people who appear to be sympathetic to the policies of their council, and of involving the trade unions more in recruitment and promotion procedures. The allegations regarding certain appointments and practices in Liverpool would run the danger of bringing such positive practices in Liverpool and elsewhere into disrepute. Without going into great detail, the Investigation Team therefore consider it incumbent on us to report such to the NEC at least in outline. The areas of concern were as follows:-

(a) Nominations Rights: The practice of nomination rights for vacant jobs in Liverpool council employment has long applied to the various craft and building workers. Its extension to general and white collar workers ought therefore to be welcome. However, there are serious allegations that this right has been abused with people being given preference specifically within the areas of 'hundred per cent nomination rights' for the GMB, particularly in relation to those accorded the GMB Branch 5 in the parks and recreation, where Militant Tendency influence is alleged, and in GMB Branch 80 in the education area (These are not the only branches of GMB and other unions who held nomination rights but the branches where problems have been raised).

(b) Static Security Guards: Further allegations concern the static security guards. Again the allegations concerned GMB Branch 5. It was put to the Investigation Team that recruitment in this key and greatly expanded force has been on a political/old boy network basis.

(c) Campaign Support Team: The council - quite understandably - employed additional personnel in order to follow through their Campaign against the government's attempt to limit expenditure in Liverpool and the campaign in Defence of Jobs and Services. It was put to the Investigation Team that a number of the employees of the Campaign Support Unit were also working on behalf of the Militant Tendency within the city as well as pursuing the campaign of the City Council.

(d) F.E. Sabbaticals: The Education Committee of the Council agreed to fund F.E. sabbatical officers. The exact methodsof elections of such officers and selection for appointment were explained to the Investigation Team, but are still not wholly clear. As far as Student Labour Clubs are concerned the evidence from NOLS indicates clearly that sabbatical officers take over an political organising position and some have been elected as delegates to the DLP from Student Labour Clubs.

(e) Race Relations Adviser: This particular appointment has received national publicity. The appointment was made contrary to the advice of both professional and union advisers and of the then recognised representatives of the black community in Liverpool. Again it concerns a person alleged to be a Militant Tendency supporter. The appointment has lead to a breakdown of relationships between the Council and the black community leaders whom they had hitherto accepted as authentic representatives of the black community, and has led to alienation within the black community in general and to allegations and counter allegations of harrassment, intimidation and violence.

(f) Merseyside Action Group: The case of a very recent appointment of a council worker to help a body established recently - the Merseyside Action Group - was suggested to the Investigation Team to be an attempt to fund a 'front' organisation to organise within the ethnic minority communities in the face of the opposition received from the number of existing organisations and the hostility of significant sections of the black population to the appointment of the Race Relations adviser.

(g) Differential Terms and Conditions: We received assertions that the Council differentiated in terms and conditions between members, certain unions or particular groups of members on the same grade; this seems divisive and open to accusations of political preference.

13.3. The close relationship between the DLP and the Labour Group resulted in these issues being on the agenda of the DLP. The Race Relations appointment was the subject of considerable discussion at the DLP, the Merseyside Action Group is a follow on from that; the principle of nomination rights was also discussed at the DLP; and appointments to the Campaign Support Unit led to a number of accusations about the party being put to the Investigation Team. The role of the members of the Static Security Force at the DLP has already been mentioned. These are therefore the concern of the Investigation. However the main responsibility rests with the Labour Group and the unions concerned.

13.4. These appointments are clearly raising considerable concern in Liverpool. It has not been possible to investigate these practices in detail. We are however satisfied that there is some validity to these assertions. The Investigation Team strongly recommends the Labour Group and the trade unions involved to review these methods of appointment in order to avoid further accusations of this kind.

14. INVOLVEMENT IN MILITANT TENDENCY

14.1 The above summary of evidence indicates a number of clearly worrying points about the operation of the DLP and the wider party in Liverpool.

14.2 There have been a number of breaches of procedures, standing orders, and model rules of the DLP, some of which are serious and some of which in other circumstances will be regarded as technicalities. The net effect of all this is to take power away from an "ordinary DLP" and towards the Executive Committee and aggregate meetings, away from Constituency Labour Parties and away from the Labour Group on the City Council, and away from the established industrial relation practices between the trade unions and City Council.

14.3 It seems beyond reasonable doubt that too much power has become concentrated in the Executive Committee of the DLP in a way which is detrimental to the Labour Group on the City Council, to the proper functioning of constituencies and wards, and to the proper functioning of autonomous trade unionism and effective industrial relations in the cities.

14.4 The overlap between membership of the Executive Committee, leading positions and chairmanships and deputy chairmanships within the council group and within sections of the town hall trade unions creates an unhealthy concentration of power within the Labour Movement in Liverpool.

14.5 In the view of the majority of the Investigation Team it is also beyond reasonable doubt that this concentration of power and decision making is largely dominated by the organisation of the Militant Tendency.

14.6 It has to be said that the Investigation Team do not take seriously all allegations made of Militant activities in Liverpool. However there are undoubtedly a large number of supporters of the broad line taken by the Militant in Liverpool, and others who are prepared to go along with most of the policies, particularly whilst Militant has appeared to be the only credible focus of left wing activity within the Party in Merseyside.

14.7 However, our concern is whether there is in addition a membership organisation which, although it is secret, is widespread, and determines a line to be taken on the agendas of all Party bodies in Liverpool. The evidence seems to indicate that such an organisation does exist with a clear distinction between 'supporters' and 'members' and with a structure which broadly parallels the Labour Party structure. Indeed many members of the Party in Liverpool regard it as an open secret that such an organisation exists and details and information were supplied to the Investigation Team, which indicates the existence and operation of a 'shadow organisation' of the Militant Tendency in Liverpool.

14.8 The known details of such a structure include:-

1. The existence, as is publicly known, of a Militant office at 2, Lower Breck Road in Tuebrook, Liverpool, originally acquired from the Labour Party by Militant Newspapers (NEC Minutes, December 1980) and in which Labour Party meetings until very recently took place, and from which it is alleged that a number of full-time workers from Militant operates;

2. The 'Mersey Militant' newspaper edited by Richard Venton who is also known as 'Merseyside spokesman for Militant';

3. A significant number of "full-time workers" for Militant operating from 2 Lower Breck Road;

But we also have had suggestedthat there is a Liverpool District Committee on Liverpool, and more recently the establishment of branches of Militant in each of the six constituencies and probably in most wards in the city.

14.9 The majority of the Investigation Team are convinced that certain key members of the Party on the DLP Executive who dominate the key decision making groups in the city are beyond reasonable doubt heavily involved in the Militant organisation. Others are involved in establishing Militant organisation and influence at constituency, and Student Labour Club level, and establishment of 'Front Organisations' in the unions (for example the NUPE B.L.O.C. which was organised not through the union but through the Municipal Annex of the City Hall) and amongst the ethnic minorities where the Merseyside Action Group operates in opposition to established organisations for ethnic minority interests.

14.10 In addition to queries about irregularities in the DLP itself, therefore, the Investigation Team consider that there are serious questions about the eligibility for party membership of a few key individuals in Liverpool. It is therefore suggested that these individuals be presented formally by the NEC with such charges with a view to disciplinary action.

15. ACTION TO BE TAKEN

15.1 The Investigation Team conclude that there are so many serious matters identified in the above report that firm action is required by the National Executive Committee.

15.2. The breach and abuse of the Rules of the Party and the related matters outlined above have severely damaged the reputation of the Labour Party, amongst some of our own members, amongst some rank and file Trade Unionists, amongst the ethnic community, and amongst the electorate as a whole. Activities on the DLP have spread across into the actions of the Labour Group and of affiliated organisations. It is therefore absolutely imperative that any action taken by the NEC is seen to be in the interests of the long-term well-being and effectiveness of the Party in Liverpool and has the understanding and eventual support of the majority of the Labour and Trade Union movement on Merseyside, and that the Party is in shape to fight the coming local elections and General Election in Liverpool.

RESOURCES

15.3 One of the clear lessons of the investigation has been the lack of resource support and funding devoted to the Liverpool area from the national and regional level over a period of years. Since the retirement of Wally Edwards in 1983 there has been no full-time operation of the Party on Merseyside. The team believe that there is an obligation on the National Executive - perhaps with the help of affiliated organisations nationally and locally - to find the funding to resource major new efforts in Liverpool, and in particular the appointment for a period of 2-3 years at least of two full-time organisers based in Merseyside to service the party in Liverpool and surrounding districts.

15.4. These officers would be responsible for:-

* Organisation and administration of the Party, at District and Constituency level.
* Campaigning and publications and propoganda.
* A major new programme of political education & training.
* Building the relationship between the Party, the Trade Unions and Socialist Societies.
* Effective membership drives.

They would work in conjunction with the constituencies, affiliated organisations and a reformed District Labour Party. In their organising role, firm links would have to be established between these full-time officers and the National Office (Organisation Directorate). Regional Office would retain its general supportive and supervisory role. The provision of these extra resources is vital to the revival of the Party in Liverpool.

RECONSTITUTION OF THE DLP AND ITS EXECUTIVE

15.5 The Investigation Team consider it highly desirable that activity in the Party including at DLP level should be restarted as rapidly as possible. However, the changes needed will take some time to achieve, and need to be subject to consultations. Moreover, given the serious problems outlined above it is necessary to give a breathing space before the Executive Committee is formally reconstituted.

15.6 The Investigation Team therefore propose the suspension of the Executive Committee and officers of the Party and the replacement of the Executive Committee by a Temporary Co-ordinating Committee consisting of:-

2 representatives per CLP

2 representatives per each of the following larger unions (in terms of existing DLP delegates): GMB, TGWU, AUEW, ASTMS

1 representative per other unions, Co-op Party and socialist societies

N.W. Regional Officers (plus full-time officers when appointed).

The Temporary Co-ordinating Committee would elect its own officers.

15.7 This body, in conjunction with the CLPs and the North West Regional Office, should be responsible for the District Elections in May, the Local Government Panel and selections, and the finances of the District Labour Party and any other administrative matters pending the reconstitution of the DLP.

15.8 The Investigation Team consider the target for reconstitution of the DLP should be early June. The AGM of the DLP should be postponed until June. In the meantime meetings of the DLP delegates or wider meetings of members beyond the constituency level should be convened by the Temporary Co-ordinating Committee, to co-ordinate the District Election Campaign and should be regarded as consultative only.

15.9 This would give time for a number of major changes to be introduced into the constitutional procedures and practices of the District Labour Party. It is important to recognise that these recommendations arise from the very particular and peculiar problems found in Liverpool. Flexibility was introduced when District Labour Parties were established; in Liverpool this flexibility has been totally misinterpreted and Rules and Standing Orders should be much more explicit. Certain procedures now need to be set down.

15.10 RULES AND STANDING ORDERS

The Rules must be redrafted so as to:-

(i) make clear that the scope of the DLP is limited to local government issues.

(ii) Differentiate between "ordinary" DLP meetings (which should take place monthly) and "all member" meetings, which should be consultative only. Where the DLP feel the need to consult all members, all members meetings should be called but not more frequently than quarterly. Members should be properly notified of these meetings, which should be conducted to their own Standing Orders.

(iii) make clear the demarcation between the District Labour Party's area of decision making and that of the Labour Group.

(iv) Exclude explicitly detailed industrial relations issues from the competence of the DLP.

(v) make clear the demarcation between the DLP and the CLPs.

(vi) make clear the voting procedures and procedures for credentials at DLP meetings, All Member meetings and the AGM.

Standing Orders will also need to be amended to take these points into account. This will need further consultation in time for ratification at the proposed June AGM.

15.11 AFFILIATIONS

There are a number of aspects of affiliation which need either alteration or investigation:-

(i) Trade Union branches and Socialist Society affiliations to constituency Labour parties should no longer be via the DLP but direct to CLPs.

(ii) There would still be a separate entitlement to a direct affiliation from Trade Union branches and Socialist Societies to the DLP itself.

(iii) There should be a strong request to all affiliated organisations to check their current levels of affiliations, their delegations and their delegation entitlements to both the DLP and the individual CLPs.

(iv) In particular because of the bloc affiliation position the GMBATU and the TGWU should be asked to check rigorously their delegation to both DLP and CLP as against their branch membership and to check the method of appointment in consultation with the North West Regional Office. Delegates should henceforth be clearly designated according to branch. We do not believe this process should take long, but until that process of investigation is complete, and in agreement with the unions concerned, no delegates to the DLP or individual CLPs should be accepted from any branches of these unions.

(v) On Student Labour Clubs there should be an immediate examination by the NEC and the National Committee of NOLS into the operation of the Student Labour Clubs on Merseyside, the conduct of their Annual General Meetings, the role of FE Sabbatical Officers, in relation to Student Labour Clubs, the role of FELS, the levels of claimed membership and therefore delegation entitlements to the DLP and CLPs, and allegations of intimidation taking place at Student Club meetings. Until this examination is complete, there should be no delegations to the DLP or individual CLPs accepted from Student Labour Clubs.

(vi) On the Women's Council, the North West Regional Office should examine the basis of affiliation to the Women's Council and the basis of delegation. A properly constituted Annual General Meeting for 1986 should be held in the presence of the North West Regional Office with the properly accredited delegates. Until this process is complete, no delegates from the Women's Council should be accepted to the DLP.

LABOUR GROUP AND THE DLP

15.12 It is important to recognise that the Liverpool Labour Group have been under intense pressure as a result of the Government cuts in Rate Support Grant and the legal cases brought against them, and suffers from the disastrous heritage left over by the Liberal administration. In no sense are we suggesting that the Labour Group as a whole have been compromised by the abuses outlined in this report. However the Investigation Team do believe that certain obligations rest with the Labour Group. The relationship between the DLP and the Labour Group has not been in accordance with the principles of either the rules for DLPs of the model standing orders for Labour Groups (which were established in the Labour Party's constitution, and were most recently amended and approved by the 1984 Labour Party Conference).

15.13 The reconstitution of the DLP and the redrafting of the rules and standing orders of the DLP will help this situation, but the Labour Group also will need to redraft their own Group Standing Orders to fit in with the proposed new DLP standing orders and rules, subject to ratification by the NEC.

15.14 In view of the serious issues raised earlier in the Report and the concern that raises we would ask the Labour Group to consider their position on the following cases:-

(i) The need to give immediate attention in conjunction with the recognised Trade Unions to rectifying any abuses and conduct which have been set out in this report, and in particular in the area of personnel recruitment. This request should also be put to the national Trade Unions involved.

(ii) The need in view of the deterioration in relations with the Ethnic minority in Liverpool to give urgent reconsideration to rebuilding a constructive relationship between the City Council and Ethnic Minority organisations, and their communities.

(iii) That the Labour Group should consider urgently the method of recruitment and control of the Static Security Force, the Campaign Support Unit and related campaign support staff.

ACTIONS OF INDIVIDUALS

15.15 A number of allegations were made concerning individual officers and members of the Party in Liverpool. When any individual member of the Investigation Team considered it necessary to clarify or pursue such charges those individuals concerned were invited for interview or reinterview about these charges. This included the Officers of the DLP who were interviewed collectively, but declined - with the exception of the Treasurer - to be interviewed separately. Not all of those invited to respond in fact turned up.

15.16(a) The Investigation Team consider that there have been abuses and breaches of Labour Party Rules and Constitution and the resultant distortions of Party organisation in Liverpool are of sufficient gravity to require action to be taken by the National Executive Committee. We recommend that the General Secretary be instructed to consider the evidence in respect of the above matters given to the Team against the persons concerned and where applicable to formulate charges against them to be heard by the NEC.

(b) In addition as indicated in Section 14 it is beyond reasonable doubt that the Militant Tendency is an organisation with its "own programme, principles, and policy for distinctive and separate propaganda, possessing branches in the constituencies". Members of Militant Tendency would therefore be ineligible for membership under Clause 11 (4) (b) of the Constitution of the Labour Party. The Investigation Team believes that there is evidence that there may be members of the Party who are part of that organisation in Liverpool and the Investigation Team recommend that the NEC should consider their position under Clause II ((4) (b) in the light of the decision of the 1982 Labour Party Conference, the January and July 1983 decisions of the NEC and the subsequent endorsement of those decisions by the 1983 Labour Party Conference.

We therefore further recommend that the General Secretary be instructed to consider the evidence relating to possible membership of Militant Tendency against the persons named below and where applicable to formulate charges against them to be heard by the NEC.

15.17 The following members should be considered under (a) or (b) or (a) and (b) above:

Tony Mulhearn (Chair DLP)
Terry Harrison (Vice Chair DLP)
Felicity Dowling (Secretary DLP)
Josie Aitman
Tony Aitman
*Paul Astbury
*Roger Bannister
*Carol Darby
*Pauline Dunlop
Derek Hatton
Richard Knights
Ian Lowes
*Sylvia Sharpey-Shafer
*Harry Smith
Cheryl Varley
Richard Venton

Those asterisked were agreed by four members of the Team only; the remainder were agreed by the six NEC members signing this Report.

15.18 There may be other members of the Party who have to varying degrees been involved or supported Militant Tendency in the past. However, the Investigation Team believe it is neither provable nor profitable to add to the above list. The Investigation Team recommends that the NEC takes a decision as to disciplinary action if appropriate as rapidly as possible. It is important to ensure that the rules of natural justice and the constitution of the Labour Party are upheld in conducting these interviews and reaching any decision on disciplinary action.

Annex. A

Party Membership (1984)

	Ordinary	Regular	Special	Total	% of vote
Broadgreen	250	250	-	500	2.66%
Garston	160	90	50	300	1.4%
Mossley Hill	348	144	29	521	4.2%
Riverside	297	280	-	577	2.3%
Walton	258	216	17	491	1.82%
West Derby	274	647	19	940	3.93%
				3329	

Annex B

WRITTEN AND ORAL EVIDENCE
RECEIVED ON LIVERPOOL DISTRICT LABOUR PARTY

(Liverpool Only)

	TOTAL	RAISING CRITICAL POINTS	SUPPORTIVE OF DLP
Trade Unions	10	4	6
Socialist Societies	3	3	
CLPs	6	2	4
Ward Branches	9	5	4
Women's Sections	1		1
Individual Members	71	32	39
Other Groups of Members	6	5	1

Annex C

D.L.P. AFFILIATIONS

There are 562 potential delegates to the DLP, of which 262 are taken up (as of October 1985). The numbers of delegates are as follows. Figures of potential delegates are in brackets if different from actual.

C.L.P.s	
Broadgreen	7
Garston CLP	7
Mossley Hill	7
Riverside	7
W.Derby	7
Walton	7
	42
Wards	
Broadgreen Constituency Wards	5
Garston Constituency Wards	6
Mossley Hill Constituency Wards	5
Riverside Constituency Wards	4(6)
W.Derby Constituency Wards	5(6)
Walton Constituency Wards	6
	31 (33)
LPYS	2
Womens Cttee(womens council)	2
Co-op Party	6(8)
Labour Group	2
	2

Socialist Societies

SEA	1(2)
SHA	2
Student Clubs:-	
Poly Labour Club	o(2)
Central College Labour Club	2(3)
NE Tech Labour Club	1(3)
University Labour Club	1(3)
Old Swan Tech Labour Club	1(3)
Other Clubs:	
Riverside Labour Club	1(2)
Dovecot Club	3
Copperas Hill Workplace Branch	5
Liverpool Workplace Branch	0(3)

Trade Unions	Branches affilited	Sending delegates	Delegates	Potential delegates
GMBATU*		21	53	
TGWU		?	35	
ASTMS	12	6	15	(33)
AUEW/Eg/C/F	7	6	11	(15)
AUEW-TASS+	5	4	5	(10)
APEX	1	0	0	(2)
ASLEF	1	0	0	(2)
COHSE	3	1	1	(4)
EETPU	6	3	4	(12)
FBU	1	1	5	
FTAT	1	1	1	(2)
NGA	1	1	3	
NSMM	1	0	0	(2)
NCU	4	1	4	(9)
NUPE	10	2	6	
NUTGW	1	0	0	
Musicians	1	1	1	
NUR	4	2	7	(10)
NUS	1	1	2	(3)
SOGAT '82	1	0	0	(2)
TWU	2	1	2	(3)
TSSA	1	0	0	(2)
UCW	1	1	3	(9)
UCATT	5	2	4	(10)
USDAW	20	3	5	(21)

* Including Boilermakers
\+ Including Sheet Metalworkers

ANNEX D

LIST OF DLP Meetings

	Date	Delegates
1983	3 February	71
	3 March	51
	7 April	46
	8 May	46
	7 July	88
	4 August	86
AGM -	1 September	107
	3 November	64
	1 December	62
1984	5 January	91
Aggregate -	19 January	213
	2 February	113
AGM -	1 March	137
Aggregate -	12 March	
	21 March (special)	111
	1 April	
Aggregate -	5 April	120
	8 May	131
Special Aggregate	4 June	
	7 June	76
	9 June (7.00 pm - 7.30 pm)	
Aggregate -	9 July	300
	2 August	71
	6 September	
	11 October	120
	1 November	120
	6 December	134
Reconvened -	13 December	

DLP Meetings (continued)

	Date	Delegates
1985	3 January	
	7 February	113
	AGM - 14 March	
	4 April	123
	Aggregate - 2 May	
	7 May	85
	6 June	86
	Aggregate - 13 June	173
	4 July	
	2 August	
	5 September	115
	Aggregate - 12 September	
	Aggregate - 26 September	(112 Delegates and 106 visitors)
	Aggregate - 16 October	
	Aggregate - 6 November	
	Aggregate - 14 November	
	Aggregate - 22 November	

LIVERPOOL METROPOLITAN DISTRICT LABOUR PARTY

Annex E

DISTRICT RULES

Amendments to the Model Rules recommended at a meeting of Officers and Regional Officer, held on Thursday, 23rd June, 1983

CLAUSE 1 - NAME

Insert "Liverpool Metropolitan"

CLAUSE 11 - OBJECTS

Section (v) It was agreed that the District Labour Party act as a collecting agency for the receipt of affiliation fees and the appointment of delegates by affiliated organisations for transfer to the appropriate Constituency Labour Party.

CLAUSE 111 - MANAGEMENT

Members voted in favour of Option (iv) as follows :-

Section (ii)
insert

CLP's

7 delegates from each of the six complete Constituencies.

Members branches

1 delegate from each of the 33 members branches.

Affiliated Organisations

1 delegate for each 100 members or part thereof on whom affiliation fees have been paid through the District Labour Party to the CLP's with a maximum of 5 from any one Branch.

Women's Organisations

2 delegates.

Young Socialists Organisations

2 delegates.

CLAUSE IV - OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section (iii)
insert

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Officers (4) the Leader and Secretary of the Labour Group on the District Council and 26 members as follows :-

14 - members from affiliated organisations (including 1 from the Co-op Party and 1 from Socialist Societies)

6 - members from CLPs (with 1 member from each of the 6 CLP's)

4 - members from Members Branches.
1 - member from Women's Organisations.
1 - member from Young Socialists Organisations.

CLAUSE V111 - CANDIDATES

Section (i), line 4 (insert) "July"

Section (v), line 3 (insert) "September"

REPORT ON NEW PARTY STRUCTURE.

Local Government re-organisation set the machinery moving for the establishment of a new Party Structure and Party Conference considered the situation and made its decisions.

The decisions about Constituency and County Party organisations were fairly clear cut.

Constituencies shall continue to be the important base unit of our Party organisation with delegation rights to National, Regional, County and District parties.

County Labour Parties are to be set up in each Metropolitan County with representative delegates from the Constituency Labour Parties, the Co-operative Party and nominal representation from the District Party.

District. As far as the District organisation is concerned, and because of the considerable variation of size and composition of District authorities, the structure of District Parties was left with a great deal of flexibility as regards their composition.

What was clearly decided was that a District Labour Party should be set up in each District council area. Which in our case means Liverpool.

The functions shall be mainly concerned with Local Government matters and that there shall be no affiliation to the Party either National or Regional, and therefore no representation at either of their Annual Conferences.

In replying to the debate about the representation of Trade Union branches and other affiliated and Party organisations at District level, it was indicated that the kind of organisation that we now have as a Borough Labour Party with participation by affiliated bodies, could continue subject to the qualifications already made.

.....

The rules as recommended by the N.E.C. were carried but in the rules there is room for local variations and having regard to the agreement about flexibility the following set of draft rules are submitted for comment and possible amendments. The parts inserted or different from the document presented to the Labour Party Conference by the N.E.C. are in capitals and as far as possible these represent the declared policy of the Borough Labour Party.

Rules for a District Labour Party in Liverpool.

Clause 1 Name. Liverpool District or City Labour Party.

Clause 2 Objects.

1) To co-ordinate the activities of Constituency Labour Parties within the area forthe purpose of securing the return of Labour representatives to the District Council.

2) To undertake in co-operation with Constituency Labour Parties within the area, propaganda, educational and other activities related to Local Government.

3) To formulate an Electoral Programme and to compile a panel of candidates in accordance with the provisions laid down in Clauses VII and VIII of these rules, and

4) To ensure the establishment of a Labour Group upon the District Council in accordance with the Standing Orders for Labour Groups laid down by the Party Conference.

5) To co-ordinate constituency activities as may be required by the Constituency Labour Parties within the area, including the collection of affiliation fees and appointment of delegates by affiliated organisations for transfer to the appropriate Constituency Labour Parties.

Management

1) The management of the District Labour Party shall be in the hands of a management Committee consisting of delegates appointed by organisations approved by the National Executive Committee as entitled to be represented.

2) The basis of representation shall be as follows:-

a) TRADE UNION BRANCHES. 1 DELEGATE FOR EACH 100 MEMBERS OR PART THEREOF ON WHOM AN AFFILIATION FEE OF 5d PER MEMBER HAS BEEN PAID WITH A MAXIMUM OF FIVE FROM ANY ONE BRANCH. (WHERE BLOCK AFFILIATIONS ARE PAID BY A T.U. THE DELEGATION WILL NEVERTHELESS BE BASED ON THE NUMBER OF AFFILIATED MEMBERS FOR EACH SEPARATE BRANC

b) CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTIES AND BRANCHES THEREOF.
5 DELEGATES FROM EACH C.L.P. PLUS A DELEGATE FROM EACH MEMBERS' BRANCH WITHIN THE CONSTITUENCY TO BE NOMINATED BY THE BRANCH CONCERNED.

c) CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY PARTIES. ONE DELEGATE FOR EACH 100 MEMBERS OR PART THEREOF ON WHOM AFFILIATION FEES OF 5p PER MEMBER HAVE BEEN PAID.

d) WOMEN'S SECTIONS OR WOMEN'S COUNCIL
2 DELEGATES

e) YOUNG SOCIALISTS
2 DELEGATES.

f) SOCIALIST SOCIETIES , BRANCHES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS DECLARED AS ELIGIBLE FOR AFFILIATION.
ONE DELEGATE FOR EACH 100 MEMBERS OR PART THEREOF ON WHOM AFFILIATION FEES OF 5p PER MEMBER WITH A MAXIMUM OF 5 FROM ANY ONE BRANCH.

3) DELEGATES MUST BE RESIDENT OR REGISTERED AS ELECTORS IN THE AREA COVERED BY THE DISTRICT/CITY LABOUR PARTY AND MUST BE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE LABOUR PARTY.

4) THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE LABOUR GROUP ON THE CITY COUNCIL SHALL BE EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WITH VOTING POWERS.

5) Full-time agents within the area shall be ex-officio delegates without voting power unless appointed as accredited delegates.

Clause 4 Officers and Executive Committee.

1) The Officers and Executive Committee shall be elected by the Annual Meeting of the Management Committee.

2) The Officers shall consist of a Chairman, 2 Vice-Chairmen, Secretary and Treasurer.

3) THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SHALL CONSIST OF THE OFFICERS, THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE LABOUR GROUP OF THE LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL AND 28 MEMBERS ON THE FOLLOWING BASIS :-

TRADE UNIONS. 12 MEMBERS (NOT MORE THAN ONE FROM ANY ONE UNION)

CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTIES. 12 MEMBERS. ONE FROM EACH CONSTITUENCY PARTY (8) AND 4 FROM NOMINATIONS BY MEMBERS BRANCHES.

WOMEN'S SECTIONS OR COUNCIL.	1.
YOUNG SOCIALISTS.	1.
CO-OPERATIVE PARTIES.	1.
OTHER BODIES.	1.

FULL TIME AGENTS WITHIN THE AREA MAY ATTEND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS WITHOUT VOTING POWERS.

4) Officers and members of the Executive Committee must be delegates to the Management Committee.

...ngs.

3) THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SHALL BE HELD IN MARCH.

2) THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO MEET AS REQUIRED.

6. Finance

1) THE ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES OF THIS PARTY SHALL BE MET FROM CONTRIBUTIONS SUBSCRIBED BY CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTIES AND BRANCHES ON AN AGREED BASIS AND FROM AN AGREED PROPORTION OF AFFILIATION FEES.

2) The Constituency Labour Parties shall be responsible for the expenses incurred in contesting elections, and by-elections within their area, and also meet a proportionate share of expenses which the Constituency Labour Parties agree shall be incurred by this Party in contesting these elections.

Clause 7. General.

1) The electoral policy and programme for the elections shall be decided by this Party in consultation with the Labour Group on the District Council.

2) The desirability of contesting an electoral area at the elections shall be determined by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Constituency Labour Party concerned.

Clause 8. Candidates

a) Nominations

1) THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THIS PARTY SHALL INVITE NOMINATIONS FOR THE DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS FROM CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTIES, MEMBERS BRANCHES AND AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS DURING THE MONTH OF JULY IN THE YEAR PRECEDING SUCH ELECTIONS.

2) All nominees must be individual members of the Labour Party and have paid the current membership contribution; in addition nominees must have been individual members of the Labour Party for a period of 12 months except in exceptional circumstances as may be decided by this Party.

3) No person who is disqualified as a Parliamentary Candidate under the Constitution of the Labour Party, or under the decisions of the Party Conference, shall be nominated or selected as a candidate for these elections.

4) All nominees must undertake to accept and conform with the Standing Orders for the Labour Group approved by the N.E.C.

5) A list of members so nominated shall be submitted to a meeting of the Management Committee for endorsement in the month of SEPTEMBER preceding the elections.

6) THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MAY REFUSE ENDORSEMENT TO ANY NOMINATION IF IT THINKS FIT BUT THE C.L.P. IN WHICH THE NOMINEE IS A MEMBER, MAY APPEAL TO THE REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, WHOSE DECISION SHALL BE FINAL.

7) In the event of an insufficient number of valid nominations, the Executive Committee shall in consultation with the Constituency Labour Parties have power to take whatever action may be necessary to meet the situation. In cases of dispute the matter shall be submitted to the Management Committee whose decisions shall be final.

8) The list of members endorsed by the Management Committee shall be submitted through Constituency Labour Parties to the Branch or Branches covering the electoral areas where contests have been approved.

continued . . . . . .

Annex F

LIVERPOOL DISTRICT LABOUR PARTY

Standing Orders

MEETINGS

1. a) The General Committee and Executive Committee meetings shall be held on a regular basis, Special and emergency meetings may be convened on necessity.

   b) Notice of General and EC meetings shall be sent out by the Secretary prior to the meetings. Such notices shall include an indication of the business.

   c) Delegates shall show credentials on entering the meeting room and sign the regist

   d) Meetings of the General Committee shall commence 7.30p.m. If within half an hour of the appointed time a quorum is not present, the meeting shall not be held, always provided that in special circumstances a lesser number than the quorum may transact business subject to the ratification of the proceedings by the next full meeting.

2. QUORUM. The quorum of the General Committee shall be 20 and the quorum for the Executive Committee shall be 7.

3. CHAIRMAN. The Chairmen of the Party shall preside at General and Executive Committee meetings. In his absence a Vice-chairman shall take the chair. In the absence of both, the Secretary shall call upon the meeting to elect a person to preside. Should the Chairman or Vice-chairman appear later, the presiding Chairman may continue until the current or particular item of agenda is disposed of before vacating the chair for the official holder. At the Annual Meeting the Chairman shall hold office until his successor is elected, who shall forthwith take the chair, and proceed to the election of other officers.

4. ORDER OF BUSINESS. The usual order of business at an ordinary meeting shall be:-

   a) Minutes of previous meeting.
   b) Questions arising from minutes.
   c) Executive Committee report.
   d) Reports.
   e) Resolutions.
   f) Correspondence.
   g) Other business of which notice has been given.

5. NOTICE OF MOTION

   All original motions for the agenda shall be notified to the Secretary in writing not less than 7 days before the meeting, unless on matters of urgency accepted by the majority as such, but where urgency is known or anticipated before the meeting notice in writing of the urgent business or motion shall be transmitted to the Secretary as early as practicable before the meeting. The term urgency or emergency shall be interpreted in a bona fide way and with due regard to the reasonable intent of this order. Emergency resolutions shall not be dealt with before 9.00p.m.

6. AMENDMENTS

   Amendments to an original motion shall be handed to the Secretary in writing.

7. RESOLUTIONS - to be moved and seconded. No motion shall be discussed at a meeting until it has been moved and seconded.

8. AMENDMENTS.

   Amendments shall be taken in order, and one amendment shall be disposed of before another is moved. If the first amendment is carried it becomes itself the question whereupon any further amendment may be moved.

9. MOTION TO RESCIND RESOLUTION

   Any motion to rescind any previous resolution passed by the Party shall be handed in written form to the Secretary not later than 7 days before the date of the next meeting. A motion to rescind a resolution shall not be valid within the (three) months after the date of the original resolution, always provided that on due consideration of grounds of untenability, emergency or definite urgency, the General Committee or Executive Committee shall have power to suspend a part of this order for the purpose of allowing the ad hoc motions of rescission to be put.

cont.....

10. SPEAKERS. All speakers shall address the Chair. All members shall preserve order and be seated when the Chairman rises. No member shall be allowed to speak more than once on any motion until every other member has had an opportunity of speaking Invited speakers and members giving reports shall be allowed 7 minutes with the opportunity to reply to the discussion.

11. TIME LIMIT FOR SPEAKERS. The mover and seconder of any motion shall be deemed to have spoken theron. A mover of a motion shall be allowed 5 mins, seconder and succeeding speakers 3 minutes. The time limit may be extended by vote of the members. The mover of an original resolution, but not of any amendment, may reply to the discussion without introducing any new matter and this shall close the discussion.

12. CHAIRMAN SPEAKING TO A MOTION. The Chairman if desirous of speaking individually to any motion, shall request the permission of the meeting to leave the chair for the purpose of so doing, always providing that this shall not abrogate the ordinary right of the Chairman to sum up or comment on a discussion to clarify the issues on which members are to vote.

13. VOTING ON A MOTION, shall be by show of hands by delegates with credentials, except where the constitution of the Party provides for a ballot vote, or when the GMC shall otherwise decide. The voting for official and E.C. members shall be by ballot

14. EQUALITY OF VOTES.
a) In the event of an equal number of votes being given on any matter it shall be decided the question be not carried; or (b) the Chairman may give a casting vote in the event of there being an equality of votes on any matter. If the Chairman does not wish to give a casting vote the resolution is not carried.

15. ENTITLEMENT TO VOTE. Delegates whose names are registered with the Secretary as having been duly notified by their appointing bodies, shall be entitled to vote on the General Committee or Executive Committee.

16. NOMINATION OF ABSENT DELEGATE.
a) An absent delegate may be nominated for any office at the discretion of the Chairman, whose ruling shall have regard to circumstances. (b) delegates failing to attend 3 consecutive meetings without reason being given, shall be reported to their nominating bodies.

17. PROCEDURE MOTIONS. Any motion "to adjourn", "next business", "that the vote be taken", "that the chairman leave the chair", shall be moved, seconded and put to the vote without discussion. After such a vote, twenty minutes shall elapse before such a motion can be again accepted by the chairman. A motion of "next business" shall not be taken until the mover and seconder of a motion have been heard.

18. CHAIRMAN'S RULING. The Chairman's ruling on any point of order raising from these standing orders shall be final, unless challenged by not less than three members, thereupon the Secretary shall put the ruling to the meeting forthwith. If any point arises not provided for in these standing orders, the Chairman shall give a ruling on this point. Should his opinion be challenged by not less than three persons a vote shall be taken to decide the point for that meeting.

19. BREACH OF RULES OR ORDERS. Any breach of or question on the rules of standing orders may be raised by a member rising to a point of order.

20. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS. Any of the Standing Orders numbered 4, 11, 21 may for good reason be temporarily suspended for the remainder of a meeting by a majority vote of the members present at a meeting.

21. CLOSE OF MEETING. All meetings shall close not later than 9.45p.m.

22. MISCELLANEOUS. The general provision of the Labour Party as stated in the Constitution and Standing Orders shall apply to this organisation.

23. ALTERATIONS OF STANDING ORDERS. No alterations shall be made in any of the foregoing rules and standing orders except at the Annual General Meeting of the General Committee.

(1985)

Issues Discussed at D.L.P. Annex: G

Jan '84	Militant Editorial Board
	Call for resignation of Len Murray
Jan 5	Grenada Invasion
	Knowsley CLP
	South Africa
	GCHQ Cheltenham
	Northern Ireland
	Nuclear Weapons
Feb '84	Blackburn 5
	Northern Ireland
April '84	NOLS conference
May '84	Blackburn 6
July '84	Oldham East CLP
	Blackburn 6
Sept 27	Northern Ireland
Nov '84	Northern Ireland
	Brychan Davies
	South Africa
Jun '85	Nicaragua
	ASDA Planning Permission
	Parliamentary Workshop
Jan '85	ASDA
Feb '85	Nicaragua
	Ethiopia
Feb 7	ASDA Planning Permission
March 11	Zimbabwe
	Sri Lanka
March '85	New Zealand
	FELS
	NOLS Conference
	Leader and Deputy Leader of the Party
April '85	Wales Labour Party
	Sri Lanka
	Zimbabwe
May '85	Wales Labour Party
	Militant
	Chile
June '85	YTURC
	NUPE Militant
	Nicaragua
July '85	S Africa (SACTU)
	Militant Advertising
Sept '85	South Africa (SACTU)
Nov '85	South Africa

Annex H

List of Executive Committee Meetings

1983	31 March
	28 April
	30 June
	26 July
	? July
	24 August (special)
	25 August
	29 September
	6 October (Special)
	14 October
	22 October (Special)
	27 October
	25 November
	29 December
1984	11 January
Adjourned	26 January
	23 February
	29 February
	8 March (Special)
	11 March
	13 March (Special)
	16 March
	28 March
	30 March
	26 April
	31 May
	22 June
	9 July (Special)
	16 July
	26 July
	30 August
	27 September
	9 October
	11 October
	25 October
	1 November
	6 November
	22 November
	29 November

ECs (contd)

3 December
13 December

1985

2 January
31 January
7 February
1 March
8 March
11 March
13 March
16 March
21 March
28 March
30 March
25 April
17 May (Special)
23 May (Emergency)
30 May
3 June (Special)
12 June (Special)
24 June (Special)
27 June
22 July (Special)
25 July
2 August
7 August
18 September
25 September
26 September
14 October
28 October
30 October (Special)
1 November
22 November

Annex: I

DLP Executive

Party Officers (5)

Cllr Tony Mulhearn	Chair
Terry Harrison	Vice Chair
Eddie Loyden MP	Vice Chair
Cllr Felicity Dowling	Secretary
Cllr John Hamilton	Treasurer

CLP Delegates (6)

Mike Allen	Riverside
Cllr Derek Hatton	Broadgreen
John Brazier	Walton
Pat Roche	W. Derby
Cllr Eddie Sabino	Mossley Hill
Cllr Paul Astbury	Garston

Ward Delegates (4)

Josie Aitman	Tuebrook	(Broadgreen)
Ron Curey	Valley	(Garston)
Phil Knibb	Gillmoss	(W Derby)
Pat Weathers	Childwell	(Broadgreen)

LPYS (1)

Ron Owen

Womens Council (1)

Sylvia Schafer

Co-op Party (1)

Cllr Eddie Roderick

Trade Unions (12)

Cllr Pat Ferguson	AUEW
Marie Harrison	COHSE
Cllr Mike Black	EEPTU
Ian Lowes	GMBATU
Steve Parry	FBU
Ray Farrah	NCU
Alec Dowsell	TGWU
Chris Williams	TGWU
Tony Byrne	TASS
P Geoffrey	USDAW
G Gorman	UCATT
G Booth	

Socialist Societies

Cheryl Varley	Central College Labour Club

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Annexe J

LIVERPOOL INVESTIGATION

Information relating to affiliations of certain Trade Union Branches

From North West Regional Office

The Liverpool Constituency Parties rules contain the following Clauses.

Clause IX - Management

Section 2 Affiliated Organisations

1 delegate per 100 members or part thereof with a maximum of 5 delegates from any one Branch.

Affiliation Fees and contributions payable to this party should be as follows:

a) Trade Unions, Branches of Trade Unions, Branches of Socialist Societies and Other Organisations not less than 5p per annum per member resident or registered as an elector in the Constituency with a minimum payment of £5.00.

DETAILS OF APPOINTMENT OF DELEGATES MADE BY CERTAIN TRADE UNION BRANCHES

GMBATU Branch 5 - actual membership of the Branch is 1195
- implies minimum membership is 2002+

Constituency	No of Delegates	no of members from whom fees have been paid
Liverpool/Broadgreen	3	200 plus
Liverpool/Garston	5	400 plus
Liverpool/Mossley Hill	1	1-100
Liverpool/Riverside	5	400 plus
Liverpool/Walton	5	400 plus
Liverpool/West Derby	5	400 plus
Knowsley North	3	200 plus
Knowsley South	1	1-100
	28	2002+

T&GWU Branch 6/522. Actual membership - 638
Implied minimum membership is 1503+

Constituency	No of Delegates	no of members from whom fees have been paid
Liverpool/Broadgreen	2	100+
Liverpool/Garston	?	?
Liverpool/Mossley Hill	1	1-100
Liverpool/Riverside	4	300+
Liverpool/Walton	2	100+
Liverpool/West Derby	1	1-100
Knowsley North	5	400
Knowsley South	5	400
St Helens North	1	1-100
Birkenhead	3	200+
	24	1503+

T&GWU Branch 6/612 Actual Membership - 263
Implied Minimum Membership - 2001+

Constituency	No of Delegates	no of members from whom fees have been paid
Liverpool/Broadgreen	4	300+
Liverpool/Garston	?	?
Liverpool/Mossley Hill	2	100+
Liverpool/Riverside	5	400+
Liverpool/Walton	3	200+
Liverpool/West Derby	2	100+
Knowsley North	3	200+
Knowsley South	1	1-100
Bootle	2	100+
	24	2000+

NOTE

We have been unable to ascertain the delegation of these Branches to Garston CLP. No replies have been received from the CLP to our enquiries. However it is known that these Branches are affiliated to this CLP.

It is also possible that the two T&GWU Branches may be affiliated to other Constituencies in the Merseyside area, but the attached letter from the Regional Office at GMBATU clearly shows that this Branch is only affiliated to the Liverpool and Knowsley Parties.

LIVERPOOL COUNCIL - ELECTION RESULTS

Page 1

Annex K

		1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Liverpool	Con	27.4	-	34.2	34.1	47.0	36.8	30.5	29.8	21.7	25.5	21.3	19.0
	Lab	35.8	-	31.2	34.7	28.2	32.8	40.7	35.9	46.9	38.6	46.5	46.2
	Lib/SDP	35.4	-	33.1	30.2	23.5	20.0	27.9	32.8	31.0	35.6	31.9	34.4

Annex K (cont)

LIVERPOOL GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

(i) June 1983

	% Vote	Result
Broadgreen	40.9	Labour
Garston	46.6	Labour
Mossley Hill	26.8	Liberal/All
Riverside	65.0	Labour
Walton	52.7	Labour
West Derby	54.5	Labour

(ii) May 1979

	% Vote	Result
Edge Hill	34.6	Liberal
Garston	43.3	Conservative
Kirkdale	56.1	Labour
Scotland Exchange	75.1	Labour
Toxteth	54.7	Labour
Walton	55.2	Labour
Wavertree	34.2	Conservative
West Derby	55.5	Labour

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Annex L

NLP - STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 1st JANUARY, 1984 - 31st DECEMBER 1984

E X P E N D I T U R E

	£	
Salaries, Super., NH. Insurance	4,955.	05
Postages and Telephone	1,632.	61
Stationery and Printing	1,285.	45
Adverts	50.	00
Election printing	454.	99
Office rent and rates	558.	93
Hire of rooms	433.	00
Delegation Fees etc.	101.	00
Hire of Bus: Chesterfield By-election	89.	00
Miners' Strike Funds	666.	84
Donations	60.	00
Sundries	22.	00
Bank Commission	72.	79
£	10,381.	66p

PAGE 2.

DLP - STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 1st JANUARY, 1984 - 31st DECEMBER 1984

I N C O M E

	£	
Balance in C.W.S. Bank 31.12.1983	284.	12
Affiliation & delegation fees	2,957.	66
Duplicating etc.	8.	60
Grants for elections GMMCC	1,000.	00
Election literature	176.	50
Donations	1,617.	05
Proceeds: Supporters Draw	218.	00
Income: Mun. Policy Conference	35.	00
Income from Tote	973.	25
Miners' Strike Funds	645.	00
Fares for London Lobby	90.	05
Sundries	48.	00
DLP collections	480.	19
Collection: March 29th demonstration	104.	55
Proceeds: Labour Week "Royal Iris"	69.	95
	8,725.	92
Deficit in C.W.S. Bank 31.12.84	1,655.	74
£	10,381.	66

JOHN D. HAMILTON,
Treasurer.

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PROPAGANDA FUND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AS FROM
1st. April 1984 - 31st March, 1985

INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	
Cash in Bank at 1.4.84	427.55	Printing - Not the Echo	5495.00
Councillors Donations	3948.74	" Leaflets	456.50
Chairmans S.R.A.	7642.36	Repayments Printi.g M/C	600.00
Sale of "Not the Echo"	2576.22	Repairs " "	91.53
Other Donations	77.00	Duplicating etc A/C to DLP	93.74
		Transport "Not the Echo"	80.00
		Stationary, stamps etc	10.62
		Cash in Bank at 1.4.85	7844.48
TOTAL -	14671.87	TOTAL -	14671.87

****

A decision of the DLP of OCTOBER 1984 requested Councillors to make a donation of £5 per month to DLP Funds.

To 1st April, 1985 19 councillors have contributed varying amounts to this fund.

A total of £345.00 has been donated to the District Labour Party Account.

MIKE BLACK

ANNEXES

A. Membership of CLPs in Liverpool

B. Summary of Evidence taken

C. DLP Affiliations and Delegations

D. Dates of DLP Meetings 1983/4/5

E. Rules of DLP

F. Standing Orders of DLP

G. Issues discussed at DLP

H. Meetings of Executive of DLP

I. Members of DLP Executive

J. GMBATU and TGWU Branch Affiliations

K. Recent Electoral Results in Liverpool

L. DLP Accounts

Appendix 8 Interview by the Inquiry Team with Irene Buxton

IDENTIFICATION :

INTERVIEW WITH MISS IRENE BUXTON - ABERDEEN - ON 24 JANUARY 1986

STATION HOTEL - ABERDEEN

M. ..... (inaudible) ... Labour Party and that's to investigate enquiries into the activities of the District Labour Party in Liverpool and all that surrounds the District Labour Party. We can't obviously ignore its relationship with the Council, the County of Millwall and the infiltration into the Party and whether there are groups that control it and of course your first name is ?

F. Irene

M. Irene. I should have said something to you first of all by the way, a little speech I have to everybody which says our discussions have confidentiality about and anything you have to say to us shouldn't impinge upon the Court Action which is taking place, because people are trying to stop us if we do anything like that. I want to say this everybody. In addition, we hope you (inaudible) ..... talk to everybody because ..... we haven't talked to anybody. Now there are another seven colleagues ..... (blank) so you can understand we couldn't bring the whole of the people up here and we have talked to a lot of people in Liverpool. We've still some more to talk to. We have also talked to a Researcher whose name was Kelly wasn't it on the Granada programme of which you had some input. So perhaps you'd just like to tell us about your time in Liverpool. How long you were there and what you were connected with in Liverpool. How you see it having relationships with the Labour Party. As simple as that. It's confidential. To the Committee I will give a report on Sunday when we meet, saying I've had a discussion with you along with the General Secretary, Larry, and this is what you've told us, but it's confidential ..... because what I've said was we'd get you to come to Carlisle from wherever you were so we met halfway. Ok.

F. I appreciate the confidentiality and no doubt they'll all know that you've come to Aberdeen and things do get out. I'm in the fortunate position that unlike a lot of people in Liverpool, I am not bothered about the fact that they know I've spoken to you. That doesn't worry me at all but I didn't want to go to Liverpool

to actually do it.

M. I understand.

F. Because in fact at the end of the World In Action programme it was stated that I was going to be in touch with the Labour Party .... after anyway. So I've already stated that, but our Marshall (?) is away so I'm not in such a difficult position as the other people, especially about this business of wanting to face their accusers. I don't mind at all but obviously in terms of interviews, I have been hounded by the press since the programme but whoever's been in touch has simply been told go away, even the Daily Mail sitting outside the house at 8 o'clock in the morning but anyway ..... I got involved in the Labour Party after being involved in my Trade Union NALGO. I became Branch Secretary of the Union in 1978, and was Branch Secretary for five years between '78 and '83. I was elected onto NALGO's District Executive Committee. Ididn't join the Labour Party for some time because I thought it was too right wing. Well I did get a lot more in NALGO. I accepted the argument that if you want to change an organisation you have to do it from within. You can't do it from outside and that was when I joined the Labour Party as I could see that.
I was a member of Walbrech Ward (?). I became Chairman of the Ward Party as a delegate to Walton General Management Cttee., and delegate to Liverpool district party. I think in fact I was a delegate for two years to the District Party. The main reason and force behind getting me involved was the influence of (?) Militant (?). Within ..... NALGO there was a caucus of either Militant members or supporters and it was led by Derek Hatton who at that time was just starting to get involved on the fringes of the union, although ..... INAUDIBLE BECAUSE OF VARIOUS NOISES AND MUMBLES (!)
TEA BREAK BY SOUND OF IT.....

Derek Hatton approach three of us who were probably at that time the only left wing stewards on the NALGO Branch Executive and sold us the paper. At that time I started to talk about politics and Militant's aims and views, objectives etc. and it was at that time that we pointed out to him that he ought to be Shop Steward. So under much pressure he became Shop Steward of his own dept. So the four of us formed the basis really at

that time of a Militant supporters caucus within the branch because it was only Derek who was a member and then another person Marjorie Bannister (?) who's now ..... Branch Secretary and who I think on the District Labour Party, who was when I left and Roger became a Militant member and that left just Ray and I (?) and I was then approached by Derek and had discussions with him regarding my views politically and what Militant was all about. He asked me to attend a Readers' meeting which was held in a hotel, the Feathers I think it was in Liverpool (Mount Pleasant) where a particular issue someone ..... gives a lead off about the situation and there was a discussion and afterwards if they think you're OK they gather for further talks. So Derek approached me again and this time brought along Terry Harrison. He was on the local District Council. I had come across Terry previously in my role as a Welfare Rights Officer for the Council because he sat on the Supplementary Benefit Appeal Tribunals as a Trade Union Delegate and so I knew who he was and the reason he came along to talk to me was because he'd seen me before at the Tribunals and thought it might be useful if it was someone I'd actually had contact with. So this went on for some time. I resisted actually becoming a member and the caucus gradually grew. We got in the end to about 12 or 13. Either members or supporters and everybody was approached in the same way to become a member you were taken along to a Readers' meeting, based on how you reacted to the meeting and discussion afterwards, with either one or more people, then continued talking to you, explaining the entries and theory ..... to the Labour Party. They worked in that way to build up a revolutionary party so come the time, we've got an alternative party to take over if ..... every does appear.

I eventually, I think in about 1980, became a Militant member. That was because I'd got more involved with the Labour Party. I think this is also one of the reasons why in Liverpool Militant is so large is because in Liverpool and Liverpool District, and surrounding area, Merseyside, it's really the only forceful group on the Left that's in appearance anywhere and I think that's why a lot of people who would consider themselves to be left-wing socialists, as I do, tended to drift towards Militant. Militant members certainly spotted you and tried to pull you in. There's no other group that's actually involved in Liverpool and that's why a lot of people say at the end of the day well OK yeah there's nothing else. That I think is why I eventually joined. When I

joined there were just two branches, sorry before I joined there were just two Militant branches. By the time I'd left, there was a Militant branch in every constituency in Liverpool so that would be six wouldn't it? and then were other branches in Sefton and the Wirral, St. Helens (?), Molesley, Huyton and the way the branches increased was that I would say there were originally only 2, but as you get more and more members coming along, when it gets to say 25-30, they then make decisions to split the branches into 2 and you become a branch for a different area. I was in the Walton branch eventually and I was Chairman of the branch. Mainly because I could get on better with the younger people who were mainly Young Socialists who didn't get along with the older Militant comrades who didn't have much time for the youth and I think it was a tactical decision on the part of the District Cttee. to make me chair the meeting in order that I would encourage the younger ones to continue coming along. The branch meets once a week on Wednesday nights, so if ever you're in Liverpool and you try to get anybody involved either in party matters or union wise, you arrange regular meetings, say a monthly meeting, you never get one on a Wednesday because that's the Militant Branch Meeting night and it's just excluded from any of the meetings. At your branch meeting it's a similar kind of format to a Readers' meeting, but before you have your lead off and discussion, some questions and answers, you have your business and the branch has a chairman, secretary and treasurer. It has a fighting fund organiser, a paper seller, organiser and most often it will have a youth worker. Usually the Chairman and Secretary are the most influential people. The ones with the most experience. The longest standing members who can gain the most respect from the other people and the treasurer maybe falls in that range but maybe the paper sellers and the fighting fund organisers would generally be younger people with more energy and enthusiasm, having just been brought in. So at the beginning of the meeting, you deal with the business like collecting fighting fund, collecting the paper money, explaining how many papers you've sold, who you sold them to, who you tried to sell them to and they wouldn't buy them and why they wouldn't and when you did sell them did you manage to get any fighting fund money off them - I don't know how much Militant is now - it used to be 20p, The idea was that someone would offer 50p and you'd ask can I keep the change for the fighting fund and also you were supposed to collect money at trade union branch meetings for the fighting

fund, which to members. Sorry - to people who were not now Militant Members, the reason you were asking them for the fighting fund money was to keep the paper going because it was run by a small group of people and very expensive and that was your excuse and that was what the fighting fund was all about to people who were not members of Militant. Obviously for people who were, then it was to try keep the organisation going and pay the full time organisers. You'd then talk about what contacts you'd had with people and what discussions you'd had about Militant and its ideas. What people you'd tried to bring in to the organisation or to a Readers' meeting. You would be questioned individually by the officers of the branch as to why aren't you getting anywhere with such and such and being sort of .... for a while now and they're still not coming any nearer and why do you think this is. Can anything else be done. Perhaps someone could go along with you. There was a lot of pressure on you as to your performance as Miltant member.
You would then collect branch fund which in my time was 10p a member that was put into a separate bank account for each branch and it was used to send people to conferences and particularly the young socialists conference and the Militant Annual Conference which, as you know, is called THE PAPERS SELLERS RALLY and it used to be in Bridlington and .... took the branch fund money there to pay for people who couldn't actually afford to go or who were unemployed etc. After all that kind of thing, as well as telling the branch members what conferences and meetings are coming up and who's going to them , then there's the lead off on political issues and a discussion, questions and answers and then wound up by the person who gave the lead off and the way the lead off is given, is that whoever gives it, puts the Militant line on whatever the issue is and the line comes down from the top and in terms of any debate afterwards, there may be questions from branch members, but there's no argument about what you're being told, it's more or less this is what our leaders say should be our ideas on a particular issue. We have to fully understand their ideas so that we can go and put them across to other people afterwards, but there's never a vote as to whether the branch members all agree with this. It's just accepted as said that we now go out and explain to people.
Above the branch is the District Cttee. and each District of the UK which has a significat militant presence has a District

Committee, and that's made up of representatives from the branches within the area. Originally, Liverpool had the Merseyside District Cttee., but when I left it had a Liverpool District Cttee., Sefton District Cttee. and a North East - I think it was a North East - District to cover St.Helens, Kirby, Huyton - that side and it also had a District Cttee. for over the water - the Wirral, Birkenhead, all that. The District Committee delegates are chosen annually by the District Committee so the outgoing district cttee. draws up a slate of people they think should be the next district cttee. Invariably most of them stay on and its usually people who are either in an influential position within their trade union or their branch. Again, the District Committee will have a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and the district committee is there to oversee the work of the branches and trade union caucuses that are going on all the time. Above the District cttee is the central committee which meets in Terrace where the Militan newspaper is produced and the main people on the central cttee. are the people they employ as full time organisers. The likes of Richard Benton who's the Liverpool full time organiser and people like that. Occassionaly they will invite the likes of Derek Hatton who I do believe has not yet become a member of the central committee and sometimes he would be invited along to certain meetings. When, for example, they're talking about the situation in Liverpool and the Central Cttee is really the body which decides what the Militant policy is going to be and they give it down to the districts and branches. Again, because it's because of the way it operates there's no voting, there's no argument. The Central Cttee just decide what's going to happen. Everybody is told and you get on with it. Even when you go to the Annual Conference, once a year, when people get up and talk about political issues, it's in a funny kind of a way similar to the Tory Party Conference where there isn't any debate, people just talk about things and never seem to argue with each other. You certainly don't take votes and that's the way the annual conference worked and the Central Cttee also produces the internal bulletin which is distributed roughly every two or three months to members and you get it when you arrive at your branch meeting and its numbered so that the Branch Secretary keeps a list of who's so that if ever one goes astray, and it's leaked, they can actually trace back who it was actually given to. The articles in the bulletin are written by central cttee members

and the names attributed to the articles are the initials of their own names, but reversed so Peter T ? the General Secretary might write an article under the name of Tom Patton.
Andy Bevan writes for the internal bulletin. He is a militant member, unless he's left, I haven't been involved and at one time he was writing under the name of Brian Under(?). Reversing his initials and writing under a different name.

M. Query

F. Anderson. The other thing that you do at a branch meeting is of course collect your own individual fighting fund or subscription, and salaried members pay that on a standing order. People who didn't have a salary were paid weekly or were unemployed would pay weekly at the branch to the Treasurer and even unemployed people had to pay a proportion of their unemployment benefit or supplementary benefit to the funds.
Trying to think of anything else..... I don't think so.

I was a member and chaired a branch for some time. Eventually it must have been about 18 months that I was actively involved. I was never happy about selling the paper. I couldn't actually bring myself to do it and I certainly didn't collect any fighting fund. I was not probably considered to be a very good member. I started to fall out with the ideas and the way they went about things when Derek Hatton became Deputy Leader on the City Council because it was at that stage that he started behaving in a way that I thought unacceptable, having no regard to groups or branches or trade union feelings about particular issues and it was always a question of these people will have to understand the way we're are going to do things and my criticisms were condemned and shot down. Eventually, when I could no longer tolerate it, I left Militant and then my criticisms were condemned as someone who was an arch Marxist because I couldn't join in the activities so much and I know that a number of people have had their sort of political integrity blackened in such a way. That seems to be that you're either attacked politically as being incompetent or you're attacked regarding your personality as being in some way deficient and that seems to be the way they actually handle criticism and complaints about the way they behave. After that - I think it was about 1982 - I was becoming less and less

involved with the Labour Party because once you've fallen out with Militant in Liverpool you're not wanted any longer and you don't become a delegate here there and everywhere and you're not trusted and you're not included in certain things and I then eventually met Doug and decided to come up here and live in Aberdeen so I left my job and Liverpool where I lived in April of '84.

I heard a lot of what's gone on from people who're down there and it's recognised that the way certain individuals like Derek Hatton and Militant as an organisation carry on. It's recognised that's bad for the party. But those people, the likes of Tony Burn, who aren't in the Party, unfortunately seem to be justifying it and or rather condemning it in the sense of it's dangerous to do anything about the likes of Derek Hatton and Militant because we might damage the Labour Party. We might damage public opinion and after all, look at all the good that's coming out of what's happened so far. I mean it's true the number of council houses that have been built: the facilities and leisure that have been provided and the other things that they're doing. The jobs that have been created. That's all true and a few people... no I think a lot of people.. who were involved in the Labour Party and who are Militant supporters are unfortunately allowing it to go on because they see great achievement by the Labour Party in Liverpool and surrounding districts and they are reluctant to actually do anything about it in case all that falls apart. In case, for example, the Liberals get back in.

I think one of the other big things as well was my condemnation of Militant and the way they operate. Because it's based on the entry theory, and because they are not a democratic organisation, one thing is very very clear when you have been involved and for example, what you see happened in the Liverpool crisis where the Council was brought to the brink of bankruptcy, what annoys you so much is you know it's not being done for the sake of the Labour Party and the sake of the people in Liverpool, it's being done for the sake of Militant. It's being done to increase membership, to increase paper sales. Because of their ideas about raising the political conciousness of the working class, in order that when the revolution arrives, they will all be ready. Because of that, they choose particular areas, or particular disputes or struggles and decide that they will be highlighted

and they will in order to raise people's consciousness then bring them into the organisation. So the terrible tragedy is for me about Liverpool is that Militant will be proclaiming that catastrophe as I see it as a victory for Militant.
In branch meetings up and down the country, district meetings will do exactly that. They will say yes we lost at the end of the day but what a tremendous victory it was for us because look at all the hundreds of people who have joined. Look at all the papers we've sold and look at all the fighting fund money we made and that to me I really object to about the way they operate. It's that use of the Labour Party and Labour Party supporters for their own ends, or should I say abuse rather than use. And that's something in terms of all the dogma that about regarding ideas etc... ? That's something they fundamentally believe in and justify totally that they're perfectly right to go about disputes and struggles in this way and use people and use the Labour Party because really it's the best way to build up an alternative revoluntionary party.

M. Lovely. That's very good Irene. As I say, we've talked to a lot of people about things in Liverpool and people within the party ..... inaudible

It is a party. You mentioned some names.

F. Tony Byrnes is definitely not a member. Tony Mulhurn is a member. Felicity Downing is a member. Terry Harrison is a member. Richard Benton. Richard Knight.

M. I'll just get some of these down. This is the basis where people have told us these things. A lot of people have said these things and named people .... My objection is to .....

There's going to be no confrontation by anybody by anbody because I know what that leads to and what it's all about. It is a question that anybody that tells us something about somebody and then we're going to act upon it. ..... I'll have them back individually and tell them we have been told this .. I'm not telling them who said it ... I shall tell them it's been said by more than 1 person. More than 2 people. For some of them, more than 3 or 4 people. It's hardly any use me going through a catalogue of names because their argument is you better bring them here so we can confront

them. If what I'd heard in Liverpool was true, they'd be a lot of legless people walking about...

F. That's right.

M. So I'm not going to do that but I do sort of want to cross check all the people that have been said. Well you said Tom Felicity Terry Harrison. Richard Benton. Richard Knight.

F. Tony Ateman and Josie Ateman Aitmen (spelling?).

M Anybody else?

F. There's a new person in Liverpool - who was the subject of a Daily Mirror article last Friday, Dave Cotterell . He's from Newcastle and when I was involved that's where he was then. He was the full time organiser for Newcastle and he was on the central committee and as I understand it now he's in Liverpool also Cathy (?) She arrived from the Isle of Wight. There's Ted Mooley (?). Ray Farrah. He's always held as the highest subs paying member more or less in the UK. He's a post office engineer and when I was actually a member, and this was in '81, he was paying something like £40-50 a week out of his wages in subs. I've no idea what he's paying now. Roger Bannister I mentioned earlier.
Len Harrison. There's a woman who lives in the same house as Felicity Dowling in Anfield. They share the house together and her name's Lesley. I can't remember her surname. She used to be a teacher. But she's now a full time organiser.

M. Well, we can check on that..... Unfortunately, being Chairman of the Committee, inaudible....

F. Lynn Harrison.

M.

F. There's also Pauline Dunlop (?) and Ian Low.

M. Yes.

F. Andy Pink who's head of this publicity unit .. the Council.

M. Is it possible for you to say who (inaudible)

F. Tony Mulhurn, Ian Lows, Pauline Dunlop, Roger Bannister, Terry Harrison, Richard Knights. I think Lynn Harrison became a member eventually. She was young and might have been delegated from the Young Socialists.

M. inaudible

F. No, they just recruited about 12 or 15.

Derek Hatton of course. Branch meetings originally when there were fewer branches used to be held at his house for that area. I understand that a Sunday Times article a couple of weeks back - Richard Benton had produced a list of some 600 papersellers, declaring that these people were supporters of Militant and sold the paper. Well quite probably they would be members. That's probably a list of membership.

M. You seem to include supporters and members....

F. Yes. I think it's because they're now getting a bit confident and can produce a list and say we're not a party. We don't have members, but these people actually sell the paper for us.

M. questionnning Irene ... very hard to decipher question.....

F. Right, I didn't actually go into the Labour Party through (?) Militant. Because of political activity and more political awareness, I realised that I ought to be a member of the Labour Party, so I joined the Labour Party and being a member of Militant if you like was a separate thing to that, although they were part and parcel of raising my political consciousness. But they don't have much difficulty in getting to be delegates through the GLC or District Labour Party because most of Liverpool's Labour Party branches are left wing and so it's not difficult to get to be a delegate to the GLC or the district but they do encourage trade union delegates to attend meetings. I don't know myself of any discrepancy in numbers but I know it's been suggested that in terms of the numbers a particular trade union branch has, in terms of how many delegates are actually sent to the constituency in question, I'm not aware of that. Unfortunately, my area was not affiliated to the Labour Party. One of the things which was always stressed was young socialists

were particularly reluctant to get involved in the tradition of the Labour party machinery, to attend the ward meeting, or even be a member of the General Management Cttee. Probably because they thought not only would they a load of old fuddy duddies but also they may be too right winged, but it's now the case where there's absolutely no excuse for not attending your ward meeting and trying to get to be a delegate to these others, because it's absolutely vital because then you've got more votes and when you go along to your general management committee, which is another thing I find totally appalling about the whole set up is that you speak and you vote on the Militant line, regardless of whether its against Labour Party policy. That's the way says you ought to speak and vote and that's what you do. So you've had the meeting before it happens and you have been just given what to say and you go and say it and vote a particular way. So it's certainly not democratic.

When you got back to your branch next week or any trade union caucus, there would be all hell let loose. You would be questioned - interrogated would perhaps be a better word as to why you did it. It would just be inexcusable. One of the things again which is annoying about that is I think it would be fair to say that every trade union has militant supporters, particularly at the national level of annual conference and in NALGO, the left of the delegates branch offices used to organise and we had a North West broad left meeting, so prior to every district council meeting, the left wing thinking officers and delegates used to get together and decide how you would you know play certain issues and it was always understood and agreed that however the broad left decided a particular issue should go, then if you were a member of the broad left and you attended the meeting, when you got to the District Council meeting proper, even if/disagreed, even if you lost, the vote in the broad left, when you got into the District Council meeting, you wouldn't oppose the rest of the left you would simply keep quite. That was understood and if any of the broad left did that Militant would ..... and there would be a lot of agression at the next meeting. But the times Militant did that, the times that Militant sat in a broad left meeting and an issue was discussed and took a vote and lost, and yet still went into the meeting and argued against the rest of the left. They are just not into democracy at all.

I'm concerned about some of the names of people I knew were members. It might be now that some of those people aren't. Because, like me, they've fallen out for one reason or another.

M. Well yes, ... They might have the same problems ..... mostly inaudible .... splitting because of an issue caucus problem .....

F. ..... Alan Fog, Fox, Susan Jenkins. She may well be someone who's left because for a while she was having a lot of problems, criticising certain issues.
The woman that Roger Bannister lives with - I can't remember her surname - Elaine and also his ex wife her name's Ann Bannister and she recently wrote an article in the Guardian, criticising the complaints .... Labour Party and she signed it something like Liverpool Labour Party Women's Council or something like. Sylvia Shafer.

M. Ever heard of Sheryl Darwin?

F. No.

M. Inaudible murmers

You said just now .....

F. The Rebel? ..... where people are called all the names under the sun because they have a different opinion and things like you won't be our secretary for long - whether it was the NUR or whatever else. This is the way they carry on. 'We'll make sure we fix you' in terms of we'll get you thrown out of office .

M.

(Several voices in background)

"That's right, she was in Bootle. Last time I knew she was on the Sefton District Committee."

"When you talk about full-time , what do you mean ? There are a number of names (inaudible)

"They are the organisers in the area and they would probably be called in terms of Labour Party Constituion - papersellers or journalists for the paper. I think they are all in the NUJ. Cotterill claims to be a freelance journalist, according to the article in 'The Mirror.' But most of them who claim to be journalists for Militant - Richard Benton, Josie Aitman, Tony Aitman, Richard Knights - are all full-time organisers. Depending on how many you got in one area the group of them, together with the higher people on the District Committee, would decide their area of work. So for example, they may decide that Josie Aitman is going to be responsible for the youth work over Merseyside in general, whereas Richard Knights might be responsible for the . They will then be (inaudible) with the respective person that is involved with the work nationally. For example, Terry was the one at the time when I was responsible for .

"Did you know anything about the of the Labour Party ?"

"Jimmy Dunn's old ward (inaudible) my branch used to meet in there every week - my branch of Militant support. In fact it's the headquarters for Merseyside where they do all the work from. That's where the District Committeee meets." (inaudible)

(Tape is faulty from here onwards)

APPENDIX 9
STONEFROST REPORT

AMA	POLICY COMMITTEE	19 DECEMBER 1985	ITEM
P 85 111			17

AMA SUPPORT OF LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL

1. Following a debate within the Association at its meeting on 28 November, the Secretary was instructed to prepare a report on the activities of the Association and its Secretariat in connection with the financial affairs of Liverpool City Council. The chronology and amplification of events involving AMA appear below.

2. Prior to any involvement of AMA, in early October, a decision was taken to have an independent scrutiny of Liverpool's finances, and discussions took place on various financial measures open to the authority, including the possibility of transferring loan sanctions from authorities able and willing to do so.

3. Later that month, agreement was reached between the City Council and a group of Trade Unions within the local government sector that a small team of experts, able to analyse the background, set out issues and offer a range of options, should be brought together. On 21 October AMA was approached to see if it could produce such a team.

4. After consultation with the Chairman, and with the agreement of their authorities, a group comprising the Principal Officer GLC, two Treasurers from other member authorities and the AMA Under-Secretary (Finance) was formed, to visit Liverpool and prepare a report for the Council and the national Unions. The "Stonefrost Report", as it became known, was handed over on 29 October.

5. During the first three weeks of November a number of meetings took place, mostly at political level and with little involvement of AMA, though the Report was discussed at appropriate party meetings at that time. Two issues, as the Press reported, were uppermost:

a. which parts, or combination of parts, of the Report might be adopted by Liverpool, and

b. whether as an element of any package there would be any transfer of loan sanctions.

6. These issues were seen as involving only one section of the Association, the members of the majority party. This was made clear in all contacts with the media, as was the nature of the loan sanction exercise. Nonetheless, references were regularly made in the Press and on TV to AMA rather than its Labour members, and to the potential transfer of actual funds, rather than of loan sanctions. In a final effort to correct this, the Chairman agreed a press release immediately after the Association meeting on 28 November, as ... attached herewith.

7. The Committee will wish to know how heavy a call on the Association's resources this has all been. The preparation of the Report involved about four days' work by the Under-Secretary (Finance), including a visit by him to Liverpool. The printing of the Report cost AMA £193.50. The total of these items is about £800.

To: The Chief Executive,
Liverpool City Council

General Secretaries of: GMB, AUEW, EETPU, NALGO, NAS/UWT,
NATFHE, NUPE, NUT, TGWU, UCATT.

29 October 1985

Liverpool's Financial Position

On 21 October 1985 the Liverpool City Council and the 9 Trades Unions representing the City Council's staff jointly commissioned the Association of Metropolitan Authorities to establish an examination of the financial position of Liverpool City Council. We were enlisted by the Association to undertake that examination. In performing our task we were acutely aware of the need to report quickly. Our report provides all parties with an assessment of Liverpool's current financial position and the components of a solution to Liverpool's present budgetary difficulties.

It would have been impossible to produce this report in a few days without the assistance of Liverpool City Council through the Chair of the Finance and Strategy Committee, Councillor Tony Byrne. We are indebted to the Chief Executive, Mr Alfred Stocks, and the City Treasurer, Mr Michael Reddington, and his staff. Notwithstanding this help, the report is ours.

We have no doubt, that all parties concerned with the future of Liverpool City Council, its services and the community, will recognise the need for a careful and quiet approach to the critical decision Liverpool City Council must now take urgently.

G.J. FOLWELL

J.A. MARLOW

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Liverpool's Financial Position

Summary

1. The terms of reference were:-

   "To examine the financial position of Liverpool City Council and report on the options available to solve and/or reduce the current problem in 1985/86 - 1986/87 budgets".

2. Liverpool City Council is close to the point of insolvency and decisions need to be taken quickly.

3. The critical position arises primarily from the reaction of the Council to the effect of the system of grant assessments on the Council's position at a time of economic and social stress in Liverpool.

4. It is within the discretion of Liverpool City Council to avoid becoming insolvent.

5. With grants, rates, rents and charges taken together being lower than budgetted expenditure, the Council is dependent upon borrowing, a dependency accentuated by its increased capital programme.

6. To avoid insolvency, credibility needs to be restored by demonstrating that the Council is able and willing to match its trends in expenditure with its trends in revenue. Loans totalling c £90m need to be raised this calendar year.

7. A speedy restoration of credibility is possible. The main on going services of the Council could continue and the Council's ability to finance a capital programme of substance in the remainder of 1985/86 and 1986/87 could be restored.

8. The report sets out a number of income, expenditure and accounting factors as options for the City Council to consider.

9. A rate increase has now become the cornerstone of the restoration of credibility.

   Accounting changes are also necessary and of financial advantage to the Council. The two combined (a rate increase and accounting changes) would reduce the scale of other real changes (increases in revenue income and reduction in staff and other expenditure) which would be necessary in 1985/86 through to 1986/87 in order to match income trends with expenditure trends.

10. It is open to the Council to select options which would restore credibility which include a rate increase now, the yield of which need not include one penny to compensate for Government cuts in grants.

11. Credibility is more than arithmetically "balancing the books". It requires confidence in the responsibility of an administration to maintain its on going service.

Removing uncertainty now as to the future of the staff of the main services and of the capital programme commitments is as much a precondition to the restoration of credibility as bridging the gap in financial terms.

12. A technical part of the report illustrates how, by taking hard decisions now, to increase revenues and reduce expenditure, very substantial advantages can be gained from the grant system by accounting changes to balance the budget. In addition the report shows that the Council could place itself in a much better position to face 1986/87.

13. The options do not depend on immediate help from the Government but -

(1) provide an opportunity for following on with a more lasting and stable financial regime for the Council in the future.

(2) record the circumstances of the reduction by Government of the Housing Investment Programme allocation in the current year.

Report
on
Liverpool's Financial Position

1. Terms of Reference and the Report

1.1 This report is submitted in discharge of the terms of reference to us:-

"To examine the financial position of Liverpool City Council and report on the options available to solve and/or reduce the current problems in 1985/86 - 1986/87 budgets".

1.2 We were asked to carry out this remit on the 21st October by the Liverpool City Council and Unions representing employees of the City Council and our report is to them.

1.3 Liverpool City Council is close to the point of insolvency and decisions need to be taken very quickly indeed.

The critical financial circumstances of the Liverpool City Council - publicly expressed by the Chairman of Finance and Strategy Committee - require us to report in a matter of a few days. This we do. It must follow that this report is based upon the public reports of the Council supplemented by supporting explanation on some issues from the Chief Executive and the Treasurer to Liverpool City Council. In these circumstances the report is not and must not be taken to be a comprehensive review of the finances and financial administration of Liverpool City Council.

1.4 We recognise that in a critical situation, uncertainty increases as to the precise financial position. Some issues are less easy to quantify than we would have wished.

1.5 However, we consider that this report:-

(i) fairly sets out and quantifies in financial terms the options available to the Council;

(ii) provides a basis for the Liverpool City Council by its own decisions to avoid its own insolvency; and

(iii) enables the Liverpool City Council to take decisions to continue its services and its capital programme commitments.

1.6 We are able to do so because:-

(i) although the audit of the final accounts for 1983/84 has not been formally completed, the District Auditor has confirmed to us that, apart from an issue relating to the provision for Housing Rent arrears, the accounts present fairly the financial position of the authority at 31st March 1984;

(ii) the District Auditor has examined the financial systems for 1984/85 and is satisfied that the procedures for preparing the accounts for 1984/85 will be the same as in previous years and that full disclosure of all relevant matters will be available.

(iii) we have confidence in the integrity of the Chief Executive, Mr. Alfred Stocks and the Treasurer, Mr. Michael Reddington in providing us with information and we thank them for their unstinting help.

1.7 This report is independent of any party or interest.

2. How Liverpool City Council Arrived at its Present Financial Position

2.1 In discussions with the Department of the Environment in 1984, Liverpool City Council presented a case which considered Liverpool's treatment under the various Rate Support Grant regimes since 1965/66. The Government did not dispute the factual basis of any of the following arguments put forward by Liverpool:-

(1) Since 1981/82 (the first year for which comparisons can accurately be made) Liverpool's share of the national total grant has fallen from 1.35% to 1.07% in 1983/84;

(2) the "needs" of Liverpool measured by the system of Grant Related Expenditure Assessments have declined from 1.1% of the national share of "need to spend" in 1981-82, to 1.0% in 1984/85 (we note that this is a relative measure - the system does not attempt to assess Liverpool's absolute need to spend);

(3) from 1981/82 to 1984/85 Liverpool's Grant Related Expenditure Assessment increased in cash terms by 8.5%, compared with 14% for all Metropolitan Districts and 17% for all authorities.

(4) From 1975/76 to 1978/79, the City Council reduced its expenditure by 6% in real terms. This resulted in expenditure being 10% less than it would have been had the City Council increased its spending in line with other local authorities;

(5) the relatively low spending position of Liverpool in 1978/79 formed the basis of its spending target for 1981/82. Liverpool further reduced its spending towards that target;

(6) the reaction to 1981/82 spending targets formed the basis of targets for later years.

The Council's Case

2.2 Based on these facts the Council's case against the Government is that a major contribution to Liverpool's present financial position is the system of targets and penalties. In retrospect the spending levels of the City Council in the years up to and including 1981/82 disadvantaged the City Council because of the way targets have been constructed.

The Government's Case

2.3 The Government contested that the comparisons made by Liverpool were invalid on the grounds that Liverpool was not entitled to assume that a level of grant in the past should be fixed for all time; that Liverpool had been treated no differently from other authorities and indeed that its Grant Related Expenditure Assessment per head of population was the fourth highest of any Metropolitan District.

