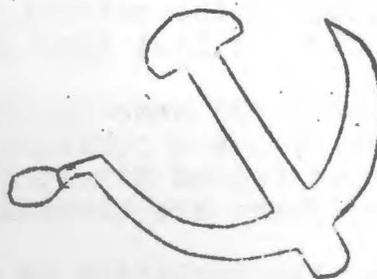


Finsbury Communist



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FRINGE OF FINSBURY LAWYER TO LEAD WORKING CLASS!:

Tony Blair, the newly elected Labour Party leader, lives in plush Richmond Crescent, just outside Finsbury. His first policy statement was on education. This interest does not appear to extend to sending his own children to Islington borough schools if we can believe Public Eye in the Islington Gazette (July 21st, 1994).

"The devout Christian is alleged to have visited the Catholic London Oratory School in Chelsea, an institution with a reputation for academic success. Rumour has it that he sees the school as a possible alma mater for his own three young ones".

Perhaps Tony does not realise that Elizabeth Garrett Anderson school, Risinghill Street, alma mater to Finsbury's finest, is just 5 minutes' walk away.

Blair has been acclaimed by all and sundry as the man who can beat the Tories at their own game. Maybe. Nobody knows who is going to win the General Election in three years' time, just as nobody had heard of Blair a few months ago.

With the demise of what many people regarded as socialism, the political spectrum has shifted well to the right. The election of a right-winger to lead the Labour Party reflects this shift. It does not mean that Labour has any more chance of being returned at the next General Election.

ONLY FIVE MINUTES FROM FINSBURY

The boundary between the City of London and Finsbury is well marked. On one side all is immaculate. On the other lies a tidemark of dirt and unevenly dug up streets and pavements.

Finsburians are used to a bit of mess. Few realise, though, that a two class system operates in health as well. And this inside a service they have paid in for in National Insurance and taxes.

National Health Service time is precious. Patients' time is not. Working class patients are kept waiting for ages and then shot through by a doctor or consultant in double quick time. If the worst comes to the worst, the NHS motto is "When in doubt, cut it out". Or burn it out as the case may be.

There is a little publicised method of treatment available within the

NHS which does not involve such drastic methods. This is homoeopathy which has received the patronage of the Royal Family for six generations. When did you last hear of a royal being sliced open?

Suppose you want NHS homoeopathic treatment. Camden and Islington Health Authority has a contract with the Royal London Homoeopathic Hospital, Great Ormond Street (RLHH). Any doctor can refer you to the RLHH. Few do. There are several reasons for this.

When a doctor has qualified he or she wants to start earning. Homoeopathy requires extra study for no extra reward.

We phoned up the Camden and Islington Family Health Service