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2.4 The Government has announced its intention to abolish targets in 1986/87.

The current position

2.5 The critical financial position of Liverpool City Council arises primarily from the reaction of the Council to the effect of the system of grant assessments and penalties on the Council's policies at a time of economic and social stress within Liverpool.

2.6 This reaction included fixing a rate for 1985/86 which was inadequate to meet the level of net revenue expenditure intended by the City Council of £265 million. The City Treasurer reported on the extent of the deficiency that "if the budgetted level of net expenditure is incurred, and the rate support grant penalties for that expenditure level are withheld by the DoE, the time will inevitably come within the year when, in the City Treasurer's opinion, the authority will fail to meet its financial obligations". (CT/95/85)

2.7 That time is now near but it can be avoided.

3. Basic Issues

3.1 We believe that there are a number of basic issues which need to be borne in mind when considering the financial position of Liverpool City Council.

Insolvency is avoidable by decision of the Liverpool City Council

3.2 Many organisations in a critical financial position (whether as a result of their own actions or the actions of others outside their control) are not in a position to avoid insolvency by their own actions.

However, although the critical financial position of Liverpool City Council has been a public issue for a considerable time, Liverpool City Council is not insolvent and it is within the discretion of the Liverpool City Council to avoid becoming insolvent.

Urgency and Decisiveness

3.3 But that discretion is only available for a very short time and needs to be exercised by unequivocal, lawful and unqualified executive decisions which together restore, and restore quickly, the credibility of Liverpool City Council to meet its financial commitments to its current staff and creditors and to give confidence that new commitments it enters into daily will be financially honoured.

Credibility

3.4 The City Council has five sources of finance; grants, rates, rents, charges and borrowing. With grants, rates, rents and charges taken together being lower than budgetted expenditure, the Council is dependent upon borrowing; a dependence accentuated by its increased capital programme.

3.5 The position has now been reached where the City Council needs to demonstrate to existing and potential lenders its willingness :-

(i) to continue to provide the main ongoing services within the revenue cash available to it;

and (ii) to place itself in a financial position to be both willing and able to pay creditors, interest and loan repayments.

3.6 It follows that this demonstration needs to extend into 1986/87 to restore the essential credibility of the Council to lenders and it needs to do so quickly to enable loans which are due for repayment during November to be replaced by new loans and to avoid the collapse of the capital programme.

Maintaining services and a capital programme

3.7 Despite the urgent and critical position facing the Liverpool City Council, and without seeming to minimise the difficult consequences of taking decisions to maintain credibility, there are options available to the Council; they do not require the abandonment of all the policies of the Council and they are not all options of pain. One example is the [redacted] Because it is heavily dependent on borrowing, it is now at very serious risk. However, a speedy restoration of current financial credibility would, in our opinion, simultaneously and speedily restore the Council's ability to finance a capital programme of substance in the remainder of 1985/86 and during 1986/87. This is an important factor not only for the Council and its employees but also for the private sector contractors and employees in Liverpool whose future is also dependent on the Council's decision.

Accounting changes and finance

3.8 The Liverpool City Council has been expertly advised on accounting changes and has been made well aware of both the short and longer term consequences. Indeed, in the course of our inquiry we have learnt one or two lessons of potential value to our own authorities. In exchange, our options include one or two points for Liverpool City Council to consider. However, there is one major accountancy issue which has been presented in the media in a manner which, in our opinion, poses a misleading choice.

3.9 This is the issue of "capitalising repairs" as a means of reducing revenue expenditure. The consequence is, of course, to increase capital expenditure by the same amount. The argument used against such a course of action is that it would reduce the level of capital expenditure which would otherwise be possible. This is not now the choice, and even if it were, it is not the determinant of the level of capital expenditure in 1986/87.

3.10 [redacted] And if, as a consequence of not "capitalising" repairs in whole or in part, the credibility of the ongoing services of the Council during the remainder of 1985/86 and 1986/87 is placed at risk, the whole of capital programmes financed from borrowing would be at risk. The effect on the potential size of the capital programme in 1986/87 would be, in these circumstances, academic.

3.11 We later refer to the position of the Secretary of State for the Environment in relation to capital authorisations for 1985/86 and we are aware of the possibility of local authorities transferring some of their capital allocations to Liverpool. Although there must be hope for an increase in authorisations, we know that Liverpool City Council has much experience of the differences between expressions of goodwill and real help and we do not base our report on matters outside the immediate discretion of the Council.

3.12 However, although the size of authorisations allocated by Government to the Council is very important indeed, they are not a "ceiling" upon the Council's capital programme. The City Treasurer has already displayed initiatives in financing capital expenditure well in excess of authorisations, and given a return to credibility, a continuation of those initiatives would result in a continuation of a capital programme even after "capitalisation" of repairs expenditure.

3.13 The credibility of revenue services and the capital programme is indivisible. Credibility cannot now be returned solely by accountancy transactions which ease 1985/86 and add to the problems of 1986/87.

3.14 But for reasons given above, 'capitalisation' of repairs can be a component part of the Council's decisions to reconcile revenue expenditure and revenue income in 1985/86.

Rates, the relationship between real changes in expenditure and income in 1985/86 and accounting changes

3.15 Later in the report a number of options are listed which are greater than the sum necessary in simple arithmetic financial terms to reconcile income in 1985/86 with expenditure.

3.16 The selection will need to maintain a balance between the Council's services, staff, ratepayers and tenants, and pay regard to relationships between the two years 1985/86 and 1986/87. In addition, options which are to the best financial advantage of Liverpool City Council are important in the selection process. The framework later in this report is intended to assist the Council in its choice and not to impose upon the Council our (or anyone else's) judgement of the difficult decisions which the Council needs to make.

3.17 Earlier in the report, in advising that the Council need not and should not rule out the capitalisation of repairs in whole or part from its options, we also advised that credibility cannot be restored, and the prospects of avoiding a repetition of 1985/86 in 1986/87 eliminated, unless the options now chosen are based on real changes in reducing revenue expenditure and increasing current revenue income. There are choices between reductions in expenditure and increases in income - but the choices are limited.

3.18 The sum total of choices of increases in revenue and reductions in expenditure needs to form a substantial part of the decisions and not be significantly smaller than the accountancy changes and "once and for all" use of balances.

3.19 In relation to the selection of options, a rate increase is a critical issue.

3.20 The Council is now perceived to be willing to reduce dramatically its staff and to cut back its service to a "life and limb" level rather than consider an increase in its revenues (rates and rents).

3.21 It is perceived to do this despite the advice given by the Council's Solicitor as to the outcome of a potential court action on its rate for 1985/86. In these circumstances, an increase in rates has now become the cornerstone of the restoration of credibility.

3.22 An increase in rates would require a "friendly" court action. In addition to being a key element in creating credibility, it would regularise the financial position of the Council beyond doubt. This is important because if the Council now takes a decision intended to restore financial credibility, it would not wish that credibility to be open to any further doubt.

3.23 A rate increase also puts the Council in a strong technical position on rate capping in 1986/87. Whilst a nominal rate increase would result in a continued doubt as to credibility and whilst a rate increase is a painful choice, the taking of a decision to increase rates would enable the accounting changes of significance to be made, and the two combined (a rates increase and accounting changes) would reduce the scale of other real changes (increases in revenue income and reductions in staff and other expenditure) which would be necessary in 1985/6 and 1986/7.

4. INCOME, EXPENDITURE AND ACCOUNTING FACTORS

4.1 The preceding sections of this report have clearly indicated the extent and serious nature of the City's present financial position.

4.2 Before the Council issued redundancy notices to all of its employees as a means of "balancing the books" its members must have considered and rejected other courses of action which were apparent at that time. However this approach is now in the most serious of difficulties.

4.3 Our terms of reference directed us to examine and report on the options available to the Council with a view to solving and/or reducing the financial problems in 1985/86 and 1986/87

4.4 Before particularising on specific options it is necessary to identify the main elements, many of which have been featured in previous reports to the Council by its officers.

Employee Costs

4.5 The court decision in respect of notices to employees applied to certain parts of the Education Service only. It would appear that the City could decide to make "certain" staff redundant i.e.

(i) those engaged upon statutory services but who may be adjudged to be above the level of employees required to deliver the basic minimum service level of that statutory service, or

(ii) staff who are not engaged on statutory duty services:

It is not possible for us to identify the scale of numbers but the net revenue saving for each 1,000 made redundant from 31 December, 1985 is of the order of :-

£1m in 1985-86, and
£7m in 1986-87.

4.6 In addition to, or as an alternative to, redundancy, the effect of freezing all recruitment of staff, as of now, for the rest of 1985/86 and continuing non-filling of those vacancies in 1986/87, would reduce net revenue costs, by, say :-

£1.5m in 1985/86, and
£6m in 1986/87

4.7 Freezing further vacancies, after 31st March 1986, would obviously increase the reduction in net revenue costs but freezing of all vacancies other than for a short time is not practical. Freezing of a

proportion of vacancies could of course continue for a significant time.

"Capitalisation"

4.8 Previous reports make it abundantly clear that the Council does not want to jeopardise its capital programme. Earlier in the report we address this issue and give reasons why capitalisation should remain an option.

Non Housing Repairs and Maintenance

4.9 Repairs and maintenance on non housing buildings which could be capitalised will cost c £7m in 1985/86. It should be noted that in previous years Liverpool City Council has capitalised some expenditure of this nature. The Association of Metropolitan Authorities is canvassing its members with a view to identifying "spare" capital allocations. The target is c £5m and if transfers of allocation materialise at this level net revenue expenditure in 1985/86 would be reduced by c £5m. This capitalisation would not affect the capital programme.

Central Heating

4.10 Prescribed capital expenditure includes c £2.5m in respect of central heating installation costs. This expenditure could be de-prescribed and funded by leasing thereby increasing capital resources.

Housing Repairs and Housing Association Debt

4.11 Housing repairs expenditure which could be capitalised amounts to c £12m in 1985-86.

Whilst the Council has sold house-purchase debt, consideration could now be given to selling its Housing Association debt of c £11.5m. Only a small proportion of this type of capital receipt can be used to enhance prescribed capital expenditure.

4.12 However as (a) it can be fully used (i.e. 100%) to fund non-prescribed capital expenditure and (b) appropriate housing repairs expenditure can, at the discretion of the local authority be viewed as non-prescribed expenditure, it would be beneficial to the Council to undertake this funding operation.

4.13 Before arrangements of this kind can be entered into it would be necessary to obtain the consent of the mortgagors (i.e. the Housing Associations).

DLO order book shortfall

4.14 Up to and including 1983-84, the shortfall on the Direct Labour Order Book has been capitalised. The shortfall in 1984-85 of c £3m and 1985-86 of c £9m has not been similarly treated. As the unapplied capital receipts are expected to be in excess of £17m as at 31 March 1987, capitalisation (in accordance with previous practice) of the c £12m should be seriously considered.

4.15 Sinking Fund - changing from 8% to 10%

A benefit of £1.3m has been shown in 1985-86 as a result of this change. It is recommended that the DoE's approval should be sought to the continuation of debt charges at the notional rate of 8% in the Housing Subsidy claim. This would provide an additional benefit of £1m p.a. in 1984/85 and thereafter.

4.16 Rephasing Expenditure

It would be advantageous to re-phase some expenditure from 1985/86 into 1986/87 by deferring some activities in order to obtain Block Grant benefit.

Rents

4.17 There has not been a rent increase since March 1982. Almost 50,000 of the Council's c 65,000 tenants receive rent rebate in one form or another.

4.18 For each increase of £1 pw as of now, the net revenue budget would be reduced by:-

c £1m in 1985/86, and
c £3m in 1986/87.

4.19 For each further increase of £1 per week, above any increase presumed by Government for subsidy purposes from 1 April 1986, there would be a further net revenue reduction in 1986/87 of c £1m. The report refers earlier to the significance of the Council being seen to match its trends in expenditure with revenue trends and not relying too heavily upon accounting changes.

Other Charges

4.20 There has not been a general increase in charges for over two years. However charges would not have a significant effect on the City's net revenue budget in the short term.

4.21 Nevertheless we must include all options and as part of an endeavour to produce a balanced package by which service recipients and ratepayers were seen to contribute, it could be possible, by a review of charges to reduce the net revenue budget by:-

c £0.3m in 1985-86, and
c £0.7m in 1986-87.

This would involve increasing existing charges in line with inflation and some new charges.

Rates

4.22 This report refers to the significance of a new rate levy for 1985-86. Additional rate income of an increase c 15% City purposes (c 11% on the total rate bill including precept) would produce c £19m.

Additional rate income of varying percentage increases in the City rate would produce the following:-

City Rate %	£m
15	19
20	25
25	31
30	38

Almost half of Liverpool domestic ratepayers receive rate rebates.

The cost of collection is, of course, a factor in calculating the precise yield.

Urban Programme Grant

4.23 We understand that under the former Economy Programme, expenditure on the provision of advance factories had not been the subject of Urban Programme grant claims. However as the expected profit is unlikely to materialise, grant can be claimed and credited in 1985/86. This would benefit the current year by £1.8m with a £0.3m benefit in 1986/87.

Effect on Block Grant

4.24 The Council is aware that there is a multiplying effect on increases or decreases in general rate fund expenditure as a result of the mechanisms of the Block Grant system.

In this respect a £1m decrease in GRF expenditure in 1985/86 would reduce the Block Grant penalty by £2m thus providing a total financial benefit of £3m (i.e. a gearing of 3.1).

5. [redacted]

5.1 We have set out the criteria which we consider the Council needs to bear in mind in choosing options.

(1) The [redacted] and of the Council keeping its revenues moving in trend with its expenditure to avoid insolvency and restore credibility.

(2) Providing that real increases in revenues and reductions in expenditure are a substantial part of meeting the deficiency in 1985/86, [redacted]

(3) if insolvency is avoided and credibility restored by (1) and (2) above, there is [redacted]

A framework for decision

5.2 We now set out a framework to accord with these criteria as a point of reference for the Council's decision. It enables the Council to assess the effect of its decisions now on 1986/87 and to obtain the maximum financial advantage to Liverpool of its decision. The financial implications of a rate increase, a balanced budget and the effect on 1986/87 are considered in more detail.

5.3 When the original rate was set in June 1985 the Government had not announced its intent to rate cap Liverpool in 1986/87. If at that time the City had approved a balanced budget of a City rate level of 195.97p, it would not have fallen within the criteria for rate-capping later announced by the Government. Indeed if the City Council had approved an expenditure level of £260m (as distinct from £265m) it would have avoided rate-capping. If, therefore, a substitute rate and a balanced budget are achieved, the issue of rate capping is opened up to question.

5.4 As to the size of any such increase, it is noted that to finance a budget of £262m, (with penalties) would require, on its own, a further increase of over 80% on the City rate. It is also noted that to finance a budget of £262m (without penalties) would require a further increase of some 15% in the City rate (11% on the total rate bill including the precepts). For exemplification therefore an increase of 15% or 30p in the City rate has been used. This would give additional rate income of some £19m in 1985/86 thereby reducing the savings to be found from other options to £19m and increasing the flexibility available to Council at the end of 1985/86 and 1986/87.

This is illustrated in the following exemplification:-

Present Position 1985/86		Framework for decisions now 1985/86		
£m				£m
262	Net Expenditure			262
10	Available Reserves (as per CT report)		10	
	Accounting changes and net expenditure reductions		19	29
252				233
58	Grant			95
194				138
6	Deficit 1984/5			6
200				144
125	Rates			144
Deficiency 75				A balanced Budget

5.5 On this framework, if at a later stage in 1985/6, the Council had a significant part of its capitalisation options still available and its capital programme for 1986/87 was then soundly based, it would have the option to improve its revenue position for 1986/87. This "best revenue scenario" would then be:-

Best Revenue Scenario 1985/86 as at end of year

Net Expenditure	262
Available Reserves (as part CT report)	10
	252
Accounting changes and net revenue reductions	24
	228
Grant increased even further to	109
	119
Deficit 1984/85	6
	125
Rates	144
Balance available for 1986/87	19

Arithmetically, the position would be even better if the total reductions this year exceeded £24m.

5.6 We stress that it would be wrong and a total misunderstanding of the whole thread of our report to interpret this "best scenario" as a justification for doing little or nothing now.

5.7 We need to emphasise that this "best scenario" is only possible:-

(i) on the basis of the hard decisions now;

(ii) if the market and creditors have no reason to doubt that, having taken them, the City Council will continue to balance its books in 1986/87;

(iii) if, on this basis, those decisions do restore credibility to finance the capital programme by borrowing to an extent that capitalisations of repairs can be maximised at the end of the year.

To underline this point the City Council needs to borrow £90m between now and the end of the year.

1986/87

5.8 If Liverpool remains rate capped in 1986/87 the permitted rate increase is not likely, in itself, to increase the Council's ability to spend above the notified expenditure limit of £245m. It would however provide a forceful argument in representations to the Government as a 15% increase in 1985/86 is equivalent to additional expenditure of some £10m in 1986/87.

5.9 It is also noted that Liverpool's preliminary GRE for 1986/87 (excluding abolition) is some £231m. For two consecutive years the Government has used GRE plus 20% as a criterion for ratecapping. Whilst it cannot be stated with certainty, a spending level for the City of less than £277m could contribute to the City's avoiding ratecapping in 1987/88. When the abolition figures are taken into account the relative permitted spending level for the City is likely to improve. Whilst these figures are only illustrative because of the complexity of the new RSG system and abolition etc an attempt has been made below to provide a framework for the 1986/87 considerations as follows:-

Assumptions

Assumed PRP £638,000
RSG at GREA £120m
Loss of Grant
GREA to GREA + 10% 50p
Over 10% 100p

Expenditure Level	City Rate Increase (to nearest 5%) On 1985/86 Original	On Original + 30p
£m	%	%
245 (rate cap level)	5	10 reduction
255	15	-
265	35	15
277 (GREA +20%)	55	35
285 (CTs forecast)	65	45

Whilst figures must be treated with some caution the table does demonstrate the increased scope for representations to the Government. The position could be further improved if the City places itself in the "best scenario" position towards the end of 1985/86.

Other Frameworks

5.10 We were asked to consider all options.

5.11 The framework provides the basis for balancing the interest of the services, the capital programme and staff with the interest of ratepayers and tenants and provides options within that balance. For example if the £19m 'savings' to be achieved were to be found, say by £13m capitalisation and by, say, £6m real net revenue reduction (rents and/or savings) the incidence of eliminating the deficit would be:-

		£m
Deferred - Accounting/increased borrowing		23m
Government - Grant		37m
		60
Real now - Rates	19	
- Rents/Reduction in expenditure	6	25
		85

We comment on other options having regard to this balance of incidence.

No rate increases or a very low rate increase

5.12 It can be seen that the yields from rent increases and employee savings at this time of the year are limited unless excessively harsh decisions are taken. The underlying credibility problem is the trend in revenues to match the trend in revenue expenditure. A no rates increase option is very difficult to reconcile with the need to restore credibility.

5.13 Although in arithmetical terms a "no rate increase" framework is just possible, it must be very doubtful indeed that even if the Council were resolved to impose excessively high rent and charge increases and to make as many staff redundant as is consistent with the judgement of the High Courts, that the gap between income and expenditure could be bridged in practice. The capital programme would be at serious risk if there were no rate increase because of the doubt, which would exist to lenders as to their confidence that the Council was now willing to match revenues to expenditure at a time when the Council is heavily dependent upon borrowing.

The arithmetic framework to bridging the gap of £75m would be:-

	£m
rents and charges increases	
and staff reductions and some capitalisation	24
Grant	51
	75

No rent increase or a very low rent increase

5.14 We understand the Council's concern at the present high level of rents in Liverpool compared with other Metropolitan Districts.

5.15 We must continue to record however that the problem is the failure of the trend in income to keep pace with the trend in expenditure. As "rent and rates" are the main income sources at the discretion of the Council a low rent increase or a continuation of a no rent increase would place very heavy weight indeed on a rate increase of substance.

5.16 Arithmetically the previous framework with a rate increase of 15% makes it possible for the Council to select reduction in staffing and capitalisation to an extent that bridges the gap with a low rent increase.

Staff Reduction

5.17 This report makes it clear that the Council does have options available to it which, taken together, can avoid insolvency and restore credibility and which do not require the redundancy of all or a substantial part of its staff. Indeed, credibility is more than arithmetically "balancing the books". It requires confidence in the responsibility of an administration to maintain its on going service. Removing uncertainty now as to the future of the staff and of the main services is as much a precondition to the restoration of credibility as bridging the gap in financial terms.

5.18 The financial effect of the Court decision is to rule out the possibility that the Liverpool City Council can 'balance its books' in 1985/86 by redundancy of staff except 'life and limb' staff. Within the framework set out above, the Council is able to avoid a dramatic reduction of staff.

To have no staff reductions at all, would emphasise further the need to increase the Council's revenue income. This would be in a situation where much greater weight is upon higher rates and rents than on expenditure as a means of short term reconciliation. Furthermore the Council has to place great weight on income additions and accounting changes now but it faces rate capping next year.

5.19 As with rents therefore, a price is to be paid for ruling out any reduction in staff between now and the end of 1986/87. This is a choice which the Council has available to it knowing that some early containment of recruitment yields more and contributes to bridging the gap in a less painful manner than may be necessary later.

Cessation of the Capital Programme

5.20 The cessation of the capital programme would enable full capitalisation of repairs to be agreed forthwith but it would not avoid real revenue increases and expenditure reduction now. This is because borrowing on a significant scale would continue to be necessary both to renew loans and to provide temporary finance pending the receipt of new revenue and to finance the capitalisation accounting changes.

5.21 The stark cessation of the capital programme would prejudice credibility. Whilst the size of the programme and contracts let needs careful and open monitoring during the months ahead, there is no reason to go to the extreme of the cessation of the programme and good reason to believe that a restoration of credibility now would enable a substantial programme to continue.

Conclusion

5.22 As is clear from the rates figures, it is unrealistic to put the whole weight for balancing 1985/86 and 1986/87 on any one factor. Equally the above illustrates the problem of exempting any one factor from making some, at least, contribution to avoiding insolvency.

The Central Government

6.1 We believe that is is clear that the Secretary of State for the Environment will not consider representations for more grant or higher authorisations until Liverpool City Council has taken decisions:-

(i) to finance their revenue expenditure in 1985/86;

and (ii) to do so in a manner which provides a credible basis for the borrowing necessary to finance the current year's capital expenditure and the commitment in 1986/87.

6.2 We also consider that expecting to obtain a commitment by Government to special financing assistance as a pre-condition to the Council's decision is not a realistic option. Attempting to do so would be a waste of limited time and because of its unlikely success, would add to an uncertainty which is already close to leading to insolvency.

6.3 There is a strong and widely held opinion that if Liverpool City Council were now to fulfil the two objectives, then the Government would be under heavy and united pressure and would and should be willing to give special assistance to Liverpool. The Government would certainly be under more united pressure at a time of increased consciousness of the needs of the Inner Cities; a consciousness which has been informed and heightened by the problems of Liverpool.

6.4 We do not wish to discount this important point but we are in no position to assess its worth in real practical terms to Liverpool and we are very much aware from our own experiences that understanding and good intent do not pay bills. Therefore, our options for the immediate problems of 1985/86 and into 1986/87 do not depend, upon immediate specific help from Government.

6.5 If Liverpool City Council could meet the two objectives in para 6.1 then additional support would help bridge the gap on the one hand between saving the basic services of the Council and continuing its current capital commitment and, on the other hand, comprehensive longer term social and investment programme for the Inner Cities.

6.6 We are well aware that our report relies heavily on using such discretions as are available to Liverpool City Council now. We do not believe the limited and conditional dependence on accounting changes implicit in our report simply postpones the crisis. But it would be wrong not to follow on with a more lasting and stable financial basis for the Council if it now avoids insolvency and restores its credibility.

Capital Authorisation

6.7 There is one matter in relation to the Central Government's relations with Liverpool City Council which we consider does not appear to reflect well upon the Government even within the reality of the tensions of policy and of relationships. On the 29 June last year the Secretary of State for the Environment wrote to the Leader of Liverpool City Council on issues relating to housing and urban programme resources in 1984/85 and 1985/86. This letter is attached.

6.8 Within the limits of Government policy, the Secretary of State made a number of helpful and not insignificant changes for 1984/85. No doubt this was an attempt to assist without breaching the financial policy of the Government. No doubt too, the Department of the Environment would consider that its attempts to help had been misrepresented as a major breach of policy.

6.9 The letter also deals with the capital allocations to individual authorities in 1985/86 (as critical an issue in June 1984 as the prospects for 1986/87 are to Liverpool City Council now). This letter does not commit the Government in specific number terms to the Housing Investment programme for 1985/86 and has the customary caveats to it. But the Secretary of State for the Environment wrote

"..... I can give you an assurance that I will do my very best to ensure that allocations to Liverpool next year under the Housing Investment Programme and the Urban Programme, taken together will enable the Council to make positive progress in dealing with the City's severe needs, having regard to the scale of your capital commitments and the resources (including possible proceeds of sales of Council dwellings and freeholds) available to you."

6.10 However, we understand that the Housing Investment Programme allocation for 1985/86 was £31.5m compared to £38m in 1984/85. To Liverpool City Council this was wholly inconsistent with the intent of the last paragraph of the letter from the Secretary of State for the Environment to the Leader of the Council, of the 29 June, and was inconsistent at a difficult and sensitive time. This is an issue which, if the Council takes its decision to avoid insolvency, the Council and those who support it would no doubt press very strongly upon the Secretary of State for the Environment.

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

29 June 1984

Dear John,

At our meeting on 19 June, I promised to write to you about the likely position on housing and urban programme resources for Liverpool in 1985/86. Your officials have subsequently written to mine about a number of 1984/85 issues, and I am taking this opportunity to reply to those points as well.

1984/85

When we met I emphasised the limited room for manoeuvre which I had in my expenditure programmes for 1984/85. The main RSG settlement and HIP allocations have been fixed. I explained that, although I would consider all the proposals you put to me, I could give no commitment that we would be able to allow the additional expenditure disregards which you sought. I am afraid that remains the case. The effects of any disregards would not be restricted to Liverpool alone. In deciding on representations I am bound to take account of the national consequences which would flow from slackening this element in the discipline of the RSG system.

One area, however, in which I have some marginal flexibility this year is the urban programme for which your own allocation has yet to be finally settled. In the informal discussions which have taken place between your Council and my officers a number of schemes, totalling in all some £3.2m, have been identified which were due to become time expired in 1984/85 and which you would have had to finance through your main programme. I am optimistic that we shall be able to accommodate the bulk, if not all of these schemes in this year's Partnership Programme. I understand that this has the effect of reducing your rate call by up to £7.5m (or some 11p in the £) after taking account of holdback.

In addition, and assuming that the Council makes a proper rate, I would be able to offer the Council a further £2½m of resources which I would expect to see devoted to a range of items which might include environmental maintenance in selected housing areas, running costs of recreation facilities already provided by the urban programme, selected voluntary sector projects and continuation of the additional street cleaning and nursery classes previously funded through the Inner City Partnership. This would I believe make a substantial contribution in a major problem area, and could reduce your

expected rate call by nearly a further £7m (or some 10p in the £).

When we met I explained that I was reviewing the question of whether loan charges on demolished property, and the costs of demolition itself, should be reckonable for housing subsidy. Any change here could, of course, affect all housing authorities in subsidy, but would have particular reference to Liverpool. I have decided to relax the housing subsidy arrangements to enable subsidy to be claimed by authorities on the reckonable proportion of loan charges and demolition costs relating to demolished dwellings, where the circumstances have been approved by my Department in accordance with certain guidelines. These guidelines will be the subject of early consultation with the local authority associations. The new arrangements will apply to subsidy determinations for 1984/85 onwards.

Finally, on 1984/85, you ask about outstanding Exchequer contributions in relation to environmental works undertaken by your Council in Housing Action Areas and General Improvement Areas. My officials have now discussed this with your officers and I confirm that it will be possible for the Department to make a payment. I understand that your officers consider that the total sum involved is likely to be of the order of £1m. The payment will of course depend on your Council being able to produce a claim certified by its auditors.

1985/86

We also discussed the significance of the capital resources that might be available to Liverpool in 1985/86. I well understand that a decision by your Council to allow capitalisation of expenditure previously charged to revenue, thereby easing revenue commitments in 1984/85, will be influenced by the effect this might have on your capital resources in future years.

I know you appreciate that the capital allocations to individual authorities will eventually be determined in the light of the Government's overall public expenditure plans and that decisions for 1985/86 have yet to be taken. You will also recognise that I must distribute resources between authorities on an equitable basis.

There is no disagreement between us about the scale of the problems you face, especially in relation to your housing stock where we agree that improving the quality of management and maintenance is essential if better value is to be secured for the substantial sums of money spent. I also pressed you to use all available resources, not just those of the authority, in tackling Liverpool's undoubted problems. The private sector has much to offer; and the enthusiasm and resourcefulness of the housing associations and the local communities you serve are also there to be tapped. I urge you to make the

fullest use of these opportunities. Our officials are continuing to discuss ways in which both housing and urban programme resources can best be applied to help in this, and I very much hope we can develop an effective and constructive partnership to tackle the needs of the people of Liverpool.

Against that background, and bearing in mind the constraints set out in the two preceding paragraphs of this letter, I can give you an assurance that I will do my very best to ensure that allocations to Liverpool next year under the Housing Investment Programme and the Urban Programme, taken together, will enable the Council to make positive progress in dealing with the City's severe needs, having regard to the scale of your capital commitments and the resources (including possible proceeds of sales of Council dwellings and freeholds) available to you.

Yours ever

Pat

PATRICK JENKIN

Councillor Hamilton

Appendix 10

Minority NEC Inquiry Report into the Liverpool District Labour Party

EXAMINATION OF THE PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES OF THE LIVERPOOL DISTRICT LABOUR PARTY.

MINORITY REPORT - SUBMITTED BY MARGARET BECKETT AND AUDREY WISE, to the National Executive Committee. February 1986.

0.1 We have looked into the Rules and practices of the Liverpool District Labour Party and we believe that some changes are needed in these Rules and practices. Such changes will be resented in Liverpool because the Rules and some, though not all, of the practices have historical roots.. However, we believe that on consideration what is proposed might be seen to be objective and reasonable and therefore be accepted. If accepted, we believe that the problems identified can be resolved with the minimum of dislocation or disruption. We believe that this was our remit and that these proposals fulfil that remit. We believe that to proceed to further action not only exceeds the remit given and will cause great disruption both in Liverpool and elsewhere, but will jeopardise the chances of successful reform along the lines required.

0.2 At the outset we must state that the emotive adjectives used as media shorthand for this investigation are not based on the instructions given in the resolution by which it was established. We give this resolution in full in the next section, but note here that it talks of examining "the procedures and practices of the District Labour Party". We have kept these instructions in mind throughout.

0.3 Although there is some overlap between our findings and those of the other members of the investigation, we have found it necessary to issue our own Report partly because we have been advised that to do otherwise associates us with the entire contents and conclusions of the Majority Report, and it has always been clear that there are divergences of views among the members conducting the examination.

Background

1.1 Following letters from two national trade unions, a report from the Regional Office, and complaints conveyed verbally by some NEC members, the following resolution was carried by the National Executive Committee on 27th November:

> "The NEC, mindful of the resolutions passed in May and October 1985 in respect of Local Government action in confronting central government on their policies of enforcing cuts in jobs and services, notes the decision of Liverpool City Council Finance Committee announced on Monday, expresses the hope that this will result in the protection of services, jobs and the housebuilding programme and congratulates all those sections of the Labour and Trade Union movements who contributed to finding a solution which did not put at risk the people of the city or the standing of the Labour Party.

"This NEC notes in particular those parts of the Stonefrost Report which highlighted the part played by previous Liberal/Tory regimes in Liverpool, who had contributed to the financial difficulties of that city since the mid seventies and the particular responsibility of the Conservative government. In line with conference statements and NEC resolutions, the government is charged with complete indifference to the plight of its citizens and the results of their own policies towards the most deprived and desperate inner city areas, and have chosen instead to let others cope with the consequences.

"In view of the statements made by some Councillors and Party members in Liverpool, the accusations and charges levelled against the Party, the T.U.s and others, and the damaging and deliberately provocative nature of the attacks made through the media, the NEC resolves that an urgent examination be carried out by the General Secretary and eight members of the NEC into the procedures and practices of the Liverpool District Labour Party; and that, pending this report, no meetings or activities of either the District Labour Party or its Executive should be held."

1.3 This makes it clear that all events in Liverpool must be taken in the context of tremendous Government attacks on the well-being of the city. Everyone in Liverpool, whether suffering in general terms from the effect of these attacks or more particularly from the poverty of mass unemployment or the strain of acute job insecurity, is living in an extremely stressful situation. This applies to a very high degree to all members of the Liverpool Labour Party who are struggling to help their city. It is within this context that feelings and argument have run high.

1.4 We also had to take into consideration the dramatic events of the past few months on the Movement in Liverpool, in their opposition to the government's legislation and the District Auditor's attack on the city councillors. Whilst there may be differing views on the tactics employed, the fight to defend jobs and services required major efforts to rally the Labour Movement in the city.

1.5 We therefore recognised that the recent period has been a tense and difficult one for the Party and for the Labour Movement in Liverpool. In such circumstances, and given such pressures, no-one can expect a 100% perfectly functioning Party.

SUMMARY OF SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 We recommend that Liverpool DLP be reminded that its management is in the hands of its delegate meeting; that its Executive Committee is responsible to and must report to that delegate meeting and not to any other type of meeting; that delegate meetings must be held sufficiently often to deal with the business, properly notified, and with accreditation. In the present climate and to prevent unnecessary tensions, we consider that the delegate meetings should be restricted to delegates only, except for councillors, MPs and MEPs attending ex officio without votes (unless full delegates) but able to speak at the Chair's discretion. We recommend that this be incorporated in the current Standing Orders.

2.2 We consider that the priority should be to get the DLP functioning

smoothly again as a delegate body. We advise against city-wide members' meetings, for reasons we give, but if they are desired then they must be totally separate from delegate meetings, all members must be properly notified in a way which makes it impossible to allege that they are selective, they should be informative only, and no votes should be taken. Provisions to this effect should be included in the DLP Rules before any such meetings are held.

2.3 We recommend that the Constituency Labour Parties should be reminded that it is their duty and prerogative to deal with general political issues; and that the Rules of the DLP be clarified to make clear that items on the DLP Agenda must always have a local government context.

2.4 We make some recommendations in the text as to clarification of delegations, but these should not be allowed to hold up the resumption of the functioning of the DLP.

2.5 We recommend that the number of Constituency Labour Party delegates to the DLP should be increased. We would suggest a standard number of ten, and an extra delegate for each 250 or part thereof over 500 members. On the existing membership figures that would raise the CLP delegates from 42 to 64.

2.6 We recommend that direct representation from Members' Branches be increased, perhaps by giving an extra delegate when branch membership reaches 200. We do not have figures to show how many, if any, extra delegates that would currently create. We recommend that this be considered because the Members' Branch is the basic unit of organisation for local government purposes.

DISTRICT LABOUR PARTY MEETINGS - AND 'AGGREGATE' MEETINGS

3.1 The District Labour Party Rules Clause 3 say that: "The management of the DLP shall be in the hands of a management committee consisting of delegates appointed by organisations approved by the NEC as entitled to be represented." Clause 4 sets out the make-up of the Executive Committee to be elected from those delegates. Clause 5 (2) says: "The management committee and executive committee to meet as required".

3.2 Over the past three years the pattern of meetings has altered. In 1983 there were DLP meetings approximately monthly (ten in the year), and fourteen EC meetings in the year. In 1984 there were twelve DLP meetings (including one special meeting, one reconvened, and one at which visitors outnumbered delegates so we think it should be classed as an Aggregate meeting. There were 26 EC meetings, and there were also five meetings called Aggregates. In 1985 there were nine DLP meetings, 30 EC meetings and eight Aggregate meetings.

3.3 There is no provision in the Rules or Standing Orders for an "Aggregate meeting". During 1984 Aggregates formed a significant supplement to DLP meetings but did not actually replace them. During 1985 and the budget crisis, the Aggregate meeting developed a significant life of its own. The ordinary meetings of the DLP increasingly did not deal with normal business.

3.4 The really massive change ocurred in the autumn of 1985. Normal DLP meetings were abandoned and Aggregates substituted, often at short notice.

meetings were abandoned and Aggregates substituted, often at short notice. The last normal DLP delegate meeting was held on 5th September. There were no further normal DLP delegate meetings but there were SIX Aggregate meetings.

3.5 The complaints we received related very largely to the atmosphere of Aggregate meetings, and we consider that this change has had a very detrimental effect on the conduct of the affairs of the DLP, for reasons we shall give.

3.6 Aggregate meetings as held in Liverpool are not simply members' meetings. They are a curious hybrid, to which delegates are called as if to normal DLP meetings but which are also attended by large numbers of visitors (outnumbering the delegates). There is no segregation of delegates and visitors. They are decision-making meetings with an Agenda dominated by the Executive Committee Report. They have been dealing with very important, complicated and sensitive matters and yet have a confused status being at one and the same time a delegate meeting and a mass meeting.

3.7 Problems start with the matter of notification. Many people stated that the notification of Aggregate meetings was not done by formal notice except to DLP delegates and possibly branch secretaries. The secretaries and other people who knew of them made whatever arrangements they felt able, as far as informing other people was concerned. The meetings were sometimes at short notice, especially during crisis situation, and Branch Secretaries described ringing people up and using word of mouth, especially at work. It is clear that not all members of the Liverpool Labour Parties knew of them. Some of the Council employees, some of the people with telephones, and people on 'grapevines', clearly had more opportunity to know and attend.

3.8 There were complaints that this led to the attendance at Aggregates not being particularly representative. There is firm evidence that the meetings were sometimes attended by people who did not live in Liverpool, yet Liverpool members did not know of the meetings.

3.9 Lack of segregation of delegates from visitors, even when visitors outnumbered delegates, clearly make it much more difficult to ensure that only delegates vote. No-one claimed that this had caused any problem in judging whether a motion had been carried, because it was generally acknowledged that issues were decided by wide margins. Evidence was given however that some delegates felt that visitors tried to exercise improper influence on them.

3.10 At Aggregate meetings it was the practice to take two votes. The evidence was overwhelmingly that the delegates voted first (though this was not clear from the Minutes), and that afterwards there was a 'consultative vote' of everyone present.

3.11 There were complaints of verbal abuse and a generally intimidatory atmosphere, and some of the complaints related particularly to certain sections of the visitors.

3.12 A majority of DLP delegates and visitors interviewed gave very clear statements (often giving virtually the same answers to questions) making it clear that they were completely satisfied with the conduct of the meetings, that they did not feel intimated, and that they considered that both the debates and the voting were consistent with high democratic standards. Many of these who were satisfied were long-standing party members. Some however who were themselves very satisfied with the meetings and especially with the standard of chairing, did say that there had been quite a lot of new inexperienced people who they felt were not accustomed to the traditional standards of meetings and were not as orderly as they should have been.

3.13 Some people did clearly feel intimidated. Some of the people who were critical did nevertheless say that the Chair conducted the meeting in accordance with the rules of debate and it seems clear that people with views contrary to the general trend of the meeting were called to speak. One particular aspect which caused us anxiety is that a number of people referred to members of the 'static security force' of the Council who were often present, in what capacity was not clear to those delegates, except that they seemed to act as over-officious stewards and sometimes wore their security guard 'uniform'. Other people pointed out that various uniformed workers sometimes came to meetings in their working clothes.

3.14 Feelings of intimidation are very subjective. It is very difficult for those not present to take a firm view on all complaints. It is clear that there was often a good deal of noise and verbal abuse. One instance of physical manhandling seems to be established. We were told that it is characteristic of Liverpool to be robust, lively and even abusive to an extent which might be unusual or unacceptable elsewhere but that these spirited exchanges are not intended to be basically offensive. We are not qualified to comment on that. We do consider it important that the atmosphere of a meeting should not be felt as intimidatory. We are conscious however that noisy heckling and abuse is not confined to Liverpool, but is for example by no means unknown in the House of Commons.

3.15 We consider that the basic problem with these meetings has been that their size and composition is not appropriate for the matters they have had in hand.

3.16 They have been far too large and those who attend as delegates have been outnumbered by visitors. It is claimed that the presence of large numbers of visitors makes the set-up more democratic, but we would deny this. A meeting cannot be truly regarded as a meeting for all members unless all members know when and where it will be held. When this knowledge is selective then it is not surprising if people holding minority views feel they are being pressured by weight of numbers. We have a delegate structure precisely because this is the best way to obtain a representative expression of opinion.

3.17 We recommend that Liverpool DLP be reminded that its management is in the hands of its delegate meeting; that its Executive Committee is responsible to, and must report to, the delegate meeting and not to any other type of meeting; that delegate meetings must be held sufficiently often to deal with the business, properly notified, and with proper accreditation. In the present climate and to prevent unnecessary tensions, we consider that the delegate meetings should be restricted to delegates only, except for councillors, MPs and MEPs attending ex officio without votes (unless full delegates) but able to speak at the Chair's discretion. We recommend that this be incorporated in the current

Standing Orders.

3.18 We went exhaustively into the question of access to meetings, in particular the meeting held on 22nd November because the original Regional report said that it seemed that some delegates may not have been able to get in.

3.19 It is clear that the meeting on the 22nd November was overcrowded and that many people were turned away. We received many statements, and fully accept, that stewards came out to the waiting queue and called delegates and councillors forward. However it does nevertheless seem that some delegates could not get in, despite these efforts.

3.20 We have had confused accounts of how delegates and visitors obtained access to meetings, and there seems little doubt that problems arose at least partly because of the human error of delegates who forgot or lost credentials and because of the large numbers of people seeking access. We consider that if our recommendation on the total separation of delegate meetings is carried out, then the problem of access and voting credentials will be manageable.

3.21 We are doubtful of the wisdom of holding Aggregate meetings of members, as we consider that there is no lack of opportunity to attend meetings in the Labour Party. All members are, or should be, invited to their own Branch meetings. Many are eligible to attend other meetings such as Women's Sections, LPYS, and of course meetings of trade unions and other affiliated organisations. Active members may well be delegates to Constituency Labour Parties and/or the DLP, plus their ECs. Then there may be (should be) other meetings for political education etc. The move towards Aggregate DLP meetings probably stems from the extent to which the DLP has subsumed all political discussion, much of which should properly take place elsewhere - for instance at the constituency meetings. Any meetings additional to the load described should surely be of a public campaigning nature, whether for the city as such or the various constituencies.

3.22 We therefore advise against city-wide members' meetings but if they are desired, then they must be totally separate from delegate meetings, all members must be properly notified in a way which makes it impossible to allege that they are selective, they should be informative only, and no votes should be taken. Provisions to this effect should be included in the DLP Rules before any such meetings are held, and Standing Orders provided for their conduct.

3.23 We recommend that the priority should be to get the DLP delegate meeting functioning smoothly again and that city-wide members' meetings should not be organised in the near future. If desired, then a Rules amendment should be made as outlined above, so that delegate meetings will be clearly separate from any others.

ROLE OF THE DLP IN RELATION TO CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTIES.

4.1 Clause 2(1) to (4) of DLP Rules clearly limit the role of the DLP mainly to Local Government. However, the topics dealt with by the DLP have ranged widely over national and international issues. We were given an interesting explanation for this, giving three main reasons: first, historical in that in the days of the old Trades and Labour Council the whole range of topics was dealt with and this was continued by the City

Party which was the immediate forerunner of the DLP so there was a strong element of custom and practice; second, that some national affairs have a bearing on Local Government because they provide a context for it; third, that as a port Liverpool has always been very much affected by, and involved in, international events.

4.2 We are not seeking to define the DLP in parish pump terms, and it may well be sometimes legitimate to discuss issues which are national or international but this should be done in the context of the work of the Council. An example would be a discussion of Council purchasing policy in relation to South African goods, or a proposal to twin with a town in Nicaragua, and so on.

4.3 However, there were numerous discussions which could not be said to have any local context. Therefore, we do consider that the function of the DLP as provided in the Rule has been exceeded. It can be argued that this leads to a devaluation of the CLPs, especially by the affiliated organisations, who are more inclined to focus on what seems to be regarded as the senior body. In fact it is the Constituency Labour Party which is the prime unit of Labour Party organisation and District Labour Parties are not 'above' or senior. If this is felt by some to be unsuitable for big city needs, then their remedy would have been to seek a change of Rule rather than ignore the existing Rule.

4.4 We therefore recommend that the CLPs should be reminded that it is their duty and prerogative to deal with general political issues: and that the DLP Rules be clarified to make clear that items on the DLP Agenda must always have a local government context.

AFFILIATION FEES AND DELEGATIONS

5.1 Clause 2 (5) of the Rules lays down that the DLP shall deal with "the collection of affiliation fees and appointment of delegates by affiliated organisations for transfer to the appropriate Constituency Labour Parties".

5.2 In practice, by a long-standing arrangement, the CLPs do not claim the transfer of their trade union affiliation fees by the DLP. Historically this was in order to finance a full-time agent at district level, but the previous holder of that post has not been replaced, having retired in 1983. If, by agreement, the CLPs wish to donate back the affiliation fees in order to finance the DLP, then that should be clearly and very explicitly shown in the accounts of both the DLP and the CLPs. Indeed the accounts should be much more detailed than they are, in the general interest of good housekeeping. The CLPs should be informed clearly and in detail of the basis of affiliation and delegation entitlement. It has been suggested that CLP affiliation fees should be sent direct to them by the affiliating bodies. We think this would need further discussion to ensure that it did not lead to a reduction in affiliation income overall.

5.3 It is of course the duty of constituency parties to check that delegates sent to them from affiliated organisations are paid-up individual members of the Party. This check should also be done in relation to delegates sent to the DLP, but does not appear to be done. The DLP should send to each CLP a list of the DLP delegates living in its area, and the CLP should check individual membership and report any ineligibility to the DLP who should then refuse credentials and report back to the affiliated organisation. This check should be accurately done so that there can be

no further allegations of non-members attending DLP meetings

5.4 A number of queries were raised about the affiliations to the DLP and CLPs, of the GMBATU and TGWU, both of whom affiliate on a block basis handled by their Regional Office. In view of the numbers of branches, members and delegates involved, this is quite a complicated matter, and we understand the unions are looking in to it themselves.

5.5 There are also queries relating to Student Labour Clubs, their delegation entitlements and other matters. We do not consider that these are central to the operation of the DLP or CLPs, and should not delay the resumption of DLP activities. They should be dealt with by the Youth Committee and the appropriate officials.

5.6 There are queries relating to the operation of the Women's Council which should be settled when an Annual General Meeting is held, which should be attended by a Regional Official. The Women's Council should be advised that it cannot make payment of a delegation fee a condition of participation. This, again, should not cause any delay in resumption of DLP activities.

CONSTITUENCY DELEGATIONS TO THE DLP

6.1 The six CLPs have seven delegates each, totalling 42, and the 33 Members' Branches are entitled to one each, 31 of these places being filled as at October 1985. Trade Unions can have one delegate per 100 affiliated members, with a maximum of 5 for any one branch.

6.2 Of the 262 delegates actually appointed to the DLP as at October 1985 42 were from CLPs as such, and 31 from Members' Branches. Based on its current affiliations the DLP has a total delegate potential of 562, but many unions do not fill all their delegate places. This means that CLP and Members' Branch delegates combined amount to about 28% of the actual delegates appointed, and about 13% of the potential number. This is not in any way an irregularity but it is perhaps not a good balance of representation. We must obviously welcome union participation and would not seek in any way to curtail it. However, we note that boundary re-distribution in 1983 reduced the number of constituencies from eight to six, and therefore cut the number of CLP delegates by fourteen.

6.3 We recommend that the number of CLP delegates to the DLP should be increased. We would suggest a standard number of ten, and an extra delegate for each 250 or part thereof over 500 members. On the existing membership figures that would raise the CLP delegates from 42 to 64. If the principle of increased CLP representation is agreed, the exact figures can be subject to further consideration if necessary.

6.4 We recommend that the potential of representation from Members' Branches be increased, perhaps by giving an extra delegate when membership reaches 200. We do not have figures to show how many, if any, extra delegates that would currently involve. We recommend the principle of increased representation because the Members' Branch is the basic unit of organisation for local government purposes.

6.5 We recognise that these recommendations would increase the size of the delegate meeting. However, the information available on attendances shows that average attendance of delegates at normal delegate meetings was 79 in 1983, 110 in 1984, and 104 in 1985. Therefore in 1985 attendance was about 40% of the possible, taking delegates only and normal meetings only. The very large attendances have been at the Aggregate meetings. We consider that the delegate meetings could be larger without disadvantage, especially since the additional attendance would be more widely representative than the Aggregate meetings.

ROLE OF THE DLP IN RELATION TO THE LABOUR GROUP

7.1 Rule 2 (3) requires the DLP to "formulate an Electoral Programme".

7.2 In most DLPs this would be interpreted as drawing up the Manifesto and other broad strategic policy guidelines.

7.3 In Liverpool the DLP appears to have become involved in a number of situations which should be the prerogative of the Labour Group. These include issues which would normally be decided by negotiation between the recognised trade unions for council employees and council officers or council committees. Detailed involvement in industrial relations of this nature seems to us to be inappropriate, particularly when it gives the impression of by-passing normal trade union and industrial relations procedures.

7.4 There were also other items in Agendas and Minutes such as planning permission, and the detailed approach of the Council in other areas of policy which indicate that the DLP does not simply lay down the broad parameters of Labour Group policy but involves itself in the day to day direct management of the council.

7.5 We were variously told that the DLP was 'sovereign' or that 'the DLP lays down the policies and it is up to the Labour Group to implement them', but it was clear that many DLP delegates thought of the councillors as being delegates from the DLP to the council.

7.6 Many of those giving evidence felt that the practices of the DLP rendered the Labour Group accountable in a way that was wholly desirable and did not exist in many other places. Others felt that the DLP expected to have control rather than accountability.

7.7 We recognise that the question of accountability is a difficult one. We agree with those who consider that in the past (and in some places also the present) Labour Groups have ignored the wishes of the Party in important respects even to the extent of doing battle with them, and that Party members have sometimes had cause to think that the Election Programme which had been properly drawn up by the Party was being flouted by a Labour Group when in office. This can lead to accusations of bad faith with the electorate and is wholly undesirable.

7.8 However, there is an opposite danger, which is that a DLP can attempt to substitute itself for a Labour Group and take decisions which ought to be the prerogative of the Group. We consider that there are at least two reasons why this should not be done. We consider that the whole question of accountability is one which deserves thought and discussion in the Party in order to arrive at a correct balance taking into account all the

problems.

7.9 First: Councillors can face special and very onerous legal restriction and penalties in the course of their decision-making. It seems quit wrong to us that people who do not themselves face this hazard shoul expect to have the right to take decisions which could involve others i penalties. It is a regrettable fact that such hazards can be incurre by councillors when taking political decisions which they feel to be i the best interests of their electors. In these circumstances w consider it necessary to make a clear distinction between giving help an support to councillors who may face this danger, as compared wit demanding or requiring that they be willing to face it.

7.10 Second: councillors have, or should have, much more detailed knowledg of all the factors involved in the day to day affairs of the Council tha can possibly be the case for the average Party member who has many othe concerns and cannot be expected to become immersed in Council matters i the same way as a conscientious councillor. A Labour Group and Labou Councillors must consult, report to, discuss with, and listen to, thei District Labour Party (and their Ward Labour Party and their electors) They then have the duty to take this input back to the Labour Group an use their best judgment in applying it. Final decisions must be theirs They then must in their turn be willing to face the judgment of the Part members as to how they have carried out their task and whether at th appropriate time they should be selected again as a Labour candidate.

7.11 We are certain that the correct balance has not been found in Liverpool nor in many other areas, but we are satisfied that in Liverpool there ha been a genuine endeavour to keep to the policies outlined in elections.

DLP AGENDAS AND DOCUMENTATION

8.1 Evidence was given (borne out by the Minutes) that many meetings wer totally dominated by the Executive Committee Report. At Aggregat meetings this was virtually entirely so. The EC has met very frequentl which will arise partly because of the seriousness of the crisis faced b Liverpool but which also may illustrate the elevation of the EC over bot the Labour Group and the proper delegate meeting. The EC met at varyin times, some of them unusual, often at very short notice. In some case the EC had met only a hour before the DLP and there certainly was n adequate documentation, if any. It was a frequent assertion that durin the very difficult and complicated period of the budget crisis inadequat documentation was put before the DLP. This was the position suggeste by the national unions and it was also claimed locally. In particular this relates to the documentation presented to the DLP itself during th period leading to the Stonefrost Report. On the other hand, it i suggested that the summary produced by the DLP officers, in consultatio with the Labour Group, explaining the Stonefrost Report, was substantial piece of documentation, and was made available to all DL delegates and Party members. Others query this, and point to the ver detailed alternative briefing provided by NALGO. Although we were tol that DLP delegates had access to full versions of the Stonefrost Report this does not seem to have been widely known.

8.2 It is clearly impossible to provide briefings for hundreds of member such as might be made available to a Labour Group or even to a normal DL delegate meeting. We were told that in any case, and especially o late, reports were largely verbal. This was made clear by people wh

were quite satisfied with the DLP, not only its critics. When vital decisions are being made this is utterly insufficient. It was clear that such written information as was available was not necessarily seen by delegates or even known about by them.

8.3 It seems to us that Liverpool DLP has been drifting steadily in the direction of decision-making not on the basis of delegacy but more approaching one person one vote. Those who believe that abandonment or downgrading of the representative delegate structure in the Party and its replacement by the one person one vote process lends itself to domination by those who control access to information, and that the apparent participation of larger numbers cloaks a reduction in real accountability when set against the participation of elected delegates who are likely to be both more experienced and more jealous of their rights as delegates, will find this food for thought.

8.4 The Aggregate meetings with the 'consultative vote' are put forward as showing the wide support for the delegates' decisions, but could readily be seen instead as a down-grading of the delegate vote by making it seem necessary to validate it by the 'consultative vote'. It was never explained what would have been the position had the 'consultative vote' gone a different way from the delegates' vote.

A WIDER ISSUE

9.1 Because of the 'sovereignty' of the DLP over the Labour Group, some matters were raised with us which go outside subjects such as meetings procedures.

9.2 One such relates to certain employment practices of the Council, apparently in line with DLP policy.

9.3 In order to put this in proper perspective, we would first refer to the situation when Labour gained power in 1983. Under the previous Liberal-controlled Council, many Council employees of various kinds, including teachers, were employed on short-term contracts. These were not guaranteed renewal, and indeed we are told that many employees felt severely stressed at the pressure this system put them under. Such a system distorts the relationship between employer and employee because it accumulates even more power than usual in the hands of the employer. Employees live in fear of non-renewal, i.e. the sack, without any of the normal rights of permanent employees.

9.4 To its considerable credit, the incoming Labour Council altered this state of affdars and removed this fear by giving normal permanent status.

9.5 There has for a long time been a system of nominating rights for jobs for trade unions in some departments. This system has been greatly extended recently, especially for the GMBATU which in certain departments has 100% nominating rights. We understand the desire that trade unionists should have first access to jobs, especially in a city where many workers suffered the indignity and insecurity of casual work in the docks in the past and who know at first hand of the victimisation which is commonplace in industry. Nevertheless we have received complaints about some aspects of the current operation of the nominating rights. We consider this to be primarily an industrial relations matter, and although it has been drawn to our attention by trade unions we consider it is a matter for them to sort out themselves with each other and with the Council.

FINAL NOTE OF DISSENT

10.1 Questions have been raised about the extent to which readers or supporters of the Militant newspaper are in fact members of another organisation with its own programme, contrary to Clause 2 of the Constitution, and whether on these grounds their Party membership should be called into question.

10.2 It should be made plain both that those who were interviewed denied that they were breaching the Constitution; and that many of those who gave evidence as to the need as they saw it for changes in the practices of the District Labour Party in Liverpool, went out of their way explicitly to state that in their opinion expulsions were not only unnecessary but would be highly undesirable and indeed counter-productive.

10.3 We have always set our faces as individuals against expulsions from the Party on political grounds; which is quite different from expulsion arising, for instance, from having stood against the Party in an election. We are very conscious of the terrible dangers involved if action is taken on the basis of assertions which cannot easily, and sometimes not all, be proved without question.

10.4 We are aware of the doubts and queries raised about the circumstances of some expulsions being proposed elsewhere in the country, and also that the Party's past record in this regard can well be described as unfortunate. Most importantly we feel that if expulsions are contemplated where doubt exists as to the quality of the evidence on which they are proposed, we are on a very slippery slope where such proposals might be made on more and more tenuous evidence and thus in reality on the grounds not even of real political convictions, though that would be dangerous enough, but even of personal likes and dislikes.

10.5 Because of our anxiety in this respect, we must disassociate ourselves from any suggestion that expulsion of members of the Liverpool District Labour Party should be recommended.

APPENDIX 11

Disciplinary Charges against Tony Mulhearn, President of the Liverpool DLP, by the NEC

PAGE 1

from J.L. WHITTY
GENERAL SECRETARY

The Labour Party

150 WALWORTH ROAD, LONDON SE17 1JT
01-703 0833
Giro No. 510 9213

JLW/KW

Mr. Tony Mulhearn,
107 Chelwood Avenue,
Liverpool 16.

6th March 1986

Dear Mr. Mulhearn,

Re: Liverpool D.L.P. Investigation - Charges

Further to my letter of 27th February please note that the hearing on 12th March has been postponed. As promised I now enclose specific charges against yourself.

As you will note there are two charges which are fully particularised. Their subject matter is different as is the evidence on each.

In respect of the charge concerning membership of Militant your attention is drawn to the Resolution of the N.E.C. of January 1983 which provides as follows:

"That the National Executive Committee resolves that, in considering whether individual members of the party are, contrary to Rule II (4)(b) of the constitution, members of the Militant Tendency (which pursuant to the conference decision, was declared by the National Executive Committee on 15 December, 1982, to be ineligible for affiliation to the party) and therefore liable to expulsion from the party, it shall have regard in particular, to their involvement in financial support for and/or the organisation of and/or the activities of the Militant Tendency, and further resolves that it shall give written particulars of any such involvement alleged against any individual member of the party and an opportunity to make written and oral representations thereon prior to considering his/her expulsion from the party.

"The National Executive Committee resolves that, when considering an allegation against an individual member of the Labour Party, that he/she is a member of the Militant Tendency, it will afford him/her an opportunity to undertake that he/she is not now, or shall immediately cease to be and further shall not hereafter become, involved in financial support for, or in the organisation of, or in the activities of, the Militant Tendency and shall regard his/her readiness to give such an undertaking as an important factor in determining whether he/she is a member of the Militant Tendency, and therefore liable for expulsion from the Labour Party."

As advised to your solicitors the meeting at which the N.E.C. will consider these charges against you will now take place on 26th March 1986 commencing at 9 a.m. at 150 Walworth Road, London SE17. You are therefore invited to attend that meeting on that date.

It is possible that proceedings will continue until late in that day. Fares and reasonable expenses will be met by the Labour Party.

Please note that you are now furnished with the evidence to be relied upon in respect of the charge concerning Militant membership which is enclosed herewith.

The evidence in relation to the charge of breaches of rules and standing orders is clearly identified in the accompanying documents and we understand is already available to you.

No live evidence will be called against you but you will be permitted to adress the N.E.C. in oral and/or written form in your defence. No legal representation will be permitted but you may have one friend present who will not take any part in the proceedings.

Yours sincerely,

J.L. Whitty,
General Secretary.

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T. MULHEARN

Charge:

That you are ineligible for membership of the Labour Party in that in breach of Clause II iv (b) of the party constitution you are a member of the Militant Tendency being an organisation declared by the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party on 15th December 1982, pursuant to the Party Conference decision of 1982, and approved by the Party Conference in 1983 as being a political organisation with its own programme principles and policy for distinctive and separate propaganda and being ineligible for affiliation to the party:

In particular:

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PAGE 4

T. Mulhearn

Charge: That in your capacity as CHAIR of the Liverpool District Labour Party you caused or allowed or shared responsibility for the breaches in rules of the Labour Party and the rules and standing orders of the District Labour Party as set out in the Schedule: and lettered :

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, X, Y (aa), (bb), (cc), (dd), (ee), (ff), (gg), (hh), (ii), (jj), (kk), (ll).

T. Mulhearn SCHEDULE PAGE 5

Rules	Breaches	Report Reference	Summary of Evidence
Objects Clause II Section (ii)- to undertake, in co-operation with constituency Labour Parties within the borough, propoganda,educational and other activities related to local government.	A. By the extension of DLP business to deal with matters other than those relating to local government issues, in particular initiating and allowing discussions to take place decisions tobe made on national and international affairs and on issues which were specifically rejecting (a) NEC instructions or advice on FELs, (b) on SALEP and (c) on the sale of Militant at DLP meetings.	see sections 1.6,12.4,Annex G of the of the Report. (See Section 1.6 of the Report)	A. The minutes of the DLP of the meetings identified in annexe G. (a) Minute of DLP 1st April 1984. (c) Minute of DLP 1st September 1983.
	B. By not providing for any or adequate discussion on key aspect of local government policy.(see section 1.6 of the Report)		B. The admissions to Committee of Investigation by you and the other officers that the DLP had failed to discuss a series ofdocuments produced for discussion by the Labour Party Local Government Dept.
Section (iii)- to formulate an electoral programme and to compile	C. By the centralisation of the procedure for drawing up the panel		C. The adoption by the DLP of Annex.E.

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Rule	Breaches	Report reference.	Summary of Evidence
a panel of candidates in accordance with the provisions laid down in Clause VII & VIII of the rules.	and for the selection of candidates so downgrading the role of the CLP in the procedure, and breaching the rule in the detailed provisions laid down in Clauses VII & VIII. (see below)	see part 9 and Annexe E of the Report, and pages 45d the Labour of Party Rule book.	
Section (iv)- to ensure the establishment of a Labour Group on the district council in accordance with the standing orders for Labour Groups laid down by the party Conference.	D. By determining the DLP as the major policy making body, on strategy and for detailed policy matters, contrary to the rules for Labour Groups on local authorities which state: 'while it is the function of the appropriate local party to determine election policy, it is the definite responsibility of the Labour to decide group strategy and action on the council.'	(see Section 11 of the Report)	D.See (ii), (jj), (kk), and (ii).
Section V-'to co-ordinate constituency	E. By concentrating all resources,	See Section 12d of the report.	E. The evidence given

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Rule	Breaches	Report reference	Summary of Evidence
Labour Parties within the area, including the collection of affiliation fees and appointment of delegates by affiliated organisations for transfer to the appropriate Constituency Labour Parties.'	financial and administrative at DLP level, and by encouraging the DLP to be the supreme body for all policy making,so downgrading the role of the CLPs as the major unit of organisations	See Section 12 of the Report	to the Committee of Investigation in confidence together with the admissions of the Party officers
	F. By conducting organisational activities in a CLP area against the express wishes of that CLP.	See para 12.6 of the Report	F. This refers to complaints of the Riverside CLP which led to their passing two resolutions which were discussed by the DLP/EC on 1/11/85 and recorded in the minutes.
	G. By not correctly transferring to CLPs the affiliation fee or informing CLPs of the affiliations due to them.		
	- By not correctly informing CLPs of the names of their delegates from affiliated organisations		
Clause III-Management Section (iii)-Delegates must be individual members of the Labour Party and either reside or be registered as electors in the area covered by the DLP.	H. By allowing non-members of the party to be delegates to the DLP and non-party members to attend the DLP as visitors	See Section 4 of the Report	H. The Regional Office Report of a meeting dated 22/11/85;the resolution of Riverside CLP recorded in the minutes of the DLP/EC meeting of 1/11/85 and the evidence given to the Committee of Investigation by witnesses in confidence

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Rules	Breaches	Report Reference	Summary of Evidence
Clause IV - Officers & EC Section (ii)-'the officers shall consist of a chair,vice-chair, secretary and treasurer.'	I. By having an additional Vice-chair as full officer of the DLP.	See Annexe E and Annexe I of the Report	I. See the sections of the Report referred to.
Clause V-Meetings 'The Management Committee and its Executive Committee shall meet as required'.Breaches of these clause to be considered alongside the Standing Orders for the Liverpool District Labour Party, which lays down the frequency, times, notice and conduct of the business for meetings.	J. By the frequency of meetings the frequent changes of times of meetings and last minute changes of venues so making it difficult for all EC members to attend.	See para 2.1/2.6 Annex F&H of the Report	J. The various meetings summarised in Annex H of the Report.
	K.(a) by taking decisions on matters which are the property of the Management Committee of the DLP particularly in respect of the Local Election Panel, (b) by taking action on resolutions received, (c) the prevention of proper business being taken at the DLP meetings and	(Section 9 of the Report)	This was not in dispute as the practice of the DLP and the DLP EC.

ıles	Breaches	Report reference	Summary and evidence
	(d) the abrogation of the constitutional role of the DLP.	(Section 6 of the Report)	See above
	(ii) DLP meetings L - by discussion of matters not relating to local government. M - by not carrying out the correct business of the DLP.	(Section 1.6, 12.4 and annexe G to the report)	See A and B above
	N - by DLP meetings not taking place on a regular basis and being replaced by aggregate meetings for which there is no provision in the structure.	(Section 2 and annexe D of the Report)	The schedule of meetings in annexe D of the Report)
	O.- by not adequately checking delegations from two trade unions provided en bloc instead of from individual branches.		O. The Secretary's Annual Report to the 1984/5 AGM
	P. By knowingly allowing affiliations and delegations from organisations outside the rules i.e.workplace branches.	Para 7.17 of the Report	P. (a)Record of delegations attendance at DLP meetings from May 1985 to August 1985. (b). Resolutions received from Workplace Branch 25/7/84 and 13/12/84.

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Rule	Breaches	Report of Reference	Summary of Evidence
	Q. By knowingly accepting delegations from un-constitutionally formed Student Labour Clubs.	Para 7.11-7.16 of the Report	Q. Delegation list for 1985.
	R. By imposing a delegation fee on all delegates.	Para 10.2 of the Report	Q.Notice of the AGM & DLP November '84.
	S. By breaching standing orders on delegates right to reply to debate	Para 3.5 of the Report	See Standing Orders Clause II & evidence given in confidence.
	(iii). Aggregate Meetings(All member meetings). T. By Aggregate Meetings not permitted for in the Rules being called frequently and without adequate notice so allowing selective notification, and taking business proper to a duly constituted DLP meeting.	Section 2 of the Report	The Schedule of meetings Annexe D & evidence given in confidence.
	U. By last minute changes of DLP meetings into Aggregate meeting and taking changes of venue so preventing all party members from having the right to attend.	Section 2 of the Report	The Schedule of meetings Annexe D; evidence given in confidence and by way of example minutes of meeting 5/4/84.

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Rule	Breaches	Report of Reference	Summary of Evidence
	V. By non-separation of delegates and visitors.	Section 4.7 of the Report	This was notin dispute; The Regional Officers report referred to above and evidence given in confidence.
	(iv) Access to meetings W - By having no clear procedure for registering delegates and visitors.	Section 4 of the Report	W. Regional Officers report referred to above and evidence given in confidence to the Committee of Investigation.
	(v) Voting procedures X.-By promoting a change of procedure for the election of EC members, which removed the rights of the specific sections of delegates that make up the DLP.	Para 8.5 of the Report	X. Minutes of AGM of DLP 14/3/85.
	Y. By frequent changes of the procedure for voting.	Section 5 of the Report	Y. Evidence given in confidence to the Committee of Investigation.

Rule	Breaches	Report of Reference	Summary of Evidence
	7.By handing out voting slips en bloc to a delegation instead of to each individual-so being able to check	Section 5 of the Report	7. Evidence given in confidence to the Committee of Investigation
	(vi) Intimidation (aa) By allowing verbal and physical intimidation at DLP and Aggregate meetings contrary to the members rights of free participation in meetings.	Section 3 of the Report	(aa) Evidence given to the Committee of Investigation in confidence and the written evidence of Merseyside LCC as published.
Clause VIII -Nominations Section (i) -the Executive Committee of this Party shall invite nominations for the district council elections from Constituency Labour Parties within the area during the month of....in the...year following the last election, except in the case of annual elections when it shall be the year preceding such elections. The nominations shall be secured by by Constituency Labour Parties in accordance with the procedure laid down in their rules.	(bb) by abrogating the responsibility of carrying out the timetable as agreed locally for securing nominations and drawing up the panel.	Section 9 of the Report	(bb) You broke DLP rules 8(1) in that on 1st April 1984 you interviewed outside the allocated period,
	(cc) By centralisation of the procedure through the constituency parties but directly inviting nominations from not only CLPs,but branches,trade unions and socialist societies.		(cc) see C above

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Rule	Breaches	Report of Reference	Summary of Evidence
Section iv All nominees must undertake to accept and confoem with the standing orders for the Labour Group approved by the NEC.	(dd) By acceptance for being placed on the Panel being based on nominees being prepared to accept the DLP as the supreme policy making body in contravention of the Standing Orders of the Labour Group.	Para 9.4 of the Report	(dd)The three standard questions referred to in para 9.4 were not in dispute.
Section V 'A list of members so nominated shall be submitted to a meeting of the Management Committee for endorsement in the month of...in the year referred to in paragraph (i)of this section.	(ee) by endorsement of the names on Panel being the responsibility of the EC who carry out the interviews,with report to the Management Committee.	Section 9 of the Report	(ee) (i)The minute referred to in 9.5 of the Report. (ii) The current list of members of the Panel as compared with the lack of minutes of the DLP.
Section VIII The list of members endorsed by the Management Committee including the names of all retiring councillors shall be submitted through constituency Labour Parties to the branch or branches covering the electoral areas where contests have been approved.	(ff) By non-acceptance of the rule to automatically include sitting councillors on the Panel.	Section 9 of the Report	The minutes of the DLP/EC of October '83 30/3/85,4/4/85,non endorsement of sitting councillor and endorsement of alternative candidate by DLP/EC and DLP.

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Rule	Breaches	Report of Reference	Summary of Evidence
	(gg) -By openly refusing to cease preparing a supplementary panel designed to debar certain members from fighting safe or winnable seats.		(gg) Minutes of DLP/EC 26/1/84 confirmed by DLP on 2/2/84.
	(hh)-By by-passing the CLPs and submitting the panel directly to Party branches.		(hh) See C above.
Clause ix-Relations with Labour Groups Section (ii) Members of the Labour Group shall attend meetings of the Management Committee of the appropriate local party, and the group leader and committee chair or spokespersons shall attend to report to, and consult with this party on the work of the group on their council committee.	(ii)-By detailed involvement by the DLP and the EC in areas which are the prerogative of the Labour Group, involving the trade unions in the in the Council, Council Officers or Council Committee.	Sections 11 and 13	The evidence given in confidence to the Committee of Investigation and the following documents:- (a).DLP/EC minute 31/5/86 item 1 (b).DLP/EC minute 29/2/84 item (c)& (d) (c).DLP/EC minute 13/3/84 item 3 (d).DLP/EC minute 6 November 1984 (e).DLP/EC minute 22 July 1985. (f).DLP/EC minute 31 January 1985
	(jj)-By their involvement in other industrial relations matters and granting of planning permission.		
	(kk)-By their interference and involvement in the day to day direct management of the council.		
	(LL)-By their binding Labour Group members to DLP decisions.		

Breaches	Report of Reference	Summary of Evidence
		(g).DLP/EC minute 31 June 1985 (h).DLP/EC minute 7 February 1985 (i).DLP/EC minute 30/8/84 item 4(b) & 5(d)(i) (j).Undated Press Officers Report by Terry Harrison. (k).Minute of the Aggregate Meeting of the DLP dated 22/11/85, the DLP/EC meeting dated 22/11/85 and the Report of Tony Byrne to that meeting. (L).Minutes of DLP 8 May1984 (m).Minutes of DLP 7 May 1985 (n).Minute of DLP/EC 17 May 1985 (o).Page 131 of the Report of the Annual Conference of the Labour Party 1984. Together with the admissions of the Party Officers to the Committee of Investigation.

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THIS LEGAL CHARGE is made the 9th day of February 1984 between ANTHONY PAUL AITMAN of 67 Hilberry Road, Liverpool, ANTHONY MULHERN of 107 Chelwood Avenue, Liverpool and TERENCE JOHN HARRISON of 52 Ferndale Road, Liverpool (hereinafter called the Borrowers) of the one part and JAMES DUNNING of 86 July Road, Liverpool, PETER McALLISTER of 26 Heyburn Road, Liverpool and JAMES ANTHONY DUNN of 45 Lisbon Lane, Liverpool (hereiinafter called the Lenders)of the other part.

WHEREAS:

1. By an Agreement in writing dated the 9th day of February 1984 made between the Lenders of the one part and the Borrowers of the other part the Lenders agreed to sell to the Borrowers the property described in the Schedule hereto for an estate in fee simple in posse sion subject as hereinafter mentioned but otherwise free from incumbrances at the price of £8,700 and whereas it was agreed between the parties that £7,200 part of the purchase price should not immediately be paid but should be secured in the manner hereinafter appearing.

2. By a Conveyance of even date herewith and made between the Lenders of the one part and the Borrowers of the other part, the Lenders as trustees for sale conveyed to the Borrowers the said property for an estate in fee simple.

NOW THIS DEED WITNESSES AS FOLLOWS:

1. The Borrowers hereby covenant with the Lenders:-

1. That they will pay to the Lenders the sum of seven thousand two hundred pounds (£7,200) by equal monthly instalments of £120 (one hundred and twenty pounds) the first of such instalments

surrenders of leases or tenancy shall not be exerciable by the Borrowers without the consent in writing of the Lenders but it shall not be necessary to express such consent in any tenancy agreement, lease or surrender not shall the Borrowers part with their possession of the property hereby charged or any part thereof with out the consent in writing of the Lenders.

5. That the Statutory power of sale as hereby extended shall be exercisable free from the restrictions imposed by Section 103 of the Law of Property Act 1925.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the Borrowers have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year first before written.

THE SCHEDULE before referred to:

ALL THAT piece of land situate on the east side of Lower Breck Road Liverpool containing in the whole including one half of the back passage two hundred and seventy four square yards or thereabouts TOGETHER WITH the messuage thereon erected and known as 2, Lower Breck Road aforesaid subject to the restrictive covenants contained in an Indenture dated 22nd March 1867 and made between John Lindsey Scott of the first part and Walton Park Company Limited of the second part and Joseph Taylor of the third part.

insurable value thereof with some insurance office approved by the Lenders and will make all payments required for the purpose as and when the same shall become due and will when required by the Lenders produce to him the policy or policies of such insurance and the receipts for each such payment or such evidence of each such payment and if the Borrowers shall fail to perform any of their obligations under this clause and if the Lenders shall thereupon insure as aforesaid the said buildings or any of them in any sum not exceeding in the aggregate the amount aforesaid the Borrowers will on demand repay to the Lenders all payments made by them for that purpose and will pay interest at the rate of 20% (twenty per centum) per annum from the date of payment until repayment of any monies not repaid on demand as aforesaid and all such monies and interest shall be charged on the property hereby charged provided that all monies which might be received by virtue of any such insurance shall be applied in the first place in making the good the loss or damage in respect of which the same shall have been received.

2. That so long as any monies remain owing on this security the Borrowers will keep the buildings for the time being comprised herein in good order and repair.

3. That the Borrowers will not cause or allow any person to be registered under the Land Registration Act 1925 or any other similar statutory provision as Proprietor of the property hereby mortgaged without the consent in writing of the Lenders and the costs incurred by the Lenders in entering an Caution against such registration shall be deemed to be costs properly incurred by them.

4. That the statutory and or common law power or powers of ~~leasing or letting or agreeing to lease or let and accepting~~

to be made on the 9th day of MARCH 1981.

2. That if any of the said instalments shall be unpaid for twenty eight days after the date on which it ought to be paid as aforesaid or if the Borrowers shall fail to perform any of the obligations under this mortgage other than the obligation in regard to the payment of principal, the Borrowers will pay to the Lenders on demand such part of the sum of seven thousand two hundred pounds as shall for the time being be unpaid.

3. For the consideration aforesaid the Borrowers as trustees hereby charge by way of Legal Mortgage allthe property described in the schedule hereto with the payment to the Lender of the principal money and other monies hereby covenanted to be paid by the Borrowers.

3. Provided that if the Borrowers shall pay to the Lenders the sum of seven thousand two hundred pounds in accordance in all respects with the covenant in that behalf hereinbefore contained the Lenders will at the request and cost of the Borrowers duly discharge this security.

4 For the purposes of this deed, the legal right of redemption shall cease on the 9th day of AUGUST next and in favour of the Purchaser the statutory power of sale as hereby extended shall be exercisable from and after that date.

5. The Borrowers hereby covenant with the Lenders as follows:-

1. That so long as any money remains owing on this security the Borrowers will keep the buildings for the time being comprised herein insured in the names of the Lenders and the Borrowers against loss or damage caused by fire aircraft to the full

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SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED
by the said ANTHONY PAUL AITMAN
in the presence of:-

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED
by the said ANTHONY MULHERN
in the presence of:-

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED
by the said TERENCE JOHN HARRISON
in the presence :-

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED
by the said JAMES DUNNING
in the presence of:-

SIGNED SEALED AND DELIVERED
by the said PETER McALLISTER
in the presence of:-

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED
by the said JAMES ANTHONY DUNN

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PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

NEC 26 NOVEMBER, 1980
F. 3/80.

LIVERPOOL, KIRKDALE CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTY

The Tuebrook Branch of the above constituency party owns premises at 2, Lower Breck Road, Liverpool,6. In recent years they have found it more and more difficult to meet the upkeep of the premises - rates, heating, etc. In September this year the Liverpool City Council issued the Party with a summons for non-payment of rates. In order to meet the rates and avoid court action they raised a loan of £400. They are now being pressed for repayment of this loan. That can only be done from the proceeds of the sale of the property.

They have advertised it for sale in Liverpool and have been offered a purchase at a price of £6,500 from Militant Newspapers. They are proposing to accept this offer and seek permission from the National Executive Committee.

The Regional Office have been consulted and recommend that we give them authority to proceed with the sale.

Recommendation:

That the Liverpool, Kirkdale Constituency Labour Party Tuebrook Branch be authorised to complete the sale of their premises at 2, Lower Breck Road, Liverpool, 6.

David Hughes
National Agent.

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Charges Relating to the Militant Tendency (Document II is relevant)

(i) You have participated in meetings and rallies organised by Militant;

(ii) That you have been a signatory to leaflets supporting Militant;

(iii) That you have been financially involved in the Militant headquarters at 2 Lower Breck Road;

(iv) That you have worked full-time or part-time from 2 Lower Breck Road as an organiser;

(v) That you are further a member or have been a member of the Liverpool Area Committee of the Militant Tendency operating through the front of the Militant newspaper;

(vi) That you are or have recently been a member of the National or Central Committee of the Militant Tendency (Revolutionary Socialist League) organising through the front of the Militant newspaper.

Particulars and Summary of Evidence

(i) A Militant meeting on 24th October 1985 at Edinburgh advertised in Militant
A Militant readers meeting at Musselburgh on 28th February 1985 advertised in Militant and video advertised in Militant (Annexe A)

(ii) The leaflet advertising Militant printed by Militant Publishers (Annexe B)

(iii) The purchase in your name of 2 Lower Breck Road, Tuebrook on 9th February 1981 and the entering by you of a legal charge in respect of payment of £7,200 to purchase the property. The property is given as the address of Militant in Liverpool (see the Deed and see the circulars and the memo dated 26th November 1980 all Annexe C)

(iv) (v) and (vi) We rely upon evidence given to the Committee of Investigation by various witnesses in confidence.

Appendix 12, Transcript of NEC Disciplinary Hearing of Tony Mulhearn

Readers of this transcript, please bear in mind that it was taken from an audio tape of the hearing and that it is obvious that the transcribers found it difficult to hear some contributions, and in some cases identify the contributors. The transcription is less than perfect and in some cases of poor quality but in general it gives a fair account of the proceedings.

4-45

Tape 8.

Tony On a platform with Shirley Williams and I have never expressed my regret at Shirley Williams's and David Owen's and the rest in fact have left the Labour Party as far as I was concerned it was good ridence if you want to come back o.k. we will have a political debate with them. I would also argue that I wounden't use organisation methods to get rid of them. So the answer to the question is I would differentiate from others in the sense that I have never shared platforms with political enemys of this movement I have in fact never come out in favour of wage restraint when it is against the Party policy I have never defended neuclear dustbins in areas like Skelerfield which is against Party policy and I am all in favour of the Party policy of phasing out neuclear power production until such time when it is guaranteed and safe. Well you got a situation which is so ludricas when you have got thousands of miners being made redundant, therefore I would differentiate my position from those in the sense that I have always stuck for policies determined by the Party and determined by my trade union.

Chair anyone else.

Could I return to the organisational connection or noen connection, I am not sure whether Mr. Mulhern tells us that he is not a militant because Militant is not that sort of organisation and doesn't have members or whether he is saying it is that sort of an organisation but he doesn't happene to be one of them.

Tony Well the point I have made before you suggested on many occasions that an organisation called militant does exist. I have explained what my view of the term organisation mens now if you have had the opinion that there is an organisation with its own objectives, its own constitution, its own set of principles etc. then you are entitled to your opinion. I am heree today charged as being a member of such an organisation and I have categogically rejected that charge. Whether or not an organisation existsin my view the Militant newspaper I would repeat is no different ffrom an organisation that produces Tribune, no different from the organisation which produces the newspaper Working lecture or produces the Liverpool Labour Left which spends most f its time attacking the Labour Council just for your information and therefore I would say that the Militant newspaper as I perceive it is the same as those.

You don't know whether Militant is an organisation which you could conceivably be a member of or something very much like a membership shows you don't know whether that is the case or not.

Tape 9. P2.

Tony I don't know how clear I can express myslelf Chairman, Roy Hatersley has asked that question three different ways and i've answered I hope very very clearly my mother does say I should take elicution lessons for my media appearances I think I do make myself understood and I think that as I have said if you perceive it as an organisation he is entitled to his own opinion but I am charged with being a I am charged with being a member of a separate organisation and that I infatically reject.

Roy Mr. Mulhern and I have trouble with Northern accents coming from different sides of the penines. Could I try and do the best with mine. I don't think he spoke at the militant ralley in the Albert Hall perhaps he did but if he did I didn't see him on television. I wonder if he saw that Ralley as I did and I wonder if then when he saw what was happeneing there that didn't look like an organisation with a policy made at annual conferences and having resolutions and having alternative positions

Tony I know the ralley you are talking about I mean in the old days, Neil will know we used to have Tribune ralleys which I always entered the Tribune leads when Eric was on the platform, Michael Foot, Neil when he used to make excellant jokes about Denis Healey I used to really enjoy them and those ralleys were a sight to behold the Winter Gardens were always chock a block there was a banner at the back which proclaimed Tribune my Tribune, joint Tribune, made contributions to Tribune as I said Neil used to make a tremendous job of collecting on behalf of Tribune. I always said and in fact as I said to Neil on one occasion Eric and Tony were on the platform I said that this was in round about the mid 60s I remember commenting to Neil in the Winter Gardens the best performer that night was Neil because of the jokes he cracked and I think I said to him at the time if he ever leaves politics he could make a living as a stand up commedian. They were very very good ralleys no question about it, I doubt whether we could organise them like that now because of their abandonment of radical policy, nevertheless I still wouden't suggest that the ability to organise a good ralley suggests that heere is a separate organisation with its own separate set of principles or objectives and so on and soforth.

Roy You don't think of them as separate organisations

Tony I don't no

Chair Anyone else.

It is interesting to see that you have brought Eddy Lloyd with you laterly today would you take the view that in many respects

Tape 9. P3

Would you take the view in many respects coming from the same city that you are by and large have similar attitudes on scores of subjects and I am wondering whether you want to expand on that because I take your word for what you say about your involvement with Militant and so on and because you have been involved in the District Labour Party in Liverpool for such a long time would it be right that you seem to travel the same pattern.

Tony I would definitely say so in fact it is funny you should raise that question I can only recall one occasion that I differed with anyone and that was in a District Party meeting during the time of the campaign for the election of the leader and the deputy leader that the tactile difference between myself and Eddy was that there were two positions if you recall at the time there was those there were those who supported the editorial college and there was those who supported the concept of the Party Conference as electing the leader and the deputy leader. After alot of these events inside the District Labour Party and perhaps I shoulden't mention this because we were actively discussing national policies at that time Wolley Edwards a full-time Secretary and Bob Waring who was the president and if i'm expelled for discussing that there is going to be some others expelled because they approved it and during the course of that debate I advanced the position because the idea had f the conference itself electing the leader and the deputy had been defeated we should through our weight behind the electorial college Eddy adopted the position that no we should still maintain our position so far as supporting the conference supporting the electing the leader and the deputy and that was the only time that I could recall differing with Eddy, Eddy was correct correct if you like in principle but in tactile terms I said that the idea of the conference had been lost and we had to throw our weight behind the electroral college. as I think was Neil Kinnocks position and he now enjoys being leader of the Party as a result of that campaign. So I think Neil should have a lot to

The second question is this that one of the things that always puzzles me on the question of the membership of militant has been that I am right in assuming that in Liverpool about 20 odd years ago and that all these accusations made about those who were members and I find that in this so called computer age that it is inconceivable that nobody yet has produced a list with these names on. Have I missed something or is there one circulated in Liverpool. Twenty years and there has been no list produced.

Chair Have you heard anything about a divider Tony

no no

Roy Sorry Tony its my question again he keeps asking it.

Tape 8. P4

I have another question, on the question of taking steps since the Party Conference decision, you say that you know in the statement after the Conference took its decision you took certain steps to disassociate yourself with the question of Lower Breck Road now would I be right in assuming that on all the various fronts when you felt that because of some inseurity in view of your position in Liverpool as Chariman and so on that you made absolutely sure that you have not been involved or seeming to be involved in these organisations.

Tony definitely no question about it.

is your signature onthe deeds of purchase of Militant Headquarters at Lower breck Road and acting indeed as guarantor for a significant sum of money, did not imply membership of militant or indeed playing quite an essential role within it, why did you seek to disassociate yourself from that and to replace your signature with that of another directly after the 1982 Labour Party Conference decision?

Tony Well I think that denis just made the point and I think it was quite an apisite point that I indicated beofre that there was a gentleman named John Golding was in fact leaving the Labour Party and I recognised the atmosphere being created that anything that appeared to be an organisational link which the Conference decided was outlawed and I took the appropriate steps of disassociating myself from it because obviously I anticipated that the John Godings of this world and there will alway be feature of that life in the Party and I suppose you have got to have a philosophical attitude to that and I took the appropriate steps on that basis and I think that was perfectly and totally understandable.

Chair You did say in your submission that you had instructed Tony Edmans to instruct his solicitor to have your name removed from the Conference decision why didn't you instruct him on to it

Tony because Tony made the original approach and I said to him, look you know what the decision of the Conference is you better as far as I am concerned get my name off the guarantor statement and he then proceeded he said o.k.

In view of the fact that we were anxious to get the solicitors letter makes that point why after 4 years

Tony Well as far as I know I gave that instruction and that instruction was to be acted on immediately

well according to John Linden's letter which you quoted to me this morning

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Tape 8. P9.

Tony No where under no circumstances was I re accept a position that my name still remains can I say this if in fact my name is on to that statement and there is a default on the payment I can guarantee you this there will be no money coming out of my pocket. I will be taking legal advice on that.

Oh yes so was John Linden a Liverpool City Councillor.

Tony Yes he is a Liverpool City Councillor.

David The question that we dare address ourselves to whether we speak in relation to membership of militant revolves around whether people believe there is an organisation set up to organise a newspaper. Would you actually disassociate yourself from an organisation from an organisation or an organisation producing a newspaper or one that actually produced and delivered leaflets at the time of an election in any areas of the country which actually criticised the Labour Party during that election and delivered that leaflet at an election

Tony Well I think Chairman you have answered that I would obviously have to see a copy of the leaflet and to examine what that leaflet says. In principle f course it is obviously folly to distribute leaflets during an election period, in fact in the Party I think that is self evidenced and if I gave the leaflets then I would have my criticism of those leaflets but obviously it is a hypothetical question and I will give a hypothetical answer I would criticise those leaflets if they attacked the Party the Party and indeed I have done on many occasions

David Would you find it strange that an organisation producing a newspaper should in fact then go into the production and distribution of leaflets

Tony Good heavens it happens all the time The Labour Left produce leaflets, Tribune produce leaflets all of the different groups and tendancies which have always been a feature of democratic rights of the Party produce you might not have been to as many conferences as I have but since my first Labour Party Conference in 1967 I think at home I have got a file of houses of leaflets that have beenproduced by literally hundreds of groups and that has always been an accepted feature

David well I have said that i'm sorry I have made a mistake here I accept that absolutely I mean organisations exist and pronounce themselves as an organise

tony Well all the different newspapers of that don't proclaim themselves as I understand it because they produce leaflets representing the views of whicheverpoint of view they wish to persuade the movement to adopt as I say Tribune workers Action there are so many Chairman that the different names escape me and some of them change two or three times a year. Yes newsp p-r

newspapers go out for people to buy their papers asking them to support the policy that those newspapers are campaigning about they are a

they are acceptable features of life in the Party.

When you tried to disassociate yourself with your signature to 2 Loer Breck Road what steps did you take to national inentions to disassociate yourslelf from that organisae and the affiliation that it had by virtue that you were guarantor.

Tony Would I ask Chairman, I don't know the conrades name Did I take steps to make it publci

disassociate yourself from this organisation or any insinuation that you associated yourself with this organisation by virtue of the fact that your signature was on those deeds on their behalf.

Tony no I never made a public declaration what I did do when people when I was asked why I did that I explained to them as a result of Conference decision it was important that anything which appeared to be an organisational link to what was then in the view of the Conference an organisation etc. etc. etc. I didn't see the neeed to make a public declaration about it, we were far too busy in any case concentrating on more important matters at that time campaigns were getting holdof the Liverpool City Council you recall that that was round about I think 1982 and you will also recall in 1983 we were actually, for the first time actually since round about 1972 when under the leadership of Bill Sefton now Lord Sefton the Labour Party was reduced to the smallest Party in the City Council we turned the tide of history and in fact we gained control of the City Countil in 1983 and so I think you will appreciate the pressure of work that was on us the volumes of work in rebuilding the Patty in areas where in fact it was under the old leadership where the Party was David Otans Constituency for instance, Eddy will know that on the whole Executive we had to actually go into that area to re-establish the Labour Party Bill Sefton was the leader of the City Council the Labour Party was defuncted and that in fact gave the Liberals the opportunity of intervening and filling that vacume so you can appreciate that we were very busy and had no time for public declarations and at that time I didn't even consider it to be a necessity.

Roy Can I just clarify one answer Mr. Mulhern gave when Mr. Evans asked him why after 4 hours he was still a guarantee of 2 Lower Breck Road Mr. Mulhern said "am I still a guaranor and would not get any money out of me". Is Mr. Mulhern telling us he didn't know he was still a guarantor until the letter that he brought to our attention this morning and listen to the answer he gave to Mr. Evans which was not an answer but a retorical question

Tape 9. P7.

Roy implying that he didn't realise that he was still a guarantor.

Tony You see what i'm saying if John Evans has gotit on a piece of paper

Roy it's your piece of paper

John Linden's letter

Roy describing you as a guarantor Mr. Linden goes on to say I have myself made effort to resolve the situation but so far without success and finally I would say that my instruction remain what they were in 1982 i.e. to seek the names of Tony Mulhern and Terry Harrison from the deeds of 2 Lower Breck Road.

Tony right well thats clear enough I would have thought

roy just one answer if you would, Mr. Evans asked you why you haven't had your name removed for the last 4 years you implied to Mr. Evans that you did not realise that was the case. Did you realise that was the case,
that was Mr. Evans point and mine.

Tony You see I said when the Conference decision was carried take steps to remove my name from the guarantor I thought I had made that absolutely clear before. John Linden's letter substantiates precisely what I have said. In orher words as far as I am concerned my name has been removed because I instructed those steps to be taken.

Neil Yes there was one other question. In the course of replies Tony Mulhern made reference to the LCC and other organisations what they have in common is that where they have membership as in the case of a group for example, where they have membership as such like the LCC they quite proudly and boldly and publicly declare that they membership and invite people to become members usually on charging them a fee of some kind does Tony think that is strictly comfable to Militants which constantly professes that it does not have membership and therefore does not invite membership.

Tony You see you are entitled to your point of view to whether or not a organisation exists with membership. What I am here today charged with is that I am a member ofan organisation with separate objectives and policies etc. etc. thats what I am charged with. I'm not charged with believing that an organisation exists or doesn't exist, that is not the point, i'm charged with being a member of an organisation and I can only repeat that I infatically reject that charge and whether or not they are called supporters or members or what have you is a matter of no consequence as far as I am concerned. I'm being charged with being a member of as

Tape 9. P8.

Arising out of that last question Tony, are you aware that there are groups within the Labour Party mainly the right wing variety who do not like some other groups proudly proclaim their membership, I know of one certainly Soligality that has probably 60 or 70 Labour members in Parliament we have never managed to get hold of the list, we have reason to believe that Roy Hatersley and one or two others are members of it because the press seem to know a bit more about it than we do and are you aware of this group and do you know of any others who are on the right wing of the Party and who keep their cards very close to their chests because I think that it is important when you are considering the charge has been made against you, which you refuse.

Tony Obviously one is aware of such organisations and I can understand that they are very reluctant to reveal some people would be very reluctant to reveal that they are part of those organisations understandably so because of what might be inflicted upon them by the rank and file of the Party. what came to be known as the St. Airlines tendancy which was in fact part of that organisation also there is a millionaire tendancy held out by Bob Maxwell who was very anxious that Neil should terf out of the Party whose who seek to challenge his doings he makes lavish contributions and palces his newspaper at the deposal of people in order to ensure that hopefully that the demands of Mr. Maxwell can be now obviously those organisations do exist and so be it, I was going to say good luck to them what I meant was bad luck to them. Yes I know that there are such organisations but we have got a more important job than investigating them we have got a very much more important job in getting on running the General Election for the Labour Party and we will do that with or without Mr. Maxwells support.

Chair Now look Tony I think we have got a very good image already and we would now ask you to make a short final statement on the charge before I move
woul you like to do that

Tony Well I would merely say Chairman seeing as you have given me that opportunity of suggesting based upon the written submission the statements i've made the declarations by Jim Mortimer which outline and specify what a member of an organisation is whether or not it exists is not for me to disprove or prove here today, but I am a member of thatorganisation I meet all of the criteer laid down by Jim Mortimer which suggests that I in fact fatically emphasises also by russell Tuck that my activities in no way constitute membership of an organisation other than the Labour Party and there is not one shred of evidence produced here today. which suggests otherwise.

Chair O.k. thank you very much. Now I think we ought to proceed with the matter concening the breach of rules and in the same procedure I would put it in the hands of the General Secretary.

Tony Well at this stage Chairman you did on the second stage under the under the set of the two witnesses

Chair I give notice on that and will make a decision about that later.

Tony Usually the witnesses are are here

Can we ask who the two witnesses are Mr. Charman and which charges the two witnesses relate to

Chair well we could have a break now and decide on that

Well could Tony tell us who the two are

Larry Chairman you did decide on the proceedings this morning but if you want to go over it again and I suggest you do the point of which Tony would be asked to request witnesses is clearly set out in what you told him first thing this morning. Yes he does have the right to request those witnesses at that point

Chair Is it after you have made your

Larry after i've made a speech and he has made his initial response.

Chair You have had the opportunity to decide and you have given notice that you want two witnesses.

Larry In my submission I will put my comments on that at the appropriate point

Tony The point is Chairman to clarify this its normal in an investigation of this nature that the witnesses are present at the outset so that they can absorb what is going on and get the gist of it. All I am saying is that in my experience within the trade union movement and within the Party those witnesses who are going to be asked to comment are there at the outset now what you've saying is that that is not the case, now I think that is a departure from what is a recognised practise in the movement.

Chair Well Tony I think we've coped with a few you know you have had lawyers become friends and then friends become witnesses you have changed them around as we go on. I can assure you that we will give consideration to the two people you've mentioned including the two to be witnesses that will come at the stage when

Honestly we are making a big issue out of a thing like that why don't we go on

Tape ~~11~~ (5.50 pm) Tony Mulhearn

Let us be clear this whole investigation was not due to genuine complaint from the rank and file of the DLP. It was due to the fact that a certain grouping in Liverpool have only recently come on the scene and I name names, in the shape that Mrs Kennedy one or two other individuals

for the trade union who enjoys I will use that word advisedly some of the best facilities for trade union activity then probably in all other authorities up and down the country whose membership has actually increased where councillors are being dismissed from office, surcharged for making sure that none of their members were sacked. That is what it was all about similarly with NALGO all of those unions that criticize us then we got to be clear what the ground rules are on that chairman and my problem is leaving those first 3 on (d) the meetings of 6th november 1984 which is (d) again does not indicate what in fact the malpractice in those minutes are supposed to be
I can only guess that fact that Tony Burn has reported on the city council budget totally in conformity with the rules of the constitution of the Party which I will come to in a minute which specifically provides a report from the Labour Group to the District Party
in fact it would been a malpractice if we had said to Labour Group you cannot make your report to the Party. The Labour Group would then have been entitled appeal to NEC and said the DLP would not allow us to address them. On the contrary we then took backwards to ensure that the Labour Group made constant report to the.DLP.
So there again I am in some difficulty chairman, because on that meeting I do not know what you are accusing of. The resolution in meeting (a) which again is a general statement the meeting 22 July 1985, now that meeting is two foolscap sheets and foolscap sheets are nowhere indicated in your evidence, does not indicate what I am suppose to be responding to.

(5.50 pm) Tony Mulhearn

General point on (b) for instance the DLP meetings items (c) and (d) of the 29th of the 2nd 1984 items (c) and (d) they refer to a letter to parents from the council pointing out that schools are likely to be closed. (d) A meeting with postman would discuss transport for the 29th of March. Those items (c) and (d), my problem is how does that substantiate evidence of malpractice that the Party is going out to meet with the postman to discuss transport for the demonstration on March 29th. This is evidence to support the charge that I am guilty of malpractice. A letter to parents from the council pointing out that schools are likely to be closed that suggests that I am guilty of malpractice. That is the evidence which is being submitted to this NEC in support of these charges. You think on (c) DLP meetings of 30th March 1983 against .....

Item 3 again that refers to a report from NUPE meeting on Derek Hatton read out a resolution from NUPE meeting etc etc etc. It will suggest we leave for the NUPE depot to inform the members of what the position was and to invite delegation to meet us and discuss proposals. All I would suggest totally in accordance with no mention of attacking any body there,merely to invite you to a meeting to discuss what was reported back from the NUPE meeting. No way of hostility no bale and no lies which we use to receive from the NUPE leadership. I could have said at Mr Sawyer who, I think Larry Whitty ordinary remark about this. All of this emerged from the fact that it was drawn to our attention that malpractice or this deviations from the constitution, nothing of the kind. I have yet to receive an answer to my question. Tom Sawyer moved a resolution saying in view of the attacks on the Party that were taking place in Liverpool to call for the immediate suspension of the DLP. To this day no one has told me or anybody else what those attacks were.

11 (5.50 pm) Tony Mulhearn

So therefore to correct you, Larry, this inquiry did not result or did not emerge from the point you are making,it emerged from a resolution moved by Mr Sawyer who the other day made the most hysterical speech I have ever heard from a trade union leader where he has accused the District Party of policing his members with uniformed guards. I do not think he has ever been to Liverpool Some of his colleague have to involve themselves in a demonstration that we organised in support of their low pay campaign in the first period when Thatcher was election, I never saw Tom Sawyer there. Well you see all of this arose as the resolution of the proposal. Let us get the ground rules firmly established in the eyes of this NEC. I object to come across precisely what sort of attacks we were suppose to have made on the Party in Liverpool because all Sawyer notice if you could make this point here in your submission you made the point that Nalgo was criticized. Now are we saying in fact, chairman, that the DLP should not discuss the posture of the policy of a trade union. Are we say in fact, chairman, that ..... constitution that we should not carry a resolution for instance condemning Eric Hammond for

I would suggest for me to say to the Party that we can not discuss that .....

and I think that SOGAT and NGA will welcome that fact that we are supporting them in that position as indeed they have done

so therefore, chairman I do not think you are saying that the DLP cannot discuss the policies of this or that trade union. So if you are in fact allowing that pattern to take place, what you are then saying you can discuss the WATBU or NALGO or NUPE as long as you praise them and for God's sake do not criticize them. So we are very rapidly moving into a position leadership of the movement as long as you praise them that is the logic of the position that you are presenting here today.

Par (4)

A (5.50 pm) Tony Mulhearn

There is a series resolutions to statement which formulated by myself in conjunction with the officers. City council report

County Council report which I think again

the position of the Party. The report from the chairman of the

Joint Shop Stewards to the Party and then a whole series of how we

in fact could develope a campiagn

workforce Labour Party TUC Liaison committee needs to meet more

regularly. In fact we have been accused there chairman contrary to

what said about not having a enough meetings. Lobby on the Thursday

the 25th of July leaflets financial appeal tracing links with the

miners in other support areas in which you will recall were in

tremedouse difficulty. Inspite of the campaign that we were conducting

in Liverpool our role in relation to support for miners, and Liverpool is not a mining area,
was absolutely second to none. The 40th anniversary of the 45 Labour

Victory we are organising a fortune as far as that was concerned.

On the Health Service again possibly responding to request from NUPE

and COHSE members to give support in their struggles agains privatization,

on that, unfortunately one has to say very sadly that the leadership

of those unions are in fact

There wasn't difference of opinions there wasn't alternative policies pursued by certain individuals outside the party that will always happen in any democratic organisation. I also want to say of corse that we deprive some of the CLP's of some of there proper authority. Now again on the contrary any of the authority which were in the hands of the district labour party again was entirely in informity with the Liverpool district labour party and historically of course that party has always been the organising body and the co-ordinator for drawing together expression to the policies of the individual constituencies. Never ever at any time was there ever an organisational attempt to prevent a CLP doing what it was entitled to do or in fact to tell them to do something that they did not want to do. There were arguements between CLP's I can recall in the division for instance when Jimmy was the MP and if you recalled he defected to the SDP when he was always having quarrels with the district labour party that was totally consistent with somebody who was subsequently defected to the SDP. There was an arguement with Riverside after the fact after a leaflet they did with me was distributed by the district party. One of many many millions I might add we had a discussion with the officers of the Riverside consituency and an undertaking was reached that if they objected in the future to the distribution of leaflets we would meet to discuss it and that was resolved in an amicable fashion so chairman I reject entirely and there is no evidence to support the fact that we deprived the constituencies of any of there proper authority.

To quote from the rule book page 95 paragraph 5 when you talk about unconstitutionalised action or which I reject. Page 95 paragraph 5 which I quote 'Regulations and standing orders can never be as substitute for joint working and spirit fraternity in socialism indicated by practice rather than procedures, indicated by practice rather than procedures of the containing the rule book and that was a philosophy but we in Liverpool when Eddy Lloyd was the president when Huey D..... was the president when Bob Waring was the president when I was the president we always to that philosophy that we would resolve our differences based upon indicated by practice rather than procedures thats not to suggest for a moment that the procedures provided for in the rule book were always very carefully adared to.
Now chairman we come to the charge connected to the Labour Group which frankly chairman I have got to say is absolutely ..

Now when I reported that charge to the labour group people were rolling in the aisles with laughter and there was never any evidence to support the theory that I alligated to to the district party policies ehich dictate policies of the labour movement, absolute nonsense.

I have not reached these dates or specific examples of that now let me take the point which you raised about the Jimmy Dillon the taxi and Jimmy Dillon famous licence plate of Jimmy Dillon. I dont think we would have ever thought that Jimmy Dillons licence plate would have featured as part as a major discussion on the leading body of the labour party. Well let me tell you what happened, Jimmy Dillon who was in an awkward position, he was a councillor he also applied for a licence plate in order that he could earn a crust of that, and the labour group, he was perfectly entitled to this by the way, but the labour group felt that this could give bad publicity to the labour group and the party if in fact he received a license plate because you have got to have an understanding to the taxi trade, the taxi trade is peoples by various backgrounds .....

Laughter

I am glad you mentioned that because the the T&G in junction with the district labour party and council have now the highest number of taxi drivers in the T&G than in any other time and history and we have given every facility and all of the dubvious people have been rooted out. Has been rooted out in junction with the T&G and with
and they have done a good job. Now obviously because of that we were rejecting people of dubvious backgrounds, ex-eonvicts etc. who are charged or were charged with assault and battery and the taxi drivers under no circumstances do we want people like that driving cabs. They were rejected and people those people were watching and they got a solicitor by the name of Rex ..... comrades may be familiar with them who was waiting for the council to make their move which would give any indication that favouritism existed. Therefore when Jimmy Dillon applied for his plate we said Jimmy you are entitled to it the labour group not me said Jimmy you are entitled to it but eligedly if we give it to you all hell is going to break out. So the labour group as they always did with a very awkward subject submitted the problem to the executive of the
so if any one should be in the dock I suggest it should be the labour group for not dealing with that problem. They submitted it to the DLP chairman and I will tell you this as chairman I was at about five meetings that week on this question of this license plate. I would have preferred to have been some were else. Rather than having that as a charge chairman I thought that I was going to get some congratulations for the time that we put in for that license plate and in the end the DLP executive said to the labour group in our view this is the way you should handle it and we handled it and we resolved it. Now if you want to know how that was resolved I suggest you contact those comrades who were responsible to that committee. That is just an example any time a matter of the labour group is submitted to the DLP on the day to day running on the question of bonus schemes on the question of taxi licences on the question of negotiations with the union of the direct works department was submitted to the DLP either by the labour group itself or by an affiliated trade union .....

when we discussed the bonus scheme that was on the basis of an resolution being submitted by the T&G workers construction section that was the position we discussed those matters not in order to impose at a dictate policies of the labour group it was a specific request either from the affiliated organisation be it the G&M or the T&G specific resolutions from all organisations that was when it was discussed so therefore chairman I dont think there is a shred of evidence to support the charge that I caused the DLP to alligate the power to its own to dictate policy to the labour group I am sure that you read the letter from the labour group signed by John Hamilton, Derek Hatton and Tony the secretary and Jimmy P..... chief of that labour group they also reject that particular charge which is made against me by your self.
In connection with the question on whether or not we should deal with matters which are the property of the labour group, the resolution the in that statement or if you like that the district labour party doesn't have the right to discuss matters which the labour group are faced with to take decisions on on an day to day basis that is explicit in the proposal that you are making that we sont have the right to do it. What the rule books says from time to time the matters will be made by the labour group which in fact dont come within the broad terms of policy but the labour group will make this decision the rule book also says having said that it is essential that the views of the party are taken into account when the labour group makes its decsion that means in fact if the views of the party have to be taken into account. The matter first of all has to be debated inside the district labour party and the decision has to be taken because for the labour group to take the views into account the party has first of all to discuss it then it has to take a decision now what you are saying chairman is that mainly because the DLP takes a decision that dictates policies of labour groups it doesn't work like that. What actually happens is that the DLP takes the positions and then those decisions are taken into account by the labour group when they arrive at their decisions that is what it means it is provided for in the rule book under labour groups and labour authorities and it was with those provisons that the DLP always very therefore chairman on that score as well I reject entirely that particular charge that we have in fact alligated the power to dictate to the labour group.
Let me point out to you precisely what that rule says the labour party rule book page 95 para 2&3
'At the same time it is proper that the group on reaching decisions should consider and take account of any views that the local party may desire to express and provision of that is made in the model of standing orders'
entirely in conformity with the position doctored by the Liverpool DLP and I have got to say this also
Again I sought to buying members of the labour group to act on these issues of the DLP again I will refer to the letter to the labour group would be an attached resolution which indicates very carefully that the labour group condemns that particular charge levelled against me and indicating their opposition to that charge.

Now in relation to discussing matters of an national and international character again it is with some embarrassment that one even has to attempt to defend ones position in this particular matter. The philosophy of the party and all that being at ward level and branch level or constituency level regional level so on and so forth in fact you will recall chairman up until very recently the North West region in fact all of the regions of the party couldn't discuss international matters and it was so patently obsurd that they constitution in order to provide for that and to suggest that particularly aside from the philosophical concept of the party discussing matters of an international character who is to say that a sea xcorp like Liverpool that place immence pressures on the Liverpool social services because of the influx of refugees the problem that the National Union of Seaman have had with there flags of convenience and particular with that because he was involved with myself to retain the Belfast Liverpool transport the shipping line between Liverpool and Belfast were we were successful in that campaign are you suggesting for a moment that the Liverpool DLP shouldn't have discussed what was taking place in Belfast the decisions of the and declare with the National Union of Seaman in that particular campaign. I think that Sam McCluskey would have been perfectly entitled to come to this NEC meeting except those people aggravating their responsibilities plus the fact as Huey Dalton says in his submission as the chairman of the council he has been representing the city in Germany he is representing the city in Italy more recently in Spain now if he was asked to represent the city say in South Africa and he came to the district labour party to seek a position are you suggesting that the DLP that we are not prepared to discuss it with you its your decision . I think the party would be perfectly entitled to discuss the priority of going to Brussels or Germany or where ever particular in cases of South Africa and as you know John Hamilton moved a resolution in the City Council Chamber about 12 months ago calling for and also John had raised that matter himself inside the DLP because there was some dispute on whether or not we should with the district party said to John as far as we are concerned the DLP are always in link with the International Labour Movement and if you take that position you will have our full support.

So Chairman to argue that it is malpractice that it offends the constitution of this party to discuss things of an national and international character I would submit chairman even with you though you are levelling the charges you can not seriously support the very charges that your levelling against me I would suggest chairman that that is absolute nonsense apart from the fact that its been practiced since the DLP has been established since 1906 if you go back you will see references .....

I dont suppose any one would have thought that Jimmy Dillon license plate would feature as part of a major discussion on the leading body of the labour party. Let me tell you what happened, Jimmy Dillion was in an awkward position he was a councillor he had also applied for a licence plate in order that he could earn a crust of that and the labour group and he was perfectly entitled to this by the way but the labour group thought that it might give bad publicity to the labour group and the party if in fact he received a licence plate because you have got to have an understanding of the taxi trade.

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in Austria, the fall of France all of these matters were infact of course when there was a big demonstration organised led by Bessie Braddock amongst others and of course later on on the question of Nuclear Disarmament rearmament when Brockway, Bill Shafton, Crooks all these pillars of the movement, these pillars of the establishment, I say that with by the way to Brockway who I regard as a tremendous figure of the movement, they led a demonstration on the question of rearmament and consistent of the philosophy and the policy of this party. And you see Chairman, by suggesting that I am offending the constitutional guilty of malpractice, your suggesting to me that as Chairman of the party, after all this has been going on for several decades, I should on being elected President have stood up at first District Party presiding over and say "as from today there will be no more discussion on matters of a national or an international character. I suggest, Chairman, that the suggestion is so preposterous that it should not even be on the agenda of a serious body of this movement. A correction, Chairman with the

Sorry, sorry, I wouldn't want to stop you at all, can you tell me how long you are going to be because you are inconveniencing some of your colleagues only they want to get off and we have got to find out would you mind if we adjourn for a little while, have you got a long time to go yet?

I'll stay here as long as it takes you, well till midnight because I have only got today off work.

Well can we just adjourn for a few minutes because some of your colleagues who wanted to get off and and we want to make arrangements with them about what happens tomorrow and so on, o.k.

I do hope infact if this does continue that further opportunity will be given infact to elaborate on some of the points which has been made in the submissions by myself Jim and Jim

We'll adjourn for a few minutes now.

Joyce Can I explain why we have asked for the adjournment at the request of three members, Felicity Terry Harrison and Derek Hatton. Felicity and Terry Harrison are requesting that you adjourn hearing their case for several days, in order to give them the opportunity to brief their legal people about the case. I don't know why they haven't done it today and they've had all day to do it, but so far they have not been in touch with their and are asking several days adjournment to do that. They are also saying that they cannot be here tomorrow and the reason that they cannot be here tomorrow is because two of their witnesses cannot be here tomorrow and they are not prepared to come in without two of their witnesses.

What's wrong with that?

Joyce I didn't say there was anything wrong with it I am just trying to explain the position to the NEC.

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TONY MULHEARN - Chairman, I think I just completed the repudiation of the charging .. of the particular in connection with discussing matters of a national and international character. Now, could I say that the, in rejecting that charge we come to again rejecting NEC structures on FELS, SALEP and the sale of Militant at a party meeting. The latter one has been dropped by Larry. In connection with the other two, can I say that at no time did the District Party reject, and there is nothing in the minutes to suggest that, the instruction in connection with FELS and SALEP. The question of FELS was subject to clarification which hadn't been resolved at the time that the District Party was in fact suspended. SALEP itself, again, the same applied to that particular question.

Now, yes, we come to the question of the Local Government Panel, and again I fail to comprehend how these charges can be taken seriously. In the first place on charge (a), the procedure for inviting nominations for the panel for all affiliated organisations which you suggest offends the Party Constitution and breaches the Constitution. Again I specifically reject that particular charge. In the first place, the procedure for inviting nominations for the panel from all affiliated organisations has been practice and procedure in Liverpool since the time the panels were first established. And certainly since the Party was re-established after world war 2. That can be confirmed by the written submissions of John Hamilton, from Hughie Dalton a past president of the Party, from Jimmy Parry here who was in the capacity as friend and witness of the Chief Whip of the Party, and indeed by the comrades in the Labour Group. Added, apart from the fact that its been custom and practice, which in fact the Constitution of the Party specifically provides for, that when the rules for establishment of metropolitan district parties was established under the reorganisation in 1973/4, the submissions by the NEC at the time made specific allowances for local party variations. Now these are specifically provided for in the reorganisation document which I referred to in my submission. When the Party was re-organised again in 1983, when we had the re-establishment of the present Liverpool District Labour Party, the Constitution, the rules and practices and procedures of the Liverpool District Labour Party - there were two changes: that was in connection with the question of having more than one vice-president, which I notice you have dropped from the original list of charges. No reference at all was made, because the only printed document placed in front of the constituencies at that time which were called to approve in procedures on the rules for the new District Labour Party, the only document submitted in the evidence provided for those rule changes. Nothing else was changed. I'll make this point: that those proposals were carried out under the authority of Wally Edwards, the full time agent of the Party, member ratified by the the Regional Office, subsequently ratified by the National Executive Committee. Now that document, which is one sheet of paper, proposed certain alterations to the then

rules and Constitution of the Liverpool District Labour Party. Amendments. Now nowhere in those amendments did it seek to change the existing rules and constitution of the District Labour Party. Nowhere. In other words, everything remained the same except that which was amended by that statement.

Therefore, Chairman, the practice of inviting nominations to the panel from all affiliated bodies, namely from wards, Party branches, Trade Union branches, socialist societies (you know, the Social Health Association, the Socialist Education Association, etc), they were invited to the District Party in so far as the direct submissions were concerned. Recognising that the facility for the involvement of the constituencies was vital, on all of the application nomination forms there was a place for the constituency secretary to sign the document, to sign the nominating paper. That was adhered to. Now in so far as that particular clause was concerned, with the establishment of the TCC which further re-inforced my position, which further underpins my case, is that the TCC had been established in Liverpool. You will recall Chairman, although some people appear to have forgotten very rapidly, that that body was charged with taking over the responsibilities of the District Labour Party, with electing its own officers, which they duly did in accordance with the best procedures of the Party, presided over by ??, and one of the jobs it had to do was in fact appoint a panel for the May elections. During the course of those interviews by the TCC for nominations to the panel there were several nominations queried. And the query was raised: is it in order to accept these nominations to the panel because in fact they haven't been through constituencies, they've come direct from affiliated organisations - in other words from Party branches, from Trade Union affiliations. And I said "I am informed by the National Executive Committee that one of the charges that is laid against me, seeking my expulsion, is that we accepted in the past direct nominations from affiliated organisations". Now listen to this, this is very important. I'd like Neil to listen and all - if I tell a good joke there's no need to be laughing all the time. I'd like you to listen to this because it is very important. The Regional Officer over-ruled my observation, so did Mr Kilfoyle, over-ruled my observation and said no. He then pulled out the Constitution of the District Labour Party where it specifically said, and it was underlined, that the Liverpool District Labour Party, and I quote "shall invite nominations from Party branches, from affiliated Trade Union branches, from all affiliated organisations, direct to the Party". In other words they didn't have to go to the constituencies - he over-ruled me. That's Phil Robinson and Mr Kilfoyle, he's the chap who rips telephones out of walls, they in fact made it abundantly clear that it was in order for nominations to be submitted direct to the Party for interview for the panel by affiliated organisations. So Chairman, on that particular score I repudiate entirely the charge that Larry Whitty made about that offending the Constitution, or indeed constituting malpractice. On the contrary, the practice that was carried out by the Liverpool district Labour Party was in fact totally in accord with the

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practice, the procedures of the and the Constitution of Labour Party approved by the NEC and by the Regional Office. They were fully aware of what had gone on on that particular score.

Now Chairman, another charge laid against me is that during the course of interviews for the panel, I asked three questions. Charge (b), that the question I asked was "Who do you regard as the supreme policy making body in the City of Liverpool". The word supreme was never used. I think perhaps, you know, some comrades were thinking of the Soviet Union, confused it with the supreme soviet. But the word supreme was never used. What I was instructed to do by the Liverpool District Labour Party, at a time when Wally Edwards was the full-time agent, I was instructed by the Party to ask all nominees to the panel who in their opinion was the policy making body for the Party in the City, and the correct answer was, is in fact, the District Party. And on that particular score, that in no way suggested again, that that constituted my causing the DLP to arrogate to themselves power to dictate to the Labour Group. If I could remind you, this charge implies that I have acted incorrectly, and I would refer you to the rule book - page 44, clause 2, objects, (iii), "Policy of the Party is to formulate an electoral programme" - that's on page 44. On page 45 its even more specific: clause 7, general, small clause 1, "The electoral policy and programme for the elections shall be decided by this Party, the District Labour Party" - page 45. And therefore, to suggest in fact, that by asking nominees to the panel that particular question offends the Constitution I would say is absolutely absurd. Because I think you have to tell me, explain to me, how it offends the Constitution by merely asking somebody to confirm what is already contained in the Constitution. As it happens, most people knew, as you would expect from somebody who proposes to represent the Party on a public platform. Incredibly many people didn't know, and some people, I believe frankly, Chairman, were afraid to say that they recognised the DLP made policy because perhaps they had heard so much about intimidation that they perhaps felt that merely to confirm what was in the Constitution they were collaborating with the charge of intimidation. So on that particular score, Chairman, I reject entirely the charge placed against me by Larry Whitty that that offended the Constitution or that I was guilty of malpractice. Carrying out the instruction of the District Labour Party, which was agreed unanimously, which was never challenged by single delegate, which was never challenged by an affiliated organisation. The Region knew what the score was. Wally Edwards was the full-time agent, and on no single occasion was that method of asking questions ever, ever challenged by anybody.

The other two questions, for your information, were very straightforward. The first question was "Why do you wish to be a City Councillor?". And the third question was "Will you go to any branch to which you are invited for interview?". So therefore, Chairman, there was absolutely nothing wrong, and the District Party at all times, in connection with the panel, acted totally in accordance with the Constitution and the best

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procedures and practices of the Party.

Now, could I say about the Executive. Again usurping the power of the District Party in relation to nominees to the panel. Generally speaking, as long as the procedures were quite conducted in normal affairs, there was never any question of the Executive usurping the power of the Liverpool District Labour Party in relation to the panel. Because you will note, Chairman, that the procedures of District Labour Parties is this: a nomination is submitted to the Secretary by affiliated organisations. Those nominations are then placed in front of the Executive. The Executive then interviews nominations to the panel and makes recommendations to the Liverpool District Labour Party. That's the procedure. It's procedure all over on the District Labour Parties, and I have checked that. That is the procedure. The District Party Executive always acted totally in accordance with that procedure and it was only in areas provided for in the rules, which says very very clearly "In cases of emergency, or more specifically, where in fact there is an emergency, the Executive can in fact take measures, any measures it thinks fit, in order to ensure that we have a Labour candidate to fight an election." In other words, Chairman, if in fact we reach a position where an emergency comes up, say a ward has election for instance, two weeks before the election either the candidate drops dead or defects to the SDP, the Executive will then use its executive powers between DLPs to take somebody who is not on the panel - imagine the panel is ??? - who is not on the panel, but we can't get anyone who is on the panel because in some seats every ??? excuses as you well know. And say we can't get somebody, then the Executive will use its executive authority provided for in the rule book to appoint somebody to fight that seat and then seek ratification at a future District Labour Party meeting. That is specific power which is contained in the rule book for any executive to carry out.

Now in relation to sitting members not being included on the panels which was submitted to affiliated organisations. Now again that is not true. I think Larry and the inquisition team were badly informed by certain people who conducted a campaign of vilification in the most vile way against the Party in the City and frankly at odds continuously with the Riverside CLP, but unfortunately seem to received the support - they often quote you Neil, its quite incredible actually - but apart from these people, that the submissions to the affiliated organisations have carried the names of sitting councillors. Now where there has been a delay, it has been on this basis. Now again there is a rule which says very specifically, and I quote "The management committee may withdraw its endorsement of any nominee included on the list of endorsed members if, in the opinion of the management committee, there are changed circumstances relating to the nominee, provided that the Constituency Labour Party responsible for the nomination in the first place may appeal against such withdrawal." In other words, you can have a position, Chairman, where a sitting councillor is automatically placed upon the panel. That clause in the rules gives the

management committee the power to say, well there is changed circumstances since this bloke was elected. In the case involved, here we have the position where against Party policy, against Conference policy, a number of councillors have denounced the policy of the Party, have broken the whip, have voted with Tories and Liberals, for budgets which would have resulted in the redundancy of NUPE members, of G&M members, of Transport and General Workers members, and such was the wrath of the movement, there was one bloke who was actually removed two weeks before an election. Now, I took the view, personally, whilst understanding the wrath of the Party, from a tactical point of view it would have been incorrect to remove this bloke because they were determined he would stand, and we would have had a position where we would have had two Labour candidates in an election. Ernie Collett, who was the then Regional Secretary, contacted me, and he said we have an awkward position. He said, if in fact you remove him from the panel, then the comrades at national level will be very concerned. I went to the Executive and I said it was difficult position. I recognised the anger of the Party, and in fact on that basis, he was in fact put back on the panel. Now Larry Whitty has dropped that particular charge and I in fact give you that as an example - that somebody would only be removed from the panel if, in the opinion of the Management Committee, there were changed circumstances, and in fact that's provided for on the rule. And therefore, Chairman, we acted totally consistently in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the rules of the District Labour Party itself.

Now we go on, Chairman, about the number of panels that exist in Liverpool. Now since 1947, two years after World War II when the Party was re-constituted, the Party decided, having discussed this with all comrades, that it was clearly because of the numbers of people coming forwards for the panel, the Party in its wisdom decided that they would have an A panel, that is of retiring councillors. A B panel of those who have had a certain experience, certain ability, demonstrated their dedication to the movement, and they would in fact take the second layer of safe seats. The C panel was in fact regarded as a training ground for people, you know, to fight hopeless seats to give them a bit of experience. That was the position. Now that remains in force in Liverpool. In fact Jimmy Parry, as he says in his submission, was in fact, when Bill Sefton was in control, was a ward secretary, a hard grafter, but he remained on B panel I think for three years. He didn't complain - he didn't like it - but he didn't complain. And that was the position until 1973. The Party was reconstituted and we were informed that it was out of order to have more than one panel. Some time later, when we were discussing this matter, Wally Edwards (again as the full-time agent) said what goes on in other areas - Wally was an agent in Bolton for many many years - he said the best way to handle this is that on the basis of the observations from the regions we will scrap the three panels, and what we will have - what I propose - it that we'll have a main panel and a supplementary panel. The supplementary panel will be for people who, you know, need experience and so on and so forth. That was agreed -

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unanimously at the executive - it was recommended to the District Labour Party, endorsed unanimously at the District Labour Party. There wasn't a single challenge by any delegate, by any affiliated organisation. And Wally Edwards was totally convinced, and he's not given to telling lies, that the Region were aware of the arrangements so far as Liverpool District Labour Party was concerned in relation to the panel itself. So that was a proposal made by Wally Edwards, never challenged, agreed unanimously and it worked very well and worked quite effectively, and we never had any complaints until this mythical charade by the enquiry team was launched in Liverpool last November. And all these terrible things which have been going on, certainly way, way, way before my time, and way, way, way before Eric Heffer's time if it comes to that. And we're really going back a few years there, Eric? That in fact was going on.

CHAIR - Tony I wonder if I could ask you to wind it up a little bit?

TONY MULHEARN - Well you see Chairman, this is very important because - very important Chairman, and I think you made the point earlier on today that we will take as long as it takes. And I totally accord with that statement, because what's at stake. The stakes are very high, and you know and I do that certain members of this National Executive Committee are determined to get rid of me out of the Party at all costs

CHAIR - Well I don't know about that

TONY MULHEARN - You know as well as I do who I am referring to - we're all over 21 and we understand the position. I've no intention of watering down my submission because I've been around too long to accept the diluted position in terms of presenting my case, Chairman, with due respect to yourself. I hope you would afford me the facility that you indicated would be afforded this morning.

Now in relation to the issuing of panels of candidates to the CLPs and Party branches. Now again, that's always been practice. In other words, once you have a panel, you then submit it to the Party branch for them to get on with the job of appointing candidates. Now, one of the charges is that we sent them direct to the ward secretary, instead of first of all sending them to the constituency secretary, who in turn would then send them to the ward secretary. Now, I think comrades, you will appreciate the chaos that would exist if in fact that happened. Branches not getting the panels ... you see, Party practice arises out of experience. The Party Constitution arises out of experience, and the experience of the Party in Liverpool elsewhere has indicated that the agency designed most effectively to ensure that the affairs of the Party are conducted and expedited in the most effective way possible, are in fact the District Labour Parties, and that's why, always by the way with the total support of the ?C?/?D?LP, the panels were submitted direct to the ward organisation in order that they could get on

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with the job of selecting candidates and getting them into the field. So what I reject entirely is that that practice offends the Constitution, the rules, and the best procedures of the Party as contained in the rule book.

Now Chairman, on this question of the panel, charge (g), this charge relates to the fact that the DLP have decided to have an open ended panel to provide a supply of candidates for ordinary and by-elections. Again, based upon experience, what we'd found is that you have a panel, you have a closing date, assuming that you have candidates. Now maybe we have a higher rate of by-elections in Liverpool than many other cities. That's due to deaths, people leaving the area, and a fairly high turn-over because the pressures are very considerable - a fairly high turn-over of councillors. So what was proposed by Wally Edwards, again, the full-time agent, was that we have an open-ended panel. The purpose of that was that with an open-ended panel you are sure of a continuing flow of nominees from the Party to continually replenish the panel. Now that seems to me extremely good sense. And again, that was proposed by Wally who said this does not offend the Constitution - totally in accord with the procedures - the Region were aware that this was the case. Again, that was never challenged. In fact the bulk of the Party membership welcomed it because we had more wrangles and hassles of our people getting the nomination papers 24 hours late because there might have been a postal strike. So you are involved in a lot of wrangles about the deadline, and therefore the open-ended panel was proposed and, again, agreed unanimously by the Executive, agreed unanimously by the District Labour Party, never challenged by the Region, any delegate, or any of the affiliated organisations. That is the case as far as the open-ended panel itself is concerned.

Now Chairman, on the submission, which wasn't included in the original submission, was in fact distributed this morning. There was a collating error, when I was getting the thing together. This talks about a charge for District Labour Party meetings and what these charges say is that the calling of aggregates was an offence against the Party Constitution and there is no place for it in the Constitution itself. But of course a lot of practice goes on in the Party which isn't specifically provided for in the Constitution. And that's why in fact, the Constitution says, for instance, Object, Clause 2, small (ii) "to undertake in cooperation with constituency parties within the area propaganda, education and other activities related to local government," and small (v), "to coordinate constituencies as may be required by the constituency parties within the area". In other words, Chairman, you know as well as I do, that to provide every single aspect of activity within the Party, within the Rule Book, you'd have a volume that thick, which would continue to detain you because of the experience of the Party itself, because no party advances unless it changes its rules and constitution to correspond with the experience of the party itself. A party that doesn't change its rules and constitution to correspond to experience will in fact wither and die, and in fact it deserves

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to wither away and die. So those clauses in the Constitution in fact provide for other activities.

Now aggregates - again this word has assumed a new connotation since Mr Turnock got his tongue around the word - now aggregates merely mean, and they've been a feature of life in Liverpool - well Hughie Dalton in his submission indicates that they've been a feature of life in Liverpool and Eric will support that submission, and Eddie Loyden - they've been a feature of life certainly since I joined the Party in '63. An aggregate merely means what you have is an extended DLP meeting. That merely means that you call a meeting of delegates, and because it's an important issue, like a policy conference, and you see the necessity of involving the rank and file in the decision making process, in so far as the discussions are concerned, then we thought it, and the Parties probably thought it, very good sense to involve the rank and file in those discussions so that they are fully aware of the big issues, the important issues which face the Party because - I've been to meetings for many years, and one of the main complaints I have is that the members don't turn up, they don't turn up when you're discussing policy, you can't get them to meetings. You only see them at the AGM when they're voting for office. Now to overcome that, the Party felt in Liverpool that it was very good practice to involve the members in the important issues. Now that worked very, very effectively. Let me make it absolutely clear, in the charges says this practice led to an erosion of the authority of, and a deterioration in the conduct of management committee of the DLP. Nothing could be further from the truth. As a matter of fact, the authority of the District Labour Party assumed, enormous proportions, and in fact any deterioration in the conduct of the management committee was virtually non-existent. If you say that cut and thrust of political debate and the difference in the clash of ideas is a deterioration in the conduct of the management committee, then I think its an incorrect description of what went on. Because what in fact happened is that during the course of those aggregates, what used to happen is that the votes would take place with delegates first of all voting, and then a consultative vote with the Party membership. I think the biggest vote against on any occasion was about a dozen. At the last District Labour Party aggregate I think there were 700 people present, and I think 12 voted against the Executive recommendation.

And I'd like to scotch this nonsense that intimidation took place. And I heard Tom Sawyer, I mean frankly, Chairman, I was embarrassed when he said that in Liverpool District Labour Party "uniformed security men strutted around the room intimidating his members". That is an absolute, well the word in the dictionary, was a lie. No such thing took place, and as a matter of fact those who come out with perhaps the most, let's say aggressive, language, have in fact defected and are in a position of attacking the District Labour Party and if you want me to name names on that score I'm quite happy to do so. There was never any, in fact the charge made against me, and it was contained in

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Hughie Heaton's submission, is that I was too insistent and too anxious to ensure the projection of minority opinion to the extent that the minority in the Liverpool District Labour Party got time out of all proportion to their numbers to make a case and to curb abuse of the majority position inside the District Party. Now, they hurl abuse, now abuse was hurled from both sides. But I've been in this movement a long time, and if you go to workers' meetings on the issues where the stakes are high, then the language does get strong. I refer, if I may quote an example, to the Party Leader's language about Liverpool City Councillors requiring psychiatric treatment. Or opponents being regarded as nazists. The last time, by the way, for your information, Chairman, a senior politician used that kind of language, was when Julius Rosenberg, nazi theoretician, referred to the Jews as nazists. I'll say no more about that. But in terms of strong language being used, Chairman, ...

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with the job of selecting candidates and getting them into the field. So what I reject entirely is that that practice offends the Constitution, the rules, and the best procedures of the Party as contained in the rule book.

Now Chairman, on this question of the panel, charge (g), this charge relates to the fact that the DLP have decided to have an open ended panel to provide a supply of candidates for ordinary and bye-elections. Again, based upon experience, what we'd found is that you have a panel, you have a closing date, assuming that you have candidates. Now maybe we have a higher rate of by-elections in Liverpool than many other cities. That's due to deaths, people leaving the area, and a fairly high turn-over because the pressures are very considerable - a fairly high turn-over of councillors. So what was proposed by Wally Edwards, again, the full-time agent, was that we have an open-ended panel. The purpose of that was that with an open-ended panel you are sure of a continuing flow of nominees from the Party to continually replenish the panel. Now that seems to me extremely good sense. And again, that was proposed by Wally who said this does not offend the Constitution - totally in accord with the procedures - the Region were aware that this was the case. Again, that was never challenged. In fact the bulk of the Party membership welcomed it because we had more wrangles and hassles of our people getting the nomination papers 24 hours late because there might have been a postal strike. So you are involved in a lot of wrangles about the deadline, and therefore the open-ended panel was proposed and, again, agreed unanimously by the Executive, agreed unanimously by the District Labour Party, never challenged by the Region, any delegate, or any of the affiliated organisations. That is the case as far as the open-ended panel itself is concerned.

Now Chairman, on the submission, which wasn't included in the original submission, was in fact distributed this morning. There was a collating error, when I was getting the thing together. This talks about a charge for District Labour Party meetings and what these charges say is that the calling of aggregates was an offence against the Party Constitution and there is no place for it in the Constitution itself. But of course a lot of practice goes on in the Party which isn't specifically provided for in the Constitution. And that's why in fact, the Constitution says, for instance, Object, Clause 2, small (ii) "to undertake in cooperation with constituency parties within the area propaganda, education and other activities related to local government," and small (v), "to coordinate constituencies as may be required by the constituency parties within the area". In other words, Chairman, you know as well as I do, that to provide every single aspect of activity within the Party, within the Rule Book, you'd have a volume that thick, which would continue to detain you because of the experience of the Party itself, because no party advances unless it changes its rules and constitution to correspond with the experience of the party itself. A party that doesn't change its rules and constitution to correspond to experience will in fact wither and die, and in fact it deserves

TAPE 13 - TONY MULHEARN - 7.30 pm

Hughie Dalton's submission, is that I was too lenient and too anxious to ensure the projection of minority opinion to the extent that the minority in the Liverpool District Labour Party got time out of all proportion to their numbers to make a case and to hurl abuse at the majority position inside the District Party. Now, they hurl abuse, now abuse was hurled from both sides. But I've been in this movement a long time, and if you go to workers' meetings on the issues where the stakes are high, then the language does get strong. I refer, if I may quote an example, to the Party Leader's language about Liverpool City Councillors requiring psychiatric treatment. Or opponents being regarded as maggots. The last time, by the way, for your information, Chairman, a senior politician used that kind of language, was when Julius Rosenberg, nazi theoretician, referred to the Jews as maggots. I'll say no more about that. But in terms of strong language being used, Chairman, ...

TAPE 14 8.00-8.30PM - TONY MULHEARN

Tony Mulhearn - . . . and of course when Mr Hattersley accused Labour coucillors and the Party of literal and absolute corruption, when there was not one shred of evidence to support those assertions, there has never been one shred of evidence produced, and we're still waiting for a withdrawal of those scurrilous remarks which were aimed at Labour councillors at the height of a crisis when the District Auditor was in the process of removing us from office - loyal Labour councillors who had put everything on the line.

And if you want to talk about strong language, Chairman, I have never heard language used like that by trade union leaders or party leaders against rank and file members of this party.

So therefore, Chairman, the argument about initimidation and coarse language, I believe, can be levelled very much more readily where we had Mr Sawyer yesterday describing the practices of the Liverpool District Labour Party from a man who's never been near the place as fascist in character. I think the most hysterical statement I've ever heard from a trade union leader in all my years in this movement. What took place in Liverpool, and it was contained, by the way, in those four submissions and in the report itself where they were compelled to admit that I conducted the affairs of that Party in accordance with the highest standards of democratic conduct in the Liverpool District Labour Party.

Ernie Collett was asked, did he have any problems with the Liverpool Labour Party. He said, none at all. I asked Jim Mason, was he satisfied with the way I conducted the meetings. Jim Mason said, "Tony, I'm always satisfied with the way you conduct meetings." Two days before the Party was suspended, Felicity Dowling, on my instigation, contacted Ernie Collett and said, "Ernie, we've read a lot of reports in the paper about criticisms by you of the affairs of the District Labour Party." Ernie Collett said, "I don't know what you're talking about. We've got no complaints."

A circular, Chairman, was sent out from head office saying that before any action was taken against Party units, that Party unit should have an opportunity of answering any charge before action was taken. There was never a single opportunity given to the Liverpool District Labour Party to answer the charges. I was never asked to comment on any charge that was made; the Regional Office never raised any objection; and the Regional officials were present at about six of those meetings that occurred before suspension took place and not one single occasion did they approach the Chair and say, "We think you're out of order on this or that aspect." On not one, single occasion, Chairman. That's the situation that we're talking about.

All of those charges in that sense were completely fabricated. And I think the fact that there were, between September 5th and

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November 27th, there were less than 7 meetings of delegated members that took place, aggregate meetings, in a 10 week period, I think is a tribute to the Party, because a testimony to the fact that the Liverpool District Labour Party was anxious that all of the members be involved in those discussions as those events unfolded. I think it was a model of applying the democratic process in action, translating into action in so far as involving the members themselves were concerned. Now, one of the charges is that the DLP rules and Clause 1 of Standing Orders specifically states, don't provide for calling meetings that regularly. What the DLP rules does say, and Clause 1 of the Standing Orders says specifically , quote: "Special and emergency meetings may be convened on necessity." And could I say, Chairman, the justification (and again I would like you to listen to this carefully), the justification for calling those meetings has never been challenged. Not even by the 8-man inquisition team that came to Liverpool. The justification for calling those meetings has never been challenged, because it can't be challenged, because the events justified the calling of those meetings, and I think a criticism could have been levelled if we hadn't have called those meetings.

Now, one of the charges was that adequate notice wasn't given and the venues of the meetings was changed at the last minute, the implication being that this was done to confuse delegates and in fact deprive them of attending those meetings. Unfortunately, David Blunkett subscribed to that in an article in Tribune, basing (and I'm not blaming David because I don't think he's a deliberate liar), he bases observations on the majority report, which was based upon downright lies, and in it he makes the same point. Well, let's make the NEC quite clear of the position.

I wonder, Chairman, could I ask a point. The fact that the Leader and the Deputy Leader are not participating in this meeting, does that exclude them from voting at the end of this session?

ROY HATTERSLEY - Don't play silly games.

TONY MULHEARN - Well, are you listening or aren't you? You're prepared to listen to everybody else. Well, listen to me.

?? - We're all listening to a lot of stories you're telling us as well. We're taking it all in.

TONY MULHEARN - And it can all be substantiated.

?? - I mean all the asides. Okay, okay.

TONY MULHEARN - It can all be substantiated, Chairman, I can bring witnesses to that effect.

?? - Will you get on with it?

TONY MULHEARN - And could I say, Chairman, that those charges

again I totally reject. What actually happened was that all delegates received notice by first class post in good time, given the pressure of events. It was the responsibility of the Constituency secretaries and the branch secretaries to inform their members, who were not delegates that they were entitled to attend the aggregate meeting, if they so desired. That was the position. All delegates were informed by first class post. It was backed up by statements in the Echo and on Radio City and Radio Merseyside and even, now and again, on the national television media. And in any case, even if we were compelled to alter the venue to a bigger room at a later stage, the members were informed and I think we would have been open to even greater criticism if the members who turned up couldn't have got into the meeting because the room was too small. In any event, in cases where that happened, the alternative venue was never more than a ten-minute walk away, because you have the municipal annexe, you have the AUEW hall, you have Transport House, (the trade unions being very, very co-operative) and all of those are within a ten-minute walk from each other. So, this question, this idea that members were deliberately excluded on the basis of manoeuvres and machinations doesn't bear up to a serious scrutiny to the facts. And therefore, Chairman, on that score as well I totally reject the idea that measures were carried out in order to frustrate the intention or desires of members to attend those meetings.

And could I say, Chairman, the rule book says the success of the consultative arrangements depends not so much on standing orders, but on the spirit of good will and co-operation of those concerned - that's between the Labour Group and the Party. And the last sentence of paragraph 4 says, in the Party rule book, page 99 and 95, quote: "Regulations and standing orders can never be a substitute for joint working in a spirit of fraternity and socialism indicated by practice rather than procedure".

Now, I would like to make this point, Chairman. Larry Whitty pointed out in fact that the District Party or the aggregates dictated policy of the Labour Group. Let me tell you what happened in the final stages. You mention the gnomes of Zurich. We're very pleased for this opportunity to scotch all the nonsense which has been spoken about the gnomes of Zurich and how in fact the District Labour Party or the aggregates dictated policy to the Labour Group. As a matter of fact on that occasion and on most of the occasions where these matters were discussed, on that occasion the issues were actually discussed in the Labour Group. The Labour Group then submitted the matter to the Executive. The Executive then submitted those proposals to the aggregate. First of all they were endorsed unanimously by the Labour group, then unanimously by the Executive (although I think there might have been one vote against because of some technical illusions of the trade union) and that was adopted in a meeting of 700, by 684 votes with I think it was 16 against. That was the meeting that I was accused of intimidating 680-odd members in voting to support the Executive recommendation. So you can see, Chairman, on most occasions where the very important affairs of the Labour Group were discussed, it was actually the

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Labour Group who initiated those discussions, Group spokesmen made their report to the Executive and then the Executive made its report to the GMC and the visitors that turned up. So in that sense, Chairman, the procedures of the Party were meticulously adhered to as provided for in the rule book, which is this red one, Rule Book for '84/'85. And I'm absolutely confident, Chairman, that there is never any substance to the charge that malpractice took place in Liverpool. There hasn't been a single proven charge that intimidation took place. In fact, one of our problems was that people sometimes came in the worse for wear and I seem to recall, Chairman, that one of the people you're interviewing at some time in the future, and I asked Peter Hillier to make a note of it, Terry Harrison, was rowdily heckled on more than one occasion by those who subsequently ended up signing the LCC document and whingeing about intimidation, when they in fact are some of the best exponents of heckling. And that's fine. No problem. It's part and parcel of the rough and tumble of politics. But then don't accuse other people of initimidation when you're one of the best exponents of those words.

So, Chairman, that's the position as far as the charges against me is concerned. On the question of malpractice of the conduct of the meetings, the submissions by my witnesses indicate, and even my worst enemies are compelled to admit, thatI conduct the meetings in a way which sometimes offends the majority because I bend over backwards to accommodate the minority. In relation to the municipal panel, I reject those charges entirely because apart from the question of practice and procedures that have existed for years, the provisions that are in the rule book, and those departures which come under the flexibility clause in the rules and constitution of the District Party, were in fact approved and proposed by full-time agents of this Party and carried out and continued with the knowledge of the Regional Office. And as far as the panel is concerned, Chairman, again we meticulously adhered to, in fact, the procedures laid down and I can tell you this, that I've had to make Chairman's ruling (and brought anger on myself from that section of the Party which is the left section, who have accused me of being a little bit too soft), Chairman's rulings that certain individuals should be on the panel and there's nothing we can do about it. I've made those rulings in the past to conform with the procedures of the Party and I'm quite happy to give you names of where that's happened.

So on every score, Chairman, on every score, on the question of the aggregates, on the question of giving members adequate notice, on the conduct of Party affairs and this nonsense about an army of uniformed security guards, I ask the comrades present to totally dismiss that charge as not even meriting consideration. Therefore, Chairman, that's my submission and I'm quite happy to answer any questions which the NEC may care to propose.

CHAIRMAN - Anybody want to ask any questions?

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TONY BENN - Well, just to sum up what you said because I've made a very careful note. I don't know - are we entitled to take all the charges now, everything, including the question of the Militant tendency membership?

-- .....

-- No. we've dealt with the Militant tendency.

TONY BENN - Well, I just want to go over the points to be clear. First of all, given what you've said about the charge that you were a secret member of the Militant tendency, would you agree with me that in view of the assurances that you have given, if the Executive reaches a contrary view they would be saying you are a liar.

TONY MULHEARN - Yes.

TONY BENN - Right. The second point is you described in great detail the operations of the District Labour Party. Were there any occasions when you over-rode the collective decisions of the District Labour Party as Chairman and disregarded them? If not, would it not be correct to say that every one of the decisions that you announced were collectively taken and you cannot especially be picked out as being responsible for decisions that were collectively taken.

TONY MULHEARN - I would say you're absolutely correct on that score. Could I in fact, the questions I've posed to the NEC, in fact, on page 10 of my submission, can I pose the following questions. As these charges are levelled against me, should they not be levelled against, 1) . . .

TONY BENN - That's the point I'm on.

TONY MULHEARN - . . . all the officers who have proved the procedure and practices, 2) all the members of the EC who approved procedures and practices, 3) all delegates who approved the procedure and practices, 4) all members of the Labour Group who allegedly allowed me to dictate policy to them, and 5) the regional officers who were aware of the long-standing practices and procedures of the Liverpool Party and who never raised an objection, if, as you alleged, they breached the constitutional rules and standing orders of the Labour Party and the Liverpool District Labour Party? I pose those questions.

TONY BENN - And can you confirm, because I think you perhaps answered half the question, that at no stage throughout the whole of this period where you've had responsibility, have there been any complaints whatever about the conduct of the District Party either by the regional or national officials of the Party and secondly, by the regional or national officials of any trade unions.

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TONY MULHEARN - There has never been any complaint. On the contrary, when the question has been posed, they have indicated their complete satisfaction with the way the affairs have been conducted.

TONY BENN - And can I ask you this last question? The periods when you had responsibility, have been periods of considerable electoral success for the Labour movement in Liverpool in contradistinction to the years that went before when the Party collapsed. Do you associate the very active work of the District Party and of the Labour Group with the electoral success of the Party and would you like to say anything about that, because during the period you've had responsibility, the Party nationally has not done very well, the Party in Liverpool appears to have done very well, and I wondered if you would like to comment on that. Since some of the arguments for your expulsion are based on the fact that if we don't expel you we're bound to do badly nationally, whereas it would appear from the figures that during your period if the Party nationally had done as well as you've done in Liverpool we'd all be in a much stronger position.

TONY MULHEARN - In relation to the first question you posed about whether or nor I over-ruled any of the decisions, can I say if that would have happened, I wouldn't be sitting here today as the elected President of the District Labour Party. Those who know the Liverpool character will very swiftly have removed me if I would have over-ruled any of the decisions that the decision making body in fact took. In connection with, though, the period of Labour success since I came to office, I think I was elected, I think I'm in my 5th term coming up for my 6th, (and I'm not suggesting for a moment that the electoral success was due entirely to my occupying the Chair, I'm not suggesting that for a moment - it just so happened, one could say it was co-incidental), nevertheless the facts are that since occupying the Chair of the District Labour Party, the electoral position of the Labour Party (and that's what it's all about, because I think Neil made the point at the last election the essential pre-requisite of translating our policies into action to win power) and since 1980, Labour polled 52,000 votes. In '81 that had risen to 61,000. In '83 it increased to 74,000. In '84, we actually polled 90-odd thousand Labour votes which is the highest Labour vote in the post-war period. And that's given the fact that the population of the city has declined drastically as you will know. That followed, by the way, an election campaign conducted by the Liberals the likes of which we've never seen; conducted by the way, following a period when there was actually slips on the bottom of Liberal leaflets saying if you think the Marxists should be kicked out of the Labour Party, fill this form in and send it to Michael Foot. And for the first time in the history for 50 years, the Liberals introduced religion into Liverpool politics in order to split the working class vote. Inspite of that the Party achieved the highest Labour vote in the post-war period. And one can say in fact that during the period of my occupying the Chair, Labour has gone from strength to

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strength. And even on this occasion, inspite of the fact that again Liberal leaflets didn't have to use their own quotes - they quoted Roy Hattersley and his famous, unsubstantiated charge of literal corruption - inspite of all that, we got the third largest Labour vote in the post-war period and in fact, and in fact the vote of the Liberal Party increased directly as a result of the collapse in the Tory vote. Fortunately, weather-wise, so on and so forth a certain amount of confusion, many of our Labour voters didn't turn out. But in terms of the overall opposition vote, what actually happened, the Tories dropped 16,000 votes, 10,000 of those votes shifted to the Liberals and the Labour vote remained solid - a remarkable achievement by any standards, given everything that had been held against us. So the observation I would make is that the activities of the Party in Liverpool have done an enormous amount of good for Labour both in terms of recruits to the Party and their translating socialism into practice. I would suggest, Chairman, if any member of the NEC has the opportunity, they should come to Liverpool, we'll organise a bus for them, we'll take them around the city and we'll show them the marvellous achievements that have been carried out by the Liverpool City Council whereby for the first time in a hundred years, we're actually building parks in inner city areas, the new housing is superior than in the private sector and anybody who comes to Liverpool is compelled to accept, (and that's why in fact we've got 100% support of the construction unions) compelled to accept the magnificent work which has been done by Liverpool City Council.

?? - I just want to ask about the aggregate meetings. I don't think there should be a scratch my back I'll scratch your one. When you said you had 700 people at the aggregate meetings, how were their cards checked and tell me, did the joint shop stewards committee have an open invitation.

TONY MULHEARN - No, the invitations to the aggregate meetings was to the Party membership, first of all delegates and then to the rank and file of the Party. The cards were checked - we had two doors and you'll appreciate that always with big meetings the control has to be fairly good but at the same time flexible. We had two tables where people's Labour Party cards were checked and all of the delegates were admitted to the meeting - that was given priority - and the open invitations to the joint shop stewards committee was on the basis that they were Labour Party members and were entitled to come, but again only those being delegates would be entitled to vote.

**NB Tape 290 - difficult to hear clearly **

ERIC HEFFER - I would like to say to Tony, I'm assuming that you've read carefully the statement and letters that you've sent, I'm sure you would agree ?? one of the most well respected Party members in Liverpool. There's a long record of city councillors
who . . . a member of the A??? like myself ... also a respected trade unionist .. . delegate practically everytime there's a

union conference and so on. And I think he'll also agree with me that he is somebody you would call perhaps one of the traditional members, somebody who more or less I suppose of the old Tribune left. Is it not clear on the basis of what he says that you in fact are doing no different than any previous president has done so far as the Liverpool Party is concerned, except in the sense that ?? thought you were too tolerant and probably possibly I'd have thought you too tolerant .. I think you may also have been more than tolerant in relation to minority points of view. Would you not agree that this submission by Hugh Dalton (and I put this to you because I want the Executive to understand it) is that a man who is more respected in Liverpool than most, a highly respected individual, a quiet man, never been a bombastic man, never been somebody to thrust himself forward, well respected by everybody not only in the movement but also in the city and had we not have abolished the Lord Mayoralty he of course would have been Lord Mayor, but we abolished it and he became Chairman. Now, I just want you to answer that point because it seems to me that's the most important submission by anybody of a long-standing comrade in Liverpool and I think it's the most important letter and I would like to have your views on it.

TONY MULHEARN - Well, Chairman, Hughie Dalton, as Eric says, has a tremendous history in the movement and in a fact on a guarantee is probably the only chairman of the major authorities who is in fact still the branch secretary of his UCATT branch. In other words Hughie has maintained his links with the rank and file of the movement and his record in terms of standing on Party policy to the extent in fact that in the great rent struggles of the middle sixties, Hughie was chairman of the Housing committee when Lord Sefton was leader of the City Council and rather than implement rent increases against the wishes of the old Labour Party, Hughie Dalton in fact resigned and Bill Hart who's an ex-member of the National Union of Seamen. who Sam McCluskie probably knows, in fact took over as Chairman of the Housing Committee. And that is the integrity of the man that he resigned rather than go against Party policy, against the wishes of the council leadership at that time. And it gave me, I must say, a particular pleasure and satisfaction to receive such, what I believe, is a fine submission from Hughie Dalton. He remains unflinchingly based upon Party policy and even though he's been Chairman of the Council now, he's in his fourth year, which again is a testimony, (I think he's probably the longest serving council chairman in the councils) is a testimony to the esteem in which the movement hold him. And I make the observation to answer the question that I think I'm particularly pleased at receiving such a fine submission from such a comrade with his history in the movement. He's now 70 and has spent the best part of his active life in one capacity or another as an active member and a public representative of the Party.

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ALEX KITSON - Yes, Tony. You haven't made any reference at all

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to the trade union ?? in Liverpool one way and another. NALGO, and this is following your declaration that there was going to be 37% redundancy notices posted out, how we ??evolved?? that. My own union, who even at this time only a couple of weeks ago took a decision to help Liverpool. But the Transport and General Workers Union had a meeting in the stadium and a decision was taken in the stadium as to what was going on and where the divisions were. Now there were divisions in the trade union movement. We know NALGO such a ?? but we know the stand other unions made. There was strong criticism made of the union. Now, you've not made any point about that. There's no cover on that at all that there was opposition to the kind of things that were being done in Liverpool, not only council-wise, District Labour Party-wise or otherwise so far as the trade union movement was concerned. Unfortunately there's no member of the GMW here to tell us what had happened in the GMW. There's no member of the NALGO here to tell us what happened. But could you tell us the backbone of what's going to happen now, and you know it as well as I do, the backbone of surcharges and what have you is going to be the trade union movement. Now, will you tell us that there was opposition. It was not a clear cut situation, Tony, that everybody was jumping on the bandwagon and saying it was right and this is the way we're going. Be fair. If you do nothing else, be fair and tell us what the trade union movement did for you and ?? as to what actions that you were taking.

TONY MULHEARN - I mean, Chairman, I think you recall in my statement, I pointed out that there was rows, there was internal conflict, all was not sweetness and light - as one would expect. In fact I referred to the abuse, the strong language which was hurled from one side to the other as one would expect in positions of high tension and I'm sure Alex in his history in the industrial movement has, you know, vast experience . . .

ALEX KITSON - And in Liverpool dockers.

TONY MULHEARN - . . . of course at those meetings. Yes, absolutely. but let me say this about the Transport and General Workers Union. The Transport and General Workers Union at rank and file level have indicated their total support for the position of the Liverpool City Council. At the mass meeting in the stadium, their opposition wasn't based on, by the way, on the question of the redundancy notices - that's being used in a most unprincipled fashion. Let me say this: we made a tactical error. For this reason, for this reason, what we underestimated was how the enemies of the Liverpool City Council would use that particular question as a weapon against us. Let me say this: at rank and file level at a meeting of 2 and a half thousand Transport & General Workers' members, when they heard the case, overwhelmingly supported the issuing of those notices. The G&M overwhelmingly supported the issuing of those notices. NALGO came out in opposition, NUPE came out in opposition and that's fine. No complaints from us. If they didn't like that particular tactic then fine, that's what the movement's all about. In the end, we withdrew those notices, having indicated

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that they would never be implemented in any case. So you can say we weren't guilty of an offence against the workforce because those who wanted to understand understood exactly what was going on. Inspite of what the leadership of the G&M said, that the rank and file G&M lads at local level accepted 99.9% voted for that particular tactic. We're happy about it. But they recognised that in order to keep the cash going it was important that that gesture be made - a tactical move which I believe, on reflection, because of the opposition and the opportunity it gave to our enemies to implement it, to use it against us, from that point of view, an error. I accept, Alex, there were battles with the trade unions on this or that issue, but I tell you, until the last two weeks, the trade union support was absolutely fantastic from UCATT, from the T&G, the manual workers who saw the buiding work that was going on, the construction work and to this day, UCATT (who, by the way, is dominated by the Communist Party) organised a demonstration in Liverpool in the week before the elections. I was invited to address them as the guest speaker of Liverpool City Council. The slogan of the demonstration was full support to the Liverpool City Council. They put out a leaflet saying, "Vote Labour on Thursday" as the only people in this city, the only political party which will look after the working class. That was the position of UCATT because they saw what we had achieved in terms of construction. So we've never suggested, Chairman, that all was sweetness and light, that there were no problems between this or that union leader. I've never suggested that for one moment. But where we have the ability, I would say this, to go and speak to the rank and file as we did in relation to the T&G, then . . .

End of tape

Tape 15 - Tony Mulhearn

Tony Mulhearn:

..(?) and one of your officials came up and he got a bit upset because apparently somebody made a remark to him and on that base he did launch an attack upon the Liverpool City Council. that's past history and I'm not here today to justify or argue in fact that we didn't upset this or that Trade Union leader. That's always the way of the Movement and I - none of us would be sitting in this room today if in fact we severed links with our comrades because we had an argument with them. And therefore - yes - there was differences but at the end of the day - and to this day, by the way - the T & G in Liverpool still fully support us.

Roy Hattersley: Mr Mulhearn, earlier in the afternoon you said that you defend the right of the district party to discuss the big issues - Nicaragua, South Africa. I wonder if you could tell us why the district party discussed - for instane - the dispute between Mr Bracken Davies and a Welsh Labour Party? I think it discussed that on three occasions. Why the district Labour party discussed internal matters affecting the Blackburn (?) Labour Party. Why the district Labour party discuseed the dispute in the Student movement between one student organisation and another?

Tony Mulhearn: Why?

Roy Hattersley: Yes.

Tony Mulhearn: Well, actually, the way the party is constructed. Affiliated organisations submit resolutions and the discussion takes place on those resolutions and the delegates vote accordingly.

Roy Hattersley: Do you think it's right the district party should discuss those thing?

Tony Mulhearn: Oh, aye, I think - I mean - it's not a question of what I believe is right, I think it's a question of what the movement seeks to do. What the movement has decided it's competent for them to discuss. Obviously on those occasions the party was very concerned that certain - as I recall - that certain authoritarian moves were taking place against party members in certain areas and felt obliged and in fact had the moral responsibility to comment on it. I mean - I tell you what was quoted on many occasions - was the statement of Pastor in Nazi Germany when Pastor said and I wasn't a jew so I didn't protest when the jews were taken away. I wasn't a socialist so I didn't protest when the socialists were taken away. I wasn't a communist so I didn't protest when the communists were taken away. And when they came for him there was no-one to protest. that was always quoted - quoted quite extensively. and the district party has always had the tradition of taking a stance on matters that they believe are of great importance to the democratic functioning of the Movement. Whether that be in Blackburn (?), Brecon or Fascist Chile. And I don't doubt they will continue to do so and it will be a very brave person who tries to stop them from doing it.

Roy Hattersley: And you think it was purely coincidence that in each of these issues which many people would regard as not the appropriate subject for discussion at the district party, the district party invariably came out on what was popularly described as the Militant side of the argument.

Tony Mulhearn: well you see, Chairman ...

Tony Benn: No, on a point of order .. to argue that people who are opposed .....supporters of militant ... is absolutely ..no I think it's a very important point to make

Voice: point of order, Chairman ..

Roy Hattersley: Can I put the question again?

Voice: .... he can .he is able to answer without your help

Tony Mulhearn: yes, yes - I mean - you know - I think that's a subject of assessments, Roy, I think you, yourself would only be able to make that assessment if you read the Militant every week and then you compare what Militant says and what the resolutions are carried by the Liverpool district Labour party. I mean, that's a matter for you to judge. I would say in the main on the matters of party democracy on the matters of campaigning for the socialist decisions at Party conference, the district Labour party took those decisions as indeed national conference has done on many occasions and probably if you read the pages of the Militant you would find that in the main they correspond to the issues that Militant campaigns for. Now, I am sure that if that's your assessment of the situation then you must make that judgement based upon your understanding of what Militant stands for.

Chair: Frances? then I've got John and David and then that's it.

(noise)

Dennis Skinner: I've had my hand up for ages.

Sam McCluskey: - it is quarter to ten. I mean don't spin it out

Dennis Skinner: I'm not spinning anything out.

Frances Curran: It seems to me that the charges levelled against Tony Mulhearn and some of the other comrades that will be coming in later is that the involvement and interference by the DLP in the CC .....council and also by binding members of the Labour group on the City Council to actual decisions of the DLP. Now, I have got some questions that I want to ask Tony on that but I want to ask a question about what he mentioned earlier - he wanted to call Jimmy Parry as a witness and given that statement and also the fact that you would know better that most that Jim Parry would know better than most because he's the chief whip in the Labour Group about some of the questions I want to about whether or not that is a serious charge and can he throw some light on that and some clarification from him. I don't know what the position is about that ? About Jimmy giving ....

Chair: Tony asked for Eddie Wright and Eddie's gone back ..

France Curran: He asked for Jimmy Parry as well..

Chair: Yes, but stage by stage, Eddie's gone. We have mentioned the bit about the size of the Militant in ..... Jimmy Parry in that statement. You haven't indicated again whether you still want Jimmy to comment.

Tony Mulhearn: I am sorry - yes I would request that Jimmy Parry act as a

friend and a witness.

Chair: Well I think we have to decide haven't we whether Jimmy can be a witness or not. If that's the way we're going.

Tony Mulhearn: Well can we ask another question?

(indescipherable)

Frances: One of the points is ....do you want me to ask Tony the questions? The first on is - on the question of the number of dc meetings that took place because that is one of the major charges - Larry deliberated on this point - going back as far as 1983 and 1984 and 85. The comrades in the room, who take part in the normal day to day running of the Labour party in their area and are delegates to the district Labour party then obviously there is no need to inquire as to why he would need more meetings - of general management committees or executive committees. I think its necessary to explain that and it hasn't been properly brought out in your contribution. Could you give us a bit of the flavour of the decisions that had to be taken in meetings - of those decisions and why there was so many meetings of the EC. I think that perhaps if you can throw some light on that. It may help our understanding of it.

Tony Mulhearn: Well, I think Chairman, in relation to that question one would appreciate that between the time mentioned September 5 and November 27 this was a time of considerable activity of a meeting with the D of E of meeting with the Party leadership, of meeting with the General Secretaries of the Local Authority trade unions. There was intensive activity over local and national level. Media coverage was probably the

highest extent that has ever been recorded. And the degree of interest amongst the party membership was very very intense. And we felt that we had a responsibility during that period of calling meetings almost as events unfolded - before each major visit we would indicate to the party report to the party - that the Labour group report to the party that we have got a meeting with Kenneth Baker, the DoE or the general secretaries and we would be reporting back to a meeting the following week

That was the pace of events that existed and I might say this - as I said before the justification for calling these meetings was never questioned and when we indicated that that procedure would be adopted never was there any question or challenge raised as to the propriety or the - you know - or to the - whether or not that violated the constitution. On the contrary, the members always voted unanimously for that procedure to be adopted and therefore obviously it reflected the pace of events - as indeed during the course of a major strike - as those comrades - we've seen the NUM where they had meetings where the normal lodge business was - you know - suspended,interfered with - in order to concentrate on the great issues. That's true now of SOGAT and the NGA who are involved in that mighty struggle down in Wapping. And I think it's always true when great events unfold. That was true in Liverpool and I think we were quite proper to do so - it was our responsibility to ensure that the leading bodies of the party met with such frequency.

Chair: (to Frances Curran) Will you ask a direct question and ask for a short answer? Because feeding Tony is one thing, asking questions another.

Frances Curran: OK. Are there five officers, as far as you know, taking responsibility for those meetings that were called during that campaign?

Tony Mulhearn: Well, the five officers of the Executive and all of the delegates to the district party they were all party to those decisions and in fact on most occasions I was instucted - the officers were instructed - to set about the task of calling the meetings. So it wasn't as thought we were calling meetings agains their wishes - or I was calling meetings against the wishes of the other officers. And it remains a mystery to

both Eddie Loyden and John Hamilton as to why these charges are not being levelled against them.

Frances Curran: The next one is on charge 1B - the two main cases that are put forward of the intervention in the DLP and its EC is on the question of industrial relations concerning the City Council but also the granting of planning permission and the question I want to ask - what is that charge - can you explain about this planning permission?

Tony Mulhearn: Well, that's connected with the charge about the district party interfering with the day to day running of the City Council. I indicated before that there is provision in the rule book that before the Labour group takes its decision they should take into account the views of the party and again on this occasion it was a knotty problem - a knotty problem - in fact with the famous ASDA issue which again was blown out of all proportion, Chairman, I think it's quite important I give a very brief sketch. The position of the Executive is as you know - party policy opposed to free enterprise zones. The trade union movement hasa very very very flexible position on that question. In short, if they can get members in free enterprise zones in certain conditions they will accept. The Executive received a letter - the group officers received a letter - signed by the Transport and General Workers' Unionm, UCATT, G&M and the EETPU calling upon the Labour group to agree planning permission to ASDA in the free enterprise zone. Now, I will tell you this, the officers on the Executive were opposed to it on principle. That was the policy of the party. The Labour group requested the Executive to take it to the party because they didn't really want to take a decision on it. It was too tricky. It went to the Executive, the Executive agreed - by the way - based upon the letter from the trade unions - that was the most importa t

element of that consideration - because what the trade unions had said - they recognised the party policy but this will give us - I think it was about 2,000 members in a free enterprise zone in Liverpool. I think you will agree, Chairman, that is a little very seductive in an area like Liverpool. The Executive agreed, put it to the party and in the end the party turned it over. the party said no, we don't care what the trade unions are arguing. What they say, by a majority - I would say - out of a meeting of about 150 - a majority of about three - only three in it - very narrow majority. With the trade unions affiliates voting for from the unions that I have mentioned. It was defeated. And the issue as far as we were concerned was killed stone dead. Because the Labour group at its next meeting took that decision into account and rejected planning permission. So it wasn't a question of us interfering into the affairs of the Labour group. They referred it to the party, asked the party to discuss it, take a political decision. Then when they came to make their decision they took that decision into account.

Frances Curran: I've got another question.

Chair: Well, I think three's about enough .....
trying to get through before dark you see. If we've time we'll come back.

Frances Curran: ... the right to ask a question. Look, I'm a member of this NEC.

Chair: You've had three questions, love - come on John.

Frances Curran: Well, I hope everybody else is going to get three ....

John Evans: Tony, were votes taken at the aggregate meetings?

Tony Mulhearn: Yes.

John Evans: Was there any differentiation at the aggregate meetings, for voting purposes between delegates and non-delegates?

Tony Mulhearn: The procedure we adopted was that the delegates themselves were issued with voting slips. In fact at the end there was a very sophisticated method of voting. As you will know, most district labour parties its a show of hands and the vote is taken and that's it. What we developed in Liverpool, I might say Chairman - it was a very sophisticated method of voting - where the delegates as they entered the room were given a voting slip - and then they voted with those voting slips - you have two votes at the aggregate meetings. We had the vote of the delegates, who voted with the slips - then we had a consultative vote of the whole meeting. That was purely to gauge the feeling of the members. So that was the way the vote was conducted.

John Evans: Which vote was the binding vote?

Tony Mulhearn: The binding vote was the delegate vote which took place first.

John Evans: Were resolutions put to aggregate meetings?

Tony Mulhearn: The aggregate meetings - the resolutions were in fact the executive recommentdations and from time to time amendments were moved - from different delegates to the executive recommendations.

John Evans: No organisations submitted resolutions to the aggregate meetings?

Tony Mulhearn: Because of the pressure of events aggregate meetings were called to deal with the immediate major issue. For instance you will recall that the Labour Party nationally called a conference on the Common Market. If you recall it was at the Central Hall. There was one issue there - that was the debate on the Common Market. That was a similar situation.

Chair: OK, I've got David, Dennis and Neil.

David Blunkett: Chair, if I ever need advice I will come to you rather than the ones that apper to be available recently, Tony - well, I'll leave it at that. Could I just ask you about the material that does appear in both the minority and the majority report, and is referred to in the charges that those aspects which are referred to in the so called charges here today and pick up on a couple of the points we raised. Firstly, I'll put them all together briefly - if I'm allowed three points and you can answer in one. I'd like to pick!up the question of the aggregate meetings and the failure to have a normal delegate meeting between September 5 and 22 November, bearing in mind that throughout the country there are consultative meetings around and seminars. Firstly, why as Chair do you think that such meetings were not held whilst aggregates were often called at fairly short notice, sometimes by telephone? Secondly, do you think that it is an acceptable practice - as Chair of the District Party - that things like planning permission are dealt with by the District Party notwithstanding that the decision taken by the District

Party probably was in the events of history a wise one on the issue that you raised on the question that Frances gave you ? and,thirdly, do you think it's the role of the District Party and therefore the role of the Chair to say to the trade unions and to the Labour group if they won't get involved in employment practices because of the dangers that arise, whether it's through nomination rights or whether it's through the difficulty of dealing with disputes or matters relating to (noise) or that arise from them.



Tony Mulhearn: Could I say in relation to the first point - I think it was about aggregates and the - you know - the normal so-called District Party meetings - you know - not occurring in the normal way. I think I've explained that Chairman - it was based upon the pressure of events and any and all of those great events - obviously the events themselves would take priority in terms of the consciousness of the movement. And I'm quite sure it goes without saying that if a General Election was called tomorrow then the normal party branches would suspend their activities and concentrate on the main issue - of getting Labour returned to power and Neil Kinnock to Number 10. That would be the main objective of our activities and you will agree it would be absurd to insist upon the routine meetings of the movement. So obviously that was why aggregate meetings were held. In terms of the telephone - again - may I make this point, Chairman, that notices were sent out by first class post to delegates - where the telephone was used it was used to ensure that party secretaries - ward secretaries - constituency secretaries - were informed of the situation and they had the responsibility of contacting those members who in fact wished to attend this meeting. But the main people involved - that the delegates - received the proper notification in good time and in fact that we always had a first class turnout from delegates. Planning permission - again the constitution itself - aside from the practices of the movement - and it does in fact provide for that - for the day to day activities - for the Labour group to take account of the views of the party - and fr nkly, as party chairman, nothing would please me better if I never see another planning item because I don't believe it's the function of the party in the global sense - I mean our affair is to concentrate on the great political questions and to mobilise and educate the movement on the great political questions. And the idea, of perhaps getting involved in another discussion on where they're going

to site Quicksave in the City of Liverpool doesn't particularly appeal to me. However, if the Labour group ask you to consider it, Mr Chairman, and say there is provision in the rules for you so to do, because we want your views then I believe as party chairman, I am bound to accept - you know - the request from the Labour group, even thought I mightn't particularly like discussing how much bonus a sparks earns, or where they're going to site Leo's. We are compelled to take these matters on board from time to time. As far as the employment practices - I didn't understand your question, David, could you perhaps elaborate on that?

David Blunkett: Well, the relationship between the party and the group has developed to a point where the employment practices of the Council directly are understood to be part of the prerogative of the district party and are discussed as such.

Tony Mulhearn: No - I'll tell you the way it works - is that we receive resolutions from affiliated branches, the G&M, the Transport and General Workers' Union, from UCATT - requesting that the policy of the party is that the trade unions should have nomination rights into the City Council. Now my own industry - in the print industry - won't say that Eric Hammond started his dirty work - the trade unions always have nomination rights. Gordon Colling will know, Terry O'Brien will know - the employer wants labour - he contacts the local trade union branch and he says I want two pumps or two machine men or two paper workers and the trade union branch sec sends down the labour. He doesn't go to the Job Centre or the Labour Exchange - he goes through the trade union branch. It's called a closed shop. And that has always been the position within the printing industry until as I say Hammond did his dirty work and I hope the executive have a close look at the activities of comrade Hammond. Now resolutions from

the T&G the G&M and UCATT came to the district party and said we would like nominating rights for the jobs within the local authority and the district Labour party supported that request by those trade unions. The district party then asked the Labour group to consider that policy when they deliberated it - and that's what happened. As it happens the Labour group adopted the policy which the district Labour party had agreed upon and I can tell you this, all of the trade unions were delighted. So I don't know where the objections to nominating rights come from. Now if there are abuses, Chairman, and between these four walls where trade unions have control of nominating rights, I don't know but I would imagine, unless it's very very strictly controlled, maybe what might be described as a little bit of favouritism, I don't know, because I've never been involved in it. Not having been in the position of making those nominations. But abuse was never ever reported to the district party and if it had and if it had of been proven there is no doubt in my mind, the district Labour party would have insisted - they would have asked the Labour group to ensure that any abuse which is proven should in fact be terminated immediately.

Chair: Dennis and then Neil, that's all.

Dennis Skinner: Well, following on from what David had to say about the question of the district Labour party being involved in matters regarding planning, I wonder whether Tony's aware that in many local authorities district parties do in fact take a very guarded interest in matters of this kind. I'll give him one example. Perhaps he might comment upon it. In Derbyshire County Council, especially after the miners' strike and to some extent before, they are very concerned abou open cast operations which need! planning permission and in Derbyshire County Council at

present, the county Labour party in a manner of words actually tells the Labour group that they don't want any open cast planning permissions in Derbyshire because it means it's taking away the jobs of deep - of the miners -

Voice: Can I have a question?

Dennis Skinner: Yes, I'm coming on to this because the Derbyshire County Council is important as well in the sense that Larry Whitty researches the fact that somehow or other you were recommended - they were recommended - the district Labour party who the Chairman etc should be on the local Labour group. Now I am a bit astounded at that because in Derbyshire County Council, they do exactly that and have done for many years. In fact I think they were doing it before the Party actually recommended the kind of recommendation that exists. And I wonder whether you are aware of all these practices that are taking place in all these other authorities and I'd like to know whether in Liverpool your practices in terms of recommendations in terms of chairs etc, recommendations regarding planning are no more than what they are in many other authorities - Labour controlled.

Tony Mulhearn: Yes, Chairman, I think that question is a very pertinent one and in fact in his submission Larry Whitty did say that in his opinion the fact that the district party took a position on the chairs and the leader(?) he chairs was a violation of party policy, when in fact this particular rule book authorises the district party to in fact take those decisions. And what in fact used to happen is that, and it still does, is that the district party makes it's decision which are then recommendations which the Labour group take into account when they reach their decision.

And that is provided for in the rule book and I think perhaps the party has been remiss in the past in the sense that it's only in the past four or five years that it's actually carried out the provision of the rule book. It's not a violation of procedure or of the Party constitution - it's totally in accord and in fact the party rule book in fct encourages district parties to make those decisions that the Labour group can then take into account when they reach its decision. In relation to - again - obviously planning permission and could I say particularly to Alex Kitson who made a comment before about the trade unions - if he in fact consults with his collegues in Liverpool, he will find that strike action was threatened by the Transport and General Workers' union on two points, namely that they didn't have nominating rights and that they didn't have sufficient full time representation as far as their work force was cncerned. They asked me to intervene, as party president, and I am glad to say that that s rike was avoided because I ensured that the requests of the T&G were in fact met and you can check that out with John Sheridan, with Larry McCluskey, Alex, you will find I'm telling the truth.

Dennis Skinner: The second question is that I was rather disturbed when Larry Whitty kicked off today - the second charge regarding the district Labour party - when he said - he used the phrase which was along these lines - that these charges were cumulative, in other words that they add up in quantity to make a (?) change.

Chair: Are you asking Larry that question?

Dennis Skinner: No, I'm coming on to Tony. Because although you've answered in my view exceptionally well all the charges in a singular fashion that have been made - I think you should address yourself to the fact that Larry Whitty said on two occasions that it's not so much about breaking rules on a specific occasion; if the things don't look very good to him irrespective of no rule breaking, then cumulatively they all add up to something else. I find it an obnoxious thing in view of the fact that it's not in the rules and I wonder whether you'd address yourself to a cumulation of non-rule breaking that's leading to something that is breaking the rules. I find it very strange and I wonder what Tony's got to say about it.

Chair: just answer the question.

Tony Mulhearn: I'll just say, Chairman, and I mean that's why I took pains and time to go through the charges that were specifically used by Larry Whitty to reach an accumulated offence. And I think bisecting and defining the charges individually and repudiating them I think the cumulative effect is to suggest that there was no malpractice - on the contrary I think the cumulative effect is to suggest that the Liverpool district Labour party did conduct themselves with the highest sense of

propriety and I think the only charge that could be laid against us is in fact that they perhaps - what they have been doing a few years back and who knows the Liberals may never have been the largest party in the City of Liverpool.

Neil Kinnock: On page 5 of your submission, Tony, you referred to the matter of whether the DLP has the right at the bottom of the page to discuss (?) Council matters. You refer to a passage from page 95 of the book of rules and quote it as saying "although group policy is determined within the general framework of election policy, questions of practical application continue to arise and not infrequently decisions have to be taken on matters not specifically covered by election policy. At the same time it is proper that the group in reaching decisions should consider and take account of any views that the local party may desire to express and provision for this is made in the model standing orders." The phrase before that extract is "It is the definite responsibility of the Labour group to decide group strategy and action on the council". and the phrase after that extract is "by communications with the group secretary or through the party representatives at group meetings and by the submission of names for consideration in the selection of nominations for civic office. Is there any significance in the fact that you made a fairly generous quote from the rules but omitted the preceding phrase or the following phrase?

Tony Mulhearn: Well, you see it's not really in dispute that the function of the Labour group is the definite responsibility of the Labour (in fact I've got that underlined in my rule book, Neil - you can see) it is the definite responsibility of the Labour group to decide group strategy and action on the Council. That's not in dispute. At the same time, it is

proper that the group should consider and take account of any views that the local parties may desire to express and provision is made for this. Therefore , when you take the rules then you have to take the rules in their entirety and that in fact is the rule - the part of the rule you quote I would suggest the fact that that past succeeds the para you quoted in fact reinforces because what the framers of the rules have done

TAPE ENDS

Tape No. 17 Tony Mulhearn 9.30 pm.

Tony Mulhearn: And therefore I remain absolutely firm in my convictions that those charges levelled against me are totally without substance, and I believe the evidence that I have advanced today, reinforced by the submissions by those four comrades, who, as I say, between them, have something like a hundred and thirty years of Party membership between them - I think it makes it abundantly clear that the charges levelled against me should be dropped and I should leave this NEC tonight and continue as a full member of the Labour Party, and be in a position to be a candidate for the Presidency of the Liverpool District Labour Party (inaudible) established in July. That 's my statement, Chairman, and I would reiterate I think it's unfortunate that the observations that Jimmy Parry was prepared to make weren't allowed. Could I say to our trade union colleagues who in fact - who in fact, some of them were the most vociferous - and alot of whom who weren't here today to listen to the arguments have been vociferous in their condemnation of both the Liverpool Labour Group and the Liverpool District Labour Party - all of them without exception -their members without exception - enjoy a greater membership, superior working conditions, superior facilities as far as facilities and full-time positions to defend their members within the local authority, and every single trade union, when the question is posed, is compelled to admit that the conduct and the relationship between the trade unions and Liverpool and the Labour Group is in fact based upon concessions that have been made to trade unions, and conditions (inaudible) negotiated superior - comparable with if not superior to any other local authority in the country. That would give me greater pleasure for trade union leaders to recognise - we don't want their praise, we don't want gold medals hurled at Liverpool District Party or Liverpool City Council, but what we would like is recognition by the leadership of this movement that we have sought to carry out the policy of this Party when in office, our achievements are there for all to see in terms of houses, sports centres, job creation, improvement of the environment - in other words, socialism translated into action. And we're proud of our record, and I hope the NEC after today's meeting makes a public declaration in withdrawing the insults that have been made against Liverpool, and the reaffirmation that this NEC stands four square behind the Liverpool District Labour Party and behind those Labour councillors who are threatened to have their homes seized, to be removed from office, to be surcharged for nothing more than carrying out Labour Party policy as endorsed by the DLP and the Labour Party Conference itself.

Tony Mulhearn (cont'd): That's a simple, reasonable request that I ask, Chairman. As far as I'm concerned, based upon my response to these submissions, I think I' m entitled to walk away from this NEC as a full Party member and with the full support of this National Executive Committee.

Several voices: Here, here!

Syd Tierney: Thank you very much indeed. Could you now withdraw, Tony?

Tony Mulhearn: So what's the procedure now?

Syd Tierney: Well, we have to talk about it, don't we?

Tony Mulhearn: I mean, do you need me?

Syd Tierney: No - no. Thank you very much.

Larry Whitty: Could you tell us where your contact is, Tony?

Tony Mulhearn: Well, it could be at the hotel - I was only booked in for one night - (inaudible) - the Bonnington.

Larry Whitty: Just in case -

Jimmy Parry: (inaudible) some time in the future, Chairman, and I might get the chance to speak on that occasion.

Larry Whitty: Chairman, I will have to withdraw - presumably you're going to break at quarter to anyway, but could I just give you what the latest news is on the legal front: that in the light of your decision not to decide to end at 9.45 but to reconvene at 10.30, the barrister I referred to has said that she has no alternative but to go to the judge, and she is now with the judge seeking an injunction to stop our proceedings. I think the chances appear to be that she will -

Several voices talking at once.

Neil Kinnock: Chair, Chair, sorry - I realise that the General Secretary was doing right in informing us of the up to date position. I think that that is a matter we should consider when we reconvene at 10.30 (inaudible)

Neil Kinnock: proper consideration of which because we're under certain time pressures now. But in the meantime I think it would be advisable if the barrister is making a deposition seeking an ex parte injunction in court this time, that if we can gain the offices of a lawyer to contest that deposition, then we should so do.

Several voices talking at once.

Larry Whitty: Could I please make a plea with members of the Executive not to make any statments at this stage.

Several voices talking at once.

Eric Heffer: Are you going to give me an assurance that we've not had stuff pushed out from this office all day today.

Larry Whitty: No member of the National Executive is -

Eric Heffer: No, never mind that. How much has gone from the Press people to the press all day - I've been watching it.

?m God knows, because they've been out there all day (inaudible)

Several voices talking at once.

Frances Curran: (inaudible) we'd get a chance to discuss the merits of it -

Eric Heffer: We're coming back, aren't we: you don't think we're just going to make a quick decision in three minutes?

End of tape.

Tape No. 18 Tony Mulhearn 11 pm

Syd Tierney: I suppose we move into 'make your mind up time' now - it's - we move towards a vote, unless anybody wants to make any comment to get us under way - I think we'll move into the vote. Eric?

Eric Heffer: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to appeal -

Cyril Ambler: Can I make a point Mr. Chairman, before Eric starts - I don't want to interrupt you, Eric - are we dealing with it in two separate points. You know, if there are two separate allegations, you know, are they going to deal with it two separate (inaudible) on the Militant Tendency thing and the other thing, you know, because we don't want (inaudible)

Syd Tierney: Both of them on the same ballot paper - we'll just have the one vote on the two. OK?

?m One discussion?

?m Yes, I think so.

Syd Tierney: Two issues on the voting paper.

Eric Heffer: Eric raises a very important point which I'd like just to oppose actually -

Cyril Ambler: You're Eric, I'm Cyril!

General laughter!

Eric Heffer: Well now, I do want to put this to members of the Committee. I hope that the - in all seriousness - they're not going to have already judged - made up their minds - particularly after listening to Tony Mulhearn. I think if people are honest with themselves, whatever prejudices they might have in relation to political positions or arguments about whether or not he's associated with, or not with, the Militant Tendency, I don't think anybody listening to Tony Mulhearn today could not but be impressed with his steadiness, his obvious solidity within the Party and the movement, the contribution he's made to the Party and his trade union over the years, and I can tell you,

.c Heffer: I remember Tony Mulhearn when he first became a member of Liverpool Trades Council Labour Party way back in '63. He was then almost inarticulate - I heard him make probably one of the first speeches in the Trades Council Labour Party he ever made - and he was speaking for his union branch on something. It wasn't a very good speech. I heard him today 23 years or whatever it is later, and I must say I was extremely impressed: I never realised - and I've known the chap for many years - just how impressive he actually is, and I can understand why he's been elected by the Liverpool Party for the last four or five years as the President or the Chairman of the Party. Now if we look at the actual arguments that are put forward in the charges, I think he answered both in relation to Militant and also in relation to the charges that concern his position as Chairman of the District Labour Party most effectively. For example, the point about: "You have participated in meetings and rallies organised by Militant": he didn't deny that he'd spoken at Militant (inaudible) but as it was pointed out, members of this National Executive have also spoken on Militant as many have spoken on all sorts of platforms - the Morning Star and just about everything else. Then: "You have been a signatory to leaflets supporting Militant": well, when you actually look at that leaflet, I don't think there's anything terrible about that, and I think the question of "financially involved in Militant headquarters at 2 Lower Breck Road" was effectively answered by the John Linden letter. And not only that, when you do read the John Linden letter, as it was quite rightly pointed out afterwards, if you read it carefully, Linden doesn't say that his name is still on it, he says he's still working to get it off. Apparently, I've now been informed that his name is not on the deeds. But even if they were, the fact is that when he agreed to be a guarantor, he was a guarantor at a time when there was no conflict within the Party about Militant and our Party National Executive agreed to the sale of that particular (inaudible) headquarters to the Militant newspaper. And as I said at the time earlier on there were people who grumbled at that time about it - they didn't particularly like it. Now the other thing I wish to raise with you is this question of his conduct as Chairman of the City (inaudible). Now, I really do ask you, comrades, to think back to the history of the Liverpool Labour Party: we were like Sheffield, a Trades Council Labour Party, and I think Sheffield and Liverpool were the last two -

.ic Heffer: and they went on for a long time, and there was a great deal of resistance in Liverpool, and I know also in Sheffield, to the bodies being separated. The reason why there was a great resistance was because the movement had got used to the idea of the Party, the trade unions, the student bodies, the Co-operative Party and all the others actually coming together as a sort of parliament of the working class in that city, and I am sure it was the same in Sheffield and I remember once taking a Member of Parliament - long before I was in the House - he died, he was Barbara Castle's second in command: I've forgotten the name of the man - that just shows you how terrible -

Several voices talking at once.

Eric Heffer: Steve Sweet. And we took Steve to the Trades Council Labour Party and STeve said afterwards he had never been to any body where the discussion was so good, and he said, to be quite honest, it's better than the House of Commons. And - well, discussions at the House of Commons can be pretty high level at times contrary to what alot of people might think, and that's the history of our Party in Liverpool. That's how the Trades Council and Labour Party always was. There was a resistance to it being split up, when it was split up they still carried on the same tradition. They carried on the same tradition right through to this day, and I have to say to Cyril: the rules may be as you say, Cyril, and they are: no-one argues about that. But the reality is that the constituencies, the unions affiliated, all the other bodies affiliated, have never stopped doing what they've always done. They have sent in their resolutions, they have argued the case in exactly the same way as they've always argued it, and therefore Tony Mulhearn - it would not even cross his mind until he was actually being charged with something, to even think that he was doing anything out with, or outside the constitution as laid down strictly to the letter. Now I think that's actually underlined by the - and I refer to this - the letter from Hughie Dalton. Now, again, I must come back to Hughie Dalton. Hughie Dalton is one of our great - I don't mean a great sort of revolutionary figure in Liverpool, no, but the solid type of trade union Labour Party figure in Liverpool, Chairman of his constituency for years. Now Chairman of the Liverpool Council, past Presidency of the trades council and so on, senior shop steward on big construction sites, and

Eric Heffer: like myself, worked in shipping - ship repairing for many years. I've stood on the picket line with Hughie, and I've stood with him in the Council and he was my Chairman of my constituency Party for years. When Hughie Dalton can write as he has about this comrade who we've had in front of us today, he wouldn't do it lightly. Don't think at 70 years of age, that Hughie Dalton is being pressurised by the MIlitant Tendency - Hughie Dalton couldn't give a damn about the Militant Tendency or any other tendency - he knows that at 70 years of age he's not going to be around for much longer - maybe, unless he's like old Manny - and so I think this sort of letter must be taken into consideration - seriously into consideration - and then you've got this chap who we didn't hear today, who put in his letter - Bob Parry's brother, Jimmy Parry. Now, I have to tell you about Jimmy - you know, Mulhearn and Jimmy went to the same Catholic school. They were brought up in the slum area of Liverpool. The interesting thing is - and it was interesting to hear Mulhearn make this point. He said "somebody's introducing religion back into Liverpool politics"- very interesting point, don't laugh, don't knock it: we used to have religion in Liverpool politics. David knows that - all the time, and we had Protestant councillors right up until the fifties. Now we don't have Protestant councillors and the Labour Party over the years has knocked that down. And Hatton incidently happens to be of a Protestant family, that's the thing that's developed in our Party over the years. So I appeal to this Party - I could go on for considerable length - I'm not going on any more. I just want to make this last point. I wish the Party members of the Executive had gone along to Liverpool and seen for themselves what they have done. Alright, they made a mistake and I was delighted to hear - they did something which they thought was a good way of getting pressure on the government and it misfired and hit them right back in the face, and that was the redundancy notices. They didn't intend to sack anybody. But they thought this was a good way of saying: we're going to do this, the pressure will be applied, the unions will back us and the Party will come in, and there'll be deputations, and it misfired, and (inaudible) and they didn't intend to do that. They never intended to sack a soul. It was never intended: it was a right muck-up. At the time, some of us behind the scenes were saying: look, for God's sake, that's not the best thing to do, but they did it for the best intentions, but

c Heffer: as we all know, sometimes the road to hell is paved with good intentions, but it was not intentional to do anything against the working classes: it was the other way round. And if you go there and see what they've actually done, the houses they've built - we won Breckfield, and I tell you why we won Breckfield - because that new park he was talking about, and houses in particular, are being built there: they can see it. We have one of the worst slums in Liverpool in the heart of Breckfield called Sir Thomas White Gardens, and incidentally, if anybody knows about Liverpool past politics, they'll know that Sir Thomas White was one of the Protestant leaders in Liverpool. It has now been pulled down, and in the place of Sir Thomas White Gardens - this horrible old slum - are now beautiful new semi-detached estate built by the Council and for the first time working people from that area are beginning to live in decent homes. And a new park across the road with a swimming pool, with also something else they've done - to try and get the kids off the street and away from drugs and so on - the sports centres. No, I wish you'd come, have a look at it. Alright, they've not done - they were wrong about the Co-ops, they should have given more assistance to the Co-op, but they felt this is what we've got to do. I think that was wrong. They made mistakes, but no party that does anything doesn't make mistakes. No individual that does anything doesn't make mistakes. They may have done some wrong things as far as the actual constitution was concerned about its actual operation, about - maybe they should have done - none of that justifies the expulsion of them. It doesn't justify their expulsion - it certainly doesn't justify his expulsion and I thought it was very interesting that Hughie Dalton could say that he was too tolerant. I fell over when I read that. But I knew what Hughie Dalton meant because most Chairmen and Presidents of the Liverpool Trades Council Labour Party, or nowadays the District Labour Party, weren't quite as tolerant. I remember when Bessie was the President of our Party - I don't remember her being over tolerant - I don't know that I was that tolerant in (inaudible). I might have been, but I don't think I necessarily was, and he is tolerant. I've watched him in the Chair. He does actually fall over backwards to give everybody a fair crack of the whip, and I think I'll now end on this: if this Party, this Executive, decides to take any further action on any of these things, I ask you not to take any action on any of them if we

Eric Heffer: If we want afterwards to talk to the newly elected body and talk about procedures, let's do that. That's a different matter. Let's do that. But don't let's along the disciplinary road. I appeal to you comrades, it won't be understood - it won't be understood, and when Jimmy lost his temper there with Neil for a minute there, I know that Jimmy was speaking the feelings of the ordinary Liverpool Labour supporters. Not all of them, of course, that would be stupid to say all of them, but the mass of them, and I tell you, it's the way forward now not to persist with any further disciplinary action whatsoever. Afterwards when all this is over let's talk about the procedures of the Liverpool District Labour Party with them, with the newly elected leaders there locally, but for God's sake, let's drop this business of disciplinary action. It's not going to help us, and not only that, it will be seen as purely on the part of the Liverpool people as a punishment, a punishment against people who in fact have stood up for Labour Party policies.

Several voices talking at once.

?m If we all made speeches for ten minutes, we'd be here till tomorrow morning.

Syd Tierney: OK. What I was just going to say was that I don't want to stifle discussion but I've let Eric go on, and I want to say to the meeting that if anybody is wanting to speak, that Eric has covered alot of ground, and I've allowed Eric to cover alot of ground, and take his time, and I hope somebody - the rest of you will take note that he's covered alot of ground. OK - that's the point I'm making - I'm sorry, come on, Dennis -

Dennis Skinner: Well, I'd like to support Eric in many of the things that he's had to say, and I won't cover that ground, Syd, that he's already covered. It's in two parts as we've said from the very beginning. It's - one dealing with his alleged membership of the Militant Tendency, and secondly, his Chairmanship of the District Labour Party, and I will as quickly as possible deal with them separately. I thought first of all that he gave a brilliant exposition of his position as Chair, and there was something ringing through it all the time to me that he was on top of the job. He seemed to know the answers and provided an effective response to all the charges that have been made by Larry.

Dennis Skinner: There didn't seem to be a great deal of hesitation, simply because I got the impression that he felt all along that what he's been doing is (a) a continuation of what has happened before in Liverpool and that (b) he, as having been elected, felt that he had to do the same. As a member of the Appeals and Mediation Committee, we do from time to time, as some of the members on this Committee know, have to deal with charges about Militant Tendency quite regularly, and one of the things that I think has stood out in Tony's responses was in respect of the so-called allegations about his membership which has not always been as forthcoming from some others that we've had in front of us. For instance, he said that he was not a member, quite categorically, and when he was asked about contributions to the paper he made it quite clear that he didn't make any contributions and hadn't done since the Party Conference decision - in other words he made his position absolutely clear since that decision which I think's a very important factor to take into account. He was further asked a question which I wasn't sure if he would respond to in the way that he did: would he give an undertaking for the future? And without any hesitation whatsoever - I think it was from Neil - he said yes, of course I shan't be - I won't be involved in the future. And there have been occasions in the past when others have been a little bit more ambivalent about a response of that nature. And there was the question about the - attending closed meetings. He made it clear, absolutely clear, that he had never attended those meetings of Militant - he'd only spoken on platforms like lots of others have from time to time. And he also made it clear that right throughout his whole reply to the charges that he had seemingly taken very assiduous steps to dissociate himself from any connection with Militant after that Conference decision, and I don't want to go into the Lower Breck Road business but I think that exemplifies his whole attitude of dissociating himself if there could be the nearest indication of being connected in any way whatsoever.
Now then to the District Labour Party aspect of it, and to his Chairmanship which was supposedly at fault. I don't think we should argue too much about the fact that they don't always discuss local government at these District Labour Party meetings. It is well known that in some of the large authorities that takes place. It would be incredible if it wasn't the case. I don't want to name all these authorities but many of them do from time to time, including

Dennis Skinner: my own, discuss matters of an international nature just like any othe bodies do. So we can't really tar them with that brush. There was then the question of the aggregate meetings and the crisis that developed. Now I happen to come from a little place called Clay Cross where we went through a similar kind of trauma where we had to suddenly do things in a very quick response to the occasion which arose when the eleven Councillors decided not to implement the Housing Finance Act and because it was a crisis, and because they had got the Housing Commissioner coming up, there were also some meetings that had to take place, and it's perhaps a bit ironical, but important to remember that the East Midlands Regional Organiser was the same man that he recently referred to, namely, Ernie Collett, who appreciated the crisis that had developed and the fact that the workers and all the Labour Party members from Clay Cross on many occasions were called together to attend district audits and so on in order to provide the backcloth to support for the Councils throughout the whole of that crisis. They also did things which many people frowned upon - there was the reference to Liverpool and the question of people getting trade union jobs. I remember at Clay Cross when the (inaudible)pit disaster occurred in the middle of this crisis, they decided to give eighteen jobs to (inaudible) miners because the cage had gone down the shaft and alot of miners for the first time in my recollection were fearful of going back down the pit. Normally, mining accidents don't worry them too much, but when a cage drops down and eighteen people get killed, it sent a tremor right throughout the district, and Clay Cross Labour Party - I'll bet they broke one or two odd rules here and there - decided straight away through the Group, through the (inaudible) to allow some of those miners to have jobs. So that - what I'm trying to explain is - that that crisis of its own, does need extraordinary action taken in order to make sure that they keep their arguments in tact. On the question of planning, I dealt with it in questions of - regarding other authorities dealing with planning matters and I gave the example of the open cast, and there are many others as well. Similary, on the recommendations of Chairs from the Party and Derbyshire County Council have done it on a continuing basis: they did it before the Rulebook changed as a matter of fact, and it's worked exceedingly well in that authority and we've managed to keep control now for the last - more than six years. There was reference

Dennis Skinner: being made to the trade union opposition to the Council: it would be incredible if there wasn't trade union opposition to a Council anywhere at some time or another, so when NALGO was in opposition on an occasion in Liverpool, it's not surprising in view of the fact that most of the large authorities do experience those difficulties from time to time. I don't want to expand on the matter but in my local authority that's taking place at the present time with regard to the district Labour organisation and to the closure of schools. I think all in all that - I'm finishing now, Chair - that in view of the fact that he's got this tremendous support from a very wide range of opinion in Liverpool, I think it tells us something, I think it's saying to us that in this case, in Tony Mulhearn's case, that he's got the respect, that he's chaired the meetings well, that he's said that he's dealt with minorities to an extent that some people weren't very keen about. And that's why he's got that support from the Daltons and all the rest of the people that have sent him their support. The real problem about this is that this inquiry, this trial, hasn't started in Liverpool: it's started from the top of this Party, and that's why the difficulties have ensued. It's sad really, that with the support that they've got in Liverpool from the Liverpool Party activists in the main - not all of them, but in the main - that this inquiry has started from this end, and not from the other, as we've always been told when applications have been made with respect to Maxwell and Chapple and all the rest of them. We're always told that it must start at the local Party level, but in this case it didn't. Liverpool, like the city of London, like Birmingham, have all got a different chemistry of their own, and we've always recognised that in Liverpool that chemistry would be different from the way in which some other London parties operate with respect to black sections and so on. It's because they've got that problem in London to a greater degree than maybe in Liverpool, and what I'm saying to you is: understand the city, understand the way that they've had to take on the Liberals, and had to act in an extraordinary manner because they've not been dealing with the run of the mill Tories who in some cities are easier to beat than these fly-by-night Liberals, and so on, and that to some extent has developed that kind of chemistry. So for all those reasons, and for the final reason that some of these people, many of them, including Tony Mulhearn, are going to be facing the law courts, the judges, the Tory judges and

Dennis Skinner: all the rest of it for carrying out Labour Party policy, it would be wrong of us to heap on more misery at this time when they should be getting support.

Syd Tierney: OK. One more - come on, Frances.

Several voices talking at once.

Frances Curran: (inaudible) of whether or not the charges have been proven or not, is what you consider now, and if you look at the first charges, the particulars on the charges that membership of the Militant Tendency (inaudible) in the stuff that Larry sent out, and the first part of the particulars: "that you have participated in meetings and rallies organised by Militant", and what the NEC has to decide is whether or not that constitutes membership of an organisation, and I think it would be folly for the NEC to take a decision which (inaudible) Conference decisions and NEC previous decisions, particularly Conference decisions, that speaking at a rally or a meeting organised by Militant - by the Militant newspaper - constitutes membership, because all sorts of people, as has been said, have spoken on their platforms: Tony Benn, Tom Sawyer, Terry French, the in Kent, Emlyn Williams, all sorts of people if you take a look, have actually spoken on platforms - the Silent Night strikers, all sorts of miners during the strike, and to say - to be selective on who exactly is a member and (inaudible) speaking on a platform would be unfair and folly for the NEC to go ahead with that, and I don't think that that (inaudible) proves any charge against Tony Mulhearn. The other point: "that you have been a signatory to leaflets supporting Militant" - well, as Tony said, you're saying all sorts of things in the movement, and in fact somebody, I think to help me in my arguments in the NEC has sent me a copy of the Militant after the Conference decision which ... (inaudible) ... banner headlines across the top of the Militant which will - like you see,. but I don't fancy sending it to you, and with the intention, I don't know if you knew, of raffling it for the Fighting Fund - I think they'd probably get more now than they would have in 1983, but the point is, that is that not financial involvement with the Militant and also, you signed that - is it OK for you to sign it? Joan has appeared as "Why I read the Militant" in the pages of Militant,

ances Curran: Emlyn Williams has appeared as "Why I read the Militant" in the pages of Militant, on leaflets: different individuals in the Labour movement, leading individuals have put their names to leaflets encouraging activists to read the Militant even after the decision of the NEC, and you've been very selective with a handful of people that have been before the NEC, and one in particular, but also those that will come before it later on, and I don't think that you can be that selective. It makes a mockery of the NEC having any fairness in mind: if you're going to do one, you'll have to do them all, and that's with some members who are sitting on this NEC, so it just makes a mockery of the whole procedure if you're going to go ahead with it. The other point about: "have you been financially involved in the Militant headquarters at 2 Lower Breck Road, well, to anybody, Tony's attempts - (inaudible) the other Tony, Tony Aitman, that he didn't want to be involved in that after the Conference decision on the constitutional question, I think should be accepted by the NEC and I've heard since that actually his name isn't in the deeds at the moment - I don't know ... (inaudible) ... clarifies it later on, and he isn't on the title deeds of that, but the very fact he instructed solicitors- they're the people who set it up - to end that - whatever relationship that they had on the building at that address, I think it's got to be accepted by the NEC. You can't say that he went (inaudible) after the Conference decision, and the last point on Militant is the undertaking - I think we should consider that he unhesitatingly agreed to the undertaking which Larry set out in the letter that he sent to Tony and the other comrades who are coming in later, and I don't think that any of this has been answered and none of it can constitute membership of an organisation. I don't think that even stretching the imagination can allow for that and, as I've said before, there's so many people that would be complying with what has been set down here, then there must be hundreds if not thousands ...

End of tape.

Tape 19

gakehadsandlwhgrehis is ghengasssfop.forfdtheyNECmbership in the than you are leaving an open door for all sorts of both Parties at local level to move and the point in a District Labour Party I think is crushing. What a case that Tony Mulhern put in relation to the Labour group he made it clear, Jimmy Hinds made it clear, Hughe and if Jimmy Parry had been called I think he would express the fact that the DLP is not binding on the group and it is not interferring with the running of the Council, unfortunately
The man was upset at not being allowed to be heard in this NEC meeting even given the chance to put a 5 minute speech if that's the way we are going to treat people in Liverpool then it is no wonder they will be up in arms the other points the local government panel. They were set up by the it was merely set up by Tony Mulhern or any of the people who are infront of the NEC just now and that has been the proof of it. The business of the District Labour Party on the intregrity of Tony Mulhern and the way they handled most of the business of the District Labour Party and I think that if had presidents or chair prsons at that then the major positions in the District Labour Party it would save a lot of time of the appeals and mediations Committee which is always interferring in difficulties between DLPs and Labour groups and if there was somebody like Tony Mulhern in that position exercising the caution and tregrity that he has then we would be in a much better position I would ask the NEC not to go ahead and expell Tony Mulhern.

Chair Now I have got Neil, Tony and Cyril, could I just ask a favour I said I would ring the people I was going to stay with about half past eleven and let them know that there is no chance of me getting to them. If that is acceptable to you I will ask one of the staff to ring them for me. Can you give me a minute.

The legal ruling about this so called injunction

I think you would agree that we have been on this job for about 14 hours you know and there have been some complaints about that and I think that it is a fair measure of time and what I thought was that I ought to proceed and at least finish one case today and then if there are any legal developments we can perhaps discuss those

I think that Joyce has it on tape

well give us some advice yes I think we ought to proceed until we've got there.

Neil Legal questions, i'm sorry this was misinterpreted the legal questions were considered at the times when they related inside the future cases.

Chair that is what I thought

Tape 19 P2

Neil If they had related to Tony the only

Chair Well they might change in the next 10 minutes I don't know but that is what I thought to deal with the next one rather than this one. rather than this one that is what I thought and I thought we could proceed.

Neil Chair I think that on the case of Tony Mulhern I think that Denis has made a valid point that it is necessary to understand the city of Liverpool, I think that Eric made the same point very effectively and very forcibly and -I and I think that we should all acknowledge that Liverpool is different and it always has been different in its history, and in the conduct of a lot of its relationships from a lot of other places in Britain. Its part, as Denis put it, there is no better explanation how the chemistry of the city of Liverpool and one or two other bits of Merseyside. So far as Jimmy Parry is concerned I don't think anybody could fail to have been impressed by the intensity of his feelings that he had I think it is necessary for the Executive to understand in a way that itmight be difficult to express to people in Jims situation that the judgment offered to us by the Vice Chancellor as a result of the publications by people from Liverpool related to witnesses and to legal representation and we were acting entirely within the kind of guidelines that were laid down in the consequence of that judgment but no one will try to block him out as a good conrade and that the fact of the matter was as I said earlier that if we begun on the process of witnesses outside those areas in which we would we would have been obliged as a result of the judgment to call witnesses, then that would have severely complicated and unnecessarily prolonged the consideration that we are giving to these matters. Now Liverpool is different and as it is in the same thing saying that because Liverpool is different there is no reason for us not to be interested in the operation in that city. Our grouping which has its own separate and distinctive programme, policies and proparganda and it is very clearly obvious from any observations this evening
observations as seen in Liverpool that such a group exists and such a group is the Militant Tendancy. That isn't hearsay that is on the basis of repeated reference by people on all sides of the Labour Party political spectrum and it is also a matter of documentary evidence. It requires only days spent in Liverpool in order to get that absolutely straight and of course people who do spend days in Liverpool not necessary with the accompanying propaganda when they go to see their families as I do myself. Now as far as Militant are concerned therefore, the charge against Tony Mulhern first was that he is a member of Militant under the terms of the 1982 Labour Party Conference resolution. Frances says that people share platforms where there are no problems I think the frequency with which they share platforms and the fact that the bulk of their appearances on platforms organised in support of militant are bound to bear upon our considerations

Tape 19 P3.

Neil of evidence in that respect. Secondly, the question of financial involvement was very clearly specified in the 1982 resolution and we have been extremely permissive in our interpretation of that resolution since 1982 and the Exectuive Committee decision in 1983 we could be a great deal more strict about it but it is obvious that there are people with different levels of commitment and thirdly, so far as involvement in Lower Breck Road is concerned, I simply submit this, that I am prepared to accept the letter from John Linden and the solicitors and I am prepared to accept that there was an instruction issued 3 years ago for the detachment of both Tony Mulhern and Terry Harrison. I am also prepared to accept that the reason why that has not been proceeded with is the imformal lack of confidence that relates to the problems of the bank and so on. It nevertheless poses the question and I do know more than
and I do no more than pose the question that it would be an extraordinary thing woulden't it for Tony then to select from all of the people in Liverpool Terry Harrison and Tony Mulhern for the purposes of being guarantors for a building being purchased as this Executive Committee then registered by Militant. Now I simply pose it as a question for people to consider because people arguing about

because people are delivering on these matters to be more specific and relate to the testomy offered in the course of today, I asked theChair, Tony whether he believed or accepted that such a tendancy as the militant tendance exists as an organisation. He said no. Now I think that he may in his own terms have been answering truthfully but it is certainly outside the bounds of credibility that there is not a political organisation that operates as the militant tendancy. I asked him whether he made any financial contributions, he said I make no financial contributions not even the odd contribution. I think too that in a sense Tony occupies a certain position in a city in which the Militant Tendancy is evident if not prodominant, it is unlikely that if that relationship would continue to exist without a financial relationship certainly within the terms of1982 resolution. I asked whether he had ever attended a Militant meeting not open to the public. Militant, from the evidence of those who have belonged to it and those who have apposed it is favoured It is not the only organisation but it is most definitely the case that its meetings are not limited to open meetings and anybody who believes to the contrary merely would be deluding themselves. I think that applies both to people who are sympathetic to Militant and secondly tolerant to the case of militant even though not supporting Militant as well as those who are antagonistic to militant. Well there are private meetings and it would be extraordinary in a city which with all the reasons that I said earlier has got an eminence of Militant activity that the that Tony Mulhern with his various attrobutes wasn't privy to certain meetings not open to the public and I would like now if he would distinguish in his case because I don't want him to generalise as that would be unfair, in his case if he could distinguish between membership of militant which is a phrase that he used as mere association with Militant which is a phrase that he used and the National Executive Committee must use their own judgment as to whether the response that he gave on that was satisfactory in terms of definition or in terms

Tape 19 P4.

Neil of demonstrating that his relationship with Militant went no further than mere association to the point of nodding acquaintance rather than actual participation. I think that we must make a judgment on that basis as well. When it came to the question of the charge of being a member of the Militant Tendancy, I did not, as denis intermated, although I recognise that it was a long time ago since it was said, ask him whether he would in future be a member of the Militant Tendancy I asked no such question. He volunteered the phrase "I am not a member of the Militant Tendancy, I never have been or ever will be" and I think that given the matters relating to Lower Breck Road and the nature of the political structure in Liverpool means that the very least we can say is that it is a matter that has to be regarded with certain reservations. I spoke of the political structure in Liverpool and what I propose to do now in order to demonstrate that is t quote from the Merseyside Labour Committee evidence that was published submitted to the NEC yesterday yes but published in Tribune and elsewhere and I have the evidence before me. The principlecriticism of the campaign in Liverpool they say has been as to be that it failed even in its own terms. The lordable achievements of the City Council were jeopodised for the DLP leadership, jobs were put at risk with the issue of redundancy notices which took place without consultation with the unions and the steam rollingg through the DLP and the Labour meeting of 26th December. Services were cut despite denials from leading Councillors, far from consolidating its basic support it is neglectng the Parties increased share of the vote at the last elections Please refer to this publication which is bound to be sent along with these typed papers.

Now please turn to page 2 of the submission.
this goes on finally to say, the campaign developed momentum and rushed on in David Blunkett's words "people queried whether it was a campaign to defend jobs and services when, towards it end, jobs and services were used to defend the campaign.
I think that that history.

Neil could I ask who actually signed that.

Neil That is signed the name that appears is the secretaryof the Labour Co-ordinating Committee Paul Larry

He is a member of our Constituency and I have never heard him once say anything of that kind throughout the year and I am amazed.

Neil All I would say Eric Eric is that here is a public document which has been published in national magazine he has been prepared to put his name on top of it and of course you will be familiar Eric with the large number of conrades in Liverpool who have been not only willing to support but campaigning support on the views expressed. Now the document continues, I won't go into it more, there are criticisms of me in this ddocument, I won't go into all the details because I think people are familiar with it. I think that these kind of contributions have got to be taken into account as well.

Tape 19 P5

A point of order Mr. Chairman, I don't think that a complaint from that Committee was put to tony at all and is being raised now really after the hearing and I don't really understand why Neil thinks they are telling the truth and Tony Mulhern is lying.

Chair That is a point of order, but all I can say is that at this time of night and I think that all of us have been taken along a bit one way that way most of the day.

Neil Even at this stage, I woulden't introduce new evidence because that would be quite outside the rules not only of this National Executive Committee but of national justice. The matters which I referred to are all involved in the kind of charges that have been put and the report that was published in the first place by this National Executive Committee I might be particularising within the terms of that evidence but I am certainly not producing new evidence of the kind of affairs in Liverpool or the reaction which it actually produced. Now if I can become very specific, to the question of that which is of no doubt been considered at some length in this Committee in the course of today and that is again the letter from John Linden and his company. The question from John Evans about involvement with 2 Lower Breck Road, Tony said and people will recall it clearly, "am I" where is the note and since it is a matter of recording, it is eay to check with note of surprise in in his voice. I must say that I found that somewhat unpersausive due to the fact not that he would so much association himself association himself back in 1982 or 1983 from involvement in Lower Breck Road but because we haven't 17th May 1986 just a short time ago that was actually produced and submitted for discussion in the Executive obviously at the request of Tony Mulhern and in support of his contentions that he has not been involved and it is not possible to answer a question am i, when in that letter itself it is clear that Mr. Atman has not returned to Mr. Linden with instructions and difficulties have been experienced with the bank over 3 years and, although Tony, I think rightly, says that if something went wrong at 2 Lower Breck Road they could not come to him for money because he doesn't consider himself to be a guarantor the fact remains that at the time of this letter no matter what has happened since on the basis of the contribution just made by Frances at the time of this letter whatever the disassociation the unfortunate fact to Tony was that he was still involved in 2 Lower Breck Road an he must have understood it due to the recency of the letter. Very shortly, very briefly, how many questions of the conduct of the Party in Liverpool. I think that for the sake of being as brief as possible it is as well to refer to the matter again in the LCC document but certainly contained in the long submission made by the NEC to Tony Mulhern and the long response that he has made to it. The contention is that the aggrigate meeting of the DLP act as a general political parliament in all aspects of policies ranging from local to nation or even international

Tape 19 P 6

Neil The contention is that the aggrigate meetings of the DLP act as a general political parliament in all aspects of policies ranging from local to national and international issues. There is absolutely no reason whatsoever why a Ward Party shoulden't do that, why a Constituency Party shoulden't do that, why a Regional Conference or Regional Executive shoulden't do that but I must say that in terms of the rules that we have and of course we can change these rules and many would argue that it is essential to change these rules it is the fact that within those rules they are being stretched somewhat when there is such a frequency and breath of reference to issues that don't refer specifically to local government. Now that all I am arguing is that the rules as they currently exist and are understood make certain provisions and the provisions don't embrace the breath of a general political parliament on all aspects of matters and one must then ask questions about how those aggrigates are being used and finally I ask Tony, members may recall, about the three questions that were set questions, and he testified that there was one set question about who makes policy, one set question about whether you go anywhere to look for it and one set question that is repeated in the submission of John Hamilton about the status of the District Party I will find it precisely now and refer to it, since we are being recorded this won't take more than a few seconds. The important thing yes it was why do you wish to stand as a Candidate for the City Council? a repeated reference by a number of people inside Liverpool with a close familiarity with the affairs there who do say the question is very frequently asked as the point of being a set question what would you do in the event of a policy conflict between the Ward you represent and the DLP. Had Tony said yes that is a set question and we understand the need for doing that so that we understand where the Candidates stand well that would have been the end of that. But that is frankly the answer that we got as people will recall there was a different and more generalised answer.

who said that, who in the LCC said that.

Neil Well i've heard it said

a heated comment by Eric here which I cannot understand.

Neil Apart from here is a document signed by Larry on behalf of the LCC as I have already said, Ian Williams, Jane Kennedy, and most of the other people

well who are they

Neil Not just to me but to a lot of other people as well and from a lot of other people being prepared to submit.

I must ask this question. Were any of them asked and who do they quote that said it.

Tape 19 P7

Neil Right I will give you specific names in addition which I am going on to do. Vicky Roberts met with a no panel decision, Paul Thomas met with a no panel decision, Tony Sharp met with no panel decision, Malcolm Kennedy met with a no panel decision and others leading to the wide spread suspicion I go no stronger than that that they were being assessed

A loud cry was heard saying answer that question with others trying to hold Eric, I think, down. Answer me. It sounds here as if Eric bashed the table down.

Chair Eric let me say to you that it does not make it any more important by shouting and balling like that, does it?

Eric I am not getting an answer

Nobody is going to give any more consideration

Eric Well i'm not getting an answer I am told that shouting that is one thing, I want to know who asked that question and who the people were who asked it. That has not been said by Neil

Chair Listen, if you want to shout and ball, if you do enjoy doing that, we don't enjoy it, but if you do enjoy it, do it through the chair

Neil o.k. Chair I hope that this asertive manner of cross questioning is not is not going to take us until tomorrow
I will answer the point and I will answer it by saying this, I am quoting from a widely publised document the alligations in that document are very serious and they are very specific since they refer to the Chair person of the EC requiring Candidates to give correct answers to three questions. The Chair person of the EC who has been here giving testomy all day has taken no action other than to make generalised attempts to rebut the very serious alligations that have been made in the course of this document and other references made to people who it is believed have been excluded from the panel not because of their lack of expertises or experience but because they basically

Eric You didn't put those points

Neil three times over that question

you did not put those questions

Tape 19 P8

Neil I hope that when considerations of natural justice are made then due note will be taken of the attempt to shout down in the course of what I am saying and I tell you simply this that the louder they shout the finner their case gets.

I wish all this was televised. I wish the people could hear what you are saying and what you didn't say to

Eric Eric

You never put one of those questions about any of those people to him, why didn't you do it.

Neil and it would certainly bring a hell of a lot of changes The bits that I don't manage to cover there you always make up so I am sure that they are comprehensively informed about what I am doing or alledged to be doing. All I would say absolutely in conclusion Chairman is that we have had a lot of testomies in the course of today. The kind of charges that are being made relating to the membership of the Militant Tendancy and the Labour Party in Liverpool have been responded to at considerable length but have not answered with considerable conviction. But I still come to a conclusion other than that the charges in respect of membership of Militant Tendancy and the particular form of operation of the DLP in Liverpool under the influence of people and associated in the Militant Tendancy is not satisfactory in terms of the Labour Party Constitution and rules and the person responsible under both of those charges should be denied membership of the Labour Party.

Chair Can I just say to you in the quietness of the interlude now, I let you go, i've let the leader go because I think those special situations in the terms of contributions but if anybody shouts at you when you are speaking like you shouted at other people I hope you will complain to me, but I will make the same remarks to other people that I am going to say to you now if you want to shout at least do it through the chair, o.k. I have got Tony and I have got Cyril

I would just like to put it on the record what the Vice Chancellor said "it is contrary to the rules of natural justice even in a case such as this to seek to find a man guilty of a charge having serious consequences for him on the basis of evidence not disclosed to him or even
none of the points and none of the names Neil has mentioned were put to Tony Mulhern when he was in the room. I just want to put that on record.

Can I just say this from Tony Mulhern that were not put to him either. It has been that kind of a day and can't we give and take a little bit

Chairman you have

Tape 19 P9

Chairman you have just told Eric not to interrupt

I will not interrupt again

You have to put the points to the persons accused but the one thing is the protection of the Party and I want to make two general points and then come on to Mulhern's own position. First of all we are passing through a momentus political time and I do not think the Party understands after Layland, Libya, Chernaville, local elections, ship building and so on why we are devoting so much time more than on any other subject to this. The second point that I would make which is very important is this question of the way the public see us. The televisions today showed a noisey demonstration josaling some members of the Executive as they came in, but in this meeting there has been a lot of camerarmry and not only between people of different views but also with Tony Mulhern and yet he is a man who certainly seems to and before has been blackened abbused insulted by public press as a as a wrecker an extremist, a mole, somebody who wants to destroy the Party, parliamentary democracy and charged with cruption and truthfully the man we saw today who I have known as I have been up to Liverpool a couple of times a year for the last 5 or 6 years and I first spoke there in 1950 when I remember being told not to go into a protestant housing estate that was when it was religious politics but what we have saw today was an honest competent and decent man who whatever you may think of his promises and he omitted he had made mistakes is clearly committed to the movement. Now it is against that background that we have to omit the charges and the point about the DLP if I take that first is that Mulhern enjoys the confidence of the people who know him best namely the Liverpool Labour and he enjoys their confidence if you do decide to destroy the leader of Liverpool Labour Party, this Party at the time of crisis is taking on Liverpool too. Now the second point I would make is about Militant, because it is quite straightforward, either you believe what he said or you brand him as a liar and I did put that point to him but if you brand him as a liar then the word will go out to the press that he is a wrecker, an extremist, a mole, who want to destroy the Party of parliamentary democracy and for all I know they will say that he confirms the judgment.

Tape 20 12pm -

Tony Mulhearn

Tony Benn: Expelled Tony Mulhearn. We all know there are hundreds of people like him in the Party in other cities besides Liverpool, and the press will never leave us alone until we have got rid of those they name. At an earlier meeting Michael Meacher said "what is the blood price" and I presume what he was saying is when does it stop. Because if you get rid of Mulhearn, in my opinion, there is nothing he has done that could not be used as grounds to demand the expulsion of Dave Nellist and Terry Fields and a lot of other people as well. Now if we do go on it will become the major business of the Labour Party. We had our GC in Chesterfield on Sunday, 103 people turned up - and it wasn't an aggregate meeting and Eric Varley's former secretary moved a motion of criticism of me for having left the Executive, which I think was right, because I think it protected us from a breach of the judge's rules, but after a long debate because it occupied a lot of time, that man got five people to support him out of 103, but the point I am making is that the GC had to spend most of the time on that subject and because it is so important every GC will now begin drifting their business from preparing from the election to discussing whether they think the NEC was right or not. Now if it doesn't go on, if we draw a line under it and I am sure there are many people particularly after today and the prospect of tommorrow or should I say after yesterday and the prospect of today/after midnight and its if we don't go on then all the ..... incredibility of a tough leadership dealing with extremists will be thrown away. There will be no credit to the Executive having dealt with Mulhearn if they don't then deal with Nellist and Fields and hundreds of people. Now I am not - wouldn't be for any individual member of the Party to try to sum up what the Party feels, but if I were to give a guess at it I would say this I think the Labour Party desparately wants to win the election including Mulhearn, who is here today. I think the Labour Party wants to support the Leader and make him Prime Minister, but I also think that the majority of the Party regards this as a major diversion and a divisive factor on the eve what we hope will be a majority Labour Government.

Tony Benn: Therefore, given the answers (inaudible) which I thought on the DLP were immensley competent and comprehensive and given the fact that I don't believe he is a liar,. I think we should stop and I think we should stop now by acquiting him of the charges and getting on with the job. I tell you this, I think if that were done the Party would thank the Executive and I would certainly regard the last fifteen hours as having been worthwhile. But if we start again tommorrow then we have to come back again in a couple of weeks and then we have to do it again I think the responsibility of those who started this will be a heavy one. I can't more than that, but I believe that these are the factors that ought to be in our mind when we decide what to do about the case of Tony Mulhearn.

Chair Cyril, do you want to come in.

Cyril Ambler: Yes, thank you very much Chairman. First of all can I apologise (inaublible)

Joyce: Can't hear - will you speak up.

Cyril Ambler: First of all I must apologise for perhaps having to make the longest speech that I have ever made on this Executive, because I am sure that a number of people think I am the little lad that sits at the back and says nought but ..... Now we are suppposed to be, as a jury, if you want to use that word, considering the evidence that has been presented to us. And in considering the evidence obviously opinions of that evidence have to come and play a part in our deliberations Now it is said that Tony impressed some people by his behaviour when he sat at that table there and answered our questions. Quite frankly my own opinion was that if his answers weren't inconclusive they were evasive. Because he answered them in an evasive way and how can you expect anyone else to answer questions about an organisation which is ambiguous, which is secretive, an organisation in fact which denies its own existence. I don't know with

Cyril Ambler: what else we can compare the 'Militant Tendency' with. Perhaps the nearest thing I can compare it with is the MI5, which denies it exists, but we all know it exists as we all know that the 'Militant Tendency' exists. My own opinion is that it hid behind a facade which usually accompanies questions in relation to the 'Militant Tendency'. Can I turn to the question of the signature of the 'Militant Tendency' document purchasing that property in Liverpool in 1980 and which in 1982 after a decision at conference - was it '82 or '83, I don't know I am getting so confused with dates - it might have been '83. We are informed that he took steps to have his name moved as guarantor of the 'Militant Tendency' because that was what he was - a guarantor of 'Militant Tendency' payments for the purchase of that property. And I cannot understand that if he was so concerned about the fact that he was going to be associated with 'Militant Tendency' by his signature on that document, why he didn't make his steps public that he wanted to renounce,at that stage, any renounciations of his associations with 'Militant Tendency'. You will recall that I particularly asked him the question - "Why did he not make it public at that stage that he was disassociating himself from the 'Militant Tendency' and I received an answer which was to the effect that he was too busy with other things - not too busy to take steps to get his name removed from the document, but too busy to make it known in a public announcement. A letter at that time to Walworth Road, Transport House, whatever it was, wherever Eric thought it was would have done a world good to him, but he never took those steps and a note in one of the Liverpool newspapers would have disassociated himself completely from the 'Militant Tendency' in Liverpool, but those steps were never taken. I will have to refer, of course, to John Linden's letter. It doesn't escape my notice if it has escaped anyone else's notice, that the name of John Linden also appears on a public notice advertising and searching for support of the 'Militant Tendency', a document which you have before you today, on the same document the name of Tony Mulhearn appears. I'll not draw any

Cyril Ambler: conclusions from that I'll ask you to draw your own conclusions, I've probably drawn my own conclusions. In five years - or something of that nature, four to five years - since he first set out to get his name removed from that document on the 16 of the something of this month of this year - 17th in fact - according to his solicitors that he approached - his name still appears on the document. Now it appears to me Mr Chairman that there can have been very little pressure from Mr. Mulhearn to get that name removed from that document and I have to ask myself a question - was there any pressure at all to remove his name from the document. Some of us say that it is difficult to get a guarantor's name removed from a legal document of that nature. Well, comrades my own ward owns certain property at which we decided we had to change the names of the trustees. It didn't take us two months to get the names of those trustees changed to enable us to sell certain land so we could build better facilities for our own ward. Check it, in fact, I think David you will find in your correspondence from my own ward Balby ward in Doncaster we are seeking the permission of the NEC to sell certain land so we can build a permanent property for the Balby ward Labour Party. It didn't take us two months to get the names of those signators, those trustees of Balby ward Labour Party removed from the list and taken off. Said that Hugh Daltney, 17 years of age, and he doesn't give a dam what happens to the 'Militant Tendency' and whatnot. I've got news for you comrades, I have got a member of my ward, who is 86 years of age, who hobbles down to a ward meeting, every ward meeting there is and he gives a dam what happens to the Labour Party and its relationship to the 'Militant Tendency'. He is an ex-councillor. He doesn't hesitate to say what he says. It is said that Mr. Mulhearn not only spoke on 'Militant' platforms but he spoke on other platforms. Very difficult you know to get anything out of Mr. Mulhearn exactly which and when platform other than 'Militant' platform he spoke on. Particlarly platforms which were actually supporting the policies of this National Executive Committee. Can I turn briefly to the question of the disposition of Chairman of

Cyril Ambler: the District Labour Party. As Chairman of the District Labour Party he was in office in 1983 when the new Rules of the Liverpool District Labour Party were adopted by the District Liverpool Labour Party with Mr. Mulhearn as the Chairman of that District Labour Party, by his own ommission he was aware of those rules, by his own omission he allowed those rules to be ignored, and I have to ask myself why, and Comrades you have to ask yourselves why he allowed those rules, which he approved of, to be ignored. As Chairman of the District Labour Party as some of us here are Chairman of ward Labour Parties, of trade unions, we consider ourselves I am sure as Chairman of those organisations to be the person who is responsible of the safeguarding of the rules and the constitution and the rules of debate of those organisations to which we belong. Mr. Mulhearn should be no exception to the rules of chairmanship and the rules of a chairman to maintain the rules of the organisation to which he belongs. Irrespective of the fact, of the alleged fact that certain things had happened in the past, a specific meeting took place in '83 which changed the rules of his District Labour Party and he was party to those changes, he was chairman of that District Labour Party when those changes took place and yet he choose to ignore those rules. Rules are there within our Party our responsibility as an Executive Committee is to safeguard those rules and the consitution of the Labour Party and I cannot understand why he didn't object when debates may have been forced upon him, why he didn't object to breaking the rules of the Labour Party. Why didn't he seek to object when people sort to break those rules. He referred to Bob Parry and how good a fellow Bob Parry is -

Larry: Jim Parry.....

Cyril Ambler Jimmie Parry sorry, names sometimes escape me as they do with Eric.

(inaudible)

David Blunkett: Could I ask you to speak to us as if we are colleagues

Cyril Ambler: Sorry I said I was going to make the longest speech that I have ever made in my life. Jim Parry about what a good fellow he was, brought up in a slum area. Brothers, there is nobody who can tell me about being brought up in the slum areas, because the house I was born in was pulled down as a slum when I was 13 year old so I know a little bit about being brought up in the slum areas. So that doesn't make Jim Parry any different from anybody else that might be on this Executive Committee. It's said that the question has been raised at other Constituency District Labour Parties, other business other than local matters is discussed. Well, I will invite any of you, any of you to come to the Doncaster District Labour Party and see what happens when questions are raised which are not the affairs of the District Labour Party. That even when trade unions try to bring up questions in the Labour party and try to use the District Labour Party as an negotiating body which is on a trade union matter, they are told that the place to take them is through the trade union organisation and the organisation that employs them and not use the District Labour Party as a tool for their wishes and that is what should have happened in Liverpool. The rules have been talked about in this meeting quite a lot, but what has not been mentioned from that table is the policy of the District Labour Party is to draw up an electoral programme not to discuss the day to day policies of the District Council. As for the Local Government panels, Comrade, and if I am losing your interest I will shut up in a few minutes.

Syd Tierney: No, no, I protect your right to make your own decision.

Cyril Ambler: As for Local Government Panels you know, it is recognised it is admitted from that table there should be one Local Government panel, you know, they've admitted they've ..... the rules, but they've said we ignore these rules.

Cyril Ambler: We have a Local Government Panel and a subsidary panel. You know we cannot have subsidary rules if it suits that particular organisation. If Charlie Smith is not fit at this stage to be a candidate for Local Government elections he should be told so and he should be advised where he can increase and improve his education on Local Government matters, as happens in Doncaster and no doubt in other constituencies and District Labour Party - not put on to a subsidary panel and pushed to one side as a second choice - talk about protection of the Party someone mentioned over there - talking about protection of the Party, does the party understand what's happening. I'll tell you this, yes, the Party understands what's happening, and I will tell any one of you, you spend the last six weeks every night on the doorstep like I have spent and that will tell you what the people want, what the electorate want. I have no excuse for being down in Parliament, I have no excuse for being a full-time officer of a trade union, I happen to live in the area, used to work in the area, but at the moment I am only temporary employed, and spent every night for the last six weeks knocking on doors, and I know if not good if not better than most of you what the people on the doorstep think, because its not the odd day out for me knocking on the doors in election times, local election times, it's six weeks at a period, and its no use talking in Liverpool about what happened yesterday, its talk about what happens today and its what happened today or virtually today, those are breaches of the rules of the Labour Party, breaches of the constitution and from that Mr. Chairman, you can only conclude that I have got one way to vote of this.

Syd Tierney: Well, look I have got Ted and then I have got Alex and then I think I want to wind it up. Got to proceed there's a bit more to do yet.
I want a vote before we go tonight - Ted.
Fairly quickly, can you make it fairly sharpish
I'm not going to penalise you, Ted.
Alex you next. O.K. Go on Ted, sorry.

Ted O'Brien: Mr Chairman, Ladies and gentlemen, I will endeavour to do my best. First of all I would like to say this that the fact that I am considering the evidence that is before us doesn't mean I should have asked Tony Mulhearn to explain the evidence, because Tony Mulhearn has had the evidence as exactly the same as I. I would like to refer the Executive Council to the minutes of the District Labour Party held on Friday, 1 November 1985. Now the focus made did the trade unions get consulted in relation to the jobs of 35,000, 31,000 actually contained in the minutes and it says it praises first of all the Party then calls on the Liberal City Council to organise a conference of all council workers, community organisations, unemployed, sections of the Labour Movement to unite in the common struggle. However, we demand that Council withdraw its redundancy notices to 31,000 people. Then we go onto the next one, and I will try to be brief and talk as fast as I can. In the present circumstances we were able to publicly express no confidence in the Leader of the Labour Party but it is wrong for the Leader to share the misfortunes of the particular council that is also supporting Liverpool, but they first of all demand in that resolution that the council withdraw the notices of 31,000. The GMBW stewards broke official picket lines it says and also they are calling for the withdrawal of the notices. I will go onto the next page. On the bottom of the page the ward. supports the campaign to win just resources, but the sudden ..... to issue redundancy notices and the disarray(inaudible) consequence on this decision the ward calls the deal to work closely with the reps of the National Labour Party, the trade unions and to work closely with the reps of these and the best way to protect jobs as a solution to prices, ... jobs and services to ensure the Liverpool Labour Party.Then on the next page another resolution accordingly we totally condemn the issuing of 31,000 notices to the workforce of Liverpool. such a step will only result in demoralisation,..... total confusion and the end of an effective local campaign, believe there is no tactical advantage to be gained at such a move. and I must continue this..... and I hope the Executive will bear with me just for a few more moments and continue

Ted O'Brien: We call on the city council to withdraw immediately the redundancy notices to the workforce in Liverpool and support entirely the position adopted by the trade unions and of the Labour Party conference in moving a emergency motion opposing such redundancy notice. Then it goes on from the T&G, this branch of the T&G demand a public - I wont read that one because I can't ..... in front of some young ladies here. And then there is another one, secretary's report, and all these Neilson made an extremely offensive derogatory remark confirmed by other delegates in attendance, we feel that in the interest of unity Councillor Neilson should apologise. Now you see what I am trying to point out is that Tony Mulhearn was the President at all these meetings and then it goes on another resolution in relation to education. Then in each one of these if you read the minutes of the meeting you will see where there is criticism that's referred to policy or it's referred back the EC that in everyone of these notices and motions where it congratulates the EC of the District Labour Party then there is support. We fully support the decision taken by the DLP to break off all links with the Black Caucus Group until that group can be seen to be fully represented of the Black community and is prepared to participate along with other Black organisations in ..... discussions on how to combate racism but to do so with threats of physical abuse being used on Labour Party members to achieve these aims. The next lot: DLP members of the Executive are invited to offer explanations to the (inaudible) trade union movement of their decision and what was the decision? That this Labour Party congratulates both Labour Party members and trades unionists and councillors who took part in the demo against unemployment and cuts in social security. This Labour Party demands an explanation as to why the leadership of the District Labour party withdrew from the national demonstration in this city against unemployment and cuts in social services. Can I go on, and this - I think I've only got two more comments on this particular set of minutes. "This Labour Party calls upon the DLP ot ensure that Labour Party cards as well as delegates to

Ted O'Brien: (inaudible) are respected at the door of District Labour Party and the CLP to ensure there is no contravention about who is entitled to vote"- report from the Secretary: "The Labour Party condemns in the strongest possible terms - and this is evidence that has been in the hands of everybody for the last fortnight - "The Labour Party condemns in the strongest possible way the motion in coming uninvited into the Riverside (inaudible) a provocative leaflet and also expresses views totally contrary to policies of Riverside CLP and are appalled at the continuing damage being done to the credibility of the Labour Party within the black community by the sectarian dogmatism of the Militant dominated DLP on the Samson Bond appointment and the action of racism. Riverside therefore resolve to issue a leaflet explaining their policy". These are the minutes of the DLP, Mr. Chairman, and they have been before this Committee and they have been before the defendants. Now, it goes on to say that "this Labour Party can be forgiven for thinking that there is a planned attempt to short-circuit the views and existence of Riverside Constituency Labour Party. We do not gainsay the right of any groups to distribute leaflets or canvass in any ward they choose. However, we do expect that a group composed of Labour Party members has to support the very existence of the Party with at least the minimum of courtesy if not the (inaudible) of political duty of consulting the ward on the content and timing of such activity. The inflammatory, provocative and offensive references to sections of the black organisations in this area, both in Liverpool Labour News and the recent Militant leaflet, increases (inaudible) the Granby Ward in maintaining working relationships with some of the black organisations. This Labour Party abhors the leafleting by Militant in certain Liverpool wards without the prior knowledge and consent of the wards, Constituencies and DLP. We particularly deplore recent leaflets concerning the issue of Liverpool's Race Relations Officer which served only to inflame sensitive issues and in fact contained many inaccuracies.

?m Here, here!

?m Ted, we've read these, haven't we?

Ted O'Brien: I don't know, have we? Have we? Because I'm not sure .... because there was a question asked - we've been here twelve hours today

Ted O'Brien: some of us haven't said a word -

Syd Tierney: Ted, I'm not shutting you up, I'm just saying to you that we've read those, and if you want to make your comments -

Ted O'Brien: The question was then asked by the leader of the Party on the question of who in fact is in control. Now if you look at the Liverpool District Labour Party of the 5th of April, there were some people who voted against the budget and it said that they should be removed from the list of Labour Party candidates. Then you come to the selection and it says: "the idea was that the best candidates would be - best candidates, I don't who's going to judge that - will be put forward in winnable or safe Labour wards. More difficult wards or more Tory wards, the candidate who will gain in election experience." Now, I must come on to the letter that today we've had more discussion about than anything else. And that's the letter from John Linden of Kevan Coombes and company and it says - and I want you to read carefully, because we sometimes glance at letters and we don't read them: "I've been requested by Councillor Tony Mulhearn to write to you concerning Number 2, Lower Breck Road" but then the letter goes on to totally disprove that point. "Some time in '82, following the Labour Party Conference, I was approached by Tony Aitman, who I knew in my professional capacity as a solicitor"- not Mulhearn, Aitman - "he explained to me the situation concerning the ownership, and as a result of the (inaudible) Tony Mulhearn and Terry Harrison, who I did not know, were anxious that their names should be removed from the deeds. I in turn explained to Tony Aitman that the matter was not as simple as that and that consent of the bank" - and this is important - "and that fresh Trustees should be accepted by the bank. In these circumstances Tony Aitman decided so far as I am aware, on his own volition, that that being the case, matters should be left as they were for the time being, and these instructions were given to me by Tony Aitman as I have described above. In the event, Tony Aitman did not immediately return to me those instructions on account as I understand it, of difficulties (inaudible) with the bank in making the necessary arrangements for them for the transfer of responsibility from Tony Mulhearn and Terry Harrison." I'm reading this for the record really."This is still the position

Ted O'Brien: today. I have finally made efforts to resolve this situation but so far without success. Finally I will say that my instructions remain as they were in '82, to seek the removal of the names of Tony Mulhearn and Terry Harrison from the deeds of 2 Lower Breck Road. I can also say to the best -

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End of Tape.

I'll make this last point Chairman, ...

Things have shifted away I went with Mortimer to see the brokers and they couldn't get a loan, we were in an overdraft of £400,000 we have a look at militant books they had £400,000 in the books and were appealing to the ordinary punter to give us money constituencies to give us money did Militant give us a penny not a wink and they had that money so I still believe in the Labour Party O.K you put your money were your mouth is and they didn't do it .....

I can get kicked in I can be done anything can happen to me but they are a party within the party and you may do that and you will need to do that as soon as possible if you are going to win the next election and thats were I stand and I shall help my friends I have many I hope maybe I've not got many left but I have got many friends who can agree with me and the Trade Union Movement who are good left wingers and I think that should put your feet up to the issue about Tony Mulhearn and not using him as any sacked official Tony is associated with that group and I think he is going to be dealt with in that fashion that is my point.

I think that is an end in discussion I am going to have to ask you to get the ballot papers out .....

Can I just make one commnent Chairman

We are going to hand out the ballot papers now

It wont take long Mr Chairman
I only want to make a comment about what was said by Ted Collins which drawed my attention to something.

It's Gordon Collins

I beg your pardon, I beg your pardon ...
Can I make the point Mr Chairman I re-read the letter from John Lindon a great deal of what is being made today figured largely in our proceedings, I dont know but it is a rather peculiar thing I think that we should all at least appreciate the point at least, in the letter from John Lindon which is dated the 17 of May, he states in the 3rd paragraph he explained the situation concerning the ownership of that property and further told me that as a result of conference decision Tony Mulhearn and Terry Harrison whom I did not then know were anxious that the etc. John Lindon is a councillor his name features in document advertising the Militant along with other people like Derek Hatton and Tony Mulhearn, he must of been elected to the council in May 1984 because obviously this document is before this year there were no elections in 1985

I do find it very very strange and rather hard to accept that he did not know someone like Tony Mulhearn who in 18 months later or less than 18 months later was elected to the city council. I find that astonishing. Seems to me .....

O.K. there is a answer to it ......

There may well be an answer all I am saying is Chairman I find it astonishing and I think that it is worthy of note.

O.K we are going to get the ballot papers out now David.

For subsequent hearings which I think is an important one to take into account. That maybe the basis why Micheal is the idea. The advice is, it wouldn't be held as being prejudist and then there is no reason not to make an announcement.

We have decided on the voting, well the votes are in the box now so lets leave them in the box for a while we find out ......

We have to decide the order tomorrow now there were a number scheduled for today if you have not heard two of whom have requested legal representation and at least one of them has an appointment with their lawyers in the morning.
It is suggested therefore is Ian Lowes, Harry Smith and Tony who are due to be here tomorrow, Terry Harrison who were due to be here today Richard Venton who is to be here tomorrow and Felicity Dowling is seeing her lawyers quite late in the morning. So we have ....

So what about Derek Hattons position ...

Derek Hattons position is that we understand that he is unable to be present and he is asking that we odjourn for at least two weeks, in the light of that and in the light of the fact that we know that his position in the meeting we have already discussed and in the light also in the fact that technically we haven't dealt with the schedule business for today it would be sensible not to schedule Derek Hattons one.

So what has happened to the injunction and the .....

Fourteen.

I move that we declare it now is that agreed.

All agreed.

There is a question of how you are going to deal with the
of procedural issue.

We declare a result on the issues first then we have to get back in to decide whether to what the second charge, what if it is carried, what the appropriate form of disciplinary action is if any, at which point I will have to disappear again but that is sensible that whether or not the first charge is carried that you also decide on the disciplinary action for the second charge.

Chairman the result of the ballot is on the first charge, charge of militant tendency, 13 votes for probe 7 votes not probe. On the second charge that of being breech of rules standing orders, 13 votes prove 7 votes not prove.

Well its only one Renny didn't vote.

So do we wish now to proceed.

Chairman there were no divided votes so if I read the names out it means that those have voted prove or not prove on both charges.

Amber C.	Proven
Benn A.	Not Proven
Blunkett D.	Proven
Clarke E.	Not Proven
Collin G.	Proven
K	Proven
F.	Not Proven
Donwoody G.	Proven
Evans J.	Proven
Hattersley R.	Proven
Heffer E.	Not Proven
Kinnock N.	Proven
Kittson A	Proven
Maynard J.	Not Proven
McClusky S.	Proven
Meacher M	Proven
O'Brien E.	Proven
Richardson J.	Not Proven
Skinner D.	Not Proven
	Proven

Right now we have got the Proven and the Not Proven and we have the situation were it is an Proven majority do we now proceed on the basis of the second one.

The first one if found guilty thats the word Proven we are saying but then its no action repremand suspension for a set period, exclusion from office, delegacy and candidature and expulsion. I will proceed with that.

We are not voting against we are voting actually for.

Do you want me to start at the top.

No action, repremand, suspension for a set period, exclusion from office, delegacy and candidature and expulsion, do you want me to start at no action?

Am I to put it to all of you and say all in favour of expulsion?

Mr Chairman, I am prepared to facilitate matters by moving expulsion and taking a straight voting to that to meet Tony wishes.

There are three propositions to make why dont we just do have as David says you can only vote forwards like for one candidate, go down the list and then on the final vote have the name .....

All in favour of no action please show.

Those against no action. O.K it's late at night all in favour of repremand.

All in favour of suspension for a set period.
All in favour of exclusion from office, delegacy and candidature.

All in favour of expulsion.

Let me tell you what we have got O.K on no action it was '7' On Repremand it was '1' on Suspension was '0' on exclusion was '3' on expulsion was '9'. Then I am left with no action and expulsion.

We should drop repremand and .....

I have got 1,4 and 5 so I am starting of one again, no action in favour of no action.
All in favour of exclusion thats from office, delegacy.

Let me explain, I asked Renny that she shouldn't vote because she was away.

You want me to shout the names for and against expulsion.

For or against expulsion:

Benn	Against
Blunkett	For
Clarke	Against
Collins	For
	For
	Against
Donwoody	For
Evans	For
hattersley	For
Heffer	Against
Kinnock	For
Kittson	
Maynard	Against
McClusky	Against
Meacher	
O'Brien	For

Tape 22

even whilst the NEC was going on giving statements to the press for example, this is in John John Carville's comments as yesterdays hearing wore on a Party spokesman said that it is clear that the tactics being employed proceedings to castrate the entire NEC far from demolrilising the NEC it is having an effect in uniting it in common frustration and then we go on further. Mr. Peter Tarbeck is a militant etc. inside Mr. Kinnock challenged Mr. Mulhern statement that he agrees with many of the ideas in Militant which ideas did he disagree with Mr. Kinnock asked, Labour spokesman said that Mr. Mulhern replied that eh could not recall any Militant policy well I want to say to Peter Mandelson you are implying by the Executive and if you are going to go outside saying what Mr. Kinnock says you better also go outside saying what other people say or don't go outside at all until there is a complete statement at the end I am fed up with by so called spokesman for the Party if that's the way you want it that's the way you can have it. That is not the best interests of our Party and as far as I am concerned when I am out of this sort fo thing there will be a spokesman going out with every motion to the press all the time during the internal matters in this Party and only one side because we had that before only one side being put then the National Executive any suggestions that NEC members should not take statements and so on to the press is not on that only proves the point I was making yesterday.

Can I just say Eric and I want to be brief about it, when you came on to this executive Council that is one of the things you get airitated about about who goes and tells people what you have been doing in the Committeemeeting that you sat in before you even get outside to find out what thats gone on and on and when you have raised it you still wanted an ongoing sarga but I want to say this as well we seem to have people in this building as well who come together and who have waited around for coming in here and so on who have seen press people and making statements about what is going on in there and that's what happens I think sometimes it is not a bad idea to get the balance right as far as the Party and their Executive Council is concerned. If that is what Peter Mandelson was doing yesterday then I think he ought to be doing that on our behalf and that is all I want to say.

Its not on our behalf its on certain fractions.

Is that going to be the normal practise from now on I am not worried about not seeing anything because I never see anything anyway, I purposely didn't see anybody.

I think it is a fair point chair, on a point of order can it be Mandelson or anyone else who is going and speaking on this subject matter that is taking place inside the room. Who else in other rooms might be speaking because I think it ought to be a balanced point of view. To point out some of the things to point out for instance some of the things that perhaps we might be even though we might not have secured a victory. I think it should be a balanced point of view.

Tape 22 P2

But Chair,

Chair Joe

Joe Ought anybody to be saying anything until we come to a conclusion I mean that seems to me to be the point. I have sat here all day I never went outside this room accept to go to the toilet and it seems to me I mean that is an interpretation fo what is happening oughtent there to be no statement until we have finished or at an agreed statement at some stage.

Chairman could I just make one very brief pomment. If you don't mind me saying so I think there is a massive dose of hyprocracy in all this and I think it is quite wrong to have a go at trade officials of the Party we know that everybody that goes out of here and that includes members of the NEC who are really though not necessarily in my view make all sorts of comments to all sorts of people and the Militants have spent the entire day not only running in and out and giving interviews but hanging out the window giving interviews. I think that as far as we are concerned if we have got someone who in reply to direct questions from the press gives a very careful briefing and no one no one could say that it was factually inaccurate to say that they were deliberately billerbastering, oh good Lord that seems to me to be the least contentious thing that could have been said so I think as far as we are concerned it is really quite wrong for us to attack people who are doing their best to actually give some kind of balanced view rather than ignore the comments that are being made.

Chairman can I move the question that one or two representatives of the press being invited to attend because then they will get

I second that

and since the transcript isn't secret because so I move that we invite the press to nominate one or two people who would sit in at the back

There is mass discussion here as to which paper it might be to be nominated.

Chairman it so happens that we have a whole series of correspondents for the Militant newspaper appearing before us this morning and I am sure that an accurate report will be published.

Tape 19 P3

Neil I think i've got to say this and in many ways the validity of it and the freedom of information There are two problems one it is slightly and that is that we could actually have a couple of members of the press in here but there would be absolutely no guarantee whatsoever that we ould get anything other than an disstorted report. The second point is that if we are seeking to deal with the objections of people to responses to the press outside, I think that we should work on this basis, first of all if Peter were asked I am sure he would say I will say it to members present that nobody instructed, briefed or requested him in any shape or form to give any form of statement to the public yestereday and whilst I haven't got the same obition as Eric has
We know what goes on and we know the insessant pressures that are imposed by the press on the days like this when we hang around Walworth Road for a long time. I think that it would be impossible to expect our pressrelations people to remain mute in those circumstances and all we can do is to urge that the greatest possible accuracy and balance is given without relatingthe material being transacted inside a meeting. Now as far as I am concerned that has been Peter Mandelsons record during the whole time he has been working but if there are issues for criticism then he is a full-time officer of the Party he is the Director of one of our major Departments and I am sure that he is more than capable of answering for himself on queries.

I move to nominate two people that nobody can confuse in connection

Chair o.k. you have heard the proposition i'm going to put it, I think we have had a good discussion about it, all those in favour of the proposition please show. 7 fore, those against please show, 15 or more that is lost.

Larry Chairman can I please just say in line wih what Neil said that the briefing for the press must be on where we have reached in the procedure and it is necessary for us to do that otherwise we do get a grave

Will you tell Peter Mandelson to tell the press that by 14 votes to 7 we have voted against the press attending.

Larry Chairman I have no objection to that but whether it is a main item of interest to the press nevertheless if we wish to do that that is a factual matter. It is within the agreement of the press department here. of Peter Mandelson to let the press know what stage we are at and why we are at it. We should not however be giving any indication as to the ballets of particular arguments until we have reached a decision. I believe that is the way that we have normally behaved and behaved yesterday and I suggest we

Tape 19 P4

It was what Neil said to him and the answers he gave and there were other questions put which perhaps could have there was no reference for example to Hughy Dalsons letter and the fact that Hughy Dalton has been in this Party since 1946 as a young lad onwards got a record second to none in this movement, but apparently it doesn't matter what people like Hughy Dalton say.

Larry Chairman now you are destroying the conclusion that there is an accurate report in relation to what Peter Mandelson did or did not say, I do not necessarily accept that view any more than any report of what is said in here is accurate. All I am saying is that Peter Mandelson yesterday had to make absolutely certain that the press knew where we wereprocedurally because otherwise we would get totally distorted stories in the press and that remains the sole remit of the Press Department Communications Director. To tell the press where we are at and to correct any impressions that are being given elsewhere and I am sure that is the way Peter was behaving yesterday and I am sure it is the way the Press Department are carrying on today and on any future occasions of any meeting of the National Executive

Chair o.k. well we have the resolution put out we have got the position now can we then proceed with todays business. We are to see Ian Lowes

Neil A procedural question please, which I think is worth raising at this juncture. We had a very long day yesterday and it was obviously the will of the Executive that things should be taken through until they were properly concluded, however, it is clear that we have got a list of people before us today and whilst not proposing that we should have any gilotene or appose the system, I think that if is worthwhile bearing in mind that we can give effective and generous consideration to cases without it lasting for four hours or more or three hours or more. Now there is no perfect timing but I think that we can all use judgmen as to when we have got through the required material and people have been given a fair chance to respond and then we can proceed on that basis because otherwise clearly our proceedings could be put into question simply by the longness of those proceedings.

Could we make a decision at the very beginning today given the problems which arose yesterday late on, in view of the fact that there is a vote at ten o'clock in the House of Commons on sex discrimination that we at this beginning of the proceedings decide that whatever else happens how ever long or how ever detailed, or however curtailed and whatever we don't get into that rangal that we decide to go and vote at a quarter to ten. Anything else I mean that is a matter that is up for grabs. but I think we ought to ensure that because yesterday we nearly

because yesterday some people nearly made fools of themselves by almost not voting on the ship building question and I think that would have looked extremely bad and we don't want to be facing that position.

Mr. Chairman could I add support as I told one of the Executives when we were setting up this procedure I did draw your attention to the time when the National Executive editorial staff of Militant and they did put a gilotene on it because we wanted to get the business done.

I would just like to quote what Denis said Chairman I would like to vote at ten o'clock.

Can I say Mrr. Chairman that some of us are not domicile in this marvellous city and we don't know when the result will come, but seriously there is a late plane you know at eight o'clock, ten o'clock i've got a sleeper to get, so I hope it is all over before ten o'clock

At ten o'clock I will have to standback and I think that ought to be so. on the other hand when you come back at ten o'clock and we go on and on to one o'clock or two o'clock or whatever, some of us have got important trade union meetings on Friday morning and we shall want to get to them that is some of us and I would like to make that point as well. It is important that you vote and that we have some sleep as well.

I move that we finish at seven o'clock

Chair that would be unfair to some of the people that are coming to see us

well they can come another time

Neil Do we vote on that Chairman?

Chair Well I don't know

well you are going to have to stop at some reasonable hour othrwise just walk out

Why don't you time table the people you are going to see.

Tape 22 P6

I think it would be wise to find out whether we actually get going before we start about talking

well we've been 25 minutes now.

Chair Can we get on a bit then maybe think about a time

I move seven o'clock

Chair o.k. you've moved seven o'clock, is that seconded? yese anyone else want to say anything or will we just vote,

I think its stupid

Chair Well if its stupid vote accordingly. All in favour of the proposition please show, (no number is quoted here) those against, (no number again) o.k. that's lost can we proceed to todays business.

Larry Can I just say that Ian Low is before us on the two charges Harry Smith and Tony Atman are only on the Militant charge. Tony Harrison is on both charges and will have legal representation. Richard benson is only on the Militant charge and Felicity Downing is on both charges and will have legal representation. If we get that far.

Chair I will say good morning to you, its Ian Lowes my name is Sid Turn can I take it that you know most of these members present. Can you tell me who you accompanied?

Ian Pauline

Chair o.k. fine, Ian I want to read to you and I think probably you may have some ideas but I will read it to you in order that you know how we are going to proceed you are under investigation as you know by the NEC on two accounts, that is one the membership of Militant Tendancy and two breach of Party rules and standing orders each charge will be heard separately and can I tell you informally that the proceedings are being recorded on tape. The General Secretary's letter of 18th April 1986 with the procedure enclosed referred to the position on evidence of witnesses and asked you to written evidence. The written submissions received have been circulated to NEC members and read by them. The letter to your solicitors dated 18th April a copy of which was supplied to you also deals with witnesses. The NEC have received written submissions from your witness, the General Secretary will coommence request for oral evidence oh yes you have notified us that you have a witness, I will then be asking the General Secretary to the charge relating to membership of Militant Tendancy to you referring to those

particulars of the charges and any documentary evidence he wishes to proceed with he will not put any evidence other than that referred to in his correspondence with you in the General Secretary's letter of 18th April 1986. He will also in his submission refer to your request for witnesses. Then I will ask you to answer when the general Secretary has finished in any way that you wish to in making a reply. When you have finished I will ask any member of the NEC who has a question to ask you and the questions will relate and must relate to the charge or the evidence of the statements made by you. You will get the chance to request witnesses at some stage in the proceedings the NEC, the National Committee will in fact take the decision on whether to allow witnesses or nto. The witnesses may be questioned by any member of the NEC, questions must relate to the charges and witness's statementt. We will then go through the same procedure on the other charge on the breach of rules, same procedure and at the end of the hearing you and the General Secretary will withdraw to allow the NEC to discuss before they vote and voting will then take place obviously a secret vote, each charge being voted on separately. So we will deal first with the charge concerning membership of the Militant Tendancy and I will ask the General Secretary to put the matters to you.

Larry Ian Lowes is the convener of GMB he is also a member of the Executive Committee and was the Chair of the joint shop stewards The charge before you is as set out on the charge sheet that in view of your membership of the Militant Tendancy you are ineligible for membership of the Labour Party. Could I also draw your attention to the second page of my letter of 18th April 1986 which covered the charge as delivered to you. That paragraph reads as follows: "The NEC resolves that when considering an alligation against an individual member of the Labour Party that he is not now or shall immediately cease to be and further shall not hereafter become involved in financial support or in the organisation of or in the activities of Militant tendancy until in fact he is ready to give such an undertaking as an important factor as determining whether he is a member of the Militant Tendancy and therefore liable for expolsoon from the Labour Party". In other words that letter, that paragraph in that resolution gives the opportunity for Ian Lowes to give that undertaking. He is submitted and it is before you, his undated a submission I think it is undated a two page submission which is before the Committee that in my view does not amount to the undertaking required for by that resolution of the NEC and in that and in that letter of 18th April 1986 it is however before you and we will take that as evidence and no doubt you will wish to elaborate on that later on. The other piece of evidence before you is a letter from Andy King and we think he is an employee of the Liverpool City Council with you on campaigns he was one of the key staff responsible for fixing meetings to explain the Liverpool's City Council policy and position as I understand it meetings were arranged around the country. His letter indicates that the meeting in Leicester which was advertised in the Militant newspaper as a Militant meeting was when it was arranged, conveyed

Larry to him and therefore to Ian Lowes as being a meeting of the LPYS in Leicester. Since Mr. Pink was obviously responsible for fixing that meeting and was indeed the other speaker billed for that meeting, eronusly billed as a Liverpool Councillor, it is my view that the Executive should accept that explanation by Andy Pink in which do not think that there is any requirement that we should take oral evidence. That means that as far as the detailed charge is concerned we would perhaps delete the reference to the Leicester readers meeting on 25th February 1985 and the advertisements relating to that on 15 and 22nd February 1985. What I would ask Ian to say in his response to these charges is whether he eve drew it to the attention of anybody that his position in turning up to a Militant meeting when he was sure it was an LPYS meeting. If he can just register that, otherwise the charge as such is withdrawn. That particular of the charge is withdrawn. Now can I go to the position of Ian Lowes. Ian is the convener of a major GMB branch which covers the Partsey Gardens area and I think that it would not be eronus to say that it is generally assumed that there are a number of Militantsympathisers within that branch but of course that is not the issue, the issue is not whethr Ian Loes is a Militant sympathiser I think his submission merely indicates that he has some sympathy for the policies of Militant but whether he is a member of the Militant organisation. The evidence that we aduce to the position in relation to the Militants if that you have been billed at appearing on Militant platforms in fact there is one billed here tthe date of which you have queried in your submission which billed yourself as a second speaker at a Militant public ralley in Liverpool on 11th February and on with as a second speaker after Peter Taff the editor of the Militant who you will recall was expelled from this Party, Ian Lowes and others now it seems to me that was a major ralley of the Militant organisation in Liverpool and you were part of that. Taking that together with the signature on a leaflet which was circulated with the evidence which sets out the request of the endorsement of sales of Militant the leaflet is with your evidence and is headed Marcist Paper for Youth and that also includes your paternally, Liverpool JCC the first name on there is Ian Lowes so together with that an advertisement for a meeting to be held at the Bells Conference on Sunday 17th November 1985. Now Ian in his submission indicates that he can prove that he was not at that meeting I am certainly prepared to accept that he was not at that meeting the issue before this NEC is why he was advertised as being at the meeting and whether there was any protest in relation to that. Bells as you know having been recognised by this Executive as being a counter organisation to the official Labour Party and to be heavily input by the Militant Tendancy. Now all of these pieces of evidence indicate an involvement in Militant organisation which goes beyond my submission the normal status of a sympathiser and I have no doubt that Ian will refer to te distinction that was made in the Heyward Hughes report and in submissions to Conference at the time that the decisions were taken on Militant and on the editorial board. If you are in a very central position in the Council in the sense of representing the Council's manual work force on the Party in the sense that you are a member of the Executive Committee of the Party and in the major union

Larry in the sense sense that you are the convener of the second largest branch. I would like to know what your reply is to the alligations that you are not just a sympathiser of the Militant organisation, do you accept that a Militant organisation exists, do you accept that it has membership and is therefore your argument that you, whilst sympathising with many of the policies of Militant are not a member? In other words there are other people in Liverpool or the country as a whole who are members of the organisation as was found by the Party Conferece of 1982 but your argument is that you are not such a member, or is your argument alternatively that you do not believe you think the Party Conference was wrong in aserting that, as far as your experience is concerned, it is an organisation that has members and certainly as far your experience in Liverpool is concerned you have no knowledge of a membership based organisation. If it is the later

A point of order Mr. Chairman, to ask a question about what somebody thinks about another organisation is not part of the charge there is no charge that he is denying that there is or isn't this is a pure and I object to it if you ask about what he does and what he believes in and what but to ask him for an opinion about something is not about of the charge. There is no charge laid down anywhere that people are denying the existance of something the only thing they are concerned with is him as personal position.

Chair We had this problem yesterday in the course of the discussions with Tony Mulhern when the same question was put, directly as a matter of fact by the leader of the Party to Tony Mulhern about the matter

Tony Tulhearn schedule

10·30 am Appeared ~~before~~ NEC.
Requested clarification on witnesses.

10·45 am General Secretary presented first charge.

11·15 am. 1st adjournment.

11·30 AM. T.M. returned
Requested legal representation.

11·50 am 2nd adjournment
Returned asked for further adjournment
Out for about 5 mins.
Requested time to obtain professional advice.

1·0 PM – 1·45 PM NEC adjourned.

1·45 PM. NEC resumed.
T.M. asked for adjournment until 3·30 PM.
2·05 PM. T.M. retired for NEC consideration.
2·15 PM TM returned.
On hearing NEC decision indicated taking steps to seek an injunction.
Absented himself.

In his absence
↑ NEC completed 1st charge & started proceedings on 2nd charge.

3·35 PM T.M. requested returned
3·45 PM TM. returned & the NEC commenced procedure where they had left off ~~in~~ at 11·15 am.
T.M. made his statement and questions.
4·30 PM T.M replied. ~~to~~
? 2nd charge presented, ~~TM statement~~
5. - T.M. ~~replied statement~~ ~~replied~~ statement.

~~resp~~ response to questions & reply.

9.20pm. Adjournment at request of Felicity Dowling, Derek Hatton & Terry Harrison.

9.30pm. Tulhearn returns & continues reply.

9.45pm Completion of ~~hea~~ hearings.

NEC Adjourned.

10.30pm NEC Resumed to deliberate

1.15 pm. Meeting closed.

Para 16. Page 6. (A)

Insertion :- having been invited in at 10.15am.

Before the charges were presented, he requesting clarification on the ~~right to have witnesses present~~ procedure, particularly relating to a letter from John Linden.

~~At~~ At 10.45am II presented the charge in respect of the Militant Tendency, Tony Mulhearn then requested an adjournment for 5 minutes to discuss with his colleagues. He returned 20 minutes later and formally ~~requested~~ applied for legal representation on his behalf and for John Linden to be called as a witness on his behalf. The NEC considered the request at some length and with great care and decided not to grant ~~by secret either~~ the application ~~request for~~ for legal representation by recorded vote of 14 votes to 7 and ~~for witness~~ not to hear John Linden as a witness by 14 votes to 7. ~~Tony Mulhearn returned on being informed~~

(B) He returned and indicated that he wanted further time to take professional advice. At 1.00 pm the NEC adjourned until 1.45 pm to allow time for that professional advice to be sought, and to break for lunch.

At 1.45 pm, ~~Mr~~ the Plaintiff was in attendance, and requested an adjournment until 3.30pm which was the ~~est~~ time he estimated his solicitor would be present and he would be able to obtain professional advice.. ~~The Chairman~~ The Plaintiff was then invited to make his statement pursuant to the ~~procedures~~. He refused to do so ~~after~~ although been given several chances to do ~~so~~ so by the Chairman of the meeting. The Plaintiff ~~repeated~~ kept complaining about not having legal representation and advice, and indicated his refusal to make a statement until he had received professional advice..

Appendix 13

INTERVIEW WITH DAVID BLUNKETT M.P. HELD AT PORTCULLIS HOUSE, WESTMINSTER TUESDAY 18TH MARCH 2014 AT 11.00 AM

Question One

Jim Ferguson (JF): You are aware of Michael Crick's book (because you quoted it in your own book) *The March of Militant* remember? Right, question. According to Crick's book '*The March of Militant',* Militant, had about 8,000 members, plus in 1986 two MPs, Terry Fields and David Nellist, Terry of course deceased now, numerous councillors, newspaper, circulation about 20,000, and about 300 staff, although OK on pretty low wages. If Neil Kinnock had not driven through from the Bournemouth Conference in 1985 the expulsions and then the assault on Militant in your opinion do you think if he hadn't done that (this is a 'What if? PhD!), if he hadn't gone on the expulsion route, do you think they would have continued to grow or had they by that time reached their peak do you think?

David Blunkett (DB): I think Michael Crick's estimates were probably an over-estimate particularly the circulation of the newspaper and possibly but by and large in only 1,000 or 1,500 actual number of members they had because they were very fluid. There were people burned out very quickly with Militant Tendency. I mean we had one councillor who I felt...

JF: In Sheffield?

DB: Yeah, Paul Green who would have been out of Militant within a couple of years. So my answer to the question is that I think that they had plateaued and whilst they would have caused enormous continuing damage, they would not have expanded further so it would have been a continuing worm inside the apple and it would have been destructive in the sense that it would have diverted time and resources and attention and would have been divisive inside the party after the years we had '81 to '83, we had had a bellyful of internal divisiveness. That would have continued to be destructive, but I don't think they would have grown in power and I don't think therefore they would have had a long- term influence, but as I say it would in the meantime have been very destructive.

JF: You know that destructive period, if Neil hadn't have gone on the offensive it would have taken much longer to get rid of them do you think?

DB: I think it would have taken longer. I mean in '82, '83 whilst I had nothing, I had no time for them, and when I went across to Liverpool and tried to help the anti-Militant campaign in those years, I had not taken the view that they were as powerful or as insidious as Neil felt they were. I think that in retrospect he was probably right and I was wrong, they did need taking on. I thought we could defeat them in the normal pattern of squeezing them out of power within party branches but in reflecting

back on the experience I had in going to Liverpool in ’83 and ’84 and to some extent in ’85 I think the tactics they adopted were, as all Trotskyite organisations did, so focused and pinpointed, that if we hadn’t endeavoured to get them out they would have, they could well have bullied ‘normal’ in quotes, members of the party, out of the party. So, in the areas where they did have strength they would have, in those particular areas, they would have remained predominant just by the tactics, not by the argument.

JF: You mean they would have consolidated?

DB: Yes, they would have consolidated. I mean I sat next to John Hamilton who was the titular leader of Liverpool and he was literally physically shaking and it shook me in the sense that I’d not realised how terrified people were of what was happening and then I started to talk to people on the left in Liverpool, this was not the traditional right–left split. People on what I call the ‘firm’, some people call the ‘soft’ left, in Liverpool were absolutely clear with me as to the destructive nature of what their tactics were.

JF: I know this about John because I chauffeured him around. He didn’t drive.

DB: I didn’t know that. It was very sad.

JF: Very, very sad.

Question Two

JF: David, what did you think of Neil Kinnock’s speech at the 1985 Labour Conference? Was it brave? Risky?

DB: Well here’s the paradox. I thought the bits that didn’t deal with the taxis scuttling round Liverpool were actually extraordinarily good because he made a case for an enabling Labour Government that would be on your side backing you in the actions that you would take, as well as the actions government would take. Had he returned to those themes again and again we might have made more progress in ’87 where we ran a fantastic campaign and were heavily defeated. And we might have actually won the ’92 election because we’d have changed the way in which people saw politics. As far as the Militant Tendency bit is concerned I, I went away from that speech and had a swim in the sea because I thought I just need to get my head together on this. So, I wasn’t like Eric Heffer on the verge of walking out but I needed to work out what to make of it and how I would deal with it given that I was speaking the following day.

JF: Yes, you did the local government speech.

DB: I did the local government speech and I had to work out how we would turn the rhetoric into something practical. That’s where I worked out that it would be sensible to have the inquiry, into their finances, not into Militant, that came later.

JF: The Stonefrost Report?

DB: The Stonefrost Report, Yeah. Because in order for the left to understand what was going on in Militant we needed to know, because otherwise you have to take it at face value, so getting the agreement to them going in was important because if we had not got the agreement how could we possibly have got the books open and really got into what was happening there, which was the precursor to the party's inquiry, which incidentally of course Margaret Beckett served on, and the subsequent hearings and expulsions. I had a rule of thumb by the way when I was in those hearings which was that you could actually tell the people who were hard-core Militant and those who weren't, partly by their sense of humour, and partly by the nature of the answer to the questions, and I tried to distinguish the two because I thought we were dealing with the core of the organisation, not being vindictive to individuals. Derek Hatton is a paradox because Derek was a rider on Militant's back rather than a hard-core Militant.

JF: He was always difficult to know.

DB: He was the face he gave them the cheeky chappie face and articulation, but I never felt that his heart was truly in it and I think his subsequent activities demonstrated that. But that's the answer, I went for a swim and I came to the conclusion, that this was an opportunity not a problem. As you know Neil didn't like my tactic and my speech. He came up to me when I sat down and said I was skating on thin ice. Which was true by the way, I was skating on incredibly thin ice. Gwyneth Dunwoody nearly had a heart attack in the chair and I still don't know how I did it, because if Derek hadn't walked to the front and said he would agree then my tactic would have fallen. I would have looked a complete and utter prat, so it was high stakes stuff.

JF: Yeah

DB: I'd never do it again, that's what I'm saying. It was a one off.

Question Three

JF: Well, this really leads into what you were saying about Derek. At the Conference, the '85 Conference obviously, you persuaded Derek to withdraw a motion.

DB: We didn't know he had until he came up. We'd had a mini negotiation in the Gents toilet before the debate, and it wasn't clear what they were going to do when he walked up. All I knew was that it was worth a try because it would turn Neil's rhetoric into the Stonefrost Report, because we would then have an in, and we would then know what was going on and then that would legitimise action against them for the left. Because I was part of the left and didn't want to be in a situation where the left, were battling the leadership on behalf of the Militant Tendency, which was a real possibility, that we would have ended up a shield against the Militant Tendency, because we didn't necessarily wholly believe that they were in the practical local government finance terms, telling lies. Because they hadn't. Because their housing programme was very impressive on paper, superficially, and was quite popular and

therefore disengaging the Broad Left from the Militant Tendency at that moment, was I thought, pretty crucial. Whether Neil ever came round to believing that was the right thing to do, the two Janes did, Jane Kennedy and Jane Sarin, both of whom I got to know very well afterwards. They were the two brave women from Liverpool, they were the NUPE stewards. Do you remember?

JF: Yes, I knew Jane very well.

DB: I mean Jane Sarin's still in Edinburgh, I think. I saw her up there some years ago, because she was part of the LCC and of course Jane Kennedy I helped recently in her campaign for Police Commissioner. So, it really is bringing back memories.

JF: Just to go back a second. This is all in hindsight and retrospectively. Wouldn't it have been better looking back to let the Conference debate the motion which was about industrial action in favour of councils who basically confronted the government? Wouldn't it have been better for it to have gone to the floor? Because subsequently of course Militant always claimed that Kinnock, I know it sounds ridiculous, that Kinnock didn't get support from the floor, in fact Militant got the support from the floor?

DB: Well, I don't think it would have been better because they wouldn't have agreed to the investigation and although they may well have been defeated by the trade union block vote it would have made them martyrs, in the sense that they would say they were the only ones who were fighting the battle, the only ones who stood between the Tory government and the working class. The only ones who really cared. And they like being martyrs so, you know losing wasn't a problem to them because they always formulated resolutions with the intention that they would be defeated.

JF: So basically, what you thought was the constituency parties would have supported them?

DB: We would have defeated them and that would have been another further fissure the party could have done without. At the time their withdrawal actually wasn't felt and seen to be a great victory for them. I remember having to very quickly think what I was going to say so I said "That's not a victory for Militant. It's a victory for common sense.". But I was thinking on my feet at the time.

JF: Yes, that's difficult!

DB: But we are talking about an entirely different era which I am glad to have lived through even though I'd rather the party hadn't had to.

JF: It was interesting.

Question Four

JF: Right, we are on question four now. I hope I'm not taking up too much of your time.

DB: No, carry on. It's bringing back memories.

JF: Now this is if you like, the projected forward bit. Do you think it's likely that for the Labour Party, say for instance the Bournemouth speech hadn't happened, and Neil Kinnock decided he wasn't going to go for the jugular, could they have been accepted long-term as a legitimate section of the party?

DB: No, I don't think they could. I think not just their philosophy, but their tactics, their processes, their way of dealing with other party members, made it impossible.

JF: So, you think it would be impossible really?

DB: I think it would have been impossible. And I think it would have been not only a running sore which would have caused constant problems inside the party, but a great opportunity for our opponents. I mean they would have been able to use the Militant Tendency against us over and over and over again, through the mass media, but also it would have eroded the growth of the party itself, because they would have, as I have described earlier, they were masterful at being able to drive people out of branch meetings.

JF: Mmm, you're right. But just to amplify a bit more. Do you think it would have been possible for Tony Blair to have gone on to reform the party in terms of Clause IV? I mean basically once Tony Blair became leader and say Militant was still there, and Neil Kinnock hadn't made his Bournemouth speech.

DB: Then I think Tony Blair would have had to have dealt with them. Because I think at that stage, I think the divide between a party seeking to win sufficient votes across the country, including the south, and the modernisation both of the constitution and the reform agenda for policy, would have been at such odds with the Trotskyite approach, that the party would not have been able to function so we would have had to have got rid of them.

JF: Eventually, yes, yes.

DB: I think Neil Kinnock did the Labour Party a great service and I think without those measures we would have had continuing problems. I mean we didn't win the '92 election for all the reasons we are fully aware of, but we wouldn't have got near it, and that would have made it more difficult for Tony Blair, because the further you are away, just a truism this of history, the further you are away from having the numbers, the more difficult it is to win, because governments always have the upper hand.

JF: That's right. The thing there though is.....do you think that coloured Tony Blair? Because Tony Blair did the legal representation for the NEC on the expulsions. So, from that point of view, if they hadn't expelled them.

DB: To be honest with you, James I hadn't actually ever thought of that. That is an entirely new angle which I think is very interesting and it would account for Tony's particular take on those who, not those who disagree with them on the Broad Left, but his very substantial dislike of anything that smacked of alternative organisation. So, I'm responding by saying it's a lot of thought I hadn't explored.

Question Five

JF: Last question you'll be glad to know. Some would say that the expulsions of Militant, the events of 1985, pave the way to changing Clause IV and of course Tony Blair was very keen on that and I'm working back to the fact that he did the legal representation and obviously was very much involved in the minutiae of the expulsions and bearing in mind he only got the change through on the sort of 60-40 vote roughly, at conference. Do you think that Tony Blair really had this long term view that he wanted to change the Labour Party from this labour representation going back to the turn of the century into a western-style European social democratic party, and as the precursor to that he had to get rid of a Marxist tendency within it, not a socialist tendency, but a Marxist tendency?

DB: I think on the first part of your question he did want the Labour Party to be modelled more on a European style social democratic party. There's no question about that. I'm not so sure I'm not doing him a disservice in this. I am not sure he himself had that tactical vision from 2006 onwards. I think that it was much closer to '94 when he felt that there had to be a symbolic change that would provide an example to people that something seminal was happening to the Labour Party and therefore they could be more comfortable with its direction, its make-up and its underlying philosophy. I think that's where it lay.

JF: Yes, I think this is what intrigues me about Clause IV because you know where I come from, I spent years in the Communist Party?

DB: Yes.

JF: Where we had a socialist transformation of society programme?

DB: Yes.

JF: And putting it before the electorate and getting absolutely trounced. So, Clause IV, when you actually look at it, it's not far from a socialist transformation of society.

DB: I was a very late convert to saying well you know we are not doing anything fundamental here because we are never going to implement this anyway. I mean I was chair of the party that year and so he had to tell me before what he was going to do. And a bit like the 1985 Kinnock speech I had to go away and think about.

JF: Did you go for a swim?

DB: I didn't go on this occasion. It was Blackpool and swimming in Blackpool is not a good idea. The weather was brilliant in Bournemouth in '85. I went away to think about it because I didn't have an immediate, instinctive 'Gosh, that's a really good idea, Tony'. Mine was, I understand where you're coming from. Is this really necessary? Because it is embedded in our party constitution, it is part of us, we all know what it means in a modern context. I think within six months I thought well that was quite a smart move really. We hadn't taken away something that was going to happen. We've re-shaped. I immediately got stuck in as to what the alternative should be. So that like Prescott, I thought, well what are we going to have in its place? Then what are we going to put on the card that actually expresses what we

really believe in terms of empowerment and the ability to do more together than we can individually?

JF: Tony Blair though, by changing Clause IV was saying that is no longer a hook where Trotskyite groups could hang their coats?

DB: I think the corollary of that was that he could rightly say, I'm sorry, these resolutions are no longer relevant at all about the commanding heights of the economy and the means of exchange – the means of exchange was always interesting, the means of distribution was always a disaster, it was a disaster in the soviet bloc, even when they had plenty, they didn't manage to distribute it.

JF: The means of exchange with the internet is a bit out of date.

DB: And so, the world was changing. I mean I did a very short article in *The Independent* on Saturday about Tony Benn and an interview on the *Today* programme on Friday, and I was trying to reflect that it wasn't values that had to be set aside, it was a recognition of the context in which those values had to be addressed. And if the world has changed around you and you just refuse to accept that it's changed you become a munificent, very lovable anachronism. And the Labour Party at one point was in danger of becoming a sort of lovable anachronism where we'd constantly throw ourselves against a wall and then pick ourselves up after defeat and wipe the blood from our noses and have another go.

JF: And I think you feel that would have been your fate if you hadn't have.

DB: I think it would have been the fate of the Labour Party if we hadn't.....I mean, I'm biased because I was in the Cabinet for eight years and I wouldn't have been. I saw a transformation in my constituency which wouldn't have occurred. I'm not one of those people who believe that we betrayed the British people. I think we did not achieve as much as many of us would have hoped but I don't think we.....I mean leave Iraq aside, and the arguments around Iraq, in terms of the living standards, the investment in public services, the transformation of the environment in which people in my constituency live and work and learn, there's no comparison. That for me was always the objective, to make a difference to the people I grew up with and even now, after four years of grinding austerity, there is still the spark based on what went in there. People are still combining working together, whereas in the '80s all that civil society, all that empowerment had been knocked out of them.

JF: So obviously you feel, it's the obvious question isn't it, that if you're not in power, you can't do those things?

DB: If you don't have the power to win power, if you don't have the wherewithal to invest, but also to give people hope..... I came in to make a difference and it isn't that you have to betray your principals and set aside your values in order to win in order to do nothing because you've set those values and those principles aside. It's that you have to take cognisance of where you are, but above all where the electorate are, and what they are prepared to do, and Margaret Thatcher was a past master at that. She, she took a step forward and then a step back and then two steps forward, particularly with the miners, you will remember.

JF: And the teachers.

DB: And the teachers. She chose her moments, and she would put a toe forward and then she would draw back if it wasn't the right moment and then have another go.

JF: That's right.

DB: She also banked on people reacting in the way she expected, and normally they did, which then played into her hands. Politics, as Bernard Crick used to teach me, is a messy but fascinating business, but if it's going to work, we've got to get people engaged with it and that is the big challenge of the years ahead. How do we get people back engaged?

JF: Thank you, David.

APPENDIX 14

Interview with Lord Blunkett on 19th February 2019 at 11.15 a.m.

at The House of Lords

In the interview Lord Blunkett will be referred to as **LB** and James Ferguson as **JF**

JF. The PhD started in 2013 and you kindly agreed to be interviewed at that time, things have moved on quite a bit and I've interviewed quite a lot of people around the subject. I interviewed Peter Taaffe who was editor of Militant and is now General Secretary of the Socialist party of England and Wales, his big argument because he is trying to affiliate to the Labour Party, his main argument is Militant was no different to Tribune, the Co-op party, the St Ermins Group who were very secretive, and the only reason they were expelled was because they were better organised than the right of the party, what is your view on that?

LB. I think this is fantasy land, the RSL the Revolutionary Socialist League and the whole intent of Militant was and was declared, after their expulsion by many of their leading members to have been an endeavour to enter and take over the Labour Party within an entirely separate agenda and set of values and programme and although they hid that till sometime following the mass expulsions in 1986. Subsequently I think many of them just came clean and said yes, we were, we had entirely our own agenda, we were a Trotskyite movement, namely we used cells within the Labour Party in order to be able take over branches and constituency parties in the usual Trotskyite fashion and that we had an entirely different intended outcome to the Labour Party's agreed policies.

JF. Of course, now the Socialist Party which was the Militant Tendency is on the verge of applying for membership of the Labour Party en- bloc. They are saying they see no reason why they can't affiliate on the same terms and constitution as the Co-op party because the Co-op party has its own organisation, its own constitution, its own conference, its own membership lists, its own MPs. Why can't they just affiliate on that basis?

LB. The Co-op party which has been involved with Labour from its foundation is open and clear about its acknowledgement of and recognition of Labour conference as the supreme decision- making body, of the values laid out in the Labour Party's constitution. The Socialist party of Great Britain and those who previously operated under the banner of Militant and the RSL hold no such allegiance and have never acknowledged that they would be part of, and integral to the Labour Party and its democratic history and constitution within a parliamentary democracy. They have never acknowledged that and has far as I can see they never will and if they did it would be purely to be able to provide a foothold where they cannot gain it by standing for election under their own banner. Just as Militant Tendency didn't, so Labour and Cooperative is where those who are affiliated in that way, stand they don't make any bones about it, but their total adherence is to the Labour Party and its historic values and constitution.

JF. In fact, I did actually, look at the constitution of the Co-op party and it only seems to differ from the Labour Party on issues of its Cooperative movement, the wholesale trade and the retail trade.

LB. Yes, which is its raison d'etra and its embedded history and everybody knows that.

JF. So basically, you feel it is a disingenuous reason?

LB. It's disingenuous I think that it would open the door to Socialist Worker and to all those who are claiming that they have a broad interest and commitment to the movement and to Jeremy Corbyn becoming prime minister, and that has absolutely nothing to do with winning a majority in the British Parliament for an agenda on the lines of, and in tune with the Labour party's constitution.

JF. When the Socialist party was formed, Militant, and I've researched this figure and talked to various people, arrived at a figure of about 8000 members.

LB. Yes, that's sounds about right from my memory, yes.

JF. Peter Taaffe tried to egg that up a bit, but he eventually agreed that was round about right, but the Socialist Party only took 2,000 members with it and therefore 6,000 members of the Labour Party decided not to join the Socialist Party who were formerly signed up to Militant, and that includes the current General Secretary of the Labour Party. During that period when the Socialist Party was formed in the early 90s, obviously as a prominent member of the Labour party, were you aware that there were still many people left behind who were Militant or ex- Militant?

LB. No I wasn't is the honest truth I believe that many of them were burnt out and had left the active political arena I was not aware that a group, if you like a substantial group, who had simply gone underground and then re- emerged as part of the Labour party as opposed to joining a separate political grouping under the auspices of the Socialist Party and I believe we had taken our eye off the ball and we were very keen to distinguish between those who disagreed on policy and on individual items of manifesto and programme, and who remained in and were aligned with the Labour Party and that includes the current leadership of the Labour Party, from those who had clearly been involved in what was an entryist endeavour to take over the Party and to change completely its direction and its historic constitutional programme and maybe we got it wrong.

JF. When I interviewed Clare Short, she agreed with me that the Labour Party at some stage should surely have erected some political/ ideological barriers to prevent entryism by Trotskyist organisations. In other words, because it did not have much competition on the democratic socialist scene, like the continental parties, the Labour Party seemed to make do and mend and did not create those political barriers to prevent that kind of thing happening.

LB. I think that's part of the fact the Labour Party has never been absolutely clear enough, with itself internally, about its differentiation as a social democratic party from the revolutionary left and that's partly because we never had the upheaval the Germans had for instance in the late 1950s. It's partly complacency built out of the

belief that when you have dealt with a particular problem the problem had gone away, and its partly the third bit, is a kind of benevolence which I shared back in 83 and 84 which is, well individuals are not bad men or women and were misguided and they don't really mean any harm, and so long as they are not organised in a formal sense then we don't need to worry about it, and that probably has led us to the situation today. Where for perfectly understandable reasons there is a total lack of clarity about the Labour Party's current relationship with the far left, so if we are a social movement rather than a formal political party then we should say so and that changes the terms in which we address parliamentary democracy. Involved regions and national parliament and assemblies in Scotland and Wales and obviously the regions of England, and we are not clear about that, perhaps the emergence of independent groups leaving the Labour Party in parliament, more of which will probably happen this week-end, will help to clarify that.

JF. When I interviewed Professor Robertson in Liverpool, he made a very interesting point and he is a member of the Wavertree constituency Labour Party, where obviously Luciana Berger has just recently resigned from the Labour Party. He made the point, which I thought was very interesting, that Jeremy Corbyn instead of being a traditional leader of a political party is almost the head of a franchise where he is franchising the activities of various groups and various individuals and as long, as they are all chugging along to the general left- wing tune, he is quite happy with that.

LB. I feel that's an interesting way of describing it, the great advantage of someone seeing the activities of others is that as a franchise as long as it goes with the general movement is that they can disclaim any responsibility for the actions of those individuals, or even the organisation that brings them together, and which social media communicates, social media has changed so much within the political arena, so much can be done quickly easily and privately as opposed to holding meetings. I used to sit in the back of meetings in the 1980s to find out what the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy was up to, now everything is on- line people can sign up and they can communicate the resolution or the line to be taken or the person to be intimidated at the press of a button. So, I think franchising is a very interesting description of the situation which is seen as a social movement rather than a coherent political party with an agreed programme based on a set of values which most people could sign up to even if they have disagreements about the policy. But the perverse situation at the moment, is that if you look at the 2017 manifesto I have very few arguments with the policy objectives, as opposed to the means of getting there, my objection was that far from it being a radical left manifesto it was a retail offer and lacked any underpinning coherence as a political statement. You want free tuition, you want free child care, you want to give everybody over 65 something free, you touch it we will give it you is not a coherent radical alternative social democratic programme, and yet people are parading it and many people who have not studied politics and been involved for very long in the political arena sincerely believe that they were campaigning for, and signed up to something very different and very radical compared with the past.

JF. Just going, back a bit, I will return to that it is so interesting at the moment, but just to go back a bit. I read through the diaries of Barbara Castle and even Barbara Castle in the 78/ 79 or earlier than that, even, when the Underhill Report came out mainly about Militant Tendency but other groups as well, she felt, well if this report goes through and there is action on it, all the left will suffer from it so we have to protect them.

LB. There was a reaction to what happened to the Bevanites in the early fifties of course and that affected quite a long way down the line historically, those of the broad moderate left who did not want to see persecution of people on grounds of their political difference, and were prepared to accept that they were organisationally and not just spiritually not with them, and that is difficult, and I understand that because if you think back to people of the Tribune group being suspended from the Parliamentary Labour Party, and you can see why people would balk at wanting to return to anything like that, and of course under Tony Blair there was never any suggestion of people being suspended or expelled on the grounds that they had a difference of opinion, otherwise Jeremy Corbyn, John McDonnell and Diane Abbot would not be in the Labour Party.

JF. Yes, he shielded them didn't he, Tony Blair?

LB. Yes, so there was a reaction on both, the if you like the moderate I call it the firm left, and on the reformist right not to return to and not to engender that kind of environment and I get that completely, but it did affect the way people saw Militant and other off- shoots of those who they decided they would not stand under their own banner in an electoral democracy.

JF. I interviewed Derek Hatton last week, and Derek said that he did not regret anything by the way, and he said if all the local authorities that formed the loose coalition against the cuts and against the government, including Sheffield Council, which you were leader of, if they had of all stood together this opposition would be on a par with the miners' strike, and that the dual effect of the miners' strike and the joint opposition would have brought down the government.

LB. The problem for Derek's recollections for this is that the miners' strike ended on the 3rd March 1985 and the authorities he is referring to were still holding firm well into April and May by which time the miners had clearly been defeated. They had gone back to work, and the terms of politics had changed. The government had won and so on a practical revolutionary level he is wrong, he's wrong in the sense that the authorities he refers to, other than the leadership of Liverpool, did not see this as an objective in bringing down the Tory government that had been elected two years previously. They saw it as an endeavour to try to re- balance the power of central and local government and the right to levy a local tax at the level determined locally, and to retain the business rate and to retain other powers that the Conservative government intended to take away, including the abolition of the GLC and the Metropolitan Counties so there was a different objective, and secondly there was a different practical political outcome so I am afraid on both accounts he was completely wrong. Had the action of Liverpool the year before not resulted in Patrick Jenkin giving a modest capital outlay, which covered the fact that they had not

actually won anything at all other than a small amount of freedom to use more capital, which they did effectively on house building. We would never have had the 85 stand- off with the government at all so it's interesting it brings back memories Jim quite vividly, and we did stand out along with the GLC and some of the London boroughs for a time, but although I actually voted into the new financial year to block making a budget but enough of my colleagues on the council voted with the opposition to set a rate. Once that was done, that was that, and we sought to re-heal the wounds in the Labour group and got on with the job. But you see the problem with the far left is always they have to be let down by somebody and eventually this will happen to Jeremy so there has to be someone who prevented them from what they believed to be the logical outcome of their actions, and most of the time as with Arthur Scargill, it's self- delude.

JF. They have to blame somebody.

LD. They have got to blame somebody not themselves for poor tactics or poor political strategy in the first place.

JF. This is all about merging the past with the present time which is moving very quickly.

LD. Incidentally I don't believe that Momentum is the same as Militant Tendency, I think they have things in common in terms of operating as a separate operation within a political party. I don't think most of the people who are involved who sign up to Momentum, actually see themselves in that Trotskyite vein at all.

JF. Yes, which brings me on to that question nicely. When I interviewed Peter Taaffe he said he had a meeting with Jon Lansman from Momentum and Jon Lansman said that he could not support an affiliation of the Socialist party to Momentum, not the Labour Party, but he saw no reason why individual members could not hold dual membership of Momentum and the Socialist Party and they would join Momentum individually basically, but retain their Socialist Party membership. Now there is already ample evidence, because I've done a lot of interviews in Liverpool, now that ex- members of Militant, many, many, of them are now in Momentum, and, actually in the Labour Party.

LB. Yes, because theoretically to be a member of Momentum you have to be a member of the Labour Party.

JF. Well, that's a very interesting one because it seems to me, although I have no direct evidence of this, is that the membership requirements of Momentum are liberal to put it mildly. How do you feel on the general issue of Momentum as a long, long, standing member of the Labour Party and being in government for a long time how do you feel about Momentum?

LB. I feel extremely uneasy, intellectually I feel there is no reason why a group of people should not come together if they are party members, and are prepared to adhere to the constitution and values of the Labour Party and design campaigning material and motivate and energise party members at local level. In theory there is absolutely no problem with that, in practise when an organisation has its own

structures, with its own instructions, with its own determination of candidates for office locally and nationally. when it has its own raison d'etra in terms of what it expects members to sign up to, and when its activities start to challenge sitting members of parliament, on the grounds that they don't match the objectives of an organisation, then you have separated a campaign and social movement from the organisation to which it claims to be inherently a child of, ie the party, and when there is a party within a party then that actually destroys the parent then that's how I see it.

JF. Do you feel Momentum has been intimidating members of parliament?

LB. No, I think that members of Momentum, have without the intervention of or clear discouragement from the group that operate, run it, and speak on behalf of it, and it's not just giving permission for their members to do things, its actually providing them with cover. With if you like an umbrella that says these are the candidates we want, these are the individuals that we would support in a contest, that always centrally and locally agree which is quite helpful so sometimes you get Momentum members at local level which challenges the designated Momentum candidate from the centre. The Scarborough/ Whitby area is an example of that, where people are contesting, sometimes they contest between Momentum members which leaves other non-Momentum parliamentary candidates to win, but it demonstrates very clearly what this is all about, and if you are an organisation of trade unions obviously support and nominate and give backing to individuals, who were their members, but it is absolutely clear that they are doing it. You used to have the A list and B list you remember this Jim, where the trade union worked the A list and everybody else worked the B list, and they were seen to support, it's absolutely clear that they are promoting their own members, whose constituency should be successful, will be supported by that trade union. This is what they were doing as opposed to something under the surface, and you can see immediately that there was overlap and that's where the party has never sorted it out.

JF. One last question and then I will let you go Dave, one thing that intrigues me was that, as member of an executive of a trade union at the time, I never quite got Liverpool City Council's bargaining strategy with the government. I felt the government seem to have had all their cards in their hand against Liverpool, except one, and that is civil disruption and that if there had not been the redundancy notices the unions would have stuck together, and the commissioners would have been sent in when the money ran out. There would have been civil disorder and that's the one thing the government were worried about. When I interviewed Lord Storey who was the deputy leader of the Liberals, and then became leader, he said one of the Liberal councillors was working for MI5 quite openly and they had people working on the ground, the security service. You are an ex- home secretary, I mean did you feel that was a serious bargaining counter, that there would be civil disorder and the government would get very worried about that, and make some kind of settlement?

LB. No, I did not, in my heart of hearts I believed there might have been a modest deal that would have ensured that local authorities could raise the money to continue delivering services at a reasonable level and that was the modest objective that

many of us had. Obviously, it was clear that those that believed in revolutionary as opposed to parliamentary politics were quite happy with the idea of creating civil disobedience but the contradiction within it was not only that the government held all the cards, but that the action that needed to be taken to create civil disobedience, actually damaged the workers and the recipients of services on which the argument was being based in the first place. We need to pay the wages, we need to deliver the services, but we are actually now going to destroy both of those hence the scuttling round in taxis and delivering redundancy notices. Which then changes the terms because what you are doing is you are actually damaging to the people that you represent, in order to create a situation which down the line might actually help them. That's quite a difficult ask in a normal parliamentary representative democracy. In the circumstance where other revolutionary situations, where other revolutionary breeding grounds does not exist, hence the defeat of the miners and the refusal of other major trade unions to do other than give cursory support to the miners, for all the reasons we know about. Not least the lack of a ballot actually created a situation where there wasn't a revolutionary outcome, so it was never going to happen.

I am interested about MI5, we all knew that MI5 were obsessed with the left in the 60s, 70s and 80s, Harold Wilson was not totally paranoid about that. I am amazed that when we were in government in the 60s and, late 70s we did not get more of a grip. When I was home secretary, I can't guarantee that I understood everything that MI5 was doing but we did go into it in some detail and of course MI5's main raison d'etra was dealing with the situation post 11th September 2001, and the aftermath with the situation in Northern Ireland. So, they were in a different ball game altogether. I certainly was responsible for signing off orders for intercepts and surveillance and only in very, very, rare circumstances were they to do with the political arena.

JF. One thing that Militant, although they never said it, but in their book, they point towards it, the City that Dared to Fight by Peter Taaffe and Tony Mulhearn, it was that Liverpool was special because Liverpool had the Toxteth riots, and in the Toxteth riots, it's been commented on that Margaret Thatcher was shaken by it.

LB. I think she was shaken because of course there was Brixton as well, there was not just Liverpool 8 there was Brixton and there was activity elsewhere, and the first round with the miners also took place then, which she deliberately let go in order to come back to it. She was a tactician they were not fools and when they had to give their game in order to position themselves as a government at a different time. So, I think there was undoubtably and has been historically greater propensity to street politics in Liverpool, but I don't think that added up to socialism in one city, anymore than socialism in one country. I will finish on this that's the nub really if you believe as they did that, you can bring about socialism in one country then the logic is you can start socialism in one city and once you have deluded yourself down that road then anything becomes possible.

End of Interview

Appendix 15

Interview with Graham Burgess at his home in Liverpool

On Thursday 14th February at 11a.m. 2019

Graham Burgess in the 1970s and 1980s was a member of the NALGO National Executive Committee and the branch chair of Liverpool NALGO.

Since leaving those posts he became Chief Executive of Blackburn and Darwin Council and later Chief Executive of Wirral Council.

In this transcript Graham Burgess will be referred to as **GB** and James Ferguson as **JF**.

GB. My name is Graham Burgess. At the time of the dispute, I was Chair of Liverpool NALGO which was a full- time position. I was also Chair of the North Western and North Wales region of NALGO. Following retirement from the trade union I went back into my career, ending up as Assistant Director of Social Services, Liverpool and then Chief Executive of Blackburn with Darwen Council and Chief Executive of Wirral Council. I am now partially retired and, carrying out a number of, non- executive Chair's roles in Health and Housing

JF. Graham, when you were involved with NALGO in the 1970s and 1980s, and of course Militant Tendency, gained a number of seats in the Labour Council and went on their campaign to try and get more money from government to fund their housing projects. You were uniquely placed as a member of NALGO where a lot of your branch members were employed in the City Treasury. Did you see the looming storm that was coming up, or did it come as a surprise?

GB. I think we had a number of members both in the Treasury and who did some financial forecasting. We also had a number of members who played leading roles in the policy and campaigning department as well. So, we had a good insight into what was happening in terms of the Central Support Unit, and one of our very close colleagues, for the first year of the campaign, a senior manager was head of that department, He then subsequently left that department after the first year of the campaign.

JF. I think Andy Pink took over.

GB. Andy Pink was certainly a leading member in that support unit and played a major role. He was also a NALGO shop steward as well, so he played a major role

both inside the Branch and without. In terms of the looming issues, the first year, we all felt that was quite a broad campaign, broad based campaign, and that we were fully supportive, as indeed most of the trade unions were. The second year of the campaign, gradually support was being eroded by the antics of the Militant membership of the council and a whole number of issues arose, disputes arose, between the council and trade unions, which eroded the base of that second campaign.

JF. Part of this thesis is looking at the Vanguard Model that Militant Tendency followed. Decision making was very centralised and then almost handed down for members to carry out. I mean, were you aware of that kind of structure.

GB. Yes, very much so. It was clearly from the Labour councillors, the 47 or so Labour councillors, I suspect only 14 or 15 were actually, Militant, but clearly, they had a tight organisation and influenced the Labour group as a whole. And clearly they had an organisation in every one of the Constituency Labour Parties, and organised that and also influenced a number of trade unions, particularly the GMB and we were aware that there were Militant meetings that were being held in advance of CLP meetings in advance of Labour group meetings and indeed Militant meetings being held even in our union but a number also in advance of branch meetings and in advance of our branch Committees to iron out their line.

JF. So, did you detect that their policy was standardised then?

GB. What you would find is that the same motions would be appearing in a number of CLPs, would be appearing in a number of branch meetings. They would be encouraging you to invite speakers from any disputes they were supporting nationally or regionally. Speakers from other councils, speakers over from a number of areas. It was clear that they were extremely well organised. They had their headquarters in the Tuebrook area of Liverpool, which was a reasonably sized house, meetings were held there as well.

JF. Let me come to the first budget dispute. The first round of it. There were two opinions. There was Jack Straw's opinion, and Cunningham, that they got a bundle of special measures which gave Liverpool more money, and then there was Derek Hatton's view that he came back from the settlement from the Secretary of State, that they wrestled this money through pressure of the labour movement etc.

GB. Certainly, the view and analysis that we did, from our members in the Treasury the group analysis of our members in the Treasury, and the group analysis of two of our members in the central support unit, who were not Militant but were sensible, and their view was that they got some very minor concessions from Patrick Jenkin that were dressed up as a great victory. Probably only worth about a million or two pounds, always useful to have, and I'm not denying that but never- the- less, but it made no real difference to the council's budget, but Derek then dressed it up as a major, major, victory for the movement brought about by themselves. Which gave them the credibility. The major mistake then was that Derek came out of the meeting with Patrick Jenkin who was then the Secretary of State and he proclaimed the great victory and Jenkin had backed down and Jenkin was quoted as saying 'Derek Hatton

danced on my political grave' which we thought was a huge mistake as we knew when we went back the next year no minister was ever going to make concessions to Liverpool because of the way they had reached it first time round.

JF. Yes, this is interesting because you as a senior member of a union, on the NEC, you will well know that if you negotiate with an employer and you reach an acceptable settlement the last thing you do is crow from a great height that this was a fantastic victory, because you well know you have to go back the following year and do it all again.

GB. Well, that's exactly the point. We made the point to Derek but it was too late he had done it, but really, as you say it's a good settlement, you recommend it, but you never crow, you never go to the national press, the national TV , and basically shout how you defeated the Tory Government, and defeated that minister, because in our view that set the seeds for the government, not unreasonably to say we are not going to move again because we would be embarrassed again, and it would do damage to us again.

JF. So, did you feel that when Kenneth Baker took over that he took a very hard line because he certainly wasn't going to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor?

GB. I think there was a direct relationship between the mistake that Derek Hatton and Militant made at the first settlement and the treatment Liverpool got the following year. The government could not be seen to back down again, could not be seen to be humiliated again the way they felt they were the first- time round.

JF. Once they'd reached the impasse of asking for about £30 plus million and Kenneth Baker refusing to meet them unless they made a lawful budget, did you ever feel that the City council were capable of winning?

GB. We felt and unlike some unions we had stuck closely to the city council, I think we were the biggest branch of any trade union, we had 6,000 members at that stage, despite our reservations, despite the disputes we'd had, the Samson Bond dispute, and other disputes, and the major mistakes Militant was making, we stuck with them, but the condition we stuck with them on, was if the budget became unlawful, and if the council went into special measures, and there was intervention both the council and the workforce would jump together. We'd both be affected in exactly the same way. And provided the Council was prepared to sign up to that approach, a mutually assured approach to the end of the dispute, we were willing despite our reservations about the tactics, to go along with them and push it along, so the leadership of NALGO was probably more on the left than many of the unions, with the exception of maybe the GMB, and we were prepared to go along with the council in spite of our reservations because we felt the issue was so important and we were prepared to take that risk, and it was a risk, but the key thing for us was that the councillors put themselves at risk, as well as the workforce and that was the key issue for us.

JF. When the issue of the redundancy notices came up there was an air of secrecy about it. Both Peter Taaffe, editor of Militant, and Peter Taaffe speaking for Tony Mulhearn, both denied that they had anything to do with the redundancy notices but

would not tell me who actually did organise that. In your view who do you think was behind the redundancy issue?

GB. I find it very difficult to believe that Peter Taaffe and Tony Mulhearn did not know about it in advance.

JF. No, they are not saying they did not know, they are saying they were opposed to it.

GB. Well maybe they were opposed maybe they weren't but certainly there was a huge amount of secrecy because we had heard rumours of redundancy notices about three or four weeks before, being suggested that's the way to make the budget legal, on the back of the workforce, issue redundancy notices and save the councillors, and protect the councillors by doing that. So, we arranged with the council, and Peter Cresswell, the secretary of the JSSC and, also secretary of NALGO wrote to the council asking for reassurances that the redundancy notices were not true. We received a letter back from the council signed by Derek Hatton and John Hamilton reassuring us that there would be no redundancies and no redundancy notices. So maybe naively we believed them. I know they were under pressure from the Treasurer of the council, I know that, I suspect they got legal advice from the City Solicitor, how to make the budget legal. So massive secrecy, very tight, so when redundancy notices came out two or three weeks later after that letter, we were totally surprised by that to be honest. We thought a letter from the leader and deputy leader was sufficient. I can't believe that that letter was sent without Militant group's agreement. Because the council was strictly controlled by Militant. Militant must have had, some decision- making process. Whether Tony Mulhearn or Taaffe voted in favour of that I don't know but the democratic centralism that operated within Militant must have had some say over that decision. What made it even worse was when we actually saw the redundancy letter, when it arrived, the date on it was actually printed a couple of weeks before the letter from Derek and John Hamilton was sent to us.

JF. Really?

GB. So, it was actually printed, when they sent us the letter reassuring us, promising no redundancies, the redundancy notices had already been printed.

JF. That's very interesting. It's something I've never come across before.

GB. What happened they actually crossed the old date out and put a new date on them. They re-dated them, but you could see the date of the original was actually printed two or three weeks before the letter was sent out.

JF. In the book written by Peter Taaffe and Tony Mulhearn **"**The City That dared to Fight" he talked about the councillors being hamstrung by legal niceties which required them to issue the redundancy notices, however in my research the legal niceties was the Employment Protection Act 1975 which was actually brought in by a Labour Government to protect workers from arbitrary dismissal.

GB. I saw the decision to issue redundancy notices as a total cynical decision to protect the councillors from surcharge because the issuing of the notices was

making the budget legal, so the councillors thought they were avoiding surcharges by making the budget legal, they put all the risk on the backs of the workforce. So, our view was that if the Commissioners were sent in by the Government the workforce under the notice of redundancy would have no protection, but the councillors would be safe and their homes would be safe. So, my view was that it was a totally cynical decision and that's why NALGO split from those councillors because they had broken the bargain they had not jumped together. They had protected themselves and protected their homes and put all the burden of the risk on the 30,000 plus workers by being totally vulnerable. If Commissioners had come in and they had balanced the budget and they would be unprotected at that stage, but that was the final straw that took NALGO away from the council.

JF. What effect, when our Union took the Council to the High Court, because we felt the redundancy notices were illegal and that no sensible council would have ever come to that conclusion. What was NALGO's position then?

GB. We supported that decision at that stage we would oppose the redundancy notices by all means. We had major decisions, marches, half day actions against the redundancy notices. On one march we had 5000 of our members down Dale St in protest against the redundancy notices.

So, when we heard of that, your court action we were very supportive of that decision. It seems to be reasonable when that Rubicon had been crossed all trade unions, with the exception of most GMB branches, realised that they had been far too trusting and that the trust had been broken.

JF. The legal action just covered the teachers, but did you feel it had a knock- on effect.?

GB. I think it was clear it was a test case, because if you won the test case then NALGO and other unions would have followed that through in the courts as well. Initially we would try to stop them by industrial action, by propaganda, by raising matters by the trade unions, by the DLP, the whole way of doing it and you went to the courts. I think both were important, but I thought yours was a test case that we would have used.

JF. Derek Hatton Deputy Leader of the Council and a Militant supporter he has consistently said that the issue of the redundancy notices was a red herring and that anyway nobody was ever made redundant and therefore, yes, it was an issue, but nobody was ever going to be sacked.

GB. Unfortunately, I do not believe that statement. Two issues are they knew what a big issue the redundancy notices were for the workforce. They had it in writing. They were told the unions would break from the council if they issued redundancy notices, so they knew it was not a technicality. If there was a political decision then they made that with the full knowledge that most of the unions could well break away from them. Would break from the council if they issued the redundancy notices. So they knew it was not a technicality it was a political decision they made to do that in the full knowledge that most of the unions could well break away from them on that basis. We were only not made redundant because of the intervention by the national

Labour Party and other people that that should be the position. I fully believe it for any reason the council had stayed under Militant control those redundancy notices would have been implemented. My view is we were put in an impossibly weak position to defend our members with those notices being issued.

JF. If the Council had been removed and Commissioners were sent in to the Council because the Council had become unmanageable because of the breakdown of services, do you believe the Commissioners might have, yes, re-instated a lot of redundancy notices because they wanted people to get back to work, but do you feel they would not have re-instated all of them?

GB. Upon reflection I think clearly when we received the Stonefrost Report, from I think he was the Director of Finance from Sheffield City Council, he showed us a way around the financial problems which was achievable without major cuts so I believe the Commissioners would have had the opportunity to pick off any services they did not think as vital or maybe pick off some individuals who were seen as not to be helpful, so by the redundancy notices they were putting all the power in the hands of the Conservative Government and all the power of the Conservative Government could well have been that the most active trade unionists may not have been re-employed, that's happened elsewhere or some services that were vital to the people of Liverpool may not have been re-employed. So, I think they may have not only not re-employed 5 or 10% of the workforce but there was a possibility, we were giving total control to a Conservative Government to a free hand with no employment law protection to carry out their wishes and I believe they would have taken the opportunity to change some of the services and make some of the staff redundant.

JF. Some people would say that if Commissioners came in with all the redundancy notices still in place, they were almost going in to a blank sheet situation where they could put in what they considered to be, under conservative politics, a lean, fit organisation, for the Council.

GB. I think that is quite right. Nobody would have employment rights. Thirty odd thousand workers would be unemployed. They could have chosen what services they maintained and at what level and what services they didn't maintain and therefore what workers they retained or did not retain. I'm amazed that a Militant run Council which in effect it was, would give Conservative Commissioners that much power and free reign to carry out Conservative policies in Liverpool.

JF. The other thing I am interested in is, when I spoke to Peter Taaffe and read his two books on the issue, he raises the issue that the Liverpool budget dispute was a second front against the Government with the miners being the first front and he raises that kind of magnitude of dispute. Did you think the national miners' dispute and the Liverpool budget dispute were on a par?

GB. No, no, I wouldn't say they were on a par, the Liverpool dispute was initially part of a dispute of a number of councils, Manchester, Sheffield and London boroughs, were all going together to push the Government and gradually they all fell away one by one. Liverpool was the only remaining one, I don't think it could be seen as on a

par with the miners' dispute. But certainly, the miners' dispute added to the atmosphere of people acting to protect jobs, to protect services and I think we were very small fish in comparison to the giant whale of the miners' dispute. But it was, it impacted on the atmosphere, and set the scene maybe of the Liverpool dispute, but I would not say it was on the same level at all.

JF. On reflection Militant Tendency is now the Socialist Party and is at the stage where it intends to affiliate to the Labour Party as a full affiliate like the Coo-op Party but obviously the Co-op Party has quite a distinct constitution.

As a member of the Labour Party how would you feel about that?

GB. I would oppose it, vigorously, I've already seen a number of former Militant activists be admitted and attending and being very active in the party meetings I attend. They are starting to promote a lot of the similar policies about no cuts, we should not be making balanced budgets at the cost of the workers. I am starting to see the same people re-emerging in new roles certainly people in my CLP.

JF. Which is?

GB. Well, I was Speke /Garston. People like Julie Lyon- Taylor, very active Militant supporter at the time re-emerging and a couple of former councillors as well. In my current party ward, there are also a couple of former Militant councillors active there.

So, they are getting well back into the organisation. I think it would be a scandal if the Socialist Party was allowed to join because it is a democratic centralist party, it is a vanguard party, it's a party which has an organisation and in the past has stood candidates against Labour. I think it would be the death knell of the Labour Party if that party was allowed to join formally.

JF. I don't know if you are aware or not but Jeremy Corbyn when Militant was subject to discipline at an enquiry into the Liverpool District Labour Party formed an organisation against the witch-hunts of which he was secretary. Does that surprise you?

GB. I wasn't aware of that, but it doesn't surprise me. Jeremy Corbyn has a long history of supporting far left causes. It doesn't surprise me at all.

It's interesting if he has a background of supporting the people who were expelled then, who are now being allowed back into the party.

JF. Does it surprise you to know when the Socialist Party was formed, Militant Tendency had about 8000 members in the Labour Party, but the Socialist Party only took about 2000 with them which left 6000 still in the Party, and would it surprise you to know that the current General Secretary of the Labour Party was one of those people left behind by the Socialist Party?

GB. It wouldn't surprise me at all, I did not know that, but it would not surprise me. I do know that in various areas of Merseyside where people weren't expelled some of the 6000 are still active in Wirral and elsewhere on Merseyside, they are still active.

JF. There is current talk about splits in the Labour Party at a national level. If the Socialist Party was allowed to affiliate to the Labour Party would many people who were non-militant if you like traditional Labour Party members, democratic socialists, would they be tempted to leave the Labour Party if that was the case?

GB. I think so yes it would be changing the nature of the Labour Party from a social democratic party allowing a party in which is a vanguard party, centralist party and therefore where you would normally have a free and frank debate inside a ward, ok you may disagree at least you would know everyone was coming from a base from not having a pre-determined and not being controlled by a democratic centralist group.

JF. A pluralist approach?

GB. Yes, a pluralist approach and that clearly would be abandoned if the Socialist Party was allowed in on that basis.

JF. Would you be, and people of a similar political view of yours, would you be more tempted to leave the Labour Party of Jeremy Corbyn if a new party was formed?

GB. I would be reluctant to do that. My history in the trade union movement and my history in politics would make it very difficult to leave the Labour Party. I am also concerned that another party, similar to the SDP, might end up allowing the Tories to stay in power for a long time. I'd also be concerned that our first past the post electoral system whether they could be successful. But I would think very hard over the issue of Anti-Semitism, Brexit, if the Socialist Party was allowed to join. I think I and others would think very hard about what we did, we may not join something else but whether we remained in the Labour Party is another matter.

JF. Would it be more attractive if there was a group formed within the Labour Party that would seek to oppose Jeremy Corbyn's leadership?

GB. I'd be loathe, to try and set up something which was seen as a more moderate or sensible version of Militant because you are in danger of fighting fire with fire but certainly I would work with others, not to oppose Jeremy Corbyn as such, I think history is better than personalities. It's about the policies in politics. I would be happy to work with people of similar minds and try and get the Labour Party politics back on more traditional lines that I think could eventually win an election.

End of interview.

Appendix 16

Interview with Peter Cresswell

On Friday10th May 2019 at 2.00 pm at his home in Liverpool

Peter Cresswell during the 1970s and 1980s was secretary of the Liverpool City branch of NALGO and secretary of the Liverpool Joint Shop Stewards Committee which represented most of the Liverpool local authority unions with a total workforce of approx. 31,000.

In this interview, Peter Cresswell will be referred to as **PC** and James Ferguson as **JF.**

JF. Well apart from the two positions you held, which were pretty important, obviously secretary of the JSSC. Politically, before you joined the Labour Party were you a member of anything else?

PC. I joined the Labour Party in 1965, I drifted away from it in 1968, I guess in the early 1970s I joined the International Marxist Group.

JF. IMG

PC. IMG and then a small group of us split from the IMG and formed the Revolutionary Marxist Group. I lasted there till 1979 but they joined Big Flame and I re-joined the Labour Party. It shocked them, Mrs Thatcher winning.

JF. I won't go into that at this point because I am not too sure about that split. It's your biographical details really. Part of this thesis is it's a hybrid, its politics and industrial relations. I am really interested in interviewing you about the industrial relations aspect of that period, which was fairly unique. Obviously, I was around at the time as well. You had your normal trade union structure which I am guessing was very similar to my own union, the NUT, and that is you had a group of officers and they would meet, you would have a branch committee, a general meeting, that was the decision- making process. How did the JSSC come about?

PC. Its origins were the need for one body to represent, or at least co-ordinate things. NALGO retained its own negotiations what we negotiated was different to the other unions. We wanted to co-ordinate and have contacts, understandably. I can't remember when it started. It started before 1981 anyway, it was well in existence.

JF. I think it was in the 1970s.

PC. Probably. The secretary was John Blevin, who by the time of the crisis had left to go to London to work for the Morning Star.

JF. That's right John Blevin, did you feel in a way that the creation of the JSSC was playing into the hands of the Trotskyist Rank- and- File, trade unionism where they did not trust the bureaucracy and therefore the shop stewards had to have a bigger and bigger say in what was going on? Don't you think all of us at that level of officialdom in the trade unions were a bit naive about that?

PC. Not really. I think it went wrong was when we joined the JSSC we had a clear idea of our own autonomy and the things that affected us we were going to negotiate.

I think during the crisis the Militant Tendency within the JSSC would take decisions, so for instance when a strike ballot was held, they totted up all the votes and if the vote had gone in favour of a strike they would have said 'you are all out'. Well, we would not accept that. I think that's where it went wrong. I think in terms of bureaucracy I don't feel it was an issue. I think we all had suspicions about national bureaucracies at the time. Wrongly so, as they were helpful in the dispute as it turned out. We had a clear sense of our own autonomy, so we did not feel that was a problem.

JF. Yes, because in NALGO you had the advantage that your branch chair was also on the NEC so you had a very close link to the Executive, well you could not get a closer link, similarly in my union I was on the NEC and branch secretary as well so I did not feel the trade union bureaucracy was overbearing in our branch. But the GMB felt that didn't they?

PC. They did. I'm not sure UCATT did. I think they were semi-detached from their union in some ways. They obviously had full-time officers who did not play any part and they didn't listen to them very much whereas we always operated within the strictures of the union. We weren't prepared to go outside that. So, when it came to strike action we knew and we wanted it to be the case if we voted for the strike action we would do it, we would not be outvoted by other unions. The GMB shop stewards took that view but what the GMB national officers would have said is another matter. They would not have supported coming out on someone else's say so.

JF. When I was branch secretary, I found it rather difficult reporting back from the JSSC because it was outside our structure, or running in parallel I suppose and therefore when we had Militant Tendency people on our branch committee they were picking me up on the JSSC report trying to say it had legitimacy over and above what the branch committee was talking about. Did you ever have that in NALGO?

PC. No, I did not, possibly when it came to the sharp end of the crisis, it may have been said. One of the reasons it didn't was that up to the point of 1982, I suppose we were supporting the council so that the tension was not there. It started to emerge obviously when the council went off the rails, and obviously the Sam Bond affair.

JF. That comes nicely into the next question, when I interviewed Graham Burgess, he said that the first stage of the campaign, in fact you had a NALGO member in charge of the support unit, Alan Chape.

PC. Yes.

JF. Graham was saying it was very much a broad-based campaign and that you were quite happy with it. What changed?

PC. Well, the idea behind the campaign was that if the council wasn't successful in getting money off the government, not sure any of us thought that was a possibility, if they didn't then the council would run out of money, that was agreed and then basically everyone would be in a mess, and we thought the Government would be in a bigger mess than us. So, we accepted they'd run out of money, we would not get paid for a certain time, however long it would be, the councillors would get surcharged so they'd be in a mess and the government would be faced with almighty chaos.

Now this sounds eccentric in the light of what happened. That was the plan.

JF. When you said 'that was the plan' who agreed all that?

PC. That was the position of the DLP, and our branch went along with it, we agreed with it because the financial position looked disastrous. Where it went wrong, possibly the financial position was not as bad as it was painted to us, but it was when we were faced with the redundancies, we were faced with a prospect of being made redundant and the councillors faced the prospect of carrying on because they balanced their budget by sacking us. Other people have told me the actual surcharges were an accident, there was no illegal budget.

JF. Yes, but the redundancy notices came about through the Employment Protection Act, didn't they?

They had to give 90-day notices.

PC. They didn't have to. They chose to, legally they did have to, that was never the idea it would happen. Their idea was the council would simply run out of money, we'd be illegal, and the council would be punished for it, and we'd be punished for it. It was never for them to have a nice tidy cut-off point, issuing the redundancy notices.

JF. When it came to the redundancy notices, when I interviewed Peter Taaffe, he said straight away he was opposed to the redundancy notices, thought it was a disaster. Tony Mulhearn was of the same opinion. I said to Peter Taaffe well who made the decision? Who was leading on this? He said, 'Well I am not about to stab people in the back'. I said well it's been a number of years, surely you could tell us, and by talking about various characters he more or less said who they were. Who do you think it was?

PC. Tony Byrne.

JF. Tony Byrne.

PC. He understood the finances and I think the way he saw it this would enable them to carry on a little longer doing whatever they wanted to do and Hatton certainly went along with it, he didn't oppose it at all, because he saw it as a way of carrying on campaigning. The leadership must have known it was a way of getting them off the hook temporarily of the surcharge. So, I think Byrne was behind it but undoubtedly Hatton agreed with it. John Hamilton didn't agree with it, there's no doubt about it, but as so often John went along with things.

JF. Did you get the impression with Tony Byrne that he would have done almost anything to build houses?

PC. That was his pre-occupation, it was the housing programme, the urban regeneration strategy, and that was when you talk about capitalisation which is what they did eventually do of course, it was the obvious way of staving off the crisis, it's what the chief executive supported, I'm sure the City treasurer supported it although he did not speak about it. Stocks told me that. But when it came to that they presented that as cuts in the capital programme, and making people redundant, well they wouldn't have made anybody redundant because these things were built by the private sector obviously. The whole objective of this for Byrne was his housing programme. Which wasn't a bad one as it happened.

JF. Of all the unions in the JSSC the GMB were very compliant because they had a Militant leadership with Ian Lowes. But NALGO really ran the show because you had all the feelers into the Treasury, with all your members and the flow of information into your leadership was probably pretty good wasn't it?

PC. Yes, in particular the branch chair was a top accountant and I'm not sure, the Treasury, took kindly to him being our branch chair, a very good bloke, Tony Griffin, now dead unfortunately and of course Alan Chape, who you mentioned before was very much involved in their campaign committee, whatever it was called?

JF. The Central Support Unit.

PC. So, he understood the budget and all that sort of stuff very well, so we got loads of detailed information. Where it starts to get hazy is what the effects of capitalisation were really. It obviously did mean cutting back or restricting the scope of the capital programme, that was something which they'd set down, there didn't need to be anything written in stone about that, whereas the workforce actually existed. The URS was a future programme.

JF. When you first came across the so-called solution, that they were going to make everyone redundant to buy them time, did that come as a real shock to you, or where you expecting something like that?

PC. Gob smacked, totally gob smacked. We didn't expect anything like that. We showed you a bulletin I wrote a few days before we got the redundancy notices.

JF. I've got a copy of that bulletin.

PC. Describing rumours of redundancy notices. There were rumours but they had been totally denied to us. We described them as a joke and made light of them. We thought it was just a fantasy that someone had dreamt up. So, when they did appear, they had actually been there when I had been writing that. It was a bolt from the blue from the blue and when you tried to argue with Hatton and Co, they were saying they were not really redundancy notices. But that is exactly what they were, redundancy notices.

JF. If there was one union that was a) well informed and b) the council needed to keep on side, it was yours. When you actually met them, when you knew they'd issued redundancy notices, wasn't there some form of embarrassment there?

PC. No, no. No, they weren't embarrassed at all. Not the leadership. I think some of the lower- level councillors, none of whom would disassociate themselves from it, but they said 'well there's no option' but Hatton and Co, were barefaced about it. They just said 'No they aren't real redundancy notices' they tried to give reassurances, a letter from Hatton and John Hamilton which was no re-assurance at all. It just said if the Government give in we'll withdraw them. Oh well, fine, there you go, I'm sure you will.

JF. Did you get the impression that the councillors in the Labour Group were mightily relieved that they'd issued those notices and saved them from what would have been a massive surcharge?

PC. I'm not sure all of them totally understood the implications of all that stuff really, the rank and file. You would have to speak to some of these people like Joe Devaney who are still available. I'm not sure how they saw it. They would defend it as buying more time for the campaign. If you knew what was going on in local government, no campaign was going to change what happened in Lambeth, Liverpool or Sheffield and weren't going to change their minds and do something different. It seemed to us it was just a way of spinning things out and having the council with no staff but people doing the work voluntarily, that's exactly what they put to us. The way Hatton and Byrne put the case forward was that when we were all made redundant, the council would continue running, well we would all be laid off, but they wanted us to carry out essential services, such as residential homes, that sort of thing and various other essential services. We made it clear we had no intention of doing that, it wasn't like a strike where you had exemptions, this was them, sacking us. If we were sacked, we were out the door. I think that shook them really.

JF. So, they actually thought that you would carry on working?

PC. Not everyone just essential services.

JF. Really, Very interesting.

Moving on to the Labour Party itself. I've interviewed quite a few people who described how intimidating it was attending DLP meetings. I think you attended DLP meetings as a member of the Labour Party?

PC. I did, yes.

JF. Obviously, you didn't attend them all because you were busy being branch secretary.

PC. I attended all the DLP meetings.

JF. All?

PC. I used to be on the DLP executive.

JF. What was your general impression of the way the DLP made decisions? When I interviewed Dave Robertson, who you know, he said he was often shouted down, things like that. Did you feel the DLP meetings were very intimidatory?

PC. By the time it came to the split over the redundancy notices, yes. Before then most people were pretty much in agreement, so it wasn't intimidatory. After the redundancy notices I think shouted down is a harsh word, shouted at, definitely.

Made to feel uncomfortable. Threats, I was never physically threatened but it was uncomfortable speaking out, you had to steel yourself, they were big meetings, you had to steel yourself to speak against the line of the leadership. I was never stopped from speaking. I think they welcomed me speaking in some cases because it suited them to characterise the opposition to them as being the white- collar union. So, it was them opposed to us. They abused me obviously.

JF. I'm thinking when you are looking at other delegates, you were in a position of being secretary of the largest branch in the council and a lot of the stewards had some respect for you because you were secretary of the JSSC, what about the people who weren't in your position, who had fairly minor roles, where they shouted down? Shouted at sorry.

PC. Shouted at, yes. It would be intimidating, but I think people felt there could be a physical threat, but I was never physically threatened, There, was one occasion, not in the DLP where things got a bit hairy, but I was never attacked or physically threatened.

JF. So, you never felt as though there was any physical intimidation?

PC. No, but it wasn't a comfortable experience speaking though.

JF. I have read some reports from the inquiry that the Labour Party did into the DLP, In fact I got the entire transcript, and people did talk about being physically threatened.

Jane Kennedy gave evidence and she said she was punched and kicked, on the way in and out of the meeting. Did you see much of that?

PC. No, no.

JF. You didn't. It was in and out of the meeting so actually probably in the meeting it didn't happen. Yes ok. The DLP in normal circumstances, the DLP was like the old borough party which would co-ordinate the constituencies, most probably at election times. Did you feel that Militant changed the raison d'etre of the DLP, from a co-ordinating body, to a sovereign body? They expected people to follow it.

PC. DLP was there for local elections, constituencies were a relatively minor part, I think they had some delegates, but the main body was delegates from the wards. Obviously, trade union delegates. It wasn't about local elections.

The whole thing changed. It took a much more active view about politics in general, it was democratic centralism really, once the DLP made a decision that was it everyone was expected to go along with it.

JF. That's what I am saying when the DLP made a decision, because there were so many delegates, didn't the councillors feel intimidated into supporting that, because otherwise they would have to explain to the DLP why they had made another decision.

PC. I think so, You, would need to speak to councillors, but I am sure they felt like that.

JF. When I interviewed Peter Kilfoyle, he felt there were some very strong characters in the Labour Group but there was a fairly large bulk of them who were fairly weak characters and would go along with who shouted loudest.

PC. Well, I wouldn't want to characterise people like that, but people did go along with majority decisions that their life would have been made difficult if they hadn't, no doubt about that.

JF. Although under the rules and regulations of the Labour Party the Labour Group really had the sovereignty not the DLP.

PC. In practise that did not make any difference because the DLP agreed with the Labour Group on these policies.

JF. Moving on, we had the Inquiry into the DLP by the NEC. There were expulsions, 16 to begin with and then that was whittled down to 12, they let 4 people off and that was the end of that. When I interviewed Peter Taaffe, I said most people were surprised that you'd stood in the Walton bye-election because that was clearly against every rule in the book of the Labour Party, standing against the official Labour candidate. Didn't you feel it was a big mistake. Did you feel that at the time, that they had strayed into a very, very, dangerous area?

PC. Obviously, I did. It's, one of the factions, one of the splinters of Militant, who highlight that it was a catastrophic error. They see that as a key error, people should have stayed in the Labour Party, if people are thrown out, they're thrown out but from outside they behave as if they are in the Labour Party. Not only that they encouraged people to believe they were going to win the Walton bye-election, they, didn't even get close.

JF. No, came third, I think.

PC. Yes.

JF. I've done quite a bit of research into numbers and when Militant split and there was the faction that wanted to go off on their own and contest elections, go against Labour party policy on the poll tax, and form the Socialist Party. The entire membership has now been more- or- less settled as about 8,000. And I said to Peter Taaffe what happened to the rest? He said they just stayed in the Labour Party, 6000 stayed behind, and he said including the present General Secretary. Moving on from that, in your experience or what you have read, do you think there is still some kind of residual Militant influence in Liverpool through Momentum?

PC. Oh yes, Audrey White, would be an example, an ex- Militant who is active, I think she's under threat of discipline by the Labour Party, I'm no quite sure what for. No there are numbers of people. I'm not sure they stayed in, Taaffe would know that better than me, Liverpool may have been different from the national picture, but certainly people came back and appear to have an influence Julie Lyon Taylor is one, possibly only in her ward, and the other one, the Irish teacher, active in the NUT?

JF. Ruth Knox.

PC. Ruth Knox, yes there a number of names and faces that you recognise, but I don't remember them being present during the Blair years. Most Momentum people I come across describe themselves as Returners.

JF. Returners?

PC. They left over Iraq, I think I think they would say they, left over, some of them may have over the militant business, but they came back when Corbyn was elected.

JC. So, what you are saying is there were a lot of disillusioned Labour Party members over the Blair years and the way the Blair Government operated, and they left, and now they are coming back.

PC. Yes, in terms of opposition to the war, and opposition to various Blair policies, acadamisation, commercialising the health service, I never recall old Militants playing much of a role in that at all.

JF. No, they were quite quiet or non-existent.

PC. Or not around, I can't recall anybody in Riverside Constituency.

JF. Since, the election of Corbyn and his support group, Momentum, I've had lots of reports of people leaving the Labour Party, partly because of the anti-semitism row, partly because they don't feel at home with the new influx of Momentum people. Do you think the Labour Party has changed for the foreseeable future, in support of Corbyn?

PC. Two things really. I think the policies of the Labour Party have moved to the left and aren't likely to move much back to the centre. How far Corbyn's central to that I don't know. I don't disagree with most of Corbyn's policies really. The way they are implemented and some of the stuff around him such as the anti-semitism is a different matter. I don't see the Labour Party moving back towards Brownism, Blairism, it would probably move more back towards Milibandism, Ed Milibandism, without some of the daft things that surround him like the Ed Stone.

JF. Is it possible for the Labour Party with people who are still left in it, who are prepared to stand up for what they believe in, are there enough of them to pull back a bit from Corbyn's policies or are they fading fast?

PC. It depends what happens at the next election entirely, I think that would change everything. Should Corbyn win then it would become more entrenched and you have to wait and see how he performed in government. If we lost the next election I think there would be big changes, not necessarily in terms of the detailed policy, policies towards Europe and so on may change but some of the core policies will remain the same, so the education won't change much, but I think the image of the party may possibly change then. But I think the answer to the question you are asking, it just depends on what happens in the election. Most members in Liverpool think we will win the next election.

JF. What do you think?

PC. I don’t know. I tell you what I thought Trump was going to lose, I thought we would stay in the EU, my days of predicting elections are over.

End of Interview

Appendix 17

Interview with Liam Fogarty

On Wednesday 13th February 2019 at 10.00am in

Liverpool City Centre

Between 1983 and 1990 Liam Fogarty was a reporter and producer for BBC Radio Merseyside and was their local government producer. He now teaches journalism at the University of Central Lancashire. He produced a BBC Radio 4 programme for Archive on Four entitled The Mersey Militants, a retrospective view of the Militant era in Liverpool which was broadcast in November 2018.

In this interview, Liam Fogarty will be referred to as **LF** and James Ferguson as **JF.**

JF. Did you feel that Militant had any kind of a strategy with the media?

LF. Apart from the kind of saturation bombing of the conflict, a media strategy? We were not conscious of a media strategy as individual reporters our relationship with leading members of the Council was patchy. Some of those people at the highest levels were accommodating and quite happy to talk and others clearly regarded us as part of some media monster to be either slayed or ignored. I was not conscious of any kind of a formal Mandelsonian or Alastair Campbell type strategy and I think looking back at it everybody was making it up as we went along and that included us.

JF. Because obviously you did not know where you were going to end up so you played it day by day.

LF. Well, you had to, the overriding memory I have is of consistent drama because remarkable things happened every other day of the week, for several years whether it was mass meetings by local government unions, about, whether or not to join one course of action or another, numerous marches whatever the numbers, people argued over numbers. The City was in a state of uproar, and if your job was to report on that it was very exciting and I'm sure sometimes we got carried away there was a sense of its importance because local government was on the front pages of every newspaper in the country, and that does not happen very often. Apart from the poll tax which was much a more diffuse a countrywide phenomenon, here you had this kind of uprising in one provincial city which we were living in and reporting on.

JF. Did you feel, at the time as a professional journalist, and now you lecture on it, did you feel that Militant got a fair press at that time?

LF. Well clearly not if you define a fair press nationally.

JF. Take for instance the Liverpool Echo which took a very anti-Militant line in most of its editorials.

LF. The Daily Post did, in those days we had two papers, both had municipal correspondents and there was a sense that Militant was letting the city down. There was the overwhelming majority of the coverage about them negative, but then again when the local newspapers were reporting that services were not happening, that the city was running out of money, and when there were enormous conflicts, the default position of the local press was to oppose the overall strategy. Although I do recall there was an acknowledgement Liverpool had serious problems, and so for instance, when the Stonefrost Commission came to look at the city's books there was a sense, there was a case to be made here. They were not taking the government line that you shut up and go away. I think there is a reaction, what's the word? They found the tone of the politics of Militant extreme and angry and there was a lot of anger about. There was a time where I think where a kind of a cold civil war was going on in the city. You were on one side or another and there were not many bridgeheads between those who backed the Liverpool Council one hundred per cent, and those who thought they were on the wrong track. There was very little middle ground in Liverpool at the time and I think it was inevitable that saw media coverage and certainly in the papers.

JF. Militant was a vanguard party, in other words, they have a very military structure, it is not a pluralist party. Decisions are taken at the top and very rarely are they questioned. They are very military, they styled themselves on the Bolshevik party, in my thesis I talked about how the Bolsheviks had to be secretive, being in a police state. Of course Militant were not in a police state they were just being very, very, secretive because they did not want to be kicked out of the Labour Party.

LF. But that secrecy extended into you can see that in that the way that it was almost impossible to get a straight answer to a very simple question, and that question was are you a member of Militant Tendency? And you can ask very senior figures, cabinet post holders, the Deputy Leader of the Council, and not get a straight answer. It was very difficult because you had to assume everybody knows that Ian Lowes in the GMB is one, Pauline Dunlop is definitely one, Tony is one because we have read his writings and has published them. But is Tony Byrne one? He hovers around above everything ideogically, extremley pure. His obsession with housing, but as a journalist you don't know which party or which faction these people, actually belong to. You started on the back foot and there was a lot of that but if they can't be trusted to tell us to whom they are loyal politically, how can we trust them for anything else or any other arguments they make or the facts they give.

JF. If they lie about that they could lie about anything?

LF. They are not lies they don't give a straight answer, I read the newspaper, I subscribe to the newspaper.

JF. With this vanguardism that they operate, which they deny, but at the time they were very much so. Where you conscious of, as a journalist, that a lot of decisions were coming from Militant head-quarters, in London, rather than the City Council.

LF. It kind of hovered like a cloud over everything. You could not tell for sure whether the agenda was being written in the Municipal Annexe or in the Vernon Arms or 200 miles away. You could not tell in my relatively own minor roll we were not expected to have contacts insights and contacts with the inner workings of this extremely small faction and the Peter Taaffe's the Pat Wall's all these other people, the Ted Grant's. They came in on our radar, we recognised them not least that Pat Wall was a Scouser so we had a connection there, but we never really never had any accuracy in the decision making process. There was a sense, they have some input because their people who follow them and who are their comrades in the city. But we are not quite sure how that works.

JF. One of the issues I have raised in this thesis as well, is that Militant took the leadership of the budget crisis. They identified how much money the city was short, they said how they were going to get it, by confrontation, and you said earlier there was a genuine case. Liverpool had had a hard time of it. If there had have been a broad campaign involving obviously not the Conservative Party but say the more radical wing of the Liberal Party, the Labour Party, even the churches, the community groups. Given the case that Liverpool had a genuine case do you think that would have taken off and would have some kind of effect on government?

LF. It is interesting you mentioned the churches because post the 81 riots when you had Derek Warlock and David Shepherd kind of emerging on the national stage for a fairer deal. All that was completely marginalised from 84 onwards, maybe that's a resource that the Labour Council might have used better I don't know. It became identified as their struggle, as their struggle as the party's struggle, the majority group's struggle rather than a city-wide struggle. Because in the way of things, certainly the broadcast media always tried to balance things out so every person who said yes, we are behind the Council and Derek and Tony and John and all the others. It would be an immediate counter balancing view of all those that thought they were an embarrassment, all this language why can't we get together. In terms of a broadcast meeting you would get this automatic balancing of views and there was a sense, the city, was divided on those divisions on full. If you would have got Trevor Jones and the Liberal Party on board and even the two or three remaining Conservative councillors to make a joint appeal. If you look at the LGA, the LGA is more effective as a body because it does speak for all councils of all stripes and it tends not to fragment and issue majority and minority reports, but it was the mid-eighties. You got the miners strikes and the industrial stripping out of Northern England and you have got stuff going on in Northern Ireland and you've got inner city riots. There doesn't seem to be much room for Kumbaya and hands across the aisle politics. We have got this temptation Jim towards Liverpool's exceptionalism. That the city that dared to fight. Other cities fought but in another way, the idea that this was an historic moment, an historic opportunity so you have that culture already and it's a perfect fit speaking electorally for 65 /70 percent if you go back to the election results for that year, and yes there was polarisation, but there was an enormous increase in interest, and so the turnout for the 85 election, the one straight after the first well over 50 per cent, and there is a sense that it certainly engaged people, and got people active. It divided on

class lines it divided on North and South of the city, it divided on trades unions and some trades unions were less inclined to follow the Militant path than others.

JF. I am interested in the thesis on the issue that they were intimidating the internal opposition in the Labour party through their use of the DLP the District Labour Party and that people who had legitimate concerns were either shouted down or physically assaulted.

LF. That was extensively reported because the …

JF. Did you report that?

LF. I can't remember personally but it was commonly reported then that individuals had spoken out against the policy and they were shouted down ejected from meetings and abused in and out of meetings. I remember standing outside the Trade Union Resource Centre in Hardman St, and there was some crisis meeting because every meeting was a crisis meeting, and the TV cameras were there. Newsnight was coming live from outside, and Jane Kennedy came in with her NUPE colleagues and it was pretty vile stuff.

JF. in what way?

LF. Just verbal abuse and jostling and stuff and you talk to people on the other side of the debate as it were, on the non-Militant side. They have all got anecdotes about uncomradely behaviour.

JF. Mike Storey talked about having his tyres slashed.

LF. In the interview I did with him he spoke about the kind of intimidation he was getting at the time, when his wife was very ill and was very upset by it. And he was still very upset by it. He was getting phone calls from people making threatening phone calls.

JF. Mike Storey said he had a death threat which is very concerning.

LF. Thank god Twitter did not exist in the mid-80s the whole thing would have exploded in bile. As a journalist you tread very carefully so it's perfectly routine to hear that the BBC, you are all Tories backing the other people and it's not unique to Liverpool and it's not unique to that moment. If you cover any industrial dispute people take a point of view on anti-media hostility, there is a rich tradition and it's not just a Liverpool thing.

JF. The Militant Tendency always say that during that time, there is the miners' strike as well and that they had opened up a second front against the Government and all that was needed was to stand fast and with the miners. There were two fighting fronts they could force a general election or a general strike. I mean as a journalist looking at it how likely was that?

LF. At the time we treated it as rhetoric, it is part of what they did, this is the language of the far left, historically always treated it is as that the revolution is just round the corner another general strike and another election where the scales will fall from the populations eyes and they can emerge and take a leading role. I mean there is a lot

of noise around and I think until local trade unions actually did come out on strike and make it real it was a lot of hot air. This was also at a time of this ferocious opposition to Thatcher and Thatcherism in the city, you don't need to be a card-carrying member of Militant to feel that vibe. They were a conduit for being left behind for being betrayed attacked economically, Black Stuff was on the air in 83.

JF. Boys from the Black Stuff.

LF. That had, whatever its merits as a drama which are many and fantastic. You also had the sense of speaking for the city I don't know whether that was Alan Bleasdale's purpose but there was a sense we are up against the Tories and people were prepared to cut the council leadership a lot of slack even though you might be a bit queasy. The language or the tactics or the personalities and they certainly people were prepared to back that they certainly did in the election.

JF. Did you feel that as Militant would argue that opening up a second front was on a par with the miners' strike in other words the amount of pressure on the government was similar to the pressure the miners were putting on them?

LF. I wouldn't have a view to be honest, I wasn't close enough to the miners. Around Parkside and other places around St Helens at the time the strike was on. It was on the 84 cup final, there was a banner saying victory to the miners and Everton it was with certain people it was a sense we were fighting the same battle but people would fall away as a pincer movement and somehow beating down Thatcherism.

JF. Derek Hatton was very much the voice of the City Council and Militant merged. In his book he makes no bones about it, he started to fall in love with the media.

LF. It was mutual it was a mutual love affair.

JF. In what way?

LF. Because he was always good for a quote and he had impact he was forceful articulate and box office. And over time that starts to trigger the anti-bodies in the reporting eco-system. Can we get somebody else on, let's talk to Dominic Brady or let's talk to somebody else because you want new voices. He became identifiable as a national figure very quickly.

JF. He was on Spitting Image.

LF. No greater. He, galvanised, Derek is one of those people about whom people had an opinion.

End of interview

Appendix 18

Interview with Derek Hatton

4pm on 14th February 2019 at Derek Hatton's Liverpool city centre office.

Derek Hatton was the former Deputy leader of Liverpool City Council from 1983 to 1987

In this interview Derek Hatton will be referred to as **DH** and James Ferguson as **JF.**

DH. On the basis of what Jim has told me who he has interviewed, my worry is this is going to be a very one sided thesis with the likes of so far, he tells me the only two people he has interviewed Peter Taaffe and myself and people like Neil Kinnock, like David Blunkett, Mike Storey and Clare Short etc are still very anti, very anti, what really happened and the very fact that Mike Storey can say without fear or foe that his tyres were slashed in the eighties he is a total liar.

JF. And if you could add that I am making attempts to interview Tony Mulhearn.

DH. I am hoping you are.

JF. As soon as I have the phone number from you.

In your own words, when you came to power it was a bit of a shock wasn't it when you won the election.

DH. There is no doubt about it I mean we thought that it was going to be another year before we took control. I first got elected in 79 and then it was still very much a middle to right wing controlled Labour Group and even some of the lefts tended to take the other side. And each year as new people came on who were left wing and each year the left group within the Labour group got bigger and bigger and stronger and stronger and more and more influential. And it's fair to say by 83 the left controlled the Labour Group. People came from different quarters and ages people, like Eddie Loyden and Alec Doswell, people like Ken Stuart people like Hughie Dalton, who had been in the party for a thousand years, and right down to people like myself, and others who had only recently joined the Labour Group. I mean I was one of the youngest around I was only 35 when we took control of the Council, so we had a real mixed bag and that was such a joke about being parachuted in. The likes of Ken Stuart and Hughie Dalton, Alec Doswell and people like Eddie Loyden. They had been in the party for years and so come 83 we thought we would probably have another year however the irony was I always remember we went down to Netherley, to the count the votes, you weigh the votes there you don't count them and we got in a car four of us in a car driving into town driving over the fly-over and next minute I heard that we had won Warbreck and Warbreck at the time had a Tory councillor the last remaining two Tory councillors. A lad called Reg Flude, he was a working- class cockney who we always used to say to each other come the barricades we would shoot each other but until then he was actually very good as a fella. And he had a

very good backing in Warbreck he had a carpet shop, and everybody knew him the fact that he got beat in Warbreck, we knew we had had done it at that moment and sure enough we had.

JF. What do you think, because I am very much from the Northern end of the county in Burnley, why do you think, which always surprised me when I moved to Liverpool, why did you think it took so long to get a Labour Council with a reasonable majority, I mean with the other Northern towns and cities like you said they weighed the Labour vote but there was never any hint of a Council not being Labour.

DH. I think it was a combination of first of all with the docks dying, Liverpool don't forget at the beginning of the 1900s Liverpool had more millionaires than anywhere else in the country outside London and it was all based on the ships, on the port, the insurance, see the size of the houses, they were owned by very wealthy people, so it had a very, very, rich wealthy tradition. It was only really after the war a little bit but much more before going into the 60s before there were threats to the docks and the 70s were a real threat to the docks and by the 80s, they were virtually all shutting down. So, it was only at that time that people were saying what's going on? Something has to be done, at the same time there was a very lazy Labour Council when there was a Labour council in the Bill Sefton days. People thought so the areas they stood in there whatever happens it will always be Labour. And of course, you got young Liberals who would knock on the door said to Mrs Smith how long has this flag stone been cracked? She said for years lad. They go away and have it repaired so she thinks it's worthwhile. They never ever told a single political truth in their life, but they got the vote.

JF. I think religion had something to do with it as well didn't it?

DH. No, I didn't think it did, I certainly think at one stage there was quite a strong protestant Tory element but I am going back a long time but equally there was a massive catholic mafia as well going on who was supporting the Labour Party.

JF. Because in the northern towns which I am just comparing it to, in that sort of Methodist chapel tradition which fitted easily into the Labour Party. There was no large catholic population outside Liverpool was there of any major size only perhaps Manchester.

After you gained power you became deputy leader pretty quickly, didn't you?

DH. Yes, I suppose again for the first four years 79 to 83, Eddie Loyden was deputy leader and Eddie Loyden got elected in 83.

JF. As an MP.

DH. So, for that reason there was going to be a vacancy, and everyone knew that was happening, so he didn't want to stand as deputy leader. So obviously there was a vacancy, and I was, just was the right person at the right time.

JF. I mean did you attribute that, you had quite a strong trade union background in the fire brigade's union didn't you and then you became involved in NALGO and then became a Labour councillor, do you think that trade union background helped?

DH. It makes me laugh today, I can't remember anybody getting elected to anything without a few years in the party and probably years in the trade union movement as well you know, you see MPs from school to university to research assistant for an MP to an MP. That would as you know never would have had happened in our day a trade union, Labour Party history so everybody was in that position Jim. You had to be somewhere in the movement.

JF. When you became deputy leader obviously the broad left had control of the Labour Group. When I said control it was a majority, I am saying that because I was chair of the broad left of our Union, I know how that section works. You want to move the party to the left. Now when did it come about when you decided you weren't going to along and control the budget as other administrations had done, you decided to take a stand.

DH. We decided that in 79.

JF. As early as that?

DH. Yes, from the moment Thatcher got elected and she came out with what she did. We knew that we would be put into power to actually carry out the cuts there is a record of me moving resolutions time and time again when we were in opposition to actually take the sort of line, we took later on but we were in a minority, so it didn't go anywhere. I am on record as taking that line for four years before we took control nobody thought we would actually do it once we took control nobody thought we would take a real stand everybody thought, alright you said all that, but you don't mean it.

JF. When you see the full thesis you will see a letter you may not have seen from about 79 when Trevor Jones wrote to John Hamilton as leader of the Party saying is this your policy? Which you have just said no cuts in jobs and services, and Trevor Jones was asking John Hamilton, to if you like deny that part of the policy. I don't know if you ever saw that letter? Anyway, you will see that in the thesis.

DH. What did John say?

JF. There was not a reply from John.

DH. John would not reply.

JF. No, I don't think it was that kind of a letter you would reply to, it was an open letter.

DH. Also, John disliked the Liberals intensely, intensely, in fact John was a lovely, lovely, man. In fact, he hated the Liberals probably more than the Tories he was a lovely fellow John. He liked everybody he was an absolute joy to work with but his anger towards the Liberals what they have done to the city was probably the most ferocious I have heard him against anyone.

JF. When I did interview Mike Storey, I said from Michael Parkinson's book he had dug a big hole for the Labour Party by either no rate rises, or negative rate rises. Of all the cities in the north, Liverpool was the one that needed the higher rating. They were basically digging you a hole there is no dispute about that.

DH. It cost about £50 million then.

JF. Fast forward a bit, you put forward your budget, you needed more money, you saw Jenkin in London and you secured more money.

DH. About 30 million-ish.

JF. You needed 30 million?

DH. No that's what we got.

JF. And that was the first round of the budget not the second?

I was around about that time and Jack Straw has gone on record in his auto biography, I haven't, interviewed him yet, he categorically said that he and Jack Cunningham negotiated that.

DH. That 30 million?

JF. Yes.

DH. Nowhere, near.

JF. There were grants and various things.

DH. They were not even in the meeting.

There is no way, there was only one group of people who negotiated that it was the people of Liverpool showing that they were not prepared to budge and the demonstrations that we had, and they showed that this was for real. I remember doing a television programme after it all happened in the late 80s and on the panel with me was Teddy Taylor an old Scottish MP, a hang them and flog type of Tory.

JF. I think he was Monday club.

DH. I remember he said to me two things, Margaret Thatcher from the word go never wanted to have a joint fight with Liverpool and the miners and she said one of the reasons why she stood aside and let Patrick Jenkin give that money was because of the fact that she did not want a joint fight, but when she was ready for the fight, she could not believe Kinnock did it for her.

JF. And that was his view?

DH. That was Teddy Taylor saying it to me.

JF. Some people would say, some of your critics would say, there is no way that the Liverpool budget dispute could be put on a par with the miners' strike, the miners' strike was a whale, the Liverpool budget dispute was a minnow.

DH. Yes, but don't forget Jim that at that time 83/84/85 we used to go around the country speaking at rallies there was two or three thousand people at those rallies. We used to go to Sheffield, London boroughs. They used to phone us up, and say can we speak on your platform? Because they knew if they had called a rally, they could not fill a phone box and we had two or three thousand people at our rallies in a situation where they were not actually involved. So, what Thatcher saw and also, I

believe, Kinnock saw, why he was frightened of Liverpool, was if we had have actually won more local authorities would have taken the same line.

JF. And he was worried about that?

DH. Thatcher was worried about it because it would have been as big as the miners maybe bigger and involving more people and secondly Kinnock was petrified, and he knew his power base would go.

JF. Because?

DH. Because he did not support the miners.

JF. You could easily characterise Kinnock's position in that he wanted to keep opposition within parliament.

DH. He wanted to do what?

JF. Keep opposition to the Tories within parliament.

DH. He wouldn't even stand on a miner's picket line and he was from a miners area.

JF. He wanted to confine it to the area of parliament.

DH. Exactly he had nothing in common with the struggles that were going on of the trade unions at that time.

JF. You got the settlement there was a dispute about who got it.

Now you are on to another year and things are getting difficult because you have Kenneth Baker now, he became Environment Secretary didn't he and I've seen letters to Eric Heffer, Eric used to write on your behalf a lot and Kenneth Baker sent him a tiny little letter, what's the name it not A4 it's the one down from A4 and is designed to belittle people and he was saying he won't meet you until there was a legal budget.

DH. What year was that?

JF. 84 /85.

DH. Yes, there was three budgets 83/4 got the money, 84/85 didn't get the money but we didn't make any cuts either come 85/86 that was the year we had to do the redundancy notice as a tactic as you know, that was the year it was Kinnock's speech then.

JF. Basically, Baker was doing a stonewall with you, he wasn't really negotiating with you was he?

DH. No, he wasn't he met us, he wasn't particularly interested in talking to us because he had seen what had happened to Patrick Jenkin, Patrick Jenkin got sacked.

JF. So, in other words the talks were not meaningful.

DH. Thatcher used it, according to what was the name of the Scottish fella?

JF. Teddy Taylor.

DH. She told him it was ok to give us the money because she did not want a joint fight with local government and the miners together.

JF. The Chancellor of the Exchequer Geoffrey Howe wrote her a letter before that because he is not happy about Heseltine getting any money because he doesn't believe in pumping water up a hill.

DH. Heseltine did not get any money you know, the Garden Festival, all the publicity about the wonderful Garden Festival, the exact same amount of money was taken out of the housing revenue account.

JF. That was interesting, Baker basically stonewalled you as the city is running out of money, you have not yet set a legal budget you have already been identified that about £100,000 is in lost interest.

DH. Which year are you alluding to?

JF. That final budget 1985/86 that amount of money was identified which ok was a large amount of money £100,000 but it was achievable to get that kind of money back. But then of course, now this why I'm talking about Peter Taaffe not opposition people like Clare Short, Peter Taaffe told me that when it came to the redundancy notices he was absolutely opposed to them and so was Tony Mulhearn, totally and utterly opposed to them, he has gone on record.

DH. I don't think Peter might not have liked it and Tony Mulhearn did not like it and I did not like it.

JF. Nobody liked it.

DH. Those of us who were on the coal face which includes Tony Mulhearn, all acknowledged it had to be, because don't forget as you know we got all the trade union branches, spoke to public meetings explained what was going to happen. There was not a single trade union where we did not go and speak to the membership about that before it happened. Not a single one, and there wasn't a single employee that didn't, not a single employee that didn't get a letter signed by me and John Hamilton saying, along with the redundancy notice, attached to it saying none of this will happen.

Did you have that?

JF. I've got it.

DH. The one that says there is a letter from the Leaders office signed by me and John have you got that copy?

JF. Yes, but to be fair I put that to our Union solicitor, and he said only one side of the letter counts and that was the redundancy notice.

DH. The relationship that those trade unions had with us had nothing to do with that the legality, we were telling them what was going to happen. The point of the matter

was the moment that that budget was passed the redundancy notices were ripped up and not a single job was lost.

JF. Yes, but that redundancy notice withdrawal, that came after our legal action didn't it?

DH. No legal action got nowhere went anywhere not one single legal action against us won not one.

JF. Ok, do you think it was a mistake though?

DH. I think it I wish it could have been handled better, I really wish it could have been handled better. I am not sure it could have been handled better because it's a hard one to explain a very hard one to explain. I don't know what more we could have done, and I tell you what I think again it was the Kinnock element of the Party in their opposition to it, from the beginning, that made people concerned and worried and that was the problem we had. We had people asking what was going on here why isn't the Labour Party united here.

JF. Forget the legalities of the redundancy notices, that's debateable your right, politically wasn't it a mistake?

DH. Yes, because the day after the budget went through every single one was ripped up so if we hadn't have had the right wing trade unions the right wing MPs and the Leader of the Party having a go at us constantly, after we had ripped them up, after they had been ripped up we wouldn't have had that.

JF. How did the budget stay legal?

DH. Once we had set a budget, we added x no of millions it was for the next year say for the sake of argument, March 31st, we save, 100 million pounds, budget goes through new year so you spend an extra 100 million. So, at the end of the year you have a massive problem, but you worry about it then.

JF. Fast forward a bit because I am interested in the developments within the current Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn etc. Peter Taaffe's Socialist party wants to affiliate to the Labour Party on the same grounds as the Co-op Party, what do you think about that?

DH. I have got no involvement with them. I've never ever joined any of the parties that's been set up since 1987 or factions, Socialist party, I've stayed a Labour Party supporter, I've never campaigned against the Labour Party, I've never joined an organisation that's not the Labour Party, I've never voted for any other than the Labour Party even when good friends of mine have stood against the Labour Party like Tony and others. I've never campaigned for them and now I've re-joined the Labour Party and that was part of my argument I gave.

JF. So, in terms of the affiliation of the Socialist party, you are kind of neutral on that?

DH. All I would say is I've nothing against it because if the Labour Party felt that was a good idea I would be delighted, because there are good people within the Socialist

Party who I think are a loss to the movement. I just wish they would join the Labour Party like I did.

JF. And dissolved.

DH. What they do is up to them. There are lots of groups of people who meet in all sorts of different ways.

JF. One last quickie, you organised the campaign, no cuts in jobs and services, get more money from the Government with a united front as a Labour Council. The case for Liverpool getting more money I think, was at that time, without a doubt the argument was there, the city was on its knees economically. Michael Parkinson's book completely nails that down. Don't you feel that the campaign, that you as a Labour Group waged could have involved more people, more groups, more organisations, a broader front, within Liverpool I mean?

DH. It may or may not I don't think it would have been right to involve, the Labour Party, trades unions led that campaign if people wanted to join that campaign that was fine. We were not going to have a common front with for example the Liberals, we were not going to have a common front with people who were opposed to the Labour Party. We were not going to do that it was the Labour Party and trade union movement that led that, so if people were not prepared to get involved in that, so be it.

JF. I am talking about say for instance some community groups.

DH. They were welcome to get involved do it in fact some of them did, many were encouraged. Where I was a councillor in Netherley there was a very powerful community which started as the flat dwellers then became a community group. They were right behind the campaign. There were lots of community groups that were involved. Croxteth had a great community involvement loads of them. There were certain Mickey Mouse community groups who would use any excuse to have a go at us because they were being used by other people but in the main, they were involved.

End of interview

Appendix 19

Interview with Peter Kilfoyle at his home in Liverpool on the 9th May 2019 at 1pm

Peter Kilfoyle was a North West Regional Officer for the Labour Party in the 1980s. He later became the MP for the Liverpool Walton constituency, vacated by Eric Heffer, and subsequently served as a Government Minister in the Blair Government.

In this transcript Peter Kilfoyle will be referred to as **PK**

and James Ferguson as **JF**

PK. I am Peter Kilfoyle I had the doubtful pleasure of working for the Labour Party in the North West and in particular on Merseyside, Liverpool. I also went on to become an MP for Liverpool Walton which is often described as the birthplace of Militant by many people, and many people thought that in Walton. I then became a Minister in the Government and then resigned and eventually retired.

JF. I did a very long interview with Peter Taaffe, who was editor of Militant and then became the General Secretary of the Socialist Party of England and Wales. In that interview I asked him, how come, the Labour Party purged Militant out of the Labour Party and how did you feel about that? He alleges this is his argument that Militant was no different to the Co-op Party within the Labour Party, no different to Tribune and also I have done quite a lot of work on the St Ermins Group which you may or may not have heard of which was a secretive group of trade union officials who met in the St Ermins hotel in London. Their aim was to regain a majority on the NEC of the Labour Party and expel Militant that was their twin aims they were very secretive, no membership list, no finances etc. So, Peter Taaffe is saying well that the only difference between Militant and all those other groups was that we were better organised, were larger so the attack on Militant and the subsequent expulsions was simply a purge of the left.

PK. No as you would expect I do not agree with that. The Militant or the Revolutionary Socialist League they were quite definitely a separate political party. They were not a section of that Labour Party or a pressure group within it. God knows there were plenty of them and not all of them to this day remain groups that I would think have necessarily a common interest with the vast majority of people in the Labour Party but Militant were as you rightly pointed out better organised far more disciplined far more focused, but they were very, very, distinctly a separate party with its own agenda and its own programme that goes with being a party. The comparison with the Co-op party, I would say is superficially attractive except that the Co-op party is not as I would see it, as much more than a vehicle a connection,

or maintaining a connection, between the broader Co-operative movement and its votes with the Labour Party. To put it simply not very well organised.

JF. I have researched the constitution of the Co-op Party when I interviewed Peter Taaffe because I was interested in that because the Socialist Party is trying to affiliate on the basis of the Co-op Party, so I looked into the constitution of the Co-op Party. It is exactly the same as the Labour Party apart from one small clause which gives them autonomy on their retail trade and wholesale trade so in other words it was the same.

PK. And of course, with Militant they had quite distinct policies, together with their transitional programme, distinct policies which were anathema to the Labour Party where traditionally policy was established on a year- by- year basis at various conferences. They tried to get things accepted as party policy, not very successfully but they may very well have been if they were allowed to flourish any further; and they weren't just anathema to the Labour Party in an organisational or a constitutional way but the very values and principles on which I understand the Labour Party to be about. These were very, very, different from the type of things that Militant would ultimately be shown to believe in. For example, unless I am very much mistaken, down the line for hardcore members of Militant, they did believe in the potential of a violent revolution. That's not in line with either traditional or current Labour Party thinking. The Labour Party still remains, for better or for worse, a party of the rule book, its constitutional, it doesn't seek to overthrow the existing system in our country by any means whatsoever in order to achieve some kind of utopia. I found Militant and the people in Militant are of a very, very, different persuasion. I have not attended meetings of say their central committee, of course, or whatever and of course but the other critical thing, they believe is, democratic centralism as opposed to democratic socialism. So, there is that big ideological divide between Militant and the Labour Party.

JF. If Peter Taaffe was sat here now countering you, he would say well hold on a second when the Labour Party was formed in the last century it was very much an affiliate party, trade unions affiliated, Communist Party all sorts. Something like sixty affiliates eventually were affiliated and one of those was the ILP the Independent Labour Party which again had a different programme to the main- stream Labour Party and in fact many, many, constituencies of the Labour Party were at the time affiliated to the Communist Party so his argument was that we were in line with the original Labour Party as it was formed and since then it has been distorted.

PK. He may well say that but over a period of fifty years whether consciously or unconsciously, the party as an organisation- its organic- doesn't remain preserved in aspic. In some ways what it was trying to do over time was to coordinate and to declutter itself as an organisation and provide a sense of coherence because going right back to its inception, obviously there were elements that were vastly at odds with each other. In those early days, there were things that its various elements had in common, but it would have been very easy for the Labour Party to atomise if it tried to be a party of all things to all people. It had to be coherent in a political sense and there were purges of ILP members and CP members as you know. The idea

was to maintain the integrity of the Labour Party as most people understood it to be and was it was about. Let's not forget the Peter Taaffe's of this world as I think there were many who come into the Labour Party again under the guise of Momentum. They believe in a broad front kind of approach, broad left approach; but ultimately, wherever they came from, their aim is to dominate. That is not in my understanding compatible with either the history or the overall ideology of the Labour Party. Most of the groups you said Peter Taaffe may have mentioned are pressure groups and there are lots of them, so that you can make a case of chucking some people out from the right and left within the Labour Party. The danger is you become so diluted, when you have all these people within the party that it loses any sense of real intellectual and ideological coherence.

JF. When I interviewed Neil Kinnock, I did very much put him on the spot and said when you made that great speech in Bournemouth, the taxis speech you had the Labour Party in your hands you were telling them things they wanted to hear wasn't that the time to clear up things in the Labour Party, set down an agenda for a democratic socialist party and modernise Clause IV. I said to him because Clause IV was the hook that any Trotskyist revolutionary could hang their coat on, Clause IV, it is very wide ranging, ok some would say that it is very, so wide ranging that anybody could interpret it any way, but it is very specific about the means of production and exchange and so on what do you think about that?

PK. You know as well as I do the history of Clause IV with Sydney and Beatrix Webb writing a paper. You wondered why in God's name it was put into the constitution in the first place. It was just like a sop to some people. Having said that back to 1985 and Neil and what he could and could not get away with. He was still as leader very unsure of his ground with the NEC with the parliamentary Labour Party, and with the wider Labour Party itself; and he also had to consider as all leaders do, the a balancing act they have got to maintain with the electorate, and the way in which leaders or potential leaders can get carved up by the media if they take a step wrong. For Neil, I would have thought coming to the Labour Party leadership from what was seen as a left position, it would have been seen as a step too far in so many people's eyes in the wider party in the parliamentary party. Certainly, the media would have used to belt him over his head in the same way as I suppose as Corbyn is regularly hit over the head because of his support for the Palestinians, repeatedly and wrongly portrayed him as an anti-semite. What you had in short in Neil's case was a man with a lot of baggage to carry. I have watched the machinations in the NEC. What amazed me was how Neil managed to stay sane through all of that because there were people who would use the Militant issue, for example, to attack him because of their own personal ambitions or because of pressure within their union. There was a classic NEC which I attended where I reported back on the deselection of Frank Field and the deselection of Gerry Bermingham and the very different reactions from members on the NEC to that and where they were coming from politically and organisationally. You had an unholy alliance of people who were using the situation against Neil. I was the ostensible punch bag but Neil was the real target. He was trying to hold together this party of very disparate elements with very different pressures on him and that was certainly

the case at the height over the issue of Militant. I mean you get people like Margaret Beckett who eventually became deputy leader, and pro-tem leader for a while. She was one of the people who signed the minority report over Militant in Liverpool; and you think she wasn't just alone in this kind of position? She was surrounded by people with similar views or people who would love to see him done in, simply because of perceived personal or political slights for when he was on the left.

JF. If he would have said, which a lot of sane people would say look Clause IV is never going to be enacted by the Labour Party it is never going to happen, therefore it is irrelevant and a) it needs putting into context b) it was written at the time like you say by the Webbs, who had their agenda about the early Bolshevik influence and so on and therefore he is trying to move on. He is trying to put down that marker, you obviously believe that if he had tried to do that he would have been squashed?

PK. I don't know whether he would, but I do believe is that at the time it's the old saying hindsight is 20/20 vision. It might have been very opportune to have done something at that stage. What he did was produce a paper on Labour values and he tried to come at it from that angle, updating Labour values so people could have some common idea of what bound them together as members of the Labour Party and illustrate how far removed from those values were Militant. Now how far do you go? When Blair did what he did, for example over Clause IV, he did it knowing pretty well that the time was so right in the sense that, when John Smith died, (you have got to go right back to the death of John Smith) the party was absolutely desperate at each level because everybody thought it would be a shoo-in in 1992. It wasn't and then when John Smith died, there was a real feeling that if we don't get it right here if we don't do something, the whole party is going to atomise, and it is going to be a one party Tory state for the rest of my life. Blair knew this - he wasn't entirely stupid. He knew he could just about get away with anything, but the party by Blair's time had shifted that much it was far easier for him than it would have been for Neil. Even knowing what you did at the time and looking back, it was a good opportunity, but it would have been a brave, brave, man to make the move. You remember he was taking the cosh over Scargill and the miners' strike. In fact, he was getting it from all sides.

JF. When I heard that speech it was a very brave thing he did and what I am saying is he missed that moment and that they felt that there was a turning point, a tipping point and his speech was the tipping point. Now I know organisationally if you have to get a majority here you have got to be a majority there. It's all irrelevant if you are going to be turned over but they felt they were people who were ready to be turned over they were ready to change.

PK. I have got to say there were changes that which took place between 1985 and 1994 in terms of the party's organisation and constitution which also contributed towards the creation of an environment that Blair could do what he did but they were not there for Neil in 1985. What I am trying to say but I can't remember the details, is that much would have to be done at Conference composite meetings. You would have Scargill and other bloody-minded people trotting round full of themselves. There were still people voting in a way that you knew what the objective reality was

in terms of policy issues. I just feel that it was one thing to try to take on Militant. If he had tried at that time to take on a battle on two fronts, I just think he would have been clobbered. It wasn't just through the party it was through the trade unions as well.

JF. What I am interested in is to go back to your first role as clearing up the Liverpool Labour Party. I intended to interview Tony Mulhearn, but unfortunately he was very, very ill and so the possibilities of interviewing him are very slim. When you were clearing up Tony Mulhearn was president/chairman of the DLP it came over to me with all the disciplinary papers that I have read about it he was in a sense creating a vanguard structure within a democratic socialist party and the DLP was very much a vanguard organisation.

PK. I do not doubt that Mulhearn in his own way is quite sincere in his beliefs and has maintained those all the way through and he writes letters occasionally on behalf on the Merseyside Pensioners Association so even if he is very ill, he still sees himself as campaigning. When you read what he writes, you say that's the Tony Mulhearn of old. I don't know how you define a vanguardist socialist organisation?

JF. I give you an example I have read a lot about the status of the Liverpool Trades Council and how power shifted from the Trades Council over to the DLP and how Militant through its nomination rights, somebody who was unemployed suddenly became employed with a union card and a shop steward card and a delegacy to the DLP. In other words, they had stacked the DLP with their supporters a common policy and were pushing forward with the that vanguard leadership role.

PK. It was a national decision to split the trades council and DLP and of course it split in Liverpool like everywhere else. Former joint secretary Simon Fraser stuck with the Trades Council because there were many people in the broader Labour movement who still had the fervent belief, that the way forward was through the trade unions not through the Labour Party so you get somebody like Frank Marsden who was a local MP but became a trade union official general secretary I think, because he saw the future through the unions and that was fair enough. But once you had separated them out, Militant just went with the flow from the early days of Militant in places like Walton. You need to speak to Laura Kirton or Gertie Dean, unfortunately long since dead, to understand the RSL thinking. They were Trotskyites between the wars as was Jimmy Dean and Billy Hunter. They were putting their all into the trade union movement.

JF. Workers Revolutionary Party

PK. Billy was from the west country - at least, he had a west country accent he would be ranting and raving, and I was a young man. I will be hones t- it was over my head, the nuances between the different sects; and the Labour Party was initially just a repository for worthy burgers; the real action was in the Trades Council. There were aldermen and all this nonsense, and they were there for life so whatever Mulhearn was trying to achieve later on I think he was trying to make up for lost time because after all that effort it was rather late in the day before they began to spread their wings and have an effect in the DLP. Because if you cast your mind back the

real stronghold, and it had been for a long time was the Walton constituency. In other constituencies, there was no Militant or Trotskyist presence of note, so it took time to build it up. Obviously, it not only took time there but as you rightly point out, there were people in the trade unions who had got their people nominated delegates. That took time and then it was in the early 80s in a relatively short period they dominated the scene. They were never numerically dominant but there where a load of people who were time servers. It is very much the Labour way in Liverpool where you have a handful of people dominating a so, called democratic party.

JF. Don't you think Peter that the vanguard position then moved into areas where people hadn't made their mind up about things and in the absence of ideas, they were cutting through.

PK. Their transitional programme was designed and their slogans to appeal to rather simple- minded people who were being offered nothing other than tribalism really, we are your tribe vote for us. This is what your family had always done - we are working class, will you vote for us blah, blah. But there was nothing there; it was empty. It was a shell, and they filled that vacuum. I appreciate that and the way they got themselves organised. They saw how to effect, the domination as a means to another end because what they were doing in the meantime was to raise money and new members for the RSL from within the Labour Party, so it was useful in that sense. That was always their guiding principle it seems to me it wasn't about turning Labour into a vanguardist organisation. As Lenin put, supporting Labour as the rope supports the hanging man.

JF. Didn't you think that by using the DLP and their resolutions and so on they were intimidating the Labour group? In other words, there were two hundred delegates or whatever passing resolutions quite aggressively shouting down opposition and that it would be a brave councillor who would go against those resolutions.

PK. There is truth in that in terms of the intimidatory effect of the way in which they operated. I would accept that unequivocally but that doesn't excuse the people who were intimidated you either have convictions and you have the courage of your convictions or you don't but so many didn't.

JF. You felt they were quite weak?

PK. A lot of them were weak yes without a doubt, without a doubt. It hasn't changed a great deal today. I mean you get somebody like Joe Anderson as the elected mayor he is not a councillor. He would shout and bawl at people. The people as a cross section of the council as it stands today, I would say they were weak, as historically it has been the case on Liverpool Council. I am not saying that's the sole criterion for such a group but it's having the ability and the determination and the intelligence to force through a particular line and Militant would do it at that time in all variety of ways. Yes, they would intimidate but they would bribe, and the bribe would take the form as jobs, not just jobs, but you would get a preferred job. You could be a shop steward on permanent union duties, so you get basically a sinecure. That to me is corrupt, its corrupt political practice. It happens not just on the left but on the right as well.

JF. Just to move on a bit I am trying to work out how their vanguard structure broke down over the issue of the redundancy notices where famous story of taxis around the city. Now I spoke to Peter Taaffe about this, and I said your vanguard structure broke down didn't it? Who on earth other than a tight group of people who were out of touch would ever make that decision, because it was bound to cause whatever level of decision making that you went down to, they would have said come on this is way, way, out of line. And he said it was a big mistake I argued against it from day one, Tony Mulhearn argued against it from day one. And I said hold on a second I didn't see that. I was very close with the action in fact I was down to the high court with it. I didn't see that I didn't pick that up at all so who made that decision?

PK. If it wasn't the local bosses of Militant or senior members Peter Taaffe and Tony Mulhearn on the central committee, if they weren't making the decisions who was making the decisions Ted Grant? Ted Grant was the ideologue.

JF. Ted Grant would not have been involved with that nitty gritty.

PK. That's what I am saying he was the ideologue he was like Michael Suslov, the old communist party in the USSR. His job was to come up with the ideas within the framework. Who made that decision? Was it a sudden rush of blood to the head?

JF. I asked Peter Taaffe that. I said who made the decision, Peter? He said I am not going round stabbing people in the back at this stage, and I felt to myself if it was at that time, if it was such an important thing like that, isn't it time it was cleared up but anyway he wouldn't talk about it. I think it was partly due to the fact that Tony Byrne had just died, and I don't think he wanted to get into that.

PK. Tony Byrne to my knowledge again was not a member of Militant but Peter Taaffe might say different.

JF. I don't think he was.

PK. Tony Byrne, before he joined the Labour Party when he was involved with housing and he spoke to Ken Stewart who was chair of housing before he went into the European Parliament and wanted to know whether he would be better off joining the Labour Party or the Liberal Party if he was to have an effect on housing policy, so there you go.

JF. What year was that?

PK. It's going to be in the 70s. So, he goes into the Labour Party. He used to pick up his nephews from school when I picked up one of my sons. Tony Byrne and his influence over the group was one of the strangest things I ever saw because the whole thing, the surcharge, it was the notional loss of £106,000 because he set the rate a day late and that was it. He cocked that up a wee bit, so the idea that he was some kind of great tactician or indeed a strategist doesn't wash with me. What he was, what I saw with Tony Byrne was arrogance, a man who saw the weakness of so many around him and he just bulldozed through them.

JF. At the time it was one incident which showed to me his power over the Labour Group because I got the impression that Tony Byrne, he really had done his

homework on the maths of the City Council budget and there was nobody in the Labour Group who would contradict him in any shape or form. In other words, if he said something about the budget that was it that was the truth of the matter. It came to a head when he and Derek and a few others met the EC of the JSSC, and I said to him look Tony we have a problem with some of our members who are maths graduates. They can do the sums as you can do them, and I've worked out that if you get us on strike for three weeks that will solve the budget problem. It won't solve our problem we will have lost three weeks, pay and he said where did you get that from? In other words, he thought I had brought in some great consultant to come in and analyse the books, but the arithmetic was easy enough and none of the Labour Group was aware of it.

PK. That goes back to the composition of the Labour Group and the abilities of them. It was woeful, it was absolutely woeful. I couldn't believe how bad it was. , even today some of them are woeful but just feel intimidated by anybody who shouts their mouth off. Most people don't want to be bullied and hectored, so that combination of their reluctance to undergo confrontation if you like with a, in many cases a complete absence of any nous whatsoever, was fatal

JF. Or again a sign of weakness?

PK. You show weakness in the eyes of a bully by backing down. These are human factors which played their part with Byrne. I remember when Larry Whitty came up to a meeting and he was chair of the Labour Group and he just stood in front of him and took the meeting over, Byrne took the meeting over.

JF. The other thing I am interested in is I interviewed Dave Robertson because he attended all the DLP meetings, a regular attender, and he used to be shouted down as the delegate from 'muesli hill' a pun on Mossley Hill and what he said about the present situation with Momentum and of course he has a lot of people from Momentum.

PK. And his wife is a councillor.

JF. Yes, that's right. He was talking about Corbyn and he said well the problem is that he is not so much a leader as a leader of a franchise and that he is not leading the party he is just saying to various groups within the party on the left, and are jogging along in a left wing way, and you can carry on doing what you want as long as we are all in roughly the same caravan, and that he is not leading.

PK. Remember the last person who expected to be leader was Corbyn and it is interesting to know the sequence of events in 2007 when Blair stood down. McDonnell was trying to get a nomination to be leader, but he couldn't get enough MPs behind him and rang me up. They had a very small group in the Campaign group in parliament.

JF. Can I just take you back a bit Peter because I would like to get this, on tape, when Mcdonnell rang you up what kind of pitch did he make to you?

PK. I can't recall but it was the usual stuff. Anyway in 2010 Diane Abbott ran. I was out then in that small Campaign group; and then when Ed Milliband stood, it was

Corbyn. What they said was that "I've stood now it's your turn". It was like tokenism somebody to run, somebody from the Campaign group - it was only a handful of people - and if anybody would have said to me first of all he would have got a nomination, I would have laughed. He only got it because people like Frank Field and Margaret Beckett gave him the nomination, but that's history. Given her signature on the minority report says a lot about her political judgement.

JF. She regretted it since

PK. She regrets everything since. I have heard that from her many times but so to me you have a party that it is leaderless in the sense that he is the elected leader. I recognise that he has got the votes but there seemed to be a sublime ignorance of what is needed if you are going to win an election and rally everybody in one direction, and to give the party and the country a sense of direction, and then go into government and put into effect at least some of the things you aspire to. I mean there is a very rude awakening coming for us but having said that, the Tories are in an even worse boat because there is a huge schism. It's almost as if the whole political world is changing and you have got to redefine what you believe in and they - the current leadership rumps of Labour and the Tories are stuck in a time warp. It goes back to the post imperial phase. They have never got their heads round the fact that they are no longer a world power and all that goes with it. The time warp, which, it takes us back to Jeremy, is stuck in a time frame in the 70s to my mind.

JF. I have been speaking to people who have left the Labour Party and couldn't stand it anymore, for various reasons, and I spoke to this woman who had been in the Labour Party for about 30 years outside of Liverpool. I won't name her because I have no permission to do that. But she said the reason I left, every year I did the leaflet distribution, and she went along to a party meeting and she was saying what people were saying on the doorstep. But of course, it was out of step with what Momentum was pushing for and a group of people got up one at a time, saying you are in the wrong party, its no good you putting these views forward, and you are now out of the party because of your views and then she left.

PK. I am not very surprised by that. You got that in Liverpool during Militant. You could get that in a branch meeting being told you don't belong in the Labour Party unless you subscribe to the Militant line. Over the Iraq war where there were people who said I should consider whether I belong in the Labour Party over opposing the Iraq war and all this stuff. We are now in a phase where there is a sort of huge maelstrom where with regard to the big issues, there is often no great dividing line on some of the current issues where you can say that is Tory and that is Labour. There are the ongoing issues about health, education and welfare. But if I was asked about the major issues facing this country today - Brexit and environmental issues, climate change - you can get people in either party that have far more in common with each other than people in their own party. That is just a fact.

JF. One last question Peter which I would be very interested to hear your views on. We know that the Labour Party is in flux, it's obvious, do you see significant members of the PLP leaving?

PK. I don't see there is any difference over the days of the gang of 4, the SDP. I think that there are an awful lot are chancers in the PLP (there always have been) and they will wait and see which way the wind blows. If they think their chances lie - and by chancers, I mean political career type chancers. If they lie with the Independent Party say, they would go.

JF. Let's take an example, the likes of Hilary Benn, if he left would that make a mark on the Labour Party?

PK. I don't know because I don't know what people think of in the party of Hilary Benn. Hilary Benn, I associate with the previous generation of MPs were just sort of working in the usual approved occupations in London waiting for the chance a safe provincial seat to come up and then going into parliament. What used to be seen in pejorative terms as a careerist. I am not saying he is an out and out careerist I am sure he took his lead from his father, but they have a very different take on parliament from the notion of people who go into parliament trying to do an honest job on behalf of the Labour Party and their constituents. There were so many of them but Hilary Benn, I don't know why you picked Hilary Benn as an example. Is it because of the name for example?

JF. Because of the things he has said in parliament.

PK. He is the only person who can answer that so I really would not know. It is very hard to go through the ranks of the party and I probably watch more what goes on in the chamber from when I was down there.

JF. Because of the Parliament Channel?

PK. And time on your hands. I'm very aware of danger you fall into. It was better before. The old- mans, disease, if you like. It has changed its nature of the place and its composition, how it does business. Everything about it is so very, very, different over the last nine years. It has changed incredibly, and I know talking to people who are still down there the difference in it is quite remarkable. Now whether that's for good or bad, time will tell. The quality of debate is atrocious. It is very low - they are reading out a question they are reading it from an i phone or something. Some people would say that's modernisation, I think its diluting the quality.

JF. And the fluidity of the debate?

PK. The fluidity of the debate depends on how well informed they are, and how capable they are, and picking up on things as they occur in the real world. It just seems to be very, very, poor. So, when it comes to make some big decision on whether you stay in or out of the EU, I don't know. When I saw those people, who left to form the independent group, I mean there is one, Joan Ryan who was a whip, one of those who said to me "Don't you think you should leave the Labour Party for voting against the war?" What was she talking about? I mean, I her find her totally vacuous to put it mildly. Anne Coffey, a former social worker, saying about the killers of James Bulger, that they should have been strung up! At best a knee jerk reaction what kind of person is that we have in parliament? Chuka Umunna, his grandfather was a high court judge, an eminent judge and famed within the legal establishment,

so Chuka is not quite the regular guy from the ghetto. He had a woman hanging on his arm when he was going for the leadership until people discovered he was gay so he pulled out quick rather than be shown up as a hypocrite. As I say, I sound like a typical whinging old man old man - “it was better in my day.”

JF. Thanks very much it was a very good interview.

Appendix 20

Interview with Lord Kinnock at the House of Lords on

19th March 2019 at 2pm

Neil Kinnock was the Leader of the Labour party from 1983 to 1992

He later became a European Commissioner from 1994 to 2004

In this transcript Lord Kinnock will be referred to as **LK** and James Ferguson as **JF**

JF. I've obviously read a lot about you. You are one of the few, if the only leader that I think was very, very interested in the boundaries of the Labour Party and the Social Democratic Party so that in one of your favourite phrases you said the Labour Party was not a skittles club, a sentiment which I like. However politically analysing it I mean Clause IV in the Labour Party is a hook that any Trotskyist revolutionary could hang his coat on.

LK. Yes.

JF. Why didn't you modernise it?

LK. Because it would have been an unnecessary battle on another front. I worked on the big policy changes, the constitutional changes, the improvements in the finances, the changes in personnel. To open up another front, would be a stretch too far. Had I been elected in 1992 and stayed on, then the constitution would have been changed in order to do two things, firstly to clarify Clause IV part IV, and, I will go into what I mean in that in a moment and, secondly to include the term democratic socialist in the Labour Party's constitution because it had never, been there before. Now just as an add on to that, when Tony started mooting the idea of changing Clause IV ….

JF. Tony Blair?

LK. Yes, before he did that - in the November to January of 1993/4 - I was doing a two- part series for BBC2 on the future of socialism and one of the proposals I put forward was changing Clause IV. About the same time Jack Straw and the Blackburn Labour Party had set up their own working party and re-drafted Clause IV. So, what Tony produced as the new Clause IV, is actually, in substantial part, an amalgam of what Jack had written and what I wrote, saying what we were and what we stood for. I can't claim to have drafted the new Clause IV, but my vocabulary is in there and so is Jack's. It's actually a much clearer, and indeed more specific, definition of what we stand for than anything that went before. One of the things that always bothered me about Clause IV part IV, which is why I never referred to it, was its vagueness. The more frequently my opponents from Heffer on quoted it, the

more I had to say to them “I tell you what, that was deliberately vague in 1918 and it’s just as unclear now”. Think about the circumstances in which it was written in 1918. Who wrote it in 1918? The Webb’s, Sydney Webb specifically He was very cautious about being too precise about what could be called the Marxist wing of thought in the infant Labour Movement and he was equally cautious about the dangers of being too precise about defining *against* the Marxist strain of thought. So, we ended up with this immensely vague vocabulary “to secure for the workers by hand or brain the full fruits of their labour by the best attainable means of administration”. It was so vague it could cover anything. But by the use of evocative terminology “workers by hand and brain, “and “full fruits” Sydney Webb managed to get away with the second part of that paragraph which was so vague as to lack any form of definition. Terms like “production, distribution and exchange” were common terminology then in academic and economic discussions and circles. So, it really is a product of its time intended *not* to commit firmly to things but to give a very general indication of what was being proposed. In another part of clause IV as it existed, the NEC was there “to give effect to the decisions from time to time endorsed by the National party conference” - another bit of calculated imprecision. The idea that there was something called “conference sovereignty” was always complete bloody nonsense. The reason that I got so involved in really understanding what Clause IV said and what it didn’t say dated right back to the early 1960s when I was a kid having trouble with the Labour Party establishment in Cardiff over my commitment to the Committee of One Hundred and the quarrels we had over disarmament. I had to be able to demonstrate to the then Secretary of the Party in Wales, Cliff Protheroe, the fact that if the party Conference had passed resolutions it wasn’t binding on me or even on Hugh Gaitskell. All anybody was required to do was to take account of the resolutions from time to time endorsed by the party conference. The party secretary, because he was sympathetic to me as an individual - he thought there was “a lot of work left in this boy” - defended me in front of the executive when there was talk of chucking me out of the party at the age of 18.

JF. Do a lot of people know that?

LK. I don’t suppose so. But they were going to do it to quite a lot of us in the disarmament campaign. It was just before I went to University, the summer before I was 19. I was about to come with others before the Executive, so I had to know exactly what the specifications of Clause lV were. That’s how I really got involved in it. That’s a side story about Labour, Kinnock and Clause lV. I’d always thought it was in need of change, which is why I advocated it in the TV programme. I did it to clarify and be more definitive about what we actually believe instead of this spray-on, open to interpretation, quite meaningless set of words in terms of political purpose. As the old Clause lV stood, it was capable of misrepresentation by the enemy and exaggeration by our friends. That’s, not a good basis for a Constitution.

JF. Talking about timing and, yes, I understand that you have to pick your fights butafter the 1985 conference in Bournemouth when you made your speech of great historical importance, you had the Labour Party in your hands didn’t you?

LK. No, I didn't. I had a tiny majority on the NEC. And without a dependable majority there, a Leader of change is very confined.

JF. Oh, on the NEC, but, in terms of the delegates of conference, and in terms of the I would say the rank- and- file membership, wouldn't they see it as a good time to re-assess it?

LK. No because the rank and file generally, and even the delegates in conference, have got no effective power unless there are two conditions present: one, the unions must agree to them and, secondly, there has to be a lead from the leadership. It is crucial that individual citizens are active members of the Labour Party. There is no question about that as a matter of representative democracy. It is also crucial that the Labour leadership takes full account of what they know the broad sentiment to be. That doesn't turn the rank and file of the Labour Party into a mighty determining force, but it does tell the Leadership what will and what won't be endorsed by the Conference. It could happen now because of the subsequent changes in the rules and the voting makeup of Conference. But, as Corbyn is demonstrating, it isn't happening now because, in the end, leadership does involve making decisions and then defending those decisions - and he's been dodging it. The presumption on the left has been that there is an irresistible presence of the massed rank and file and on the right the presumption has been that there is irresistible privilege of power lodged in the leader. They are both wrong, both absolutely bloody wrong. Unless you get a conjunction of conditions then nobody is *dominantly* in charge and that includes the rank and file *and* the Leader.

JF. I did a very long interview with Peter Taaffe who by the way was very congenial.

LK. He is a pleasant man.

JF. He was quite prepared to give his time even though he was, I think fairly dubious about what the outcome of the thesis would be.

LK. Yes.

JF. But he did say something that I think you should look at. He said look Militant's got its members, its organisation, but so have other organisations. Tribune, which you were a member of at one time, the Fabians, the Co-op Party more importantly he said the St Ermins Group, which I've done a lot of work on, which was incredibly secretive, it never displayed its membership, never displayed its finances, it never said what its influence was, and it met secretly. So, didn't he have a point that the problem with Militant is that the membership was too big and too organised but theoretically no different from other groups.

LK. Both in general political terms, but more importantly and specifically in terms of the Labour Party constitution, none of those bodies have "their own policy, philosophy and programme" in the way that Militant did. The Fabian society - one of the founding societies of the Labour Party - did have a couple of employees and premises in Dartmouth St, have an Executive Committee (mainly to worry about funds!), and produced its own periodicals and pamphlets. But nobody could argue it

had its own policy, philosophy and programme or that it was a secretive organisation.

Certainly, nobody could argue that the St Ermin's group had its own policy, programme and philosophy. They were a bunch of right of centre Labour party people in the trade unions who got together in order to achieve organisational and political objectives in the Labour Party, mainly by co-ordinating Conference votes. Everybody knew of their existence, they never had a membership, they certainly never had a network organisation to sell newspapers. So, on all of the grounds in terms of the offence of which we accused Militant those other organisations were not comparable. This is all, of course, before the offence of "conduct bringing the party into disrepute" existed. I changed the constitution in order to do that for the avoidance of doubt and in order to safeguard people's rights of natural justice. In any case, Taaffe is pleading his innocence by giving proof of his guilt – that Militant was an organisation, even though they always claimed that it wasn't. That's no defence.

JF. But is he is claiming that?

LK. But he is admitting his offence. He's saying yes we did have an organisation we had a network of sellers, we had our own finances, we had our own NEC, all of the instruments and existence of an organisation, our own programme, our own philosophy. That was, and is, against the constitution of the Labour Party.

JF. He said that the Labour Party when it was formed or constitutionally formed in 1918.

LK. 1918 yes.

JF. Really everybody accepted it was an affiliated body, other organisations were affiliated like the Co-op Party.

LK. Including the ILP at the time.

JF. Including the ILP, yes, they were affiliates. So why couldn't the Labour Party just accept Militant Tendency like that?

LK. Because the way in which it conducted itself, under the terms of its own policy, programme and philosophy, was simply not consistent with the constitution of the Labour Party. Straight forward as that. At no time did I or anybody else say 'hey in the Labour Party you can't have an organisation'. Specifically, in order to clarify that issue, Michael made the proposal for the establishment of the register of affiliated organisations and after that was established Militant was in any case, not registered and should have ceased operation in the Labour Party. I would have made the argument even before then that Militant was transgressing against the constitution. But Labour is a live and let live Party. It's a "broad church" was the phrase widely employed. Michael then introduced, on the proposal of the National organiser David Hughes, that we have a register of affiliated organisations, and Militant of course, together with one or two others, was excluded from that register. In those terms, therefore, it wasn't a constitutionally acceptable organisation. I would make the argument, politically and organisationally, that even before the register that Taaffe's

defence doesn't hold up. After the register was established there is absolutely nothing to support Taaffe. This has got to be put in context: the reason that only very occasionally right throughout the history of the Labour Party have there been battles over which organisation or league or federation was acceptable, and which wasn't, was simply because of the reality of a live and let live party. There were attacks, for instance on Tribune in the 1950s when Michael disarmed everyone by calling the Tribune group an "open conspiracy". Everyone said yes, had a laugh and moved on. Yes, it had a paper, yes there were a few people in St John's St who were employed - Dick Clements and two others on a part-time basis that would have been about it. It never had a paid network of sales, persons or regional co-ordinators, it never had a NEC or a politburo or anything like that. So, the idea that there is an equivalence between the Militant newspaper and the Tribune weekly magazine is a complete nonsense.

JF. I'm very interested at the moment in the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn. I've been interviewing Professor Dave Robertson from John Moores University. He's very active in the Labour Party in Liverpool. He does a lot of political work. I think he did some advisory work for the cabinet under Blair. He's had lots of experience of Momentum because they have moved into his constituency big time. The experience he's had so far, he feels that Jeremy Corbyn's leadership is not so much of a leadership as of a franchise.

LK. Yes, it's more of a followship.

JF. Yes, he's put a stamp on various things and as long as they are chugging along in a left- wing way, he's ok about it.

LK. I think that is very close to the reality - and I think it is a very good way of identifying the nature of the leadership and the character of the party now. There are places where Jeremy's writ simply doesn't run so he hasn't got a franchise there, of course. But his franchise is generally wide so far. It suits him and his retainers because they have power – they "own the brand" - and it suits followers because they've got identity without much responsibility or accountability. I need to examine it closely but what is the way in which volunteer army can operate under a nominal general? The old guard, who have returned to the Labour Party with the bag of tricks they learned in the 50s and 60s have got older, but politically no wiser, except that they are more experienced and therefore they avoid the errors of organisation which permit them to be clearly identified as a "party within a party". They have learned that through bitter experience. They have mobilised lots of enthusiastic, very decent, and highly motivated younger people who gave them the numbers. Those newcomers are only very gradually rumbling to the reality that they are in a political party and, whatever else it does, a political party has got to campaign, work its socks off, and be led with a basically agreed set of values and ideas by someone - for want of a better word , a personality that can articulate the purposes and ambitions of the party in ways that are relevant to them, the party members *and* appealing to the general electorate. Very gradually, because there isn't much in the way of political education, they are gathering the idea that, however decent a guy, however well-intended Jeremy Corbyn is, he can't lead - he just can't do the job. I may be being personal about Corbyn, but it's simply the reality that, left to his own devices, he can't perform the functions. Of course, what he's got is a group of people, some of

whom he's chosen, others of whom seem to be self-selecting, that keep him buttressed. Some of them would like to move him in a particular "radical" direction, but the political realities of public opinion are too strong for him to be able to shove through that particular stockade. That's where they are stuck. This is now a frozen party. It's got 500,000 members, many of whom joined because they shared the list of grievances and complaints that Jeremy articulated, many of them absolutely, justified, totally justified. But these people are also waking up to the fact that he isn't very good as a lead because he is repetitive and ineffectual and repeatedly complaining and protesting just isn't enough to win the power to achieve vital change.

JF. Don't you think with Momentum, I get the impression by reading about it looking at the situation, that their first priority is not to return a Labour Government, but to secure the Labour Party for their programme and to take over the Labour Party.

LK. I agree – and I say that in terms I've used very often in many places: The Labour Party has always had within it, people who want power IN Labour and people who want power FOR Labour. In some cases, they are the same people. But you can see throughout the history of the Labour Party those two distinct strains and they are often in conflict. What you describe is that reality. Some in Momentum, certainly, may be influential people in Momentum, place much more value on securing power in Labour than power for Labour. There is a book coming out next month by a man called David Kogan who wrote a book about Benn back in the 1970s.

JF. One of the Kogan brothers?

LK. Yes, he has a brother' but he wrote the Bennism book with his uncle. Uniquely, and for accidental reasons, he's known Jon Lansman, and he's also known David Triesman because of university. David is Labour but without very strong ideological commitments, he's just a very straight forward Labour bloke. He's made a lot of money in communications (I think) in the intervening thirty or forty years. Now, with this fascinating phenomenon of Corbynism and his close knowledge of Jon Lansman and others, he's traced back the origins of those elements who are now predominant in the Labour Party. This tale will be familiar to you as it was to me. You will know the name Vladimir Derer and Vera Derer. Back in the 1970s, with great assiduousness, and with the kind of duplicating machine that covered people in ink.

JF. Gestetners**.**

LK. Yes, that's right…They built organisationally, having decided the secret was in numbers in the right places and if they could secure enough support in constituency parties for changes in the Labour Party constitution that would result in the rank-and- file election of the leader and mandatory re-selection. They realised that it was achievable through conference because the clamour for such change from constituencies would be so strong and so loud that some of the unions would be bound to agree with them. They established the CLPD. Now I as an MP, I was young, but I wasn't innocent, but I thought "Labour campaign for democracy, what? Campaign for Labour Party democracy?". I'm in favour of that.

JF. Who could argue with it?

LK. Exactly, so I signed up with Frank Allaun, and went to a few of the meetings. Then I realised after about a year or 15 months their idea of Labour Party democracy wasn't the same as mine. I shared some of the objectives. I always thought the party electing the leader was a good idea and that one member one vote was a good idea, even when the left was very rooted against it! But what David has done is trace back the whole idea of momentum democracy as the instrument for changing the direction of the Labour Party and ultimately the leadership of the Labour Party, David Kogan traces it back Vladimir Derer and his wife and the influence they had on the young Jon Lansman. I think there is a hell of a lot in that because Lansman is an articulate bloke, speaks on a candid basis to Kogan, to his credit, and although quite naturally trying to tweak some little bits of history - that's only human - follows the story through. You are going to find it a very interesting book because it covers a lot of the trail you have covered.

JF. Part of that is Jon Lansman. A few months ago, he went to see Peter Taaffe in his office and Taaffe said we would like your help Jon Lansman, to affiliate to the Labour Party the Socialist party. Jon Lansman said I don't see a reason why not but you couldn't bring your paper with you, couldn't bring your organisation, you would have to affiliate individually we would help you do that etc and then Peter Taaffe said full marks for honesty, but they would never drop their organisation in a million years. He said we are going to apply for the affiliation on the basis of the Co-op Party and that's what we are going to do. Later I researched the constitution of the Co-op Party, the constitution of the Co-op Party is no different to the constitution of the Labour Party except for one small clause which identified their autonomy with their retail and wholesale trade. So, in other words he's putting forward this plan to affiliate like the Co-op Party on that basis.

LK. There is no possibility that he would honestly want to fit into a self-defined democratic socialist party with a capital D and capital S because, as an ideologue as somebody who is quite proud of the fact that he is a doctrinaire "democratic centralist", he would have monumental objections to the whole concept of democratic socialism.

JF. He said he would accept the discipline of the Labour Party.

LK. Bullshit. It's not about discipline, it's all to do with beliefs and values.

JF. What he said was because I put him on the spot if you ever did affiliate you would have to accept the NEC as the rule making body and if you put forward an MP what would happen if the NEC would not adopt them. He said we would have to accept that but at local level we would have to do our own thing the issues are local, he cited the London mayor's campaign as being unacceptable etc.

LK. This is the bloody thing. Ideologues think that the absence of a very specific ideology in a main- stream party is a weakness. It isn't. The Labour Party is non-ideological and it has been since 1918. That's why the original Clause IV appears like it did. In that age, it could be accepted as a generalised statement of purpose by people with differing convictions who were nevertheless prepared to work together

for broadly shared objectives. After decades of frequent misrepresentation by all enemies and some friends, it needed to be changed to provide greater clarity, not for reasons of dogma. That's not just necessary here in Britain: The reason why the Bad Godsberg constitution was drawn up by the SPD was not, as people often report to "renounce" the Marxism of the 1880s when the original was drafted, it was to make it clear that Social Democrats of the 1950s were distinguished and different from the GDR and communism. So, they adopted the Bad Godsberg constitution not in order to renounce but to define - and they defined themselves as a party that said the market system is acceptable for an economy but not for society.

JF. Don't you think the Labour Party should have done the same?

LK. No. Only right- wing nutters ever called Labour "communist". I think a sensible body of ideas can make a change possible feasible in a political sense. The changes that are going to have to be made in some other generation after Corbynism has reached its high tide and receded are going to have to be more orderly. But, who knows, by then we might have a written constitution in the UK, so all things are possible.

JF. Just for a final question Neil, thanks for your time. This is looking back with hindsight 20/20 vision and a clear blue sky. I am not being critical at all when Peter Taaffe decided the Labour Party was finished in terms of Militant involvement and they dipped their toe in the water with the Walton bye-election remember when Eric Heffer was very ill, and he resigned and subsequently died. They were within a whisker of getting the nomination but just about failed when Peter Kilfoyle got it and then decided to take that candidate and run her as Real Labour candidate so at that time Peter Taaffe was steering Militant away from the Labour Party. There are other people like Ted Grant who said that you're making a mistake, but Taaffe did it anyway and formed the Socialist party but only 2,000 members joined the Socialist Party. He actually left 6,000 behind in the Labour Party. When you were leader were you aware of those members or were you relieved that Militant had gone?

LK. What we did do was to say the rights of natural justice must be sustained in all considerations by the National Constitutional Committee which we established. There had to be evidence that an individual, and only an individual, was transgressing against the constitution. If it could be proved with evidence that an individual was effectively a member of an unregistered organisation, that was enough to exclude them. It was never a witch-hunt, and never a purge to get rid of the "officer class" or treat previously selling the paper as justification, by itself, for expulsion. I didn't give a dam if there were 500 went or 2,000 went or 8,000 stayed or whatever It didn't bother me because by then we had an effective system of providing the Labour Party and its members with a means of dealing with people who were transgressing against the constitution. I could only take that legalistic approach because it was the only one to take in terms of justice. In the changes we made to the constitution in establishing the National Constitutional Committee we could ensure that we had a rigorous application of the rules of natural justice, a separation of investigation and judgement, and an absolute dependence on evidence. I don't think any of the decisions of the NCC have ever been challenged

or taken to court whereas previously of course when we had a much less adequate definition and there was no offence of “bringing the party into disrepute” reference in the constitution there were several court hearings. A very smart solicitor, that Militant had - she is still around, Louise Christian - never won against us because, as she must have known as a good lawyer, their claims could not stand up in a court of law. That, nevertheless, did not stop her trying. We would have been subject to a hell of lot more challenges - which were very expensive by the way - if we hadn’t altered the constitution to give us a generalised requirement that you must not bring the party into disrepute and also, crucially, a system of seeking and accumulating evidence against an individual which would enable a complaint against them to be upheld. Not every complaint was upheld, by the way. The NCC did investigate complaints and, apart from making expulsions, either suspended people for a limited period or dismissed the case. They “convicted” several more for the simple reason that the people before them were guilty. But it did mean that we had a dependable system of justice. That’s the basis of which were judging them - not how many thousands we got rid of.

JF. Just a supplementary here. When you had the Inquiry into the Liverpool DLP, I have got the transcript. You really had a split when you had Eric Heffer and Tony Benn arguing for the case.

LK. They did not argue their case. They simply argued that we were wrong.

JF. They did ask a few leading questions.

LK. They didn’t give evidence in their defence.

JF. No, but when you closed the doors, they would argue for them.

LK. Oh yes. Always speaking from memory, but I am sure I would remember if it was otherwise, the only defence they put up was “Labour is a broad church we should be able to accommodate these people. They have been members of the Labour Party for 15 years 12 years 10 years” or “they are only youngsters”. That was the only defence there was. Never that they “weren’t at the meeting, their names shouldn’t be on that register of Militant members”, and they never made the argument that Militant was not an organisation. Oh yes, they did they did make an argument I had a stand up with Tony.

JF. Tony Mulhearn?

LK. No Tony Benn, I mean Mulhearn’s evidence was very unassertive. I mean he complained about a stacked deck and all the rest of it. He took it like a man whereas Desser.

JF. Degsy.

LK. He dodged. He said he was ill then he had a meeting and then he was ill again, and he didn’t bloody turn up so we had to pass a resolution that if he didn’t turn up again, he would be tried in absentia. He was notified of that and he didn’t turn up so bingo.

JF. Didn't you feel that during that hearing Eric Heffer by being a member of Walton constituency which was a rock-solid Militant stronghold, that regardless of the evidence he wouldn't have voted for expulsion?

LK. No because of Eric's associations. Eric was an ex-member of the CP he took a different view…

JF. He was expelled from the CP...

LK…of organisation and discipline. OK, he rebelled against it in the CP which is fine. He thought that because he'd been in the CP, and I guess read some of the books, he had an ideological mastery. It is always a bloody mistake. I discovered that a long time ago when I was a kid from guys who fought in the Spanish Civil War Their mastery of ideology is always better than ours! There was a guy who was a captain in the International Brigade, Morien Morgan from Aberdare. He was a teacher and I knew him very well as a student in one of my WEA classes. He said to me "don't go running in circles with ideology: one of the things I brought back from Spain and why I left the CP was that it's like arguing with priests. They will always find a passage from the bible which will exclude you from heaven. Ideology is like that, read it by all means, enjoy it, but for Christ's sake never depend on it". That was Captain Morgan, great guy. I always took that lesson with me. Unfortunately, Eric had never met Morien Morgan, which is a shame because he would have been convinced by him. Eric would perversely, but I understand why, on libertarian grounds, argue against anybody's expulsion. That is why I had to say to him and others on more than one occasion "Labour is a broad church but even the broadest churches have roofs and walls, and we have too.".

JF. One of the things I find very interesting was when Jack Straw discovered a Militant Tendency guy in his constituency who resigned and gave him all the minutes.

LK. That's what happened in the Glasgow branch they got the national minutes of the Swedish Militant Tendency. I gave them all to the Swedish party.

JF. In the minutes I found absolutely fascinating you talk about discipline you should have sent them to Eric. In the minutes they found some comrade who had made some comments which they found quite negative and then so a future meeting there was a move to expel him, no talk about organisational meetings.

JF. I don't think the following – while true – is very relevant…I was rambling on down memory lane! I therefore haven't checked or changed it.

LK. The reason I quote Glasgow was on a Sunday night a very Catholic working-class Labour MP was sitting at home with his Mrs watching the telly at home. Knock at the door and you never greet your constituent at 9pm on a Sunday night regardless of your dedication. There were these two youngsters at the door, and he recognised them, especially the man to be a bloody nuisance from his GC so he said what do you want, and he said I would like to talk I'd like your help with a problem. Well listen come to the office in the morning but we are desperate so his wife took pity on him and said come in and I will make a cup of tea she makes the tea. I'm in Militant both of us are I lost my job the week before last I am still being told I have

got to pay my tithe and I just can't afford it. The MP had the wit to say you are a bloody nuisance but he said I am the secretary, he told him to come into the office in the morning and bring everything you have to show and by that time I will have time to think about it great and here's a tenner. He would have done that to anybody. He then phoned me what shall I do? Take anything off him documents anything at all documents and cheque books and then he actually got him a job in a delivery firm so that solved his financial problems, and of course we had the goods. The stupidity of their oppressive discipline, quite a lot of the evidence accumulated came out of the fact they were putting financial pressures on youngsters. I was coming into the Wales TUC in Tenby this will be the mid-80s and there was a kid outside with a big bundle of Militant he decided he would have a bit of trouble with him went to the Wales TUC came out and he is still there and there is less of a crowd this time then so he came up to me and he was shouting in my face again so I held his arm and got my arm underneath and the papers went everywhere. Instead of screaming and shouting at me he dived to get most of them as possible and then he started to cry and said you don't understand I am responsible for them well what do you mean?

JF. He had paid in advance for them.

LK. Exactly they were his responsibility.

End of Interview.

APPENDIX 21

Interview with Prof. David Robertson at his home in Liverpool on 15th February 2019 at 2p.m.

David Robertson was Chair of the Polytechnic branch of NATFHE from 1977 to 1985, Teacher Representative on the Education Committee of the Liverpool City Council between 1977 and 1985, a governor on the Polytechnic Board 1977 to 1985. David was active in the Labour Party from 1982 onwards and a delegate to the Liverpool District Labour Party. David was a member of the Executive of the Liverpool Joint Shop Stewards Committee.

David became a Dean and Pro-Vice Chancellor of John Moores University and a university professor and from 1992 onwards worked as a Government advisor in London, advising ministries, and from 1997 became a Government advisor to Secretaries of State.

In this transcript David Robertson will be referred to as **DR** and James Ferguson as **JF.**

JF. Just briefly, why were you disillusioned with being a member of the International Socialists?

DR. Why with International Socialists? Sectarianism, a limited approach to politics, a belief that you could build a vanguard party one by one. When I argued you had to find other ways of building a movement on the left. You couldn't just do it comrade by comrade. You just couldn't go around to an industrial dispute or a tenants' campaign and find one individual that you can bring into the party, you had to do it in a bigger way. Really the vehicles of the far left weren't adequate vehicles for doing very much. I wasn't a member, after I left IS, of any other left group although I would describe myself as well to the left of the Labour Party during the whole of the 1970s. By the time you get to the 1980s and the introduction of Thatcherism, my general view on the prospects of the left had changed, clearly if Thatcher was going to be elected then large parts of the working class were supporting her and it was a coalition of interests that needed thinking through, and the left simply wasn't up to it. So, when it came to the big debates in the Labour Party in 1981 and the period that led to Michael Foot, my views had become significantly more centrist believing you had to have a broader church and the Labour Party was the vehicle for that. Left sectarianism wasn't going very far.

JF. When you joined the Labour Party in 1982 were you aware of the existence of the Militant Tendency?

DR. Oh yes, God yes. In fact, one of the inhibitions against joining the Labour Party was the existence of Militant Tendency. You felt, for me, they were among the more sectarian groups and therefore the model of entryism of which Militant were the principal exponents of, was not a model I thought appropriate. I still believe to this day 35 or 40 years later, that entryism as a tactic is almost certainly dishonest, it's wrong, it puts the wrong question to people and pretends to be something that you are not. It's not the way to go about politics in my view.

JF. I've interviewed Peter Taaffe who was the editor of Militant and now the General Secretary of the Socialist Party of England and Wales. He doesn't like the term entryism although Trotsky invented the term. He says that although Trotsky invented the term, he said they were members of the Labour Party like everybody else, they produced a paper, like Tribune produced a paper, and the reason why other groups in the Labour Party criticised them was because they were just better organised than all the rest of them.

DR. This is disingenuous nonsense Militant will know full well, whatever they are called, the Revolutionary Socialist League, the RSL, they are a separate distinct Trotskyist tendency which takes a specific position on the left, part of which is the tactic of entryism. That itself is disputed within the Trotskyist movement as an appropriate tactic, not all Trotskyist groups agree with entryism. Interestingly post Corbyn many have adopted the tactic of entryism because Corbyn effectively opens the door to that but the idea of entering the Labour Party as if you were simply normal members is not an acceptable definition for Militant. They know full well what they intended to do which is to take over bit by bit whichever parts of the Labour Party they could dominate and in Liverpool they managed to take over a fairly moribund and bankrupt party in the late 70s, and early 80s and were successful in doing that.

JF. Dave, when you joined the Labour Party in 1982 you just said they were moribund, the Labour Party wasn't an active, vibrant party?

DR. Not at all. As I recall it, I need to jog my memory now, then again Labour wasn't even in power in 1982/3. They didn't win power until 1983 until Hatton and others won power. The Liberal Democrats had been in power, in a minority role with Tory councillors in a coalition since the 1970s. The branches in the core Labour seats, were poorly attended, the councillors were by anybody's definition on the right of the Labour Party, they were ripe for taking over. You only needed about four people and you could win office and positions in those branches and take over and that's what Militant did. You didn't need a great number of cadres to take over those branches and elect councillors that suited them. In certain areas not least my own ward what was Arundel branch, Greenbank, these days, middle class areas, they never penetrated these areas in quite the same way. But in the inner city and some of the outer estates, and the north end of the city there was nothing going on, they just swept away people who had been battered by the Liberal Democrats and were now battered by Militant.

JF. Some commentators would say that Militant were quite distinct from other groups on the Trotskyist left in that they actively tried to recruit a very strong traditional working-class membership which put them aside from other Trotskyist groups. What do you think about that?

DR. I think there is an element of truth in that. Most of the other Trotskyist groups were dominated by what I call welfare state professionals and students and ex-students, the number of workers in 'inverted commas', in SWP and IMG and so on were fairly minimal, but then again if you look at the membership of Militant, insofar as I know it, they were dominated as well by public sector employees, there were

probably more people doing conventional working class jobs than elsewhere and I wouldn't want to overburden that but there is some truth in that argument but I wouldn't want to go over the top on that in my experience.

JF. Do you think also that Militant started to suck out the people who were inclined to join something on the left because of the quite rapid decline of the Communist Party. Do you think the competition of the Communist Party dying away?

DR. I don't have any evidence of that whatsoever. I think that when the CP began to disintegrate a bit later on in the period certainly after 1989, but before that since 1956, most of the people I know who were in the CP gravitated not to Militant but towards mainstream centrist Labour Party. They didn't go from the CP to what is effectively a Trotskyist sect. Why would they? I don't see any sort of competition there. To use the term-different markets.

JF. Moving on, when Labour came to power in Liverpool.

DR. That was 1983.

JF. Yes, were you aware, that a number of councillors were members of Militant?

DR. Oh, yes most definitely. It wasn't clear who was a member of Militant, or who was a supporter of it. That was never very clear who were members of the RSL and who weren't. That was unclear. There were councillors who were sympathetic to Militant and voted with Militant and I wouldn't have described them as Militant as we call it. But when they won in 1983 it was very clear that Hatton for example for example was Militant because he said he was, and it was very clear, that a number of others that we know, Felicity Dowling, Julie Lyon-Taylor, and others were, I don't think Tony Byrne ever was, the finance director, I suspect he probably wasn't, but it was indistinguishable from his behaviour, but I don't think he was ever a member. And on we go. It was unclear but yes you were very aware that either they were members of Militant, a separate organisation, or they behaved as if they were. It made no real difference in the end, if they behaved as if they were members of Militant, or if they were, I suppose.

JF. Were you very conscious that Militant was very much in a leadership position in the Labour group?

DR. Yes, all the time. At both the District party level, the group level, district party level, constituency level, Militant after 1983, was able to get leadership positions. They did it in a very straight forward way. They would have enough support in poorly attended meetings to win certain positions. They would then form themselves into an executive, in which they had a majority which would then take positions which would then bind the rest of the executive to a collective decision, which gave them amplified support in any general meetings. And so, it went on. They were able to guarantee or grant the trade union stewards certain privileges, certain accesses, certain benefits that ensured that in party meetings trade union delegates would vote sympathetically with Militant. Internal opposition was muted and chilled out really, sometimes brutally shouted down. It was good training for the Corbyn period, I have to say but nothing really has changed.

JF. Did you go often to DLP meetings?

DR. I went to all the DLP meetings.

JF. What all of them?

DR. All of them at the time yes, oh yes.

JF. In the main what was your general impression of those meetings?

DR. My general impression of Militant from the DLP meetings? That Tony Mulhearn was in the chair and Hatton used to sit next to him, and if people like me ever got up to speak we'd be howled down. We'd have 3 minutes to speak and never get a word out and then we would be told to sit down again. That's my impression of Militant. The delegate from Muesli Hill we would be called.

JF. Of course, your constituency was Mossley Hill.

DR. Yes, it was a pun on Mossley Hill. They used to get a cackle out of calling us Muesli Hill. Ha, ha, ha. We were all white-collar, unions, we were type cast. Not just me by any means, others in NUT and NALGO had it just as bad probably worse than I got, but we all got it. We never got to say much. I only got to say one thing once in a meeting when I wasn't howled down. That was in 1985 at the JSSC meeting when they had just issued the redundancy notices. I stood up and for the one time, "I said I speak today as an authority on industrial relations legislation".

The room went silent, a packed room of 150 delegates fell absolutely silent as I explained in detail what the redundancy notices meant, the breaches of continuity of contract against the Tory industrial relations act of the time, and that no trade union leader would ever be able to accept this, even as a tactic because they could never accept trusting the role of an employer to declare a redundancy without opposing it. Everybody listened to it in absolute silence. At the end of it, Hatton said "well anyway".

My argument everything came to pass. Within a week the trade union general secretaries were up in Liverpool hammering the living daylights out of them, but they couldn't go back, they couldn't understand what they'd done and why they would have the trade unions oppose them until it was spelled out to them. That's the only time I think that rationality finally got through to them.

JF. When I interviewed Peter Taaffe, editor of Militant, we discussed the redundancy notices at some length, he categorically said he was opposed to the redundancy notices at the time, Tony Mulhearn was opposed to the redundancies at the time, and that he told the people in Liverpool, as he described them, that they were making a big mistake. I just took that on record but what's your reaction to that? Did that come over at the time?

DR. Well I'd like to talk to Peter Taaffe about that, I actually, probably think he is telling the truth, strangely. I've absolutely no idea whether he is. I suspect they did, Militant, some of them did think it was an error and Taaffe, is not a fool whatever else he may be, he is not a complete idiot and I think he may well have taken that view. The point is it didn't make a scrap of difference because who in Liverpool was really

the intellectual thinker behind the vanguardist, overall strategy, and you can't find anybody who was doing anything other than chomp around making ad hoc decisions about the mess they had got themselves into. Which is why, really you'd allow me to address that point and come back to that point and come back to the Taaffe point, why I have some scepticism about whether Militant did behave or were able to behave with a vanguardist role in Liverpool. I sometimes wonder whether in fact despite their Leninist origins and their commitment to that model of activity whether the everyday behaviour of trying to run a city council, the complex boring, routine stuff that it requires, actually swamped any of the ideological preferences they might have thought they could pursue and because they were faced with a practical problem that they were running out of money, there was simply no money, they had to find a way of solving that, so they passed off the problem to the workforce, a catastrophic decision, by anybody's standards, to save their own necks by handing it over to the workforce and then bringing the roof down on their head. If that's what a vanguard party does, then god help us all. Again, I look at Corbynism, but I mean that's for another day.

JF. Well there is a section in the thesis on that.

DR. It's all flooding back to me now all this.

JF. It does with all my interviewees.

DR. But my view on Peter Taaffe is there has been a view put around by Militant since then, that it was a tactical error, but I just wonder how much is that re-writing history for their own benefit because nobody said that at the time. Everybody was defending the redundancy notices at the time, and then blaming us for not going along with the tactic. In fact, they all said we don't intend to make you redundant and I say back to them that's not how the legislation works. A severance of one day is a severance of continuity of employment. We can't go around trusting you lot. If every employee trusted their employer to say actually, it's just a tactic to keep us in business, we'd all be out of a bloody job.

JF. What Graham Burgess said to me when I interviewed him about the redundancy notices was that they were printed two weeks prior to a letter arriving on the NALGO secretary's, Peter Creswell's, desk saying that there is absolutely no way they were going to issue redundancy notices. The notices were printed two weeks before they gave that assurance.

DR. The letter said what?

JF. NALGO wrote to Derek Hatton and John Hamilton saying that there had been rumours they were about to issue redundancy notices. A letter came back categorically denying that. However, the redundancy notices when they were issued were originally printed with a date a fortnight before that letter arrived. In fact, it had been overprinted.

DR. It had been overprinted, yes.

JF. That's something I never knew, did you?

DR. I didn't know that. I knew they were overprinted because I've seen mine and I've still got it. In fact, my redundancy notice appears in the formal records of the JMU Annual handbook. It's been printed in the history of the JMU so it's there for posterity. And, very proud of that notice I am. In fact, I got five notices given to me by my head of Polytechnic. He said, "here you are, I've got one with your name on it and four others just in case they missed you". Yes, it was overprinted. I believe the story why wouldn't I? I didn't know that. I am not sure I knew that.

JF. Graham Burgess went on to say that they had a concordat.

DR. I didn't know it at the time, but I did know it since because I heard it before.

JF. Graham Burgess said that NALGO which was the largest union in the city council had a concordat with the council saying that if the campaign on the cuts had to be wound up the union and the council would do it together, neither would jump ship individually and that was the agreement they had with the council.

DR. The concordat was what? That if the campaign was wound up?

JF. In other words, if the council gave up its campaign because they couldn't pursue it and would have to make a legal budget the union would simultaneously agree with that.

DR. That never came my way.

JF. It never came my way. I don't think it came out of anything other than assurances that NALGO had. Now Graham Burgess's view was that when the redundancy notices came out their view was that the councillors were saving their own skins because the damages, the initial financial damages were fairly minor £100,000, but the damages that would occur if they had not issued the redundancy notices were going to be very substantial.

DR. I think that's a plausible explanation. I think the redundancy notices were issued in a panic at the last minute and indeed it was a view held by both Pete and Graham, a view in which in years past I expressed a degree of neutrality over it since I didn't know, but the more I think about it that its absolutely true that they crapped themselves basically. In fact, we know from the evidence of someone like Julie-Lyon Taylor who resigned as a councillor, they were crapping themselves over the surcharge.

JF. And John McLean, her father, resigned at the same time.

DR. Oh yes, I think that's very plausible. I think, as I said earlier, dump it all on the workforce and save their necks.

JF. I think the interesting thing is when I interviewed Derek Hatton, he said the Militant line was.

DR. Did he agree he was Militant by the way, Hatton, or did he say he was merely a fellow traveller?

JF. He denied membership of it.

DR. I think he probably wasn't.

JF. Really?

DR. I think Hatton wasn't a member of Militant. Again, it goes back to my very early point, indistinguishable from membership. But I don't think Hatton would stoop to the discipline of an organisation. None, not one in his life. Hatton's just a chancer and to be a member of the RSL would have been to accept the authority and discipline of the RSL structures and Hatton wouldn't have been interested in that.

JF. However, I have got evidence, verbatim evidence from Irene Buxton who gave evidence to the inquiry into the District Labour Party. She gave evidence in Scotland because she was frightened of intimidation in Liverpool. In that evidence she said that Derek Hatton held Militant Tendency branch meetings in his house. She was a member of Militant.

DR. I don't doubt that. But I think it's a bit like me opening up this house to Militant, he saw them as a vehicle whereby he could get power. He might well have been, I don't know. I never felt he really was. I didn't think he had the political reading, or the political discipline, or even the political interest in being a member of a Trotskyist organisation. I think he was a chancer, he was into Derek Hatton, power, doing whatever, an early form of Boris Johnson.

JF. He denies completely that he was a member of Militant.

DR. They all say that.

JF. Yes, but he says the only party he ever joined was the Labour Party. Of course, members of Militant always say that.

DR. He's not going to give you the satisfaction, is he?

JF. Precisely.

DR. All that lot aren't exactly into setting the truthful record straight. They are into writing their own history.

JF. Did you go to the 1985 Labour Party conference when Kinnock made the taxis speech?

DR. No, no, but you know what I did at Bournemouth?

JF. Go on.

DR. You know about my role in bringing down Hatton apart from, have you never heard this before?

JF. No.

DR. Jim have you never heard this before?

JF. No.

DR. I thought I'd told everyone this. This is absolutely true, for the want of a nail a battle is won or lost. When the redundancy notices were issued roughly September

6th ,1985, two weeks later end of September, round about my birthday, party conference was held down in Bournemouth. On the Friday night of party conference, the Riverside CLP met. Very sparsely attended meeting, there were only 13 people present, normally there would be about 60, everybody had either gone to conference or thought there was no business. In the chair was a Militant sympathiser, but not Militant, Ron Burke, who's name you may not remember or know. It was upstairs in the trade union centre in Hardmen St, and I moved an emergency motion, condemning the redundancy notices. I had no expectation whatsoever that the chair would accept it and to my utter astonishment he did, because it was a Militant imposed rule, that you didn't accept emergency resolutions i.e. motions they hadn't had a chance to stamp all over and vote against. But he accepted the emergency motion, it was indeed an emergency. They had a debate, and the vote came and I won the vote 7 to 6. As the meeting broke up, we are upstairs now in the trade union centre, as we are filing out of the long room and up to the top of the stairs, over the bannister,Tony Hood, Militant supporter and councillor storms up to me, grabs me by the throat, bends me over the bannister and says " Do you realise what you have just done ?" To which, I said, "I sincerely hope so" and he stormed off. Because what I had just done had been by arrangement. The arrangement was and had been agreed about a week or so before with my General Secretary David Triesman.

JF. Ah, David Triesman, Lord Triesman now.

DR. My General Secretary, David Triesman. I said you cannot allow this redundancy stuff to go. He said "No, but obviously NATFHE isn't going to shake the tree here, let me talk to my mate Rodney Bickerstaffe. He came back to me and said Rodney is right on board for this and what's more he's chairing the conference arrangements committee of the Labour Party. Now that didn't mean a great deal to me. He said is there any prospect of you getting a motion, condemning this stuff to get on the conference agenda. I said I can at least try. It could be difficult given the make- up of the city. He said, "Well let's see".

So, I had a word with our two delegates from Riverside who were going to conference. One was called Jane Sarin, now a long-time councillor in Glasgow, and the other was a little- known person called Jane Kennedy, who would go on to become more than a little known. They were going to conference and I was in contact with Jane Sarin, that I was in contact, these were the days before e mails, before i phones and before anything so I had to have an arrangement whereby I would get to her, phone her on Friday night because conference arrangements committee was going to be on the Sunday afternoon, the outcome of the vote at Riverside. She eventually rang me at Riverside, and I was able to tell her that we got the motion passed 7-6. She went to conference arrangements committee where Rodney Bickerstaffe helped make sure it was a prioritised motion on the conference order paper and got it debated later in conference after Kinnock had spoken. But it gave Kinnock the green light to make his speech. Because once he knew it had been opposed in Liverpool by anybody from the Labour Party he could speak freely. Before that it might have been assumed that maybe that Liverpool agreed with the position but no, once they got that motion - anyway the rest is history.

Except within another week I went down to Speke airport to meet my General Secretary, David Triesman one Sunday morning as he trailed along behind the back of a flotilla of General Secretaries led by the short brutal Ron Todd, as they strode across the concourse, trod all over me in their fury to get to the taxis to take them down to meet Hatton et al and read the bloody riot act to them. I remember Ron Todd growling, and that was the end of Militant, that was the end of it.

JF. And they went down to the Town Hall to meet the council.

DR. Exactly they had fish and chips. Tony Byrne sent out for fish and chips and never offered them any.

They sat there stuffing their faces with chips. You could not have insulted the General Secretaries more. I mean Triesman said after "You have to deal with that lot?" I said "Yes, standard". "He said "I have never met such a bigger bunch of provincial no marks. Who are they?"

JF. Wow that's a good story.

DR. You missed all this because you weren't in the party, but I was exposed to it all the time. You got the joint stewards and your own dealings with NUT, but I had more of the internal Labour Party stuff that Graham never got. I probably had better contact with my trade union leadership in London than you had on the grounds that they were a smaller bunch, and I knew Triesman personally. Those little connections, if Triesman had not been mates with Bickerstaffe, if Bickerstaffe hadn't been on conference arrangements committee if there had been one vote the other way.

JF. Well, that's history.

DR. That's history.

JF. Let's fast forward now. Part of my preamble to the thesis is the advent of Corbyn and the election of him as leader of the Labour Party. At one point when he was first elected it was, I think seen by most commentators as an aberration, but now of course, twice elected by very big majorities, as a member of the Labour Party how do you feel about that?

DR. I think it is an unmitigated disaster. I think it simply enables a Tory government. It'll split the Labour Party, and the Tories may split too. There is no prospect whatsoever in my view of a sufficient majority of people voting Corbyn in as Prime Minister. I think he has been an unmitigated disaster at the local level, its led to an outpouring of far more in-disciplined, and brutal sectarianism, mysogony, and anti-semitism, open racism by some of the pond life that's swarmed into the Labour Party, the most disgusting experience, and not because I am older, because I have that 80s experience to go with Militant. In fairness, although the mob used to hoot and scream, Militant was a relatively disciplined body. And they still, remain so, those in Militant.

But the mob that have come in around them, Stop the War Coalition, and every tin pot sectarianism trot sect, they are vile people. You have got open gangsters in

there now, not least in Wavertree, but to a degree in Liverpool, all the old bitter Militant mob are back with the exception of Hatton who I think is still pending.

JF. He's now a member.

DR. I am not sure he is.

JF. He is. I've spoken to him.

DR. He will tell you he is, he tells everybody he is, but he isn't. He's not been formally endorsed by the NEC. He does not have a membership card. He thinks he is a member, but he isn't. Most of us elderly veterans and that will include the people you know from the CP, people like Graham and Terry Molloy and Francine Palant and many, many, others, Steve Mumby, and so on are all now regarded as centrists. We know what's going on and do hard work and count for nothing. You've got a bunch of University students who remind me very much of myself fifty years ago telling me what and how good Marx is. People who have never read a word of Marx. I'm thinking take me on make my day you wankers. It's just awful. Laura has to skirt round. Keep her head down.

JF. Laura is your wife?

DR. Yes, the rest of us, my generation have had enough. We go to meetings but.

JF. So how do you find its going? Do you think there is going to be a split in the Labour Party?

DR. Yeah, definitely, It's unsustainable. Unsustainable under Corbyn. Quite how it plays out, or whether, it amounts to much I don't know but I don't see the Parliamentary party holding together. It is a split really. Come on people like me are thinking about leaving the party. I mean whether I will, I have no appetite to join the Lib Dems or anything stupid, no appetite to join the greens and every appetite to see the Tories out of office. But no appetite to stay in the Labour Party headed by Corbyn and that shower. A lot of people who are like me, very much hostile to Brexit, hostile to mysogony, hostile to anti-semitism, don't find any purchase in the Labour Party. I mean the odds are I will probably stay because of Laura but you ask yourself what for. Waiting to be sneered at and shouted at and told you are a Tory. The nasty people you remember are all back, but they are twice as embittered. It's disgusting.

JF. So, in Liverpool which has had direct experience of Militant or a Trotskyist group controlling a Labour Party in fact the entire District Labour Party, the fact that they are in effect coming back, or similar people, that disturbs you?

DR. Yes, it does disturb me, I can't really get a grip on the relationship between Militant and Momentum. Momentum itself is an entryist organisation. It meets separately now, and Militant clearly wants to control Momentum, but Momentum is a curious beast. It's made up of what I would call a whole group of fluffies. People like munchkins, people who thinks the sun shines out of Jeremy's arse who won't have a word said against Jeremy. Many of whom think he's going to either increase welfare benefits by 10,000% or abolish student grants, or both, or bring back rent controls,

solve all their problems. You've got a whole raft of people that we never had in the 80s, conspiracy theorists, completely barking, off their fucking loops, who shout and scream and then you've got the more disciplined trots that we would recognise who roll their eyes. So, the balance in momentum is 20% trot 40%-50% fluffy 30% nutter. The 50% and 30% trail along behind the 20% and then they all go along to Labour Party meetings and they all unite and vote us all down because they follow the Leninist model, the e mail goes out, vote for this line, vote against this. And social media has changed the ability of marshalling your own troops. They are far better at it than we are, everything is now run through, Whats App, or Facebook groups.

JF. That's, one thing I have mentioned in the thesis and that is that CLPD in the 70s and 80s they had to have a slow build up in terms of organisation whereas with social media now, with Momentum, it's far quicker.

DR. Yes, basically its simply salute the flag. What's disturbing me is that the younger generation seem to be the most compliant, the most willing to do whatever they are told, on the grounds that this what Jeremy would want. I don't remember ever being that compliant. My radicalism was always, I mean if they say are you loyal to Jeremy Corbyn? I say of course not, I've never been loyal to any leader. What's this loyalty to a leader all about? They don't understand that. They think you are either loyal to Jeremy or you are the enemy. It's this schismatic division between the good and the bad.

JF. With our generation, we grew up fearing being labelled as Stalinist and therefore the cult of the personality we wouldn't get involved in.

DR. It feels like a cult of the personality, but I think it is not quite that, Jeremy Corbyn is a paragon that they wish to emulate, though no doubt he has qualities that they like, it is that he has their permission to act to act with impunity. Corbyn because he actually doesn't intervene allows them to get on with whatever they want to do, so the anti-semites, can support Jeremy Corbyn because Jeremy Corbyn takes a very lukewarm attitude towards doing anything about the bastards.

The thugs can do the same, they can rally behind Jeremy, because Jeremy isn't about to throw them out of the party. So really, he's a permission, an ability to let them get on, he's a sort of franchise operator that says right, a bit like Osma Bin Laden was with Al- Queda, do what you want as long as we are all broadly following the same crackpot direction, that's more or less insofar as Corbynism theorises it, what he does.

JF. In terms of non-Momentum members, who have been in the Labour party many years.

DR. You mean mainstream members? Traditional members?

JF. What do you think their attitude would be if the NEC of the Labour party agreed the Socialist Party could affiliate to the Labour Party?

DR. A lot of people would see it as simply the next step on the way to madness. I don't think it would have a seismic effect, on the grounds that this is what Corbyn would do isn't it? If you made a decision about Corbyn like I have then it would not

make any difference, or it would be the final game changer. But effectively he has said that he's basically said all join. I mean there are open members of SWP in Labour. The SWP could invite their members to join Labour. There are members of the Labour party who openly vote green in this area.

JF. This would be an official affiliation, it wouldn't be an individual affiliation. The Socialist Party would then have the same status as the Co-op Party.

DR. I think it would probably raise more issues with the press than amongst the members. I don't know, I find it unthinkable that they would do that. Then again, I find it entirely thinkable that they would do that.

JF. In the documents I have managed to dig out.

DR. Are you saying the NEC is thinking about affiliating the Socialist party?

JF. No, I think the Socialist party is on the verge of officially requesting affiliation.

DR. Yes, well they turned back Militant when Militant en-bloc requested members to sign up and I think they'd knock this back as well. They're cynical and they don't need to affiliate the Socialist Party, but they could take their members individually.

JF. Peter Taaffe is very keen to do it on an official basis. He doesn't want to go in on an entryist basis. He made that absolutely clear. When Militant were first getting these initial expulsions from the Labour party Jeremy Corbyn founded an organisation called Labour against the Witch-hunts from his home in north London.

DR. Oh that was against the Militant witch-hunt? Not against the Jackie Walker witch-hunt?

JF. It was against all expulsions. So basically, if he's to be consistent he would re-admit them.

DR. Well, it's one thing in Jeremy Corbyn being consistent, it's another thing if the NEC goes along with it. Don't forget there are limits to what Jeremy Corbyn can get away with, even in the NEC. He tried to roll back the International Holocaust Remberence definition of anti-semitism and didn't get away with it. He doesn't get his own way with everything. I would have thought the NEC would bolt at that, affiliating formally. But I don't know, I don't actually care either. It doesn't seem to me to be inconsistent with Corbyn, I think it would be an unnecessary provocation, a bit liking admitting Hatton, why would you want to do it? After all they threw Livingstone under the bus when it suited them. And they will throw the others under the bus as well. They're pragmatic they don't want the flack, if they can get away with it.

End of Interview.

Appendix 22

Interview with Clare Short former Labour M.P.

By telephone from her home in London on Thursday 25th October 2018 at 2.30 pm.

In the interview Clare Short, will be referred to as **CS** and James Ferguson as **JF**

JF. In the 70s and 80s, you were a voice for, a rough translation, the non -Trotskyist left within the Labour Party, before Militant became news and very controversial. What was your attitude towards them when they were in the embryo stage? Were you benign about it or antagonistic?

CS. I became a member of the NEC in I think 1987 and you're right I was always on the left, but not ever a Trotskyist of any kind and although Militant was there we also had a whole load of other Trotskyists, particularly Socialist Action, IMG, I like many others on the left didn't quite know what they were all up to and you assumed they were people of good will and then I became aware of transitional demands and they had a manipulative agenda, it was not an open argument. But then on the NEC we faced the problems in Liverpool, and we've got two MPs in the House of Commons and of course Dave Nellist was an extremely good MP, but it was becoming a mounting problem and then they stood against the party in a by-election in Liverpool. I remember going up to work in that by-election, and for me it made it really simple. I mean they had organisationally stood against the party and therefore they couldn't be in the party. I felt clarity and simplicity about acting against them.

JF. That's when they made a break with the Labour party by standing a candidate.

CS. But they didn't leave, I mean they caused all sorts of internal turmoil, but they were still in the party, but they stood a candidate, did they call it Real Labour? I mean you must have looked at all this.

JF. Real Labour, yes it was.

CS. That made it easy to deal with it in my view. I mean they had broken the rules, they were standing candidates against the party, it had to be dealt with, end of argument.

JF. Before that, before it became crystal clear when they stood an independent candidate.

CS. What year was that?

JF. Oh, the Walton by-election, that was, 1990, I think.

CS. Oh it was as late as that?

JF. Yes, it was quite late. It was when Eric Heffer died, and he created the by-election.

CS, Indeed, indeed.

JF. The strange thing about that, I was doing some digging from the NEC papers was that Lesley Mahmood did actually marry, and her former married name was Lesley Holt, she actually was a joint signatory to the purchase of Militant headquarters in Liverpool. In fact, one of the persons Tony Mulhearn, the reason he was expelled was they had the hard evidence of him signing the deeds of the property, and it was counter-signed by Lesley Holt who then became Lesley Mahmood. And she nearly got the nomination for Walton but missed it by a whisker. I think Eric Heffer kept very quiet about that.

CS. Poor old Eric he, he was actually, of the Broad Left and not a Trotskyist, but he became a dupe I'm afraid.

JF. Well, what I'm very interested in Militant as well as their vanguard structure, which is very top heavy, where they have full time- officials as their editorial board/politburo and they hand their decisions down. When you were active in your Birmingham constituency were you aware of this top- down structure or not?

CS. The trouble is you are looking back and it's all from memory, and things you learned later you don't remember when you learned them. Obviously, we all knew they acted together that they had their newspaper. I certainly knew that they had their separate meetings. But the trouble is the left had Tribune and there were informal Tribune groups. So, you had the feeling this was much more organised but you when you first observed it you didn't know quite how far it goes. But then I had a relative who was involved with them and went to work on the paper in London and I became very clear that they had their own structure, employed people full time, got people to go to London to work for them. So, it became clearer and clearer that they were systematically organised.

JF. I don't know whether you are aware of the fact that Jack Straw, quite accidentally, in his Blackburn constituency, was approached by a guy who was a member of his constituency party who joined Militant and then was quite shocked by the parallel structure that they were building in Militant shadowing all aspects of the Labour party, where you aware of that?

CS. I wasn't aware of that. Jack Straw wasn't on the NEC and that was where we got the reports in, but I am sure there was the parallel structure that lots of people broadly on the left thinking "oh they are keen young people" but that's what people are like and then gradually it becomes apparent there is another structure and it's all organised.

JF. Very much the second question now when Militant grew, and you were saying it had two MPs, and another MP whose name escapes me.

CS. Yes, you're right, Tony Mulhearn, he came in briefly.

JF. No no, he did not get elected. It was Terry Fields and Dave Nellist who were the two MPs.

CS. Dave Nellist was there for a very long time. He was very active in the chamber and he was very active in his constituency. A very hard- working MP.

To his credit he won the Spectator award for the parliamentary campaigner of the year.

JF. He got backbencher of the year award.

CS. Yes, he was very proud of that. But when he came to the NEC when we were doing the hearings, during the expulsions, I said to him, "this is the point, it's either Militant or the Labour Party", but of course, he didn't want the choice to be framed in that way.

JF. When they actually got to their zenith, I've done quite a lot of research on this and it seems that their peak was about 8000 members but their members were far more active than other party members, on a day to day basis – so when it got to that stage, was it apparent to you that they were an out and out entryist party ?

CS. Well I don't know when they got to 8000.

JF. 1984

CS. Well they were systematically organised, like a sect. All saying the same things. We would hear all these jokes about people who didn't come from Liverpool, speaking with their Liverpool accent, going up and down, speaking like Ted Grant and Peter Taaffe, who were their leaders, so it became clearer. But there were other Trotskyists around, systematically organised.

JF. I always remember an interview, briefly on television, probably on your way to an NEC meeting and you said, which struck me, you said to the interviewer, "I find Militant deeply dishonourable".

CS. Well, yes, it's the secrecy and dishonesty, I mean if they say they are in favour of a revolution, I heard, I heard them argue that the crunch they came to in Liverpool was like in 1905 and 1917 was going to come later. The parallel, for example transitional demands, they would campaign for a mantra, a minimum wage, something very attractive, that they knew people would support, and at a rate they knew the system could not afford it and they tricked people into being revolutionaries without knowing they were revolutionaries. It was dishonest, disgraceful. I mean I think transitional demands are especially disrespectful of everybody. Deliberately unfulfillable to help the revolution along, that these couldn't be fulfilled under the existing system.

JF. They would argue that this increases class consciousness. That they went into a battle they knew they couldn't win that at the end of the battle they were more hardened to the struggle. Is that how you think they operated?

CS. No I don't see it like that at all. You see most of their campaigns, and the demands that they organised for, trying to get things through conference, they did not believe that those things could be achieved without busting the system, having the revolution, but they never told people that's what they thought, increasing consciousness, trying to create a revolution by trickery, that's what so explicitly

dishonest about it. If you want to advocate a revolution, advocate a revolution. Talk to people about why a revolution is essential. Make your argument. They could not be honest I suppose because if they put their agenda out fully it would be incompatible with the constitution of the Labour Party.

JF. I'm interested with the parallels with other Trotskyist groups. I don't want to get into the different polemics which are a minefield, but Militant grew, and these figures are fairly accurate, from 40 people in the early 60s to as I said before to 8000 in the mid- eighties. Other Trotskyists groups, if they were lucky got to about 1000 to 2000 and stuck at that. They did not seem able to grow beyond that.

CS. Do you know how many the SWP has now?

JF. No, I don't.

CS. I am just curious.

JF. I know they have been losing members hand over fist. They probably keep it secret anyway. Why, in comparison with other Trotskyist groups do you think Militant reached 8000, It's a considerable amount.

CS. I think it was around Handsworth IMG were active and they were called socialist action. There were other "fringy ones". We had them all. They always target areas with a lot of black people. But Militant were highly organised, sect- like, it was more highly organised, tighter, more determined that's how that type of thing works, until it was exposed. For a time, its advantageous.

JF. So, you thought they were disciplined and determined?

CS. They were always young people coming along, radical and determined. Young people got involved with them wanting to be radical. They probably don't know what they're buying when they first came along.

I saw them doing it in Handsworth. They befriended people, a lot of people are drawn to what they are campaigning on, they have relationships with, each other and it is like joining a sect. They pull people in who might be drawn by their radicalism but then it becomes a thing you belong to. And the friendships and contacts and all that go with it. And it's difficult to pull away from it.

JF. At a very early stage, I've seen their internal documents, somebody is attached to them and then they very much find out what, depending on their age group, they are interested in and try to pair somebody with them who shares similar views.

CS. And then it becomes a way of life, and they were systematically at it, becoming their social group, it's like a religious sect, they belong to it, it's not just a political programme.

JF. I'm very interested in Neil Kinnock's speech to the 1984 Labour conference at Bournemouth when he did his famous "taxis" speech. I'd be very interested to know your view on this, whether you thought the speech was courageous, foolhardy? Were you in the hall at the time?

CS. I was in the hall, but I wasn't on the NEC then I became an MP in 1983 and I was there. It was extremely dramatic the place went silent. It was a bit like Geoffrey Howe's resignation speech in the House of Commons. It was like that. What did I think? Reflecting on it afterwards I think I partly admired it and partly thought it was reckless. I mean I was thinking, what was the strategy behind it? But it was brave, it was brave, and it was powerful of course. Redundancy notices by taxis, who could forget?

JF. From where you were in the hall, did you get the impression the majority of delegates were supportive of him, because Militant supporters would say that the reaction from the hall was hostile?

CS. I think a lot of people were the same as me, they were silent, listening, it was very dramatic, I don't think people were hostile, they were stunned, or at least that's my memory, it was a long time ago. And there have been so many developments since. I don't think there was a general hostility. I don't think so.

JF. Following on from the speech.

CS. Oh of course Heffer walked out.

JF. That's right.

CS. Good old Eric**.**

JF. The Walton constituency was very Militant influenced.

CS. Yes taken over. And he probably did not fully understand what it was. He was in denial. But he was a very emotional man.

JF. Following on from his speech, the follow up behind the scenes, was that Jane Kennedy.

CS. I do remember Jane she was in NUPE then**.**

JF. She's now police commissioner for Merseyside. After that speech she said to someone, I can't remember who, but I heard her say, she said to Neil when they were having a coffee after, "We can't just let this go". The speech was great, but there's got to be something concrete to follow it up with.

CS. I did not know about that, but it would have been reckless if he did not have a plan, to move on to the next stage.

JF. What followed was the NEC Inquiry into the Liverpool District Labour Party, later on the following year. So, the DLP was suspended, and the Inquiry was set up, I think chaired by Charlie Turnock, and there were subsequent expulsions, I think 16 people were identified as potentially Militant people. What do you think of the suspension of the DLP and the subsequent expulsions, do you think it was right?

CS. I think a lot of it was unpleasant, but it was necessary. It felt clumsy and slow, but it had to be.

JF. So, you thought it was unpleasant but necessary?

CS. Yes.

JF. I'm in the Irish Labour party by the way, and before that the British Labour Party, but before that I was in the British CP.

CS. Oh yes. And you always had an aversion to.

JF. Yes, we have all had our political journeys (laughter). Now one thing I cannot understand when I became a member of the British Labour Party, it did not seem to have a set of political principles or barriers, ways in which the Labour party was defined, so that although it called itself a broad church it was very vulnerable to anybody coming into a constituency party and really taking over what is in essence a democratic pluralist party and changing it to a revolutionary sect and I was quite amazed how little the Labour Party had any defences to this, I mean political defences rather than disciplinary ones. What are your thoughts on that?

CS. I think that was explained by the history because of course it was always a coalition from the very beginning, the elements that came together, the trades unions, the co-op, the Fabians, the Marxist group called the SDF, and the ILP back in the 1900s.

So, I understand exactly what you are saying. If we had a clear programme of democratic principles it would be easy to say you are breaching it but given that how the party came to exist, you couldn't have that.

JF. Because of the different affiliated organisations etc.

CS. Yes and the unions that came with it because there was a range of ideas and of course there is the story of the ILP because the ILP was there and then broke away. Didn't it?

JF. Yes, that's right.

CS. So, I don't know the whole story about that. So, there was some guy whose name I've forgotten, H.M.Hyman, in the early Labour party and he was a semi-aristocrat, kind of Marxist guy and they were in from the beginning, there was a range of fairly incompatible ideas that were part of the party from the very beginning. And the very fact that it grew up like that rather than founding itself with a constitution and a programme, I think it probably explains what you are saying. It would be interesting to know, do you know, like how the German social democrats operate. Do they have a Trotskyist infiltration problem?

JF. I don't know enough about the SPD.

CS. But that's a similar model. I just wondered did any other party have a programme of clarity and structure that would be needed to deal with the problem of infiltration in the way you describe. Of course, the truth is that it's probably not new, there's always been candidates all over the place and councillors with feeble membership in places and few activists to keep things going, which means its easy to take over by any means, a right- wing group, a left- wing group, a racist group whoever, a Trotskyist group. It's just the nature of the beast. In fact, in Handsworth we had someone called James Hunt and he learnt from Militant and he signed up

lots and lots of members from the Caribbean church. Somebody paid their fees, and they were just told to come to selection meetings, and they had hundreds, he just observed how Militant did it and then he wanted to become a councillor and then he became one, and he brought in his mates, hundreds. And the poor Handsworth Labour Party was taken over. (laughter)

JF. That's another form of entryism that I don't want to get into. (laughter), I think with the western social democratic parties, the German, the Swedish, the Dutch etc because the continent developed in quite a different way to Britain because they had quite large communist parties and they were quite insistent that they would define themselves against that, so they would put up policy barriers.

CS. And also presumably they re-organised and re-structured themselves after the war.

JF. If you look at the Italian Communist Party which had at its peak three or four million as party members, they obviously had a programme so any socialist party in competition had to define itself.

CS. Yes, we don't believe in this we believe in that!

JF. So, I think the British Labour Party, because it didn't have that competition on the left, didn't think they had the need to have one.

CS. And the very way in which it evolved, bringing together contradictory forces, bringing together the broader arguments about change, so right from the beginning it had this issue.

JF. As with many things like the trade union movement Britain developed in such a different way. One thing though, entryism has now become more topical. A little quote from Roy Hattersley in The Guardian. He said the only difference between the 1980s and now was that Militant Tendency members were going along to Labour Party meetings or Momentum meetings using their bus passes. Which I thought was quite witty really.

CS. Well except of course Miltant closed down. They had some form of faction fight. I don't know where everyone ended up. There was a person I knew who ended up in the SWP. I don't know if the factions went in different directions. But they're not controlling Momentum, that's what my contacts tell me. What's his name in Liverpool made a big announcement that he was re-joining?

JF. Derek Hatton.

CS. But they haven't got the infrastructure or organisation, anymore?

JF. That's part of my question. Momentum has now got a very large membership. I am not sure how many, but certainly very large and very influential in a lot of constituencies.

There are reports coming back that revolutionary groups, like ex Militant, which is now the Socialist Party.

CS. Is that the Scargill thing?

JF. No that's a different one, the general secretary is Peter Taaffe. They are the ones trying to get people to join Momentum and the Labour Party.

CS. Well Peter Taaffe made a speech saying we've been waiting a long time now its coming back our way or something.

JF. Obviously, you're not an MP anymore but from the press reports you get and the soundings you get from your area, do you think Momentum has got a risk of being used by these Trotskyist elements?

CS. I'm not directly in contact, I'm not even a member of the party. I resigned after Iraq and have not re-joined. But obviously I've got friends and contacts, we talk about these things. But my understanding is that there's so many and they're so enthusiastic, and of course it's interesting how they became divided over allegations of anti-Semitism, because they were all wrapped up in being critical of Israel, or pro-Palestinian, and divisions over the attitude to Brexit. I get the impression there isn't one faction completely in control. I know they have big activities in parallel with party conference, political education events. I've read repeatedly there are big divisions about Europe, although lots of them came together to be supportive of Corbyn, the majority are anti- Brexit. I don't think it's the Trotskyist position.

JF. I think you are probably right. They are divided on these issues and quite clearly divided.

CS. What I'm trying to say from my direct sources of information, lots of young enthusiastic people, who I do see as an historical corrective force because New Labour became so sucked into neo liberalism and young people are suffering from the cost of housing, rents and student fees, the great surge in numbers wasn't a conspiracy, where young people who were fed up and wanted some more radicalism.

JF. That's the way an awful lot of people see it. The question really is with Militant or the Socialist Party as it is now called, with this vanguard structure, which is tightly knit, well organised when it gets into an organisation like Momentum, which like you say has a lot of people in it with altruistic views and aims, do you think that vanguard structure is going to, if you like, take over the leadership of Momentum or at least be very influential.

CS. One it's a small number, Momentum's big within itself, so I just don't think there's the numbers and of course everyone knows Peter Taaffe and Militant and don't think they have the numbers and the organisation. You would know better than me. The SWP is the one that's been going and being highly organised and dominating every demonstration with their posters, I imagine they're in. I think it would be an error to think only Militant would do what you are describing. I don't know how many people they have got left but I imagine it's pretty small.

JF. Oh no I wasn't suggesting that only Militant are at it, I think other Trotskyist groups are very interested in Momentum, but in general that kind of vanguard structure which the SWP has as well, being very organised isn't there a danger that

they could get into the leadership of Momentum and steer it towards a kind of revolutionary politics?

CS. The trouble is, what's his name, Jon Lansman, the chair of Momentum, and he's been around a long time, knows how these things goes, and this enthusiasm for supporting Corbyn, will go through to the next election, and then depending what happens I think it will reduce, I would have thought. So, Trotskyist infiltration takes a long time, and there will be people trying to do it but they won't get anyway near the numbers until we get to the next general election and then we will see the real momentum.

JF. Just to go back a bit.

CS. So I think it's logical, what you're saying, that they'll try but Momentum was created so rapidly and it's so attached to the Corbyn thing, I wonder where it will be in five years, time, and of course even on the Palestinian/anti-Semitism, thing, Jon Lansman seemed unsympathetic to the pro- Palestinian position and expelled some woman, a black woman who's also Jewish, Jackie Walker? So, he's obviously quite entrenched and quite tough. So, you understand what I am saying I think it would take a lot of time for them to try and do that and I think Momentum will be re-shaped by the outcome of the next election whenever it is.

JF. Just to go back a bit, leading up to the time of the Kinnock speech, it was fairly obvious from what Neil Kinnock has written, and made speeches about, that he felt Militant was bleeding votes away from the Labour Party at election time. Would you agree or disagree?

CS. Well I think there was a broader issue then in the 80s, there was the famous heckling of Dennis Healey at meetings and when he spoke at conference. And it wasn't only Militant it was other Trotskyist organisations too. And there was a feeling the Labour Party was becoming chaotic and hi-jacked by all sorts of groups and we had to get a grip on it and pull it back, all the Kinnock reforms, I was on the NEC, was all about getting the party back to what it was supposed to stand for and having structures and clarity about what our policies were rather than having all these factions coming in and pushing their own programmes and getting resolutions through conference that were not do-able. So, I think it wasn't only Militant there were others at it. It was making the party look chaotic, making us look crazy and unelectable.

JF. When Kinnock made that speech do you think the general public would think "ah the Labour Party is coming back from that divided image, that fractured image"?

CS. I don't think it works like that. I think the general public don't attend to the detail, and Labour seems divided, always having arguments, with some crazy people around it. One speech won't do it. It's probably good for his image that he came across as tough on Militant, and he's going to do something, but we ended up with a policy review and expulsions, we organised and then we had the '92 election, and we were going to win that. It was disappointing. Up till then it was getting a grip organisationally and policy wise, but of course the two go together because if you've

got elements infiltrating, using the democratic structures of the party, having impossible programmes.

JF. I think I've got enough now. That was very, very, good. I am very grateful to you for taking the time to do this.

End of Interview

Appendix 23

Interview with Lord Storey of Childwall, Thursday 8th October,10.00, 2018 at the House of Lords

In the Interview Lord Storey will be referred to as **LS** and James Ferguson as **JF**

JF. I just want to formally ask you who you are and introduce yourself.

LS. So, I am Mike Storey, I sit in the House of Lords, I am Lord Storey of Childwall, in the City of Liverpool.

JF. A formal question. This is the one I am really interested in. About 35 years ago prior to the Militant era you were part of the Liberal Group on the Liverpool City Council who determined budgets. Obviously, you were not the overall majority party. These budgets were based on very low rate rises, and this is all about reflecting over the years. On reflection did you regret this? Did this lead to a low- rate support grant settlement when the City needed as much cash injection as possible to alleviate the pressure on services?

LS. I think, there are a number of factors, first of all generally, local government finance nationally was going through a big change when the Secretary of State at the time, Tony Greenwood, said in terms of local government finance "the party is over". So, monies coming to local government were being reduced or were being held at certain levels by central government. I think that probably on reflection, small increases didn't help, but neither would they make the huge impact that I think has been suggested over time. I mean in politics political parties have to differentiate themselves and we wanted to be absolutely clear that we were on the side of the residents of the city and that in the financial package we put together was that we would freeze rate rises, make free adult education, swimming etc, etc, so to try to differentiate ourselves from Labour, yes you can look back now and say "do you know what, maybe if we had our time again, would we have taken that path, perhaps not". I'm not sure that - well I've given you the answer.

JF. But when Jenkin came in as Secretary of State for the Environment, followed by Baker, they were quite punitive towards local councils, all local councils, not just Liverpool in terms of their rate support grant (RSG) settlement and the formula and that hit Liverpool very hard, didn't it?

LS. But that's to do with national formulas. It was always the way that when the Conservatives were in Government the formula was skewed towards the shire counties. When Labour was in Government it was skewed towards the cities and the districts. So, it was not to do with just an individual council, it's to do with the way central government has always played politics with rate support grants. You see that even to this day in terms of currently Liverpool has seen 46% reduction in its local government income yet some boroughs, even in London have seen single figure

decreases, so government has always played around with the RSG mechanism and financing of local government. Going back to your particular question and of course following on from that, we ended up with the poll tax and now the council tax and one of Liverpool's problems at the moment is that the amount of money you get from central government in terms of revenue support is actually considerably more than the amount you generate, previously from rates, currently from council tax. The amount raised from council tax we take today is a very small amount of money, so when government cuts its funding it really impacts on local budgets.

JF. But at the time I remember talking to Tony Travis who now is at the LSE, obviously you know him. When I was a member of the NUT Executive, we commissioned him to look at Liverpool's finances, so if you like we did an independent Stonefrost, and he did mention that the Liberal's low- rate policy, which I think in some years was actually below the rate of inflation, was basically triggering off a formula, a RSG formula, which then hit Liverpool harder than other authorities. Is that fair comment?

LS. I say again that the income generated locally by council tax, and before that rates, was not as big as the amount of money received from central government. Now you might argue, you might say, and I would agree with this, that Liverpool suffered if you like a double whammy, because central government didn't favour cities when there was a Conservative Government in terms of its settlement. Perhaps having rate increases below inflation would have affected the formula. I think that's fair comment, but I think you also have to look at this in terms of a broader picture. Firstly, we wanted to govern the city, and we wanted to create a number of policies, not just in terms of income generation, but a whole host of things, where people would say "yes", not just community politics, but all sorts of things, where people would say "yes, we want to vote for them". And interestingly you're looking at the Militant Tendency period, interestingly when we took over on a temporary basis when Militant were expelled, and when we then took over permanently in 1998, when we won 50 seats and I was Leader of the Council, Liverpool was spending less on education, spending below average on education, so that Militant Tendency period, a Militant council period, saw education budgets slashed, and we immediately, and you can check these figures, they stand alone, we immediately increased the spending on education to become above the national average. So, during the Militant period, I don't know whether they inherited this from others, during the Militant period and the Labour minority period, they were spending less, certainly below average on education.

JF. Talking about Militant, I mean with this PhD I'm talking to a lot of Labour politicians, and this is why I am very interested to hear your views as a Liberal Democrat, is that Militant grew in the 1960s from nothing, 40 to 50 people, to at its peak, and we've now more or less hardened this figure, to about 8,000 members nationally, I mean looking at it from outside of the Labour Party, that's quite a phenomenal growth for a Trotskyist revolutionary group which normally gets about 2,000 and sticks at that. How do you, what do you think about that growth, how do you think that happened? And especially in Liverpool?

LS. I think it happened for a number of factors and these are not in any particular order. First of all, you had a Labour leadership that was quite benign to what was going on. So John Hamilton who was the leader of the Labour group, a lovely charming guy, I always remember him doffing his cap every time he passed people

JF. And his cardigan!

MS. And his cardigan! A lovely, lovely person, a genuine, working Labour councillor, but he allowed the entryism to happen, that's first of all, and he always found reasons you know even when it was pointed out what you realised about this person, he would say "No, no, no", and some of the lunatic things that were going on, he would say "No, no, no". His genuine socialist and Quaker background saw no ill in anybody. And then behind him you had this charismatic, some might say film star character, in Hatton, who was touchy – feely, "You're all right, lad. Great". Then behind him you had Tony Byrne and Tony Mulhearn who were real political operators, quite, quite, ruthless. So that was the canvas. And then you had two other things that happened. One is a very popular message. They had a very popular message. And the message was, and the council workforce was something like 21,000 in those days

JF. 32,000

MS. 32,000 was it? A huge number. And it was 'No cuts in jobs or services.' It was the private sector is the enemy. No realisation that actually you needed to work with the private sector to create wealth in this very poor city, you had to do a combination of both. But that was a popular message amongst the public sector. Secondly there was absolute fear, absolute fear, of, in certain quarters, because they could be absolutely ruthless. One only has to remember, and again it's full circle, the Harthill gardeners who refused to go on one of the days of action, and what happened is their greenhouses were demolished and they were pushed off somewhere.

JF. And their orchid collection!

MS. And their orchid collection! And senior officers, who you thought were 'civil servants', politically neutral, suddenly in fear of their jobs and their pensions, suddenly started acquiescing and doing things which they shouldn't do. Possibly the one exception was Ken Antcliffe who just got drunk. Let it all pass over him. So it was quite a frightening time. But I think for a time it was a populist message and it reminds me today of the massive growth in Momentum. It is at that moment when you are facing a difficult time, and local government was facing a difficult time, and somebody comes along with a populist message then it does lead to massive growth. Then if you're prepared not to say your particular objectives are not what this party is about, I can see why it happened.

JF. I mean one thing I found quite problematic at the time, because I was a participant observer, one thing I couldn't understand because the Liberal Party must have realised with the growth of the Labour Party at the turn of the century that you'd lost your traction with trade unions and that during the Liberal era , just before Militant came in, and this is Parkinson again in his book, he talks about how you antagonised the trade unions, rather than tried to bring them along with you. You

were very much an all-inclusive party, you were trying to bring in community groups, the state sector, the private sector, why not the trade unions?

LS. I think you're absolutely right. Perhaps it's easier for me to say this now, remember I was a young councillor who had not been involved in politics at all. I mean I never for one moment thought that I would become a councillor for thirty odd years, and a leader of a council, let alone come here, so this was not what I, I was a rookie really. Looking back on it now, some of the things that we did I think, gosh that is just so mad. I mean – the famous typists' strike. Why would we alienate those women, and they were women, who most of them would be our own supporters, who lived in local communities? They liked our community politics, they liked the fact they could go to their local advice centres, they liked the fact that we were sending a monthly newsletter and knocking on the door all year round, which we did do. We were ingrained in those local communities. Why offend those? Why have the social workers' strike? A chilling moment for me was when I walked into 14 Sir Thomas St, and there was a picket on the gate, and one of my best friends Kath McDonnell who was a social worker, was on the picket line and I just stopped and it made me realise, obviously I have to take responsibility as well, but I think the leadership just got that totally wrong and I think that's sometimes the nature of politics that you get so caught up in your own thinking, your own position, that you do some stupid things. Clearly, not working with the trade unions, and perhaps regarding the trade unions as the opposition, was not a sensible thing.

JF. I mean did you not realise that about 50%of the trade unions in the City Council were actually not affiliated to the Labour Party? NALGO and NUT were just two examples, and really, I felt at the time that a lot of Liberal Democrat councillors saw the union movement as Labour, whereas when you look at the voting patterns of many of the unions, many of their members didn't vote Labour. And certain sections of the unions were alienated from you.

LS. I think another factor and this is you're right, it is very hard for a small party, I think we were probably getting 6% or 7% nationally, it is very hard for a small party who has a clear philosophy, a radical party, with roots in all sorts of things, to grow from twenty odd councillors to suddenly 48, and you pick up a lot of people who perhaps do not have the same political philosophy as you. They want to be something and not do something, and the difference was that when I led, my party to victory in 1998, there had been a proper growth. It hadn't been going from a couple of dozen to 48. It had been a gradual growth and we actually did some good things with the trade unions. For example, we took people from the bottom of the pay scale and moved them all up. So, the relationship was much improved.

JF. Just one quick question and I think I can let you go then. When the money ran out in the Militant era, and they issued all the redundancy notices, at that point did you feel in any way, or have contact in any way with central government about what was going to happen? Did you have any contact at all? I know I'm asking you, Mike, to give a confidence, but all these people are retired now, and I'm trying to get at, did you have any contact with the government on any contingency plans which you might have to bring in?

LS. I'm not aware of that but, Trevor Jones was very close to Michael Heseltine and I just don't know. If you remember Patrick Jenkin was Secretary of State for local government at the time. Michael Heseltine was minister at the time of the so-called Toxteth Riots. I would be very surprised if there were not contingency plans in place. What I can tell you and you'll be surprised at this, I am aware that the security forces were very much involved on the ground.

JF. In what way?

LS. They were very nervous about where this could lead to. Remember it took the riots to bring Margaret Thatcher to Liverpool. You had these huge demonstrations, pickets, it was a very difficult time, and I think, well I know, government was nervous about where it was all going to lead to. I'm telling you on and off the record, that I think that a Liberal councillor, actually elected, was working for MI5 or MI6, whichever one it is that does that. There was evidence of that.

JF. Really?

LS. So I think certainly, I would have thought, I've never said this before, certainly at a national level, of course we know government all the time keeps an eye on things, and worries about things, and has to put in place contingency plans, and I would be very surprised if there had not been contact with, even though the Chief Executive was quite a weak and vacillating person, a nice person but weak and vacillating. I'm sure there must have been some, if not through him, other officers. I would not have been surprised if there hadn't been contact, or contact with councillors, I mean there were still Conservatives on the council as well. So, there must have been contingency plans. But certainly, the security forces were engrained in, engrained is not the right word, help me out?

JF. Embedded?

LS. Embedded! Thank you. Were embedded in Liverpool at the time to see what was going on. You also have to remember, you will remember, we produced a document called 'How Militant Sacked a City', I think I've still got a copy if I can dig it out I'll send it to you.

JF. How Militant what?

LS. 'How Militant Sacked a City'. We went through every department and showed how the monies were channelled away and cut. You remember in Education there were no allowances. There was in those days the Books, Stationery and Materials Allowance (BSM). Schools, for two to three years, didn't get any money for BSM. This was before LMS, school-based budgets, this was when local authorities gave schools their budget lines directly. Here's the money for staffing, here's the money for administration, here's the money for BSM, and for three or four years they got no money at all. I remember my wife who was at Childwall Comprehensive, in the PE department, they had no new equipment for three years. That was what was going on.

JF. Yes. Were you relieved in a way when the NUT took the legal action to quash the redundancy notices and the Militant strategy collapsed. Were you relieved about

that or did you see your advantage slipping away in terms of taking over the running of the city?

LS. Well, no, I think that things had got so bad, and also there was, you can, I don't know if you agree with me on this. You forget, I mentioned how worried the government was about how things were going, but there was an atmosphere that was really quite frightening in Liverpool. I was a youngish politician and when you are young you don't worry or think about things and I can, I can honestly tell you there were several occasions where I was in a dangerous situation with Militant Tendency and it was all a bit bizarre really because you would, on the education side the Labour spokesperson was Margaret Delaney and the Tory was Chris Hallows and we would go into the Poste House pub at the back of the Education Offices, three different parties and Derek Hatton would say "How are you, Mike? Good to see you" and there was a sort of friendship, a camaraderie, between political parties. While all this was going on there was still a friendship between politicians. I mean our spokesperson on Personnel was Pam Bradley and she was a great friend of Derek Hatton.

JF. That's right.

LS. But she, by God, she was a tough operator was Pam. She'd lay into him at committee meetings and have a go at him. And officers would leak stuff to her, to Pam, and she'd be there. But that sort of political friendship was going on, but at the same time it was also quite a dangerous place. I mean on three occasions my car tyres were slashed. One occasion, my parents, I took a party of kids from a school where I was working to mid-Wales for the weekend. While I was away my parents had been phoned and there was a death threat against me. Honestly. When I came back to my house in Alderson Road a police officer was standing guard, I mean my terraced house in Kensington. It was bizarre. I didn't think anything of it. But there was that sort of fear.

JF. It did get very ugly.

LS. It did get very ugly and I don't think it ever really, well perhaps it did come across at the time, but I think that's always been forgotten how ugly and frightening it was.

JF. I got the 40 pieces of silver.

LS. I'm sure you did. (Laughter)

JF. Over my head.

LS. So, we can reflect on the big issues like rate support grant and education and entryism and there's almost a comparison now with some of the Labour MPs in Liverpool who are facing real bullying and abuse, not from the Labour Party but certain members of the Labour Party. The tactics we saw in that period, at union meetings two or three people constantly attacking people, putting amendments down, people got fed up of attending union meetings. So that small group was then able to take over the branch. That was a very clever tactic, but people in the end thought why am I going to a union meeting to have all these insults hurled at me? I

just don't want to do that. Then that is the opportunity for that group with a strong political agenda to take over.

JF. It's been said a few times that the Trotskyist way of organising something is that they don't mind walking into a carcass. They'll destroy an organisation quite happily to walk into it. Do you feel that?

LS. Yes, very much so.

JF. Yes, and with union branches that's what they did. With many of the union branches, now of course nationally, they've made great inroads at the highest level. Right, well thanks very much.

APPENDIX 24

Interview with Peter Taaffe, General Secretary of the Socialist Party of England and Wales, at their London Office at 3.00pm on Monday 5th November 2018.

In the Interview Peter Taaffe will be referred to as **PT** and James Ferguson as **JF**.

PT. I am Peter Taaffe; I am the General Secretary of the Socialist Party of England and Wales.

JF. This is a sort of general question which I have been asking all the interviewees, regardless of their political position. In the mid-sixties, from your book, you write there were 40 or 50 of you around the Militant Tendency, very small and then you grew to, I think everybody agrees, in the mid-eighties to over 8000.

PT. 8000 committed supporters with a much bigger layer of political supporters around us.

JF. I am just taking the figure from your book the *Rise of Militant*. That's a phenomenal growth like normally because obviously you look at other parties or groups or sects whatever you like to call them on the revolutionary left of politics, they tend to grow to about 2000 and stop, they don't seem to get past that. You managed to do that. It's quite spectacular when you think Plaid Cymru has about 8000 members, so it's quite an achievement. How did you do it?

PT. It was very simple and yet complex as always with questions and issues of this character. We started off as a very small group, but where we differed from others like the Socialist Workers Party, let's say who were rivals of ours on what the commentators would call the far left, I would say the Marxist left, the first thing is to clarify the need for a political programme, what you stand for. But that is not sufficient just to outline a programme, otherwise every little group would become a significant force, even a mass party. We had mass influence at a certain stage, for instance in Liverpool and in the poll tax campaign. We decided that we had to concentrate our forces on the Labour Party. I was already a member of the Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS) and the Labour Party before I became a committed Marxist/Trotskyist. I was won to those ideas in the Labour Party itself. And what differentiated our grouping from others is we believed we had to situate our forces within the mass organisations of the working class. In Britain, whether we like it or not, that's the Labour Party and the trade unions. And they were the twin pillars upon which initially we built. We could not have made the progress that we made, which you have mentioned, just on the basis of propaganda alone. It had to be linked to the change in the objective situation, of the state of capitalism, the inevitable ups and downs in the labour movement. At the end of the 1950s there was a radical mood and some movements which was reflected in the campaign

against the threat of nuclear war. I was politically won to what became Militant. To begin with, we had a little journal called Socialist Fight. Our opponents used to joke and say it was produced so infrequently, that they called it 'Socialist Flight', here today and gone tomorrow! We were that small in terms of the mass organisations of the working class, the Labour Party. But we were located inside the Labour Party, what we considered, and still is the case up to a point now with Corbyn, the mass expression of the trade union organisations that were the voice of the working class in Britain, which grew to great strength in the 1950s and 60s in particular.

I was recruited from this radical campaign, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). We also gained support from the youth, particularly from the powerful young workers apprentices' strike of 1960, when key young workers like Ted Mooney and Terry Harrison supported Socialist Fight. This movement had widespread support on Merseyside.

JF. It was based around Birkenhead.

PT. Well, it was a national strike. There were two strikes, one in 1960, one in 1964. The former Manchester United manager, Alex Ferguson, as a young worker participated in the apprentices strike in Scotland. It involved hundreds of thousands of apprenticeships which are largely gone now because of de-industrialisation. However, they carried through a very successful strike that extracted concessions from the employers. We later emulated them in the apprentices' strike in which I played an important role. I officially worked for Liverpool City council in the housing department on Dale Street. We organised the general strike of apprentices in the North West and elsewhere when about 30,000 came out in 1964-65 and we won a victory. We concentrated our work at that stage in the mass influx of young people into the Labour Party and the Labour Party Young Socialists. We advocated the need for a socialist alternative to the Tories and so on, and we worked assiduously not just in the Labour Party, in fact hardly ever, but really in the youth wing of the Labour Party. We built up our position from having nothing, a small group in Liverpool, the Deane's who you probably know of.

JF. Jimmy Deane, Frank Deane.

PT. Arthur and Brian Deane, Gertie Deane, heroic individuals who kept the flame of socialism and Marxism alive, and we continued and built on that work. Our rival, at least on Merseyside, was not the Socialist Workers Party but the Socialist Labour League, later the Workers Revolutionary Party of Gerry Healy who were Trotskyists in name but used very dubious methods to gain support. I won't develop this but they tried to use semi-hooligan methods to win support. They had a weekly paper and they were much stronger than us in the initial stages. We worked in the Young Socialists and eventually won a majority in Merseyside, and then we spread nationally. In the late 60s we won the support of the majority in the Labour Party Young Socialists and then we turned into the Labour Party.

JF. Would you say, Peter, that a key factor in your growth historically was that you built from the Young Socialists?

PT. Yes, from the Young Socialists and the Labour Party but moreover we had the foresight to see where the next big movement of the working class was likely to come. And the change in the objective situation, the post-war boom that lasted from 1950 to 1975, had not exhausted itself. Moreover, the growth of capitalism saw wealth increase four times over. The working class experienced real material gains, in living standards, in housing and the rest, with which you are familiar and there is no gainsaying that capitalism was successful. The ideas therefore of reformism also grew. 'Today is better than yesterday and tomorrow will be a lot better' had a certain material base. We nevertheless based ourselves on the perspective that capitalism would crash at a certain stage and also on the traditions of the British working class, in relation to the trade unions for instance. They defeated Gaitskell in the late 1950s, when he tried to abolish Clause IV, Part 4 of the Labour Party constitution. In contrast in Germany the Social democracy under Willie Brandt, at its Bad Godesberg conference did succeed in abolishing its clause which reflected the party's socialist aspirations. In Britain the attempt to remove Clause IV was defeated primarily by the instinctive attitude of the trade unions. It wasn't initially the left in the Labour Party**,** the Tribune Group who objected. In fact, it was Tribune that first flew the white flag at that particular stage. The trade unions instinctively opposed this attempt to transform the Labour Party into a pro-capitalist liberal party. That aim of the 1950s and early 1960s was only completed by Blair in the 1990s through what we considered was a political counter-revolution.

JF. Would you say Peter then as you did all these campaigns about, Clause IV, for instance, you've just mentioned. Do you think within the Labour Party then, people saw you as a magnet? Militant as a magnet?

PT. Yes, politically clear and energetic.

JF. Yes, so if they had similar ideas to you and wanted to be part of some organised opposition, you were the obvious candidates.

PT. Well, we had rivals on the left like Tribune, and then those around Tony Benn nationally. They had bigger organisations at one stage, but we managed to convince the youth, not on the basis of 'bedsit infiltrators', and all of that nonsense; no serious person believes that kind of propaganda. It was based upon assiduous work. It was based upon the most hard- working section of the Labour Party doing routine tasks like canvassing, working in the Labour Party, moving resolutions to the local General Management Committees, to the Merseyside Labour Party and then of course fighting consistently nationally. We won over politically the majority of the Labour Party Young Socialists to our point of view.

In the Labour Party we managed to get Andy Bevan, a supporter of ours, appointed as its National Youth Officer in 1976. You can check out what the Labour Party allowed politically to its youth section at that stage. They actually published on the

60th anniversary of the Russian revolution, a pamphlet celebrating the revolution written by the Labour Party Young Socialists themselves, paid for and distributed by the Labour Party. This was not the first time the party had publicised Marxist ideas. You have to remember that Harold Laski defended the Communist Manifesto in 1948 on its centenary. Then the Labour Party was not at all completely inclusive of all socialists, let alone Marxists. The Communist Party traditionally attracted very good people who rejected the Labour Party as opportunist, as compromising with the capitalist system. My own father was on the periphery of the Communist Party; in fact a lot of the militants of the Communist Party when I became active, referred to my father. He was a ship-building worker, when we lived in one of the poorest areas of Birkenhead, I was brought up on the accounts of the so-called 'riots' of 1932 when Birkenhead rose as one in opposition to the imposition of the Poor Law and the cuts in unemployment pay, where the Communist Party played a very important role in the Birkenhead movement. It's all part of working-class history.

JF. I get the picture now Peter.

One part of this thesis is the growth and various people mention that. The next thing I'm interested in is managerially, the Labour Party had two reports about your organisation.

PT. Yes, the Underhill report.

JF. Yes, that was put on one side, what's the trade union term? Lay on the table, and the second one was Ron Hayward's report, and that had a similar fate didn't it?

PT. Actions arose from both indirectly and over a period of time.

JF. What I'm asking you, this PhD, its looking back, a lot of people have either retired or whatever and they can look back and say on reflection, and each of the interviewees have been prepared to say, we may have done it this way or that way.

How come you managed to survive these two reports?

PT. That's a very good question.

JF. You did, didn't you?

PT. Yes, we grew to become even stronger**.** It's because of the influence we'd built up. Remember these reports were produced while we were growing, and so was the left who were prepared at that stage to defend us against the right wing.

JF. It was 1975, I think.

PT. Well, that was very apposite because while we were growing there were two reactions to this. There was what I call the Labour machine, the professional bureaucrats if you like, many of them were ok, their heart was in the right place in the sense that they wanted to see an improvement in the conditions of working people.

However, they didn't agree with our ideas, they thought we were too 'extreme'; our ideas were not possible to implement**.** They wanted to find an organisational answer to a political problem from their point of view. Why were we growing at this stage? The idea that this was because of our **'**skulduggery**'** or 'manoeuvring' was ridiculous. We built up an authority and support from other lefts, who basically had the position that if 'they (the right) come for you in the morning, they will come for us in the afternoon'. We don't agree with you on many things, but we have to keep a certain agreement, amongst the left that we defend whatever gains the left have made in the Labour Party. In that sense we collaborated with Tony Benn, very closely, I've been to his house and debated and discussed important issues with him. We were building up this position in the Labour Party Young Socialists and then there was the famous incident of Nora Beloff (we used to call her Nora 'Ballsoff') from the Observer who wrote an article, inspired by Underhill and the rest of them, that we had a secret organisation with huge cash reserves, which was in the process of taking over the Labour Party **'**by stealth**'**.

JF. But some would say Peter, I've looked at the National Executive Committee minutes, that discussed the Underhill Report and have also done a trawl of biographies, like Barbara Castle's view of what happened which is unusual really.

PT. Barbara Castle was peripheral at that stage.

JF. Basically, from what I can gather, the people around that report at the time, particularly the Underhill Report, they felt if they get away with expelling Militant, others will follow. Did you feel that?

PT. Yes, of course, we said that to the left. And the left agreed with us. People like Tom Sawyer, who was on the left at that time, coming from the trade union NUPE into the Labour Party, was then on the left and agreed with us. But in the 1970s we were very relatively small in the Labour Party, but we weren't small in the LPYS, and the Underhill Report was calculated to cut off the head of Militant. This task was completed, they thought**,** by Hayward in the early 1980s. To begin with Michael Foot defended us along with others on the left. However, they then changed their position, which was contrary to everything that they had stood for previously. Their mantra was that we (Militant) weren't 'general' lefts – these people are Marxists – they are serious. They actually intend to do what they have said, fight cuts in jobs and services, resort to 'needs' budgets, because at that stage we were getting an echo inside of the Labour Party, we were visible at the Labour Party conferences and so on, and they calculated that a lot of these Militant supporters are good young people, nice young people, but if we cut off the head – the leadership – then the body will die. So they decided to expel me along with four other members of the Militant Editorial Board: Ted Grant, Keith Dickenson, Clare Doyle and Lynn Walsh, two of whom are in the building at the moment, and they thought that was it. However, our biggest gains actually came after that. They came in Liverpool with the selection of Terry Fields as a parliamentary candidate and his subsequent election as an MP; with the selection in Bradford North of Pat Wall, a son of Liverpool, a tremendous

orator and speaker; it came in relation to Dave Nellist in Coventry South-East, who also built up a colossal reputation. He's still around; he is speaking at our Socialism event later this year. He got the support on the basis of standing shoulder to shoulder with the likes of Jeremy Corbyn in the Parliamentary Labour Party in relation to his assiduous work, and the role he played in relation not just to the battles in the Labour Party but on the broad front of what happened in Liverpool.

JF. Were you aware, you probably weren't because it was such a secret organisation, have you read Diane Hayter's book "Fightback"?

PT. Yes.

JF. Thought you would somehow.

PT. 'Hayter of the bourgeoisie', she was called, when she was in the Mandelite IMG.

JF. After those two reports were shelved.

PT. They weren't shelved, Jim.

JF. **They** weren't acted upon.

PT. They were a kind of a slow-burning fuse.

JF. They sat on the table. They were not pleased with that and they formed the 'St Ermin's Group'. You launched the Socialist Party from that hotel didn't you?

PT. We did later on.

JF. That's amazing.

PT. Jeremy Paxman interviewed me on Newsnight at that time in entirely different circumstances.

JF. The St Ermin's group. Diane Hayter blowing her own trumpet with her book, but they certainly did get very well organised, and their sole aim, well their two aims according to the book, and that is regain control of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party and expel Militant that was their twin aims. At the time did you get any inkling that they were meeting?

PT. Yes – I mean you had only to go back to the expulsion of Denis Healey. The right wing in the past going right back to 1931 were always organised. I appeared in a very publicised debate with Tony Mulhearn at the Labour Party conference on the whole question of re-selection which was coming up and we were opposed by John Spellar, the Black Country MP; we used to call him 'ex-Spellar'!

JF. Of course, he was a leading light.

PT. He's still there continuing his dirty work now. 'Ex-Spellar**'**. They said Militant is organised, with so many full timers, etc. Our reply was: of course, we are organised, so is the right wing. Their complaint was that we were and are better organised than they were. That's their real complaint. If it's political, let's discuss the politics, we'll

face up to any question they raise, including the false idea that Marxism advocates violence and the rest of it. We'll confront all of that on a political basis and, of course, we'll answer it by quoting examples from history. Of course, they wanted to move the discussion onto the terrain of a 'sinister organisation', and they linked that with money, like they are doing with Labour at the present time with anti-semitism; the tune changes but the theme is the same. As with anti-semitism, that was the same as the attempt to malign us, but it did not succeed within the labour movement and it did not succeed in Liverpool because the concrete facts of what was done by the Liverpool City Council was a material expression of our arguments, which were that reforms were always a by-product of struggle. You don't get improvements in living standards just by asking for them; it's as a result of struggle. So, we knew about the St Ermin hotel and the plots of the right.

We concluded that we have to carry on, we have to continue to struggle; if we are expelled from the Labour Party, so long as it remains, you know as a good Communist Party member yourself, what Lenin had said that it's a bourgeois workers' party at the top, a workers' party, from below, we have to orientate to it.

That contradiction has been inherent right from the formation of the Labour Party. It has got a unique character unlike the top-down centralisation of social democracy in Europe**.** In Britain it was formed because of the power of the trade unions. In other countries, the party was formed first by Marxists, like in Germany, and then it developed a trade union base. However, that organic connection of the Labour Party with the trade unions is still a big problem for the right wing, even for Blair and the rest of them, and ultimately that's what saved the Labour. When Blair came to power, and he made no secret of this. it was not an accident when Margaret Thatcher was asked, what was your greatest achievement? She said "Tony Blair" because she realised the ruling class had wished and struggled to transform the Labour Party into the British equivalent of the Democratic Party, shorn of its socialist base and its trade union connections and no longer a vehicle for the working class, as an alternative to the Liberals or Tories. Now the dialectic of history is that the Democrats in the US are beginning, under the hammer blows of Trump, to turn to the left, at least at their base, and a new mass party will develop out of this, in our opinion.

JF. And certain Democrats are now standing as socialist candidates.

PT. That's right. In fact, our co-thinkers in the US have a good relationship with them as we had with many in the Labour Party.

JF. One thing I'm interested in is the old man himself [pointing to a photo of Trotsky on Peter Taaffe's office wall]. I know you don't like the word 'entryism', but Trotsky did use that word.

PT. Yes, he did.

JF. In the 1930s he gave up trying to be the left revolutionaries in the Communist Party because they had to give it up as basically a hopeless cause.

PT. Well, it was after the German debacle of 1933 when the disastrous policy of refusing to form a united front between the social democrats and the Communist Party allowed Hitler, in his own words, to take power without a pane of glass being broken. There was no discussion within the Communist International and its parties so Trotsky concluded, of course you can have a mass influence and still retain a base but of largely unthinking members. He therefore concluded that the road to the Communist Party is for the time being closed. Then you had the revolutionary events of Spain, you had the upheavals in France, you had the Socialist Party of France fracturing between right and left.

JF. Which I think was the first example of 'entryism'.

PT. Well actually the first proposal of so-called 'Entryism' was in Britain. It was quite open but that was because he didn't have any forces inside the Labour Party. The real problem of the Labour Party during my lifetime was not entryism but 'exitism' of layers of workers who leave disappointed with right-wing policies.

JF. Can we stick to my thesis? How does this square up with entryism (I then quote the final paragraph of the Communist manifesto by K. Marx and F. Engels).

"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win."

PT. Wonderful words but let me explain.

JF. How does that fit with entryism?

PT. Well, when you say 'Entryism' I think that's a false term.

JF. Could you explain for the tape your criticism of entryism as a term?

PT. Entryism, as applied to us in particular, the first of many issues in the Labour Party of the recent period of the last 50 years, was coined in order to give the impression of a small, sinister group entering the Labour Party to take it over. The argument was that we were not really adherents to the Labour Party, its aims and objectives. I'm quoting here the terminology the right uses. We dispute that. We joined the Labour Party in good faith because it was a federal party; it had the trade unions. If you talk about entryism, why now under Blair or under the present leader Jeremy Corbyn does the Co-op Party have its own structure, have its own NEC, its own conference, and yes sends delegates to that conference? That has existed in the past **i**n the original basis of the Labour Party. From your history you will know that Communist MPs were elected and represented Labour.

JF. This is interesting, you are saying that the parallel is between yourself and the Co-op Party; you would like to have been an affiliate to the party.

PT. Exactly, in fact that's what we are arguing now.

We've applied to re-join the Labour Party on an affiliate basis, openly, shattering all this stuff about a secret party, but if you compel a police regime on a party of full-time officials whose main job is to police the ranks against 'dangerous ideas', you promote a secretive organisation because the criteria for being a member of the Labour Party is that you don't organise a separate conference, etc.

The right-wing organisations opposed to us, including the St Ermin group, what are they, but a right-wing party within a party?

Better to say openly, we are a party united by these basic principles, but we are unified on a federal basis and that's the way the Labour Party was constituted in the beginning.

JF. Put the Co-op Party aside for one second, I can see why you are using that as a parallel argument. Your critics of which you've got quite a few, not you personally but the Militant Tendency at the time in the 80s.

PT. Of course.

JF. They would say and I got hold of Jack Straw's papers on this, a fellow called Michael Gregory who was one of your members resigned, collected a load of minutes together which I've got, gave them to Jack Straw, and used them as a basis to expel some of your members in Blackburn.

PT. One of the first by the way.

JF. That's right, it was at the beginning. I've got the minutes of these meetings and if the minutes are genuine, and I've got no reason to believe they're not, it shows to me that the minutes as they were taken, they're almost the minutes of a political party, that was running in parallel with the Labour Party. When you read them there's no doubt about it.

PT. We dispute that is the case. From your point of view, of what you and Jack Straw are claiming, we were a party within a party. But my contention is many other organisations had minutes, collected money, had this kind of 'discipline', they were organised, but I repeat they were not as well organised as us, because of the political ideas that we had. If you're going to combat an organisation – and after all this is a broad party, it's not a narrow party, it's not a communist party in which the parameters are quite clear, its doctrines are quite clear – you say this is what you signed up for, this is a broad formation, with different trends and tendencies within it.

Why do you think we were allowed to operate as the Militant Tendency?

JF. This is the interesting bit, I'm glad you have got to it. It seems to me that the British Labour Party seemed to have developed totally differently to social

democratic parties on the continent. In the sense that they (the Labour Party) grew up as an affiliate body, they almost grew in a disorganised way, obviously they got more and more MPs. The party as a structure, never had a well-defined structure, it was make do and mend so from that point of view, what you're basically saying is the Labour Party acquiesced in affiliates like the Co-op, Tribune, the St Ermin's group and any other group therefore why did they pick on us?

PT. Yes.

JF. They picked on you because you were electorally unpopular, some people would say, I know you don't agree with that.

PT. What about Liverpool?

JF. People, your critics, say you had to go because you were unpopular with the electorate.

PT. My short answer is Neil Kinnock used that as his central argument in his infamous speech in 1985**;** that by expelling us he was going to win Labour 10 years in power. A Labour MP in Merseyside, dead now from Scotland Road, I knew him quite well, said at this time Kinnock is the Ramsay McDonald of the labour movement**,** which is very accurate, if he had won an election! I was present when he made that speech. This**,** Kinnock said, was going to win the election. And Kinnock lost every election in which he was leader. It was only the expulsion of Militant, first of the Editorial Board, then of others, which allowed the counter-revolution carried through by Blair to triumph temporarily. The Corbyn revolution has now made it possible – not inevitable – that the Labour Party could be made fit for purpose for the working class.

There are people like Jim O'Neill, a big capitalist, who say, 'Well a Corbyn government can't be any worse than a Tory Government'. O'Neill is a bourgeois down to his boot laces. However, he argues that if there's an increase in wages (under a Corbyn government), it'll increase the market, it'll increase demand, and that will be 'good for us' (the bosses). This is the man who coined the acronym 'BRICS' about Brazil, Russia, India and so on to represent the new economic powerhouses of capitalism, which could renew the life of the system. That perspective has now been shattered by the endemic crisis of world capitalism.

They're empirical, they don't have any great 'principles'; he argues that if you have a movement that doesn't threaten immediately our interest, then so be it. He is saying what other sections of the ruling class are saying that the programme of Corbyn is not as radical as even the SDP split of 1983! It's a kind of mild reformism, but who knows what can happen if John McDonnell is Labour chancellor against the background of another economic crisis and the pressure that's then exerted on him to go much further and carry through measures in the interests of working people and where's that going to lead? You've already got an enduring crisis in Britain, with wage increases the lowest since the Napoleonic wars, and an accumulation of

anger, that will come to the fore in the next period. It will open the floodgates and Corbyn doesn't have unlimited support, there's a certain scepticism: is he going to deliver?

The same with John McDonnell. The labour movement was poised for a breakthrough with a Labour government coming to power, but the right have raised the issue of the 'electoral popularity' of Corbyn. However, the right has not been successful in its campaign. We were successful in Merseyside. We refused to take power in 1982 when there was the prospect of a minority Labour council, which would then be expected to do the dirty work of big business and we said, 'No' fight for a majority Labour council. That is how Labour got the power in 1983. It was quite incredible what happened. The miners' strike was taking place at the time. Thatcher didn't want to fight on two fronts.

JF. And so was the teachers' strike.

PT. Yes, the teachers' strike.

JF. Which you don't mention in your book.

PT. I think you made a number of mistakes in the leadership of the NUT but that's another question.

You supported the people who wanted to de-rail the movement itself.

So, if you're going to accuse us, or anybody, or the right in Liverpool that we were not electorally popular, it's contradicted by the record. Then when Anderson comes to power, well he came later, he's an ex-member.

JF. Joe Anderson? The Mayor of Liverpool?

PT. Yes, he's an ex-member of our organisation. We were the biggest 'left' organisation in Britain, and now our 'ex-members of the Militant' are quite a substantial number. When the right wing had the power, they let the Liberals back in to wreak their damage. The position of Labour now – the councillors are absolutely rotten – is not a 'dented shield', it's no shield at all, Jim. You must recognise that with the position of the schools now. Even Tory councillors are giving up and they're saying we can't carry on any longer, the government should come in and take over. They don't need commissioners to do the dirty work, it's rooted in the situation.

JF. Would you describe Militant as an organisation following a kind of a vanguard model?

PT. Well, that term again is not an accurate phrase of what Lenin meant. Let's speak in terms of Lenin**.** Any workers' party is a selection of the most combative individuals, men and women, youth, so on and so forth. They are in general the most politically developed; I would say the most politically advanced and consider themselves one step ahead of the rest of the class**.**

JF. More politically conscious

PT. Yes, but I think that the term **'**vanguard**'** has become an exclusive and therefore false term in the hands of certain left organisations who proclaim 'we are the vanguard', this is the programme you should fight on. That's not the way Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky dealt with this question of the programme. This was derived from the historical experience of the working class and their current experience; you have to learn from the working class in struggle.

JF. Yes, but didn't Lenin use the vanguard model because he had to? Before the revolution, I looked at the survey that Trotsky did in the 1917 congress of the Bolsheviks and there was an incredible list, out of the 170 delegates there were five years in jail or being exiled to Siberia or all manner of deprivations, and they were, you can't use the word paranoid, but they were very very careful about police spies and therefore the vanguard model in terms of a semi-military model was designed for internal security because if they didn't have internal security the penalties were pretty dire, so I think Lenin did support the vanguard model because he had no alternative.

PT. Yes and no I think it's a two-sided question it's a dialectical question –a two-sided issue. On the one side, yes in an underground situation you have centralism predominating over democracy, if you like formal democracy. This does not mean to say there are no democratic structures even in the underground; even under fascism that wasn't possible in Germany or France or in the occupied areas, so you had the democratic structures. It goes back to democratic centralism which has nothing in common with the Stalinist and social democratic model of bureaucratic centralism where everything is decided from the top with the minimum of formal democracy. You can be consulted but you don't enter into the process of working out policy of correcting the leadership on occasions. I would not want to be a member, whether it was me or anybody else, who had unlimited power, not corrected by the self-conscious rank and file.

JF. Let me give you some examples where your critics in Liverpool in the eighties would say Militant was being very 'vanguardist' for instance, the biggest example was the issuing of the redundancy notices.

PT. That was a mistake.

JF. Nobody but nobody thought that wasn't going to create a problem with the trade union movement now who ever made that decision and I still don't know who made it. Whoever made that decision that must have come from some centralised decision making, because even if it was spread out to the first layer of leadership, they would say hold on a second.

PT. And they did.

JF. How did that work?

PT. I opposed it when I found out about it and I'm the general secretary and was then the editor, one of the top two leaders if you like.

JF. And you opposed it?

PT. Of course, I did. I opposed it as soon as I heard it publically on the radio one morning. First of all, people like Derek Hatton and Tony Byrne, who was not a supporter, and he was mainly responsible for that and other mistakes, proposed this a tactic because of the exigencies of the situation with the funding gap. So, the argument was, we could get over this because by this device **–** our backs were against the wall**,** etc. This was late 1985 but it was a major mistake and we said this at the time. By the way we've said it to you, we've said it in our book we said it publicly and we said it to our comrades. When I heard that on the morning it was announced on the BBC, I held my head, when Kinnock heard it, he said to Charles Clark he was on Wigan station.

JF. Preston station

PT. Preston yes.

JF. Sorry to correct you.

PT. Very good. He said, "I've got them, I've got them now."

And the reason why he said that is because precisely in a most disloyal fashion they consciously distorted what was being proposed. I said to Derek Hatton, it's a major mistake; it's going to be used against you. Politics is a bit like algebra: its content is filled out by events and experience, and an enemy who wants to exploits your phrases will do so. If I was Kinnock, I would use this to give an impression that you wanted to sack the whole of the workforce (thirty thousand) but it had nothing to do with that. The intentions of the councillors were good but the road to hell is paved with good intentions. It was a major mistake.

JF. Who made the decision?

PT. Well, a group of comrades in the Council; I'm not going to put the knife in them now. Tony Mulhearn wasn't one of them; he was as equally as opposed as I was. The late Tony Byrne made a mistake, and, by the way, I am not just saying this to you, I said it to their faces and said if you make a mistake like this, or like you made in relation to the vote for strike action in 1985 with the teachers, if you made a mistake, say so openly.

JF. Just for the record I put forward the resolution for the strike.

PT. And it was defeated.

JF. It was defeated very narrowly.

PT. In fact, I think I said that.

JF. Just a fact. People came up to me after and said how come this decision was made, the meeting was in works time, so they had no excuse not to come and I think about 200 people on the so-called left were criticising us from a pub.

PT. That was a decisive event; it changed the whole situation.

JF. We gave the stage to Derek; he actually spoke to the members first. I proposed the motion to do it, but they voted against it very narrowly but voted against it.

PT. Well good on you and I would record that. Nevertheless, the Communist Party was like a brake on the Liverpool struggle.

JF. What I am saying for the record, the branch committee was unanimous that we should support the resolution for the one-day strike. It was a measured decision. I mean we weren't saying that we will take a one-day strike and then everything after that, we said let's start off.

PT. It was a leap in the dark, but it definitely had an effect on the manual workers.

JF. It was a disappointment to a lot of people but the thing about a mass meeting in trade union terms, the teacher unions never had mass meetings. It was the first one we ever had so we had the entire membership in the Empire, your book said the Philharmonic never mind (laughter), the Philharmonic was too small for us and it was in the Empire and it was an unknown quantity.

PT. I remember sitting in the annexe discussing with the comrades; we did not have mobiles then. The late Ted Grant argued after the decision was taken, we should get the manual workers to cross the picket lines. I said that would be an absolute disaster with the struggles on the picket lines; now we had to make a strategic retreat.

JF. I'm glad you mentioned Ted Grant because that's the next thing I wanted to go on to. I've read a lot of stuff from Ted Grant and I've read your criticism of some of the stuff that he was writing in terms of the crisis of capitalism is just round the corner with this event and that event and of course it wasn't. However, Ted Grant, by the way, the ethics in that whenever I quote someone who is deceased, I try to use an autobiography or something they have written, they don't have any rights when they are dead.

PT. I am not about to die! (laughter)

JF. With regards to Ted Grant now it seems to me both of you were wrong. Looking at this as an observer that Ted Grant was saying that according to Trotsky's theory, and I know you don't like the term entryism, but entryism was a short-term measure where the party would grow and come out and stand on its own two feet as an independent organisation. Eventually you pioneered that because you said we will come out and we will become the Socialist Party.

PT. The exigencies of history

JF. Yes, now Ted Grant is saying don't do that. Ok I think 250 members of Militant were expelled so what! Let's just carry on you know and do what we have to form a Socialist Party. Although he said 8000 was still a sizable number it was infinitesimal

compared with the membership of the Labour Party. Do you think it was a mistake doing the Walton by- election, the anti-poll tax in Scotland and breaking off and forming the Socialist Party?

PT. We didn't form the Socialist Party immediately.

JF. I know you went through a couple of stages but what do you think about Ted Grant and Rob Sewell?

PT. They made up history ex-post facto frankly, because on either side there is a short- term tactic, a long- term tactic and so on. Working in the Labour Party had come to an end by the end of the 1980s because of internal developments in Labour: the shift towards the right which affected not just us but Tony Benn, and this resulted in the real left being reduced to a handful of people. That process was inexorable and then we suffered a mighty blow with the collapse of Stalinism, which had a twofold effect. On the one side, the collapse of the planned economy, which despite all its bureaucratic limitations was an anticipation of the advantages of planning and a point of reference for the working class internationally. Then of course came the collapse of the privileged bureaucracy which Ted Grant failed to recognise, burying his head in the sand. He played a very important, pioneering role historically to start off with. Many of us wouldn't be here now but for the influence he had. But he was dogmatic; he wasn't sufficiently flexible in relation to events and would put forward a caricature of the real position that was challenged by us and the march of events. My position, and that of others, was that Stalinism was not about to collapse even at the end of the 1980s. The process began in the mid-1980s after the collapse following the Polish events. Jaruzelski, coming to power meant there was now a Stalinist military 'solution' which had previously been through the **'**Communist**'** Party itself. Also, Thatcher was greeted on the streets of Warsaw enthusiastically in 1988. If we had had people in Poland at that stage, we would have had a much better understanding of the process. We sent people into the underground, to East Germany and so on, and they came back and said that there was a growing sentiment for capitalism: "It's growing, it can't be denied." Ted Grant said no that's not the case there will be a big anti-Stalinist, pro-socialist movement. We were doubtful, very cautious. You can't argue a 'black and white' scenario that this is definitely going to happen; all kinds of factors could come to the fore. It involves the analysis we made of the collapse of Stalinism which was confirmed by events. We said Stalinism had collapsed but Russia and Eastern Europe was now returned to the market**,** as anticipated by Trotsky. Ted Grant came to that position but 10 years later in the 1990s.

And what conclusions did they draw from it? Hope is eternal. They claimed that work in the Labour Party could still be maintained. But we argued along with our comrades in Scotland for the 'Scottish turn'. Initially, we all agreed on this including Rob Sewell, Alan Woods and Ted Grant! We were not coming out of the Labour Party but let's try and test this out in Scotland and in an important by-election which came after a faction was declared. So, I don't think it was a mistake. I think it was

correct for us to test the water. In fact, Rob Sewell was very dishonest politically a dishonest individual not prepared to face up to the facts that if you make a mistake in relation to perspectives, correct it openly. For instance, I wrote an article on the 'Red 1990s' when it wasn't clear which way the situation in Russia and Eastern Europe was going. I later publicly corrected that and said that it was a mistake. Yet I made the same mistake that Marx made in 1851 of timing, when he still predicted an ongoing revolution after 1848-51. Only two years later did he change his position and argued no, we are now in for a period of economic upswing. We do not take crude, determinist approach. You have to take account of the march of events and so on.

JF. You did the Scottish turn and the Walton by-election.

PT. We didn't expect to replace the Labour Party immediately. It took the evolution of Blairism and the formation of the Socialist Labour Party to change things. We had discussions with Arthur Scargill; he missed an historic opportunity to establish a small left party, a small, democratic Communist Party-like movement conserving the best of the socialist, fighting rank and file. This in a very difficult historical situation. You must have experienced this as a member of the Communist Party. I remember going to a meeting in Birmingham when a member of the Communist Party was openly crying in the meeting. I was speaking at a small meeting of about 30. He stood up and said: "All my hopes are gone my whole life has been shattered, I have been working for the socialist revolution. Russia was my beacon and for a whole generation who sacrificed for this. Everything I have been fighting for all my life has been shattered." Rather than a movement, a political revolution to overthrow Stalinism and the establish workers' democracy, a one-party Stalinist regime was replaced by a one-party capitalist regime. The capitalist ideologues argued "we can establish a new society with blooming landscapes. Our comrades in Eastern Europe argued, "You may be on a journey to 'blooming landscapes', but it will be via Latin America and third and fourth world conditions. Nobody could have predicted at its outset the scale of the collapse of the productive forces that initially gave a boost to capitalism.

JF. But what Peter do you see as General Secretary of the Socialist Party in a number of years now since you left the Labour Party? I mean what do you see? Let me put it this way, I was a member of the Communist Party on what you would term the euro-communist wing. We contested elections and we didn't do very well.

PT. We didn't do that.

JF. I thought you did contest elections.

PT. We did that later, but we had no illusions that this was going to lead immediately to a mass breakthrough. We were holding the fort, preparing for a future breakthrough. Even now under Corbyn the Labour Party is two parties in one: one is the Corbyn wing the other the remaining right inside the party. We saw a long period of re-groupment, and consolidation of workers, of new layers who would be repelled, by the right-wing labourites, and look towards a new beginning. It was an open

question if the trade unions would separate and break away to form a new party. I remember getting a phone call from Lenny McCluskey when we attacked the Collins report which proposed to dissolve the collective influence of the trade unions in the Labour Party and we wrote a scathing article attacking this. Len McCluskey is a friend of mine and we discussed with him in relation to the way things were developing in the Labour Party. We criticised him when the Collins report was produced which dissolved the collective weight of the trade unions in the Labour Party and went towards 'one member one vote'**,** the right-wing programme of the past.

JF. OMOV

PT. OMOV

PT. He said to me, no Peter this will be a marvellous development. It will allow the rank and file to change things. I said**,** Lenny**,** it's a device from Ed Miliband which continues the Blair project with a few radical phrases and so on. It's a mistake. But then the law of unintended consequences was felt.

JF. Corbyn

PT. When Corbyn came along**,** in an entirely different situation**,** the right made a blunder. It's quite incredible what happened. You could have a vote in the leadership election for the price of a pint of beer! We have applied to join the Labour Party. I mean the General Secretary of the Labour Party, Jenny Formby, is an ex-member of Militant. They are all over the place.

JF. Would you be prepared as a party to say that if you were granted affiliate status

within the Labour Party like the Co-op party, are you saying you would never stand your own candidates?

PT. We wouldn't.

JF. Officially endorsed.

PT. Yes, the Co-op Party would stand; we would conduct a campaign for the election of fighters at local level. The right wingers at local level in particular are time servers now.

JF. Looking at the mechanics of this, if you were successful in getting the affiliation would you agree that the National Executive Committee be the final arbiter of candidates?

PT. Yes, we would accept that as long as the NEC was constituted on democratic lines.

JF. As an affiliate you would expect to be semi-independent.

PT. We would. The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition is still in place because of the stalling of internal developments in the RMT. The RMT refused to affiliate to the

Labour Party for very good reasons because it would have to give money to the still unreconstructed Labour machine that has been used to expel people on trumped-up charges of anti- semitism and so on. It's still two parties in one. On the other hand the Fire Brigades Union did affiliate and gave their money to this machine which we think was a big mistake. There is a battle taking place in the PCS at the present time and we are saying we will give support from the outside to Labour, but we don't give our money unless there is a good chance that we can push the Labour Party further towards the left.

We have publicly declared that we are not going to stand against Jeremy Corbyn or most of his endorsed candidates in the general election. What happens at local level, that's a different question. We won't be standing under the TUSC banner that's in abeyance at the present time because of the RMT and so on, but we could stand as 'Socialist Alternative' because there has to be an electoral challenge at local level because of the eye-watering cuts still taking place. You were a teacher, and you know how crucial the question of schools is. It's a disaster that we have academies because of the privatisation presided over by Blair. Who is going to fight for the working class? Not this rotten corrupted right wing**.** Some of the right wing in the past in Liverpool were raving revolutionaries compared to these people now, such as the Braddocks and co, who generally did not receive huge material rewards. When you were there the councillors didn't get lavish rewards. Some councillors get £30,000 or more in the 'cabinet' now. They are a caste which is not representative of ordinary people.

JF. I take your point. I want to take you back a bit. Are you prepared to pay the price of affiliation to the Labour Party for good or bad, accept the rules and regulations of the Labour Party, if you stood as an official candidate say for instance Peter Taaffe became a member of the Labour Party affiliated with your Socialist Party like the Co-op?

PT. Or the Communist Party in the early days.

JF. Yes, now if that was the case would you accept the rules and regulations of the NEC in terms of say for instance you put forward a candidate to the NEC and the NEC said no?

PT. Well, we would argue with that.

JF. Yes, but after the arguments had been outed.

PT. If you are part of a party, you would have to accept the discipline.

JF. Would you also accept if you were an affiliate party when it came to a general election, not a local election but a general election, you would accept the literature of the party?

PT. That's a different question because we never based ourselves all the time on all the literature of the Labour Party when we were members of the Labour Party. The

Labour Party hardly produced any literature. Let's put an argument. When Sadiq Khan's literature in the London mayoral election said, "we need more billionaires in London"**,** Momentum just closed their mouths. We answered no**,** we are not distributing that**,** and most workers would agree with us. So, it's part of this battle that's not yet been conclusive, it's an ongoing struggle. We are not going to put up candidates in a general election against Labour we will give maximum support from the outside.

JF. You won't stand any candidates?

PT. No**,** not in a general election**.** The key issue is the question of cuts taking place at local level. And there may be many members of the Labour Party who will refuse to back the open right. There will be not just us; there will be teachers, local government workers, housing activists who will not accept these creatures masquerading under the term Labour Party. That's why it's two parties in one. The left has not yet consolidated its position, and we can develop more support for Labour from the outside. Jeremy Corbyn did an interview two years ago when he was asked what about Tom Watson banging the drum about Militant getting back into the Labour Party. I know Corbyn well; he has spoken at meetings with us in the past.

JF. He was secretary of the campaign against the witch-hunts in the 1980s.

PT. Yes, he was. He also called for the rehabilitation of Leon Trotsky, signed a parliamentary motion with Dave Nellist and Terry Fields. He has counter-pressures to separate himself from us, particularly coming from Momentum. Jon Lansman came to see us because we said to Momentum, **"**we would like to join the Labour Party" and he came over and met us, myself and Hannah Sell, Deputy General Secretary of the Socialist Party. Jon Lansman played a minor role in the past in the Benn campaign.

JF. But he was secretary of the CLPD.

PT. I know but he was a minor figure frankly, he wasn't a major player and his limitations are shown now. He replied to us, well if you come into Momentum you will have to leave your paper and organisation at the door. I replied full marks for honesty Jon but what about you leaving your organisation and your journal and your sympathetic media outlets at the door?

This is an important point; you cannot build in the modern era a Labour Party on the basis of a centralised uniform model. Podemos in Spain and many other new left parties and formations have a looser form of organisation. This is because of the character of this new generation, they don't want the rigid boundaries of the past and the rigid centralism they want a more flexible form of organisation, probably too flexible.

JF. Because of social media

PT. Yes, partly because of social media but also it is opposed to imposing a self-appointed leadership, of imposing its own political position from above. We don't believe in all that.

JF. I don't know Jon Lansman I have read about him from the academic point of view, what are his antecedents, where has he come from originally when he was in the CLPD days?

PT. He's a left, he comes from a Jewish background and so on. He's played a very bad role in the anti-semitism debate, giving credence to Margaret Hodge and the rest of the right. This is an obscene campaign where they are trying to link Corbyn and the left to anti-semitism because he accidently stood next to somebody in a cemetery commemorating Hamas and so on. When I spoke to Lenny McCluskey, I said look Lenny we come from a Marxist background. The two greatest Jewish figures as far as we are concerned are Karl Marx and Leon Trotsky. They have effectively expelled Ken Livingstone on that question. It was a scandal actually, even though Livingstone attacked us viciously, we still defended him. It was still wrong for him to make that kind of a concession and even Jeremy was trying to hold out on the NEC on this question of the definition of anti-semitism, making concessions to the right.

You can't do that. You give your little finger to the right and they take your hand, they take your arm, they take the rest of you!

JF. I am very, very, grateful to you.

End of interview

Appendix 25

Interview with Ian Williams at his home in New York, by telephone, on 10th February 2019 at 11.am New York time.

Ian began his early political life by joining The Communist Party of Great Britain, Marxist Leninist, a Maoist organisation. Ian was elected to the National Executive of the National Union of Railwaymen for a three- year full-time term from 1981 to 1983 and then in 1984 formed an opposition group to Militant within the Liverpool Labour Party called the Liverpool Labour Left.

In the interview Ian Williams will be referred to as **IW** and James Ferguson as **JF.**

IW. Well, I began in the YS in Huyton, aged twelve. I was active in Huyton CND and that's when I first came across entryist factions. Later on, when I moved into Liverpool for University, I became much more active in the Vietnam protests and the South African protests and also became foolishly attracted to events in China. So, I was a teenage Maoist. I was eventually in the Communist Party of Great Britain, Marxist Leninist, the Reg Birch faction.

JF. A friend of mine was in that Steve Sinnott.

IW. Steve Sinnott who became Head of the NUT?

JF. Yes.

IW. We split again of course, he went with the centralist bunch and we split off and eventually I think 1976 or 1977 he abandoned the organisation. They called it the workers? or something like that. We actually decided, the Labour Party, one of the reasons we had very good relations amazingly enough for a Stalinist Maoist with people like Militant and others in the general labour movement. We were not so sectarian, we were more sectarian with other Maoist groups than we were with CPGB and the Labour Party. We actually got on quite well with them all. I was also a member of the National Union of Railwaymen and in 1980 was elected to the NEC for 3 years so I wasn't as active in Liverpool politics for 3 years, as I was mostly based in London.

JF. You were a lay member of the Executive, weren't you?

IW. It was a full-time position. It was a lay position, but it was a full-time position, a 3-year term mostly based in London. During that period, we set up an NUR broad left, which involved Militant. They had suddenly become very active on these things and so I was exposed to them. There was CP involvement but not much because the previous broad left of the NUR had been CP dominated. This was a revived broad left. As a result of this ironically on the front page of the Guardian the secretary of the NUR accused me of being a leading member of Militant who had infiltrated the NUR. In the light of subsequent events, it was particularly ironic. Eventually I returned to Liverpool after 3 years. I had been in India for the best part of a year as well on a Nuffield scholarship. I then came back. I was suffering from illnesses from India, so I

was a bit weak, but I resumed work. I came back and saw the changes. They were quite striking in the Liverpool Labour Party.

JF. What year was that Ian?

IW. That would have been late 1983, no, no, it would have been 1984, because my term on the executive was 1981-83 and then I was in India. I might be a year out. Well I came back, and Derek was deputy leader and things were careering, and when I left I quite admired Derek because he was a breath of fresh air in the Labour Party. He knew how to address people compared with the rest of people in Militant. I felt quite warm towards him when I went away. When I came back and saw what was happening, that really distressed me.

JF. What prompted you to form the Liverpool Labour Left then?

IW. Well there were like-minded people who were very depressed at what was happening in the Labour Party, it was at every level.

There was a culture of bullying which came down from Derek. He was bullying John Hamiliton, Alec Dodswell, the Trades Council Secretary was clearly under pressure. This was an era where people like Eric Heffer, were worried that Militant wanted to de-select him and were appealing for help from people.

JF. Can you expand on that, Ian? It's not very well known that Eric Heffer was being pressured by Militant. He seemed to give the impression he worked very well with them.

IW. My father knew Eric for many, many years, going way back to the building sites, and they all agreed that the one pathological fear Eric had was going back on the tools. He was petrified of losing his position. I'm not saying he was not totally principled. But he was desperately worried that he would be de-selected, and Militant was building up. The traditional CP method was to try to get people elected to strategic positions. That was what their broad lefts used to do. They rallied people behind broad left candidates that would be elected to positions. Militant were actually, more principled than others, they wanted to get political support. When I came back, I found that this process had been reversed. The CP was in retreat at every level and Militant and Derek and presumably some strategic position had been taken within the RSL were doing exactly that, they were going after strategic positions and they were relying on dominating committees and using them to rally mass support, I must say they hadn't lost total sight of the ball. This was also at a time when the confrontation with Margaret Thatcher was coming up and the various manoeuvres. Being a retired Maoist I recognised it. They managed to mesmerise most of the Labour Party into following the line. There were key decisions taken, and then it was a pretty, bold councillor who stood up against them. For example, over the vote for setting the rate. A terrible atmosphere

JF. Did you feel that Militant were quite intimidating?

IW. Oh, totally. I was trying to remember last night. Do you remember the Militant guy, he was Jewish, one of their cover ideologues in Liverpool, Tony or Tony, somebody?

JF. You're, not talking about Terry Harrison?

IW. Not Terry Harrison no, no.

JF. Tony Byrne wasn't Jewish, was he?

IW. He was fairly prominent, in Militant but not in public.

But its symbolic. I remember one night in the Philharmonic and a newspaper carried an expose of the RSL and I turned round and shouted, "Tony what's this RSL thing" and he was indignant telling me to be quiet and what was I doing risking everything. And it suddenly occured to me that these guys thought their internal discipline applied to other people as well. So, I should shut up because a newspaper had carried an announcement about the RSL. It was a mixture of different attitudes. Firstly, I he assumed it was in the newspaper, but I couldn't mention it, you know thought crime and secondly that I was bound by their discipline and infiltration. That was illustrative and he was one of the nicer ones. They also by then were engaged in a very determined campaign to recruit me because of us taking positions which were similar, because they tended to be more pragmatic, they weren't for a general strike in all circumstances and on the other hand they weren't the totally wishy washy must wait broad movement. Must sign petition of the CP. In some ways we were pragmatically aligned.

JF. How strenuously did they try to recruit you?

IW. Oh, very much so, I was taken to special meetings and interviewed, and they put heavy pressure on, Felicity Dowling, Terry and a few others.

JF. Felicity Dowling?

IW. Yes

JF. Terry Harrison?

IW. Yes.

They were persuasive, they even gave me key documents to persuade me.

JF. Policy Documents?

IW. Yes, mimeographed policies. It was an open secret, everybody knew what they were doing, that they existed, that they had this organisation. One of my problems was I was tainted with this. At one point the NUR ran me as the candidate for Liverpool Riverside and it was only afterwards, I discovered I got an abysmally low vote. I discovered Militant voted against me because they had a candidate, and everybody else voted against me because they thought I was a Militant stooge.

JF. Just to take you back Ian what prompted you to sit down with a few other people and say it's time to form Liverpool Labour Left?

IW. Some people in Riverside and others. As far as I remember it was when they started playing brinkmanship with the Council and it had gone too far and there was no organised opposition to them at all. A lot of the old party left were just going along

with them. Because they knew how to pull the internal ideological strings on people, the ones that I mentioned earlier, the Trades Council secretary Alex Dodswell, the others were all going along. I spoke up against it a few times which was, a total shock. I remember the first time at a meeting they called me, and they were expecting me to be sympathetic. I think I went after Derek and others for being out of touch and unrepresentative and dictatorial, at the time remember the Harthill Gardens thing? Totally vindictive.

JF. Oh yes, the Orchid Growers. Vindictive.

IW. It was very difficult to respect anybody who had done that and Alex Dodswell, who had masterminded it, who I had been very sympathetic to. I was very disappointed with him.

The whole attitude of calling people out on strike against yourself. This was posturing. These were people who were infatuated with the idea, rather than the effect, of the industrial action. A few of us in Riverside got together, like Cyril Taylor and others. We started talking and the circle got wider and wider. It included some NALGO people, Peter Cresswell, and others who came along as well.

JF. Can you remember any others? You've mentioned Cyril Taylor and Peter Cresswell. Was there Jane Kennedy?

IW. Oh, Jane and Malcom Kennedy. That was a bit different. They were unashamedly right wing. I liked them personally, but that was another thing. We considered ourselves left-wing, we were not just crazy Bolsheviks.

JF. Were Jane and Malcom involved?

IW. Oh, very closely yes. In terms of the Labour Party, Jane was a convener for NUPE at the time. She was very charismatic. Nobody ever described Malcom as charismatic, but he was extremely solid and had very good relations with the old labour right in Scotland ward.

JF. That would be Scotland exchange would it?

IW. Yes, the Eldonians, there was a very closely- knit housing complex there.

JF. The Eldonian village, yes, they built their own houses.

IW. He was very close with them. The reaction of Militant, one of the things, they were totally dismissive of the opposition, which was not the way the Labour Party was when I left it. When I was put on the local council panel, it was a manager on British rail, and avowedly right wing in that sense, who nominated me, and Terry Harrison seconded. Just a personnel reminiscence, there was a lot of common ground. It was still functioning as a Labour Party, it wasn't being consciously divided. Militant in those days were very active on behalf of the Labour Party. They did more than their share of canvassing and recruiting regardless.

JF. They worked hard in their wards.

IW. Yes, yes,

JF. To bring you back again, in terms of your influence in the Liverpool Labour Left, I know you're up against, by that time, a large Militant Tendency. What were the numbers you could rely on in terms of your informal organisation?

IW. It had to be a conspiracy almost. Which disturbed me to begin with. It was underground because people were intimidated and scared. We tried to organise opposition. We tried to get left wingers. We were holding public meetings in Liverpool with known left wingers and Militant took the bait and tried to stop it. I remember we had John Prescott, we had Robin Cook, and I was using my connections to call these people in. I still have profound respect for the ones who were brave enough to turn out. It was the soft left who came. It wasn't the right wing. We had meetings on CND and nuclear power. Frankly we were cynically picking issues where Militant was at odds with most of the Labour Party.

JF. Give us an example of the kind of issue you were picking on that Militant were opposed to.

IW. Well they were completely indifferent to nuclear disarmament, that wasn't one of their issues. Also, South Africa, we had Peter Hain along as well. These were issues on which they were deficient. Whatever their official positions, they just didn't care.

JF. Did you feel they dodged the issue of race in Liverpool?

IW. Oh, totally. The LBO was another one, the Liverpool black organisations issue was another one. On a personal level I knew most of the ringleaders and I saw Militant come in, because I saw in Liverpool Riverside Constituency the cavalier way Derek treated the local black community. It became clear that you had community representatives who agreed with you and you would de-legitimise those that don't and put them out. I knew all the people from the Liverpool Black Organisation at the time and we maintained close relations with them.

JF. One issue I'd like to hear your view on because you were a member of the NEC of a union, so you know about labour relations. What do you think of the issue of nomination rights to council positions and vacancies?

IW. All that indicated was nepotism. That was it, Derek was the real thing. Suddenly you were flooded with people who had simultaneously got a job in the static security force, a union card, a Labour Party Card and a delegacy to the DLP. They turned up at Labour Party Meetings in their uniforms, so they were even more intimidating than we first thought. These people were somewhat naïve. They'd been given a very specialised view. They'd been recruited to a cause and this produced a strange mixture of Bolshevism and traditional labourism in the American sense, the purpose of the election is to give jobs to the people who elected you. I should have recognised it from that way. Even at school level, I was a school governor,, and it became quite clear that the cards were marked on who was going to get jobs and who wasn't.

JF. Like jobs in schools?

IW. Yes, like the head or the principal, on every level it goes back to what I was saying before, the old days they forged their ideas and then I suddenly found they'd turned into a, jobs generating scheme.

JF. Did you feel they were doing that because they saw it as a route to more power?

IW. Yes, this is Derek's political instincts. The others didn't have political instincts with a small p. the others were big on the third programme of the Fourth International, but they didn't have any political sense. But Derek was very canny, and he had them. You build on not necessarily ethical or principled Marxist positions, like giving jobs to people and buttering up people. This is one of the things they did with Eric, whether or not it was said explicitly, but the implicit deal was you do what we want, and we'll keep you in there, toe the policy line.

JF. You are talking about Eric Heffer, the MP?

IW. Yes, and the same with others as well. I mean Bob Waring, he had no time for them, he came to a deal. Eddie Loyden was another one, who was very distressed at what Derek was doing and expressed it to me quite forcefully several times.

JF. I've recently interviewed Peter Taaffe, former editor of Militant and now General Secretary of the Socialist Party of England and Wales. When it came to mass redundancies in 1985, he completely disagreed with the decision to make everyone redundant and along with Tony Mulhearn, opposed that. But obviously I was very much on the scene then and in fact we took them to court over the redundancy notices. It never came over to me that Militant publicly were opposed to this. How did you feel?

IW. Derek was their big asset, he put them on the public map. But they created a monster. Almost all of the people we are talking about, the old- style Felicity and others, expressed private reservations about what Derek was doing. And I had a lot of personal friends in Militant. Several actually told me, we agree with you, but we have got to follow the line. So, Peter Taaffe and the others, whatever you think of it, Liverpool was their crown jewel, so they did not dare disavow him.

JF. So, you got the impression that the Militant leadership in London didn't feel strong enough to criticise Derek.

IW. Yes, the tail was wagging the dog by then.

JF. Did you get the impression that during the time of the redundancy notices that there was a faction in Militant that were opposed to the redundancy notices, because I didn't pick anything up, I wonder whether you did?

IW. Some were unhappy, I wouldn't say they were opposed to it. They'd never oppose it in public. Look we've got to get into the democratic centralist mindset. Its thought crime to disagree with the line. It might make you uncomfortable, but you are going to go along with it. I really saw it in operation, not just in Militant itself, but in all of the others and the Labour Party that they controlled. People were not going to break the line under any circumstances.

JF. You felt they kept a very strict discipline?

IW. Yes, it was internal discipline. Once the line had been established, to have spoken against it, or against the vote on the rate, would have been thought crime. It would have been a sign of cowardice and desertion in the face of the class enemy.

JF. I'm looking at the difference between the vanguardism of the old Bolsheviks in 1917 Russian Revolution, where their secrecy was borne out of internal security needs, because the Tsarist police were fairly brutal. I came across a survey that Trotsky did just before the Revolution at a party congress in the April before the October and almost all the delegates had suffered some form of police harassment, imprisonment, torture.

IW. Persecution is one thing but if you set up an organisation whose assured aim is the violent overthrow of the government you expect this sort of thing.

JF. Yes, but what I am saying is, with the old Bolsheviks, their vanguard structure was based on the fact that there was no democracy because it was a police state.

IW. It also developed from the nihilist point of view the sort of anarchist plot. I think we underestimate to what extent that was within the genes of the Bolsheviks. And the amazing thing is that a hundred years later it's still there in these types of organisations.

JF. That's what I want to get on to Ian. It seems to me that there was justification for a military /vanguard structure where there was a police state. However, when you're talking about the Liverpool Labour Party, it seems to me that that the only protection mechanism that they were employing was in order to avoid detection.

IW. It was a habit that outlived its origins. I'm not going to totally underestimate. This time I was actually on the blacklist. I remember one meeting at which one of the Special Branch giving evidence in court about me, came over and told me. Yes, we lived in a liberal democracy but there was an authoritarian dose behind it that we couldn't ignore. But there was no excuse for what they were doing. I mean it was conspiratorial politics. They acted like straight out of 19th century Russia. It's a gene that's been passed on.

JF. They just carried on.

IW. Yes, now I'm recovered from my ailment, I'm working on something. Don't you think it's amazing that the ghost of the Third International has people all over the world who have been supporting Milosovitch, Saddam Hussain, Putin, people whose attachment to any form of recognisable socialism is completely lacking. Yet they support them all.

JF. That's another PhD Ian. I want to drag you on to something else. The redundancy notices happened, it went to court, they lost, that collapsed the whole idea….

IW. You might not remember, Liverpool Labour Left, which controlled Riverside and I think we had one or two other constituencies. We put the DLP on the run-up to this, we played a game. Militant's credo was that that they were uber Militant with a small m, they were more Militant than anybody else. We were moving counter resolutions

doubling their demands. We will not accept etc, etc, we would negotiate them down and drop them down having made the point that these guys were not that Militant after all. That a lot of what they were doing was expedient rather than ultra- militant. We actually made some converts because some of these static security guys would come up to me after a meeting and say that was really good. They told us you were right wing. I said well you know that's not the only mistrust they've given you.

JF. When it went to the Labour Party Conference and Kinnock made the great speech on taxis scuttling around the city etc. Were you at that conference?

IW. No but I was in liaison with Kinnock's office.

JF. Tell me about it.

IW. I was working with Charles Clarke from the office. They were concerned and we pragmatically sat down, and they said we will support you if you need any help. That included escorts for the Liverpool Riverside delegates, Jane and the woman from Scotland?

JF. Irene Buxton. Jane Sarin.

IW. Jane Sarin that was the name yes. The sequence is a bit hazy but while I was arranging Liverpool Labour Left, oh its clear in my head now. We were also trying to do a documentary for World in Action about Militant and Derek in my capacity as a journalist. We were working on this. We actually had almost a rift within Liverpool Labour Left on this, because we were sort of undercover. Then my colleagues in Granada said the police are going to arrest us, this is really the time you've got to speak. Mike Allen and I went public, went on TV and announced what they were doing. That caused a backlash, it opened the gates of hell for Militant, traitors etc, etc, that was the public announcement of the Liverpool Labour Left.

Round about that time Peter Kilfoyle, came knocking on my door because he had just come back from Australia, where he had been mired in Australian politics.

JF. Peter Kilfoyle, he was employed at the North West Regional Office of the Labour Party?

IW. Much later. He was unemployed. He turned round and said what we're going to do about it? He said heck I've just come back I've got time on my hands and talking to him we had loads of mutual connections. He was tied into the Liverpool Labour Party from before he went away. He knew people from all the factions and his family, in that Liverpool Irish way, was connected with everybody and our Terry, and he knew where all the bodies are buried. So, I went down to address the Tribune Group in the House of Commons which was when Eric first denounced me. He said shameful, shameful, he's a Maoist. Funnily enough everyone thought this was Eric witch-hunting. He actually lost support in the Tribune group. I gave them a rundown on what was happening and what we were doing, and it was very well received, this was in the Tribune group very respectable.

JF. That was in 1984?

IW. Yes, it would have been. I did that and afterwards to Kinnocks office, and discussed that with him. He knew me from the NUR, by the way in which we had been on different sides on the Tony Benn deputy leadership nomination. There were no hard feelings. But he said we need someone to clear this up. Can you think of anybody? I said funnily enough yes. Talk to Peter Kilfoyle, because he knows where the bodies are buried. He knows all of these people and they can't denounce him as an outsider because he is intimately rooted in Liverpool Labour. He's got an insider's advantage. As I mentioned this tribal stuff in Liverpool, I got away with a lot because people remembered my father who was convenor of the unemployed workers movement. That meant there were a lot of people in the CP who were always watching my back.

JF. But Ian didn't you, I heard a rumour that you inspired his speech by giving him quite a lot of ammunition.

IW. Yes, and Peter was the key factor here. I persuaded Peter to take the job and then taught him the job because he was saying what do I do. I said look this is very serious, you wanted to help, this is your big opportunity. In that sense I was the behind the scenes architect of much of what happened. I had to keep a back seat by then. It wasn't so much Militant, apart from Derek of course who had a vitriolic personal hatred of me and physically offered me out several times. A lot of the others respected what I was doing. They knew my pedigree and they knew I was not doing this for selfish careerist reasons. In fact, I was actually burning my career in the Labour movement in many ways. In the course of this I alienated so many factions.

JF. But what did you think of the speech when it actually got on the conference floor?

IW. We were all watching here. This was the "we will fight them on the beaches" moment. This was the turning point. I felt sorry for the Labour Councillors who had been misled. Eric's heroics, when we knew a year before he'd been trying to rally support for his candidature.

A sense of irony is always useful in these circumstances.

JF. Did you feel that speech turned the delegates, they were listening to something they wanted to hear?

IW. Oh yes, what he did was he pointed out the probably absurd picture of a council supposedly preserving jobs and services and then sacking all the council employees and doing it surreptitiously. They did this without consultation or support. This was an internal coup. I cannot recall now that it is possible that this local cabal presented Peter Taaffe and his comrades with a fait accompli. Oh, the other factor in here and it did not get the billing here is, what's his name, the little financial whizz kid?

JF. Tony Byrne.

IW. Tony Byrne was immensely influential because none of them had a clue about how the council finances operated. In the country of the blind the one-eyed man was emperor. They didn't dare gain say him. So, I suspect his influence in here as well because it's the type of trick he'd specialised in.

JF. In what way?

IW. Financial outmanoeuvring. Tony Byrne didn't easily do mass movement. He was the brains guy. Was the one that invented the idea that you borrow money on security. None of us knew what he meant at the time. Was it, securitisation?

JF. Capitalisation.

IW. Yes, which I must say in my later capacity as a business writer I am well aware of, but at the time I was scratching my head about it. What does it mean? Inherently it's not a bad idea by the way but that's another story.

End of interview

Appendix 26

List of persons referred to in this thesis, with a short contemporary biography.

Aitman, Tony	Militant member expelled from the Labour Party, as a result of the Inquiry into the Liverpool Labour Party.
Aitman, Josie	Militant member expelled from the Labour Party, as a result of the Inquiry into the Liverpool Labour Party.
Astbury, Paul	Militant member expelled from the Labour Party, as a result of the Inquiry into the Liverpool Labour Party, Liverpool City Councillor.
Ashton, Joe	Labour MP 1968-2001, Tony Benn's PPS but opposed to Benn's constitutional changes in the Labour Party.
Baker, Kenneth	Secretary of State for the Environment 2nd September 1985- 21st May 1986.
Bannister, Roger	Secretary Knowsley NALGO, expelled from the Labour Party, as a result of the Inquiry into the Liverpool Labour Party.
Basnett, David	General Secretary of GMB from 1973-1986.
Beckett, Margaret	Labour MP, and member of the Inquiry team into the Liverpool Labour Party, co-produced a minority report advising against expulsions.
Benn, Tony	Labour MP, unofficial leader of the left in the 1970s and 1980s, defended Militant as a general purge of the left.
Bensaid, Daniel	Co- Author of the Long March of the Trotskyists.
Bentovim, Gideon	Chair of Merseyside Race Relations Committee, Sociology Lecturer at Liverpool University, member of the Merseyside Area Committee of the CPGB.
Berkman, Alexander	Diarist, leader of the anarchist movement, witnessed the killing of 600 sailors in the Kronstadt mutiny in the USSR.
Bevin, Andy	Militant supporter, Young Socialist appointed as a full time Labour Official, member of the NEC.
Burchill, Frank	Professor at Keele University, Staffordshire, author on Industrial Relations.
Blunkett, David	Leader of Sheffield City Council.1980-1987.

Boland, Dick	National Official NUT, responsible for the organisation and conduct of industrial action.
Bond, Sam	Appointed Race Relations Advisor Liverpool City Council, controversial appointment due to accusations of being a Militant placeman.
Brady, Dominic	Chair of Liverpool Education Committee, Labour Councillor.
Brandt, Willy	German Chancellor 1969-1974, SPD member.
Bryman, Alan	Author on quantitative and qualitative research methods.
Burgess, Graham	Chair of Liverpool branch of NALGO, member of NALGO NEC.
Burnham, Peter	Author on Political Economy and Research Methods in Politics.
Buxton, Irene	Gave evidence to Inquiry team on the Liverpool Labour Party, resigned from Militant, explained how Militant organised within the Labour Party.
Byrne, Tony	Chair of Finance Committee, Liverpool City Council, not a member of Militant but a passionate force behind council house building.
Cabellero, Largo	Socialist Prime Minister of Spain in the 1930s.
Callaghan, John	Author on British Trotskyism.
Castle, Barbara	Labour MP 1945-1979, member of NEC sub- committee that blocked the Underhill Report. Diarist.
Chapple, Frank	General Secretary of the EEPTU 1966-1984.
Carrillo, Santiago	General Secretary of the Spanish Communist Party 1960-1982.
Clarke, Charles	Chief of staff for Neil Kinnock 1981-1982.
Coates, Ken	Author, writes on workers control of industry.
Cook, Robin	Labour MP 1974-2005, supported the Liverpool Labour Left.
Corbyn, Jeremy	Secretary of stop the witch-hunts campaign aimed at retaining Militant within the Labour Party. MP 1983-present.
Creswell, Peter	Secretary, of Liverpool branch of NALGO and secretary of the JSSC, EC member of the Liverpool DLP.
Crick, Michael	Author of two books on the Militant Tendency.

Cunningham, Jack	Shadow Secretary of state for the Environment MP 1970-2005.
Darby, Carol	Militant member expelled from the Labour Party, as a result of the Inquiry into the Liverpool Labour Party.
David, Davies	BBC TV reporter covered the Liverpool budget dispute.
Dickenson, Keith	Member of the Militant Editorial Board expelled from the Labour Party.
Dodswell, Alex	Labour Councillor, secretary of the Liverpool Trades Council.
Doyle, Clare	Member of the Militant Editorial Board, expelled from the Labour Party.
Dunlop, Pauline	Deputy Chair of the Liverpool City Council's Personnel Committee.
Engels, Fredrich	Co- Author of the Communist Manifesto.
Fields, Terry	Labour MP, supporter of Militant, expelled from the Labour Party.
Ferguson, Patricia	Liverpool branch Treasurer NUT, delegate to the Liverpool DLP.
Ferguson, James	Secretary, of the Liverpool branch of the NUT, EC member of the NUT, EC Member of the JSSC and briefly it's secretary.
Fogarty, Liam	Broadcaster at BBC Radio Merseyside, covered the City Council budget Crisis.
Foot, Michael.	Leader of the Labour Party 1980-1983.
Formby, Jenny	General Secretary of the Labour Party April 2018-to present, former member of Militant.
Frank, Pierre	Secretary to Leon Trotsky. Member of the secretariat of the fourth international.
Frost, Dianne	Lecturer at Liverpool University, co-author of a book on Militant.
Dowling, Felicity	Secretary of the Liverpool DLP, former branch president of NUT, organised the redundancy notices to be sent to all City Council employees including her former members.
Gaitskill, Hugh	Leader of the Labour Party 1955-1963, failed to revise Clause IV of the Labour Party constitution.
Gillham, Bill	Author on research methods applied to case studies.

Godsiff, Roger	Labour MP 1992-1997, active in the St Ermins Group.
Golding, John	Labour MP and General Secretary of the Post Office Engineers active in the St Ermins Group.
Gould, Joyce	Assistant National Agent 1975-1985, Director of organisation 1985-1993 Labour Party.
Grant, Ted.	Member of the Militant Editorial Board and main theoretician of Militant. Expelled from the Labour Party. Expelled from Militant.
Grant, Wynn	Author on research methods in political research.
Grantham, Roy	General Secretary, APEX, 1971-1989.
Greenwood, Tony	Labour MP 1946-1970
Gregory, Michael	Gave copies of Militant minutes to Jack Straw in the county areas of Lancashire which led to the expulsion of members of the Blackburn Labour Party. Resigned from Militant but later joined the Liberal Democrats.
Hamilton, John	Leader of the Liverpool City Council, opposed Militant but tried to unify the Labour Group on the Council.
Hammersley, Martyn	Author on political research methods.
Harrison, Terry	Journalist for Militant.
Hattersley, Roy	Deputy Leader of the Labour Party 1983-1992.
Hatton, Derek	Deputy Leader of the Liverpool City Council, expelled, as a result of the Inquiry into the Liverpool Labour Party.
Hayter, Dianne	Secretary of the Fabian Society, author on the Labour Party and active in the St Ermins Group.
Hayward, Ron	General Secretary of the Labour Party 1972-1982.
Heath, Oliver	Author and political researcher.
Heffer, Eric	Labour MP, 1964-1991, for Liverpool, Walton.
Henry, Zig-Leyton	Author on research methods in political research.
Hesseltine, Michael	Minister for Merseyside.
Hitchins, Christopher	Author and journalist. Former member of the International Socialists.
Hertz, Noreena	Author**,** political researcher.
Hood, Tony	Secretary to the Labour Group, Liverpool City Council. Supported Militant although not a member.

Howe, Geoffrey	Chancellor of the Exchequer 1979-1983 in the Thatcher Government, lobbied the prime minister not to spend money on Liverpool but to let it decline naturally.
Howell, Dennis	Labour MP 1955-1992, active in the St Ermins Group.
Hughes, David	National Agent for the Labour Party.
Jackson, Robert	Author, political researcher.
Jackson, Tom	General Secretary of the Post Office Workers Union 1967-1982.
Jenkin, Patrick	Secretary of state for the Environment 1983-1985.
Johnson, Alan	Labour MP and Government Minister, former General Secretary of the Post Office Workers Union 1987- 1997.
Jones, Frank	Liverpool NUPE branch official, hostile to Militant.
Jones, Sue	Author on interviewing methods in research.
Kennedy, Malcom	Delegate to the DLP, founder member of the Liverpool Labour Left.
Kennedy, Jane	NUPE branch secretary, founder member of the Liverpool Labour Left
Kilfoyle, Peter	Labour MP for Liverpool Walton 1991-2010, Regional Officer for the Labour Party with special responsibility for Liverpool Labour Party.
King, Francis	Author on Trotskyism.
Kinnock, Neil	Leader of the Labour Party 1983-1992.
Knights, Richard	Militant member, expelled from the Labour Party, as a result of the Inquiry of the Liverpool Labour Party.
Kogan, David	Author, political researcher.
Kogan, Maurice	Author, uncle of David Kogan, political researcher.
Leach, Robert	Author, political researcher.
Lennard, Peter	Convenor of Branch 80 GMB, organised a fleet of taxis distributing redundancy notices to city council workers, including his own members.
Lenin, Vladimir	Author and leader of the Communist Party of the USSR.
Lowes, Ian	Chair of Liverpool JSSC and chair of Branch 5 GMB.
Lutz, Karen Gilland	Author on political research methods.

Mahmood, Leslie	Journalist for Militant and unsuccessful candidate in the Liverpool Walton bye-election in 1991.
Marx, Karl	Author, and co-writer of the Communist Manifesto.
McCluskey, Len	General Secretary of UNITE 2011- present.
McGahey, Mick	Vice President of the NUM, member of the EC of the CPGB.
McIlroy, John	Author on rank- and- file movements.
McMahon, T.I.	District Auditor for local government.
Minkin, Lewis	Author on Labour Party Affairs.
Mitchell, Austin	Labour MP 1977-2015, critic of Tony Benn and Militant.
Molotov, Vyacheslav	Minister of foreign affairs, USSR 1939-1949.
Morrell, Francis	Tony Benn supporter on the Greater London Council.
Mulhearn,Tony	Member of Militant NEC, Liverpool City Councillor and President of the District Labour Party.
Nellist, David	Labour MP 1983-1992, supporter of Militant, expelled from the Labour Party.
North, Peter	Lecturer at Liverpool University, author.
'O' Neil, Martin	Labour MP 1979-1997.
Parkinson, Michael	Lecturer at Liverpool University specialises in Urban Studies.
Parris, Mathew	Author and journalist.
Payne, Robert	Author on the life and death of Leon Trotsky.
Prescott, John	Labour MP 1970-2010.
Robertson, David	Chair of City branch of Liverpool NATFHE.
Sawyer, Tom	NUPE Deputy General Secretary and General secretary of the Labour Party 1994-1998.
Scargill, Arthur	President of the NUM 1981-2002.
Seyd, Patrick	Author on the grass roots in the Labour Party.
Sewell, Rob	Member of the Militant Editorial Board, expelled from Militant.
Sharpey-Schafer, Sylvia	Militant member, expelled from the Labour Party as a result of the Inquiry into the Liverpool Labour Party.
Shaw, Eric	Author and academic on Labour Party Affairs.

Shaw, George Bernard	Author, and member of the Fabian society.
Shephard, David	Bishop of Liverpool, Church of England.
Shipley, Peter	Author on Trotskyism in the Labour Party.
Short, Clare	Labour MP 1983-2010, Member of the NEC of the Labour Party.
Skinner, Dennis	Labour MP 1970-2019, member of the NEC of the Labour Party.
Smith, Harry	Liverpool Labour Councillor escaped discipline although named by the Inquiry report into the Liverpool Labour Party.
Speller, John	Labour MP, 1982-1983. 1992-1997, active in the St Ermins group.
Stalin, Joseph	General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.1922-1952.
Stanley, Bryan	General Secretary of Post Office Engineers, 1972-1986 active in the St Ermins group.
Straw, Jack	Labour MP 1979-2015.
Stonefrost, Maurice	Commisioned by the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, to compile a report on the finances of the Liverpool City Council.
Storey, Michael	Deputy Leader of the Liverpool Liberal Group.
Taaffe, Peter	Editor of Militant, expelled from the Labour Party, now General Secretary of the Socialist Party of England and Wales.
Thatcher, Margaret	British Prime Minister 1979-1990.
Travis, Tony	Lectures at the LSE on Local Government.
Trotsky, Leon	Bolshevik and head of the Red Army, exiled and formed the Fourth International and led it until his assassination in 1941 in Mexico.
Tuck, Russell	NUR, assistant general secretary, 1970-1983
Turnock, Charles	Chair of Inquiry team of the NEC of the Labour Party into the Liverpool Labour Party.
Underhill, Reg	National Labour Party Agent wrote a report on Entryism in the Labour Party.

Varley, Cheryl	Member of Militant expelled from the Labour Party, as a result of the Inquiry into the Liverpool Labour Party.
Venton, Richard	Editor of Mersey Militant, expelled from the Labour Party, as a result of the Inquiry into the Liverpool Labour Party.
Voroshilov, Kliment	Commander in the red Army USSR.
Wall, Pat	Militant Supporter, died 1990.
Walsh, Lynn	Member of the Militant Editorial Board, expelled from the Labour Party.
Warlock, Dennis	Archbishop of Liverpool, Roman Catholic Church
Webb, Beatrice	Author, and diarist active in the formation of the Labour Party. Member of the Fabian Society.
Webb, Sydney	Wrote the 1918 constitution of the Labour Party. Member of the Fabian Society.
Webster, David	Author, and member of the Fabian society. Wrote a tract on the New Left.
Whitty, Larry	General Secretary of the Labour Party 1985-1994.
Williams, Barry	Chair of the Confed, Chair of the Liverpool Trades Council, NEC member of the CPGB.
Williams, Ian	NEC member of the NUR, and founder of the Liverpool Labour Left.
Williams, Shirley	Labour MP 1964-1979, SDP MP 1981-1983.
Wilson, Harold	Labour Party Leader 1963-1976.
Wise, Audrey	Labour MP 1974-1979, 1987-2000, co-author of minority report into Liverpool Labour Party.

APPENDIX 27
CRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

EVENT	DATE
Publication of Communist Manifesto by Marx and Engels.	1848-February.
Trades Union Congress established (TUC).	1868-Sept.
Formation of the Fabian Society.	1883-November.
Labour Representation Committee formed.	1900-February.
Russian Revolution, Bolsheviks take power.	1917-October.
Clause four of the Labour party inaugural constitution written by Sydney Webb and adopted by the inaugural conference.	1918- January.
Communist Party of Great Britain formed	1920- July.
Kronstadt Mutiny of sailors in protest of the food shortages in Petrograd and was brutally suppressed by Trotsky.	1921-March.
Labour Party bans Communists from membership.	1924-October
General Strike in Great Britain organised by the TUC	1926-May.
Trotsky exiled to Turkey.	1929-February.

The Trotskyist ‘Balham Group’ is expelled from the Communist Party of Great Britain and forms a communist league.	1932-August.
Trotsky arrives in France.	1933-July.
Trotsky advocates Entryism in the Socialist Party of France.	1934-October.
Trotsky moves to Norway.	1935-June.
Spanish Civil War starts.	1936-July.
Trotsky arrives in Mexico.	1936-December.
Tribune formed.	1937-January.
Trotsky promotes the creation of the Fourth International.	1938-Sept.
Trotsky assassinated in Mexico.	1940-August.
Trotskyist groups in Britain form the Revolutionary Communist Party, in a fusion conference.	1944-March.
Hugh Gaitskell elected leader of the Labour Party	1955-December.
The Revolutionary Socialist League is founded by Ted Grant and Jimmy Deane, centred in Liverpool. It starts the tactic, of entryism in the Labour Party	1957-June.
The Labour Party forms the Labour Party Young Socialists.	1965-December.

The creation of a place on the NEC of the Labour Party reserved for the LPYS provides Militant, with access, to internal documents.	1972
Campaign for Labour Party Democracy formed to reform the rules of the Labour Party.	1973.
Britain joins the EEC	1973-January.
New local authorities elected in England and Wales.	1973-April.
The Labour Party ends the ‘proscribed list’ of organisations from which party members are barred from joining.	1973-June.
The Labour Party NEC fails to take action, on the ‘Underhill Report’ into Trotskyist infiltration.	1975-November.
Tony Benn receives only 15% of the Parliamentary Party vote for leader of the Labour Party.	1976-March.
James Callaghan succeeds Harold Wilson as prime minister	1976-April.
Andy Bevan appointed Labour Party National Youth Officer, member of Militant.	1976
Liverpool Council, Liberal-Conservative coalition run the City.	1979-May.
Conservatives win the General Election.	1979-May.

Labour Party Conference agrees to mandatory re-selection of MPs.	1979-October.
‘Winter of Discontent’ local authority trade unions strike and cause widespread disruption to services.	1979-January.
Liverpool Council, Liberal-Conservative coalition elected.	1980-May
Labour Party Conference agreed in principle to rule changes to extend the franchise of Labour Party members and re-affirms mandatory reselection of MPs.	1980-October.
Militant Tendency affiliate to the Rank- and- File Mobilising Committee.	1980
Michael Foot elected leader of the Labour Party.	1980-November.
Special Conference of Labour Party agrees to rule changes on election of Leader and Deputy Leader by an Electoral College instead of the Parliamentary Labour Party.	1981-January.
Labour Party splits and the Social Democratic Party is formed.	1981-January.
Tony Mulhearn signed a property deed purchasing Militant HQ In Liverpool, providing proof of his involvement with Militant.	1981-February.
Labour Solidarity Committee formed to counter the Bennite left.	1981-February.
The St Ermins Group was a group of MP’s and trade union Officials who organised opposition to Tony Benn and Militant.	1981-February.

Toxteth riots in Liverpool which saw police retreating from a hail of stones and petrol bombs.	1981-July.
Tony Benn runs against Denis Healey for Deputy Leader of the Labour Party and is narrowly defeated.	1981-December.
Liverpool Council, Liberal-Conservative coalition elected.	1982-May.
The Labour Party NEC sets up a register of acceptable non-affiliated organisations, Militant is refused registration.	1982-June.
Jack Straw, MP, discovers a Militant cell in his constituency of Blackburn, Lancashire.	1983-January.
Labour Party NEC vote to expel the five members of the editorial board of Militant.	1983-February.
Liverpool Labour Party gain a majority on the City Council.	1983-May.
Conservatives win the General Election	1983-June.
Two Militant members, Terry Fields in Liverpool and David Nellist in Coventry are elected as Labour MPs.	1983-June.
Miners' strike begins.	1984-March.
The NEC of the Labour Party expel members of Militant in the Blackburn Party.	1984-April.

Liverpool Labour Party increase their majority on the City Council.	1984-May.
Liverpool Council set a legal budget with concessions from Central Government.	1984-July.
Miners' strike ends.	1985-March.
District auditor writes to all councillors explaining the consequences of setting an illegal budget.	1985-May.
Labour Party appoint Larry Whitty as General Secretary.	1985-June.
Liverpool Council set a deficit illegal budget.	1985-June.
Liverpool City Councillors who voted for a deficit budget surcharged, in total £106,000.	1985-Sept.
Redundancy notices issued to all council staff.	1985-September.
NUT applies to High Court to set aside the redundancy notices, the judge's rule that the council's action was, as a result of an illegal rate.	1985-October.
Liverpool Labour Left is formed to counter Militant.	1985-October.
Labour Party Annual conference, Kinnock attacks Militant.	1985-October.
Liverpool Council set a legal budget by mortgaging properties.	1985-November.

Labour Party NEC votes to set up an Inquiry into the Liverpool District Labour Party.	1985-November.
Inquiry into the Liverpool DLP interviews Irene Buxton who was an active member of Militant in Liverpool, but resigned, and gave evidence on the internal affairs of Militant.	1986-January.
Report on Inquiry into the Liverpool Labour Party agreed by the NEC.	1986-February.
Labour Party NEC issues a report on the extent of Militant influence; 40 constituency parties expel Militant supporters.	1986-February.
Disciplinary hearings into 16 members of the Liverpool Party.	1986-March.
Liverpool Councillors who voted for deficit budget debarred from office.	1986-March.
Tony Mulhearn, Ian Lowes and Tony Aitman expelled from the Labour Party	1986-May.
Derek Hatton, Richard Venton, Roger Bannister and Terry Harrison expelled from the Labour party.	1986-June.
Cheryl Varley expelled from the Labour Party.	1986-July.
Court of Appeal uphold the High Court ruling and debar the Liverpool City councillors who voted for a deficit budget.	1986-July.
Felicity Dowling expelled from the Labour Party.	1986-October.

Law Lords uphold the ruling of the Court of Appeal and debar the Liverpool councillors who voted for a deficit budget.	1987-March.
Liverpool Council dismiss Sam Bond.	1987-March.
Liverpool Labour Party win a majority on the City Council.	1987-May.
Conservatives win the General Election.	1987-June.
Benn stands against Kinnock for Leader of the Labour Party and is heavily defeated only receiving 11.37% of the vote.	1988-Oct.
Lesley Mahmood stands as Real Labour, in the Walton bye-election in Liverpool. This was the first instance Militant opposed the Official Labour candidate. Mahmood was, defeated and the Labour candidate, Peter Kilfoyle, was elected, with a large majority.	1991-May.
The Communist Party of Great Britain dissolves itself.	1991-November.
Terry Fields and David Nellist, Labour M's, expelled for membership of Militant.	1992.
Conservatives win the General Election.	1992.
John Smith elected leader of the Labour Party.	1992.
Labour Party adopts 'One Man one Vote' (OMOV).	1993.

John Smith dies and is succeeded by Tony Blair.	1994-July.
Special Conference of the Labour Party revises Clause Four of the Labour Party Constitution.	1995-April.
Arthur Scargill forms the Socialist Labour Party.	1996-May.
Formation of Socialist Party of England and Wales.	1997-January.
Labour Party wins a landslide in the General Election.	1997-May.
Labour Party wins a majority, Tony Blair Prime Minister.	2001-June
Gordon Brown, Labour Party, becomes Prime Minister.	2007.
Conservative coalition, David Cameron becomes Prime Minister	2010-May.
Ed Miliband, elected leader of the Labour Party	2010-Sept.
Jeremy Corbyn, elected leader of the Labour Party, Momentum supporter.	2015-Sept.
Conservative minority government Teresa May becomes Prime Minister.	2017-June.
Jennie Formby appointed General Secretary of the Labour Party, formerly a member of Militant, Momentum supporter.	2018-July.
Conservative landslide, Boris Johnson Prime Minister	2019-Dec.

UK leaves the European Union 2020-January.

APPENDIX 28

Index of Abbreviations in the 1970s and 1980s

AUEW	Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers
CLP	Constituency Labour Party
CPGB	Communist Party of Great Britain
CLPD	Campaign for Labour Party Democracy
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
EEC	European Economic Community
EEPTU	Electrical, Electronic Telecommunications and Plumbing Union
GLC	Greater London Council
GMC	General Management Committee
GMWU	General and Municipal Workers Union
ILP	Independent Labour Party
IMG	International Marxist Group
IWC	Institute for Workers Control
LPYS	Labour Party Young Socialists
LRC	Labour Representation Committee
NALGO	National and Local Government Officers' Association
NAS/UWT	National Association of Schoolmaster/Union of Women Teachers
NATFHE	National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education
NEC	National Executive Committee
NUM	National Union of Mineworkers
NUPE	National Union of Public Employees
NUR	National Union of Railway Workers
NUT	National Union of Teachers
OMOV	One Member One Vote
PLP	Parliamentary Labour Party
RFMC	Rank and File Mobilising Committee

SDP	Social Democratic Party
SLP	Socialist Labour Party
SWP	Socialist Workers Party
TGWU	Transport and General Workers Union
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UCATT	Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians
USDAW	Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

APPENDIX 29

Ethical Approval

Keele University

Ref: ERP1291

2nd September 2016

James Ferguson
School of Politics, Philosophy, International Relations and Environment
Keele University

Dear James,

Re: Case Study in Entryism and Vanguardism By the Militant Tendency in the British Labour Party

Thank you for submitting your revised application for review.

I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved by the Ethics Review Panel. The following documents have been reviewed and approved by the panel as follows:

Document(s)	Version Number	Date
Information Sheet	1	23-02-2016
Consent Form	1	23-02-2016
Consent for the use of quotes	1	23-02-2016

If the fieldwork goes beyond the date stated in your application, **21st January 2018**, or there are any other amendments to your study you must submit an 'application to amend study' form to the ERP administrator at research.erps@keele.ac.uk stating **ERP1** in the subject line of the e-mail. This form is available via http://www.keele.ac.uk/researchsupport/researchethics/

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me via the ERP administrator on research.erps@keele.ac.uk stating **ERP1** in the subject line of the e-mail.

Yours sincerely

pp C H Bateman

Dr Jackie Waterfield
Chair – Ethical Review Panel

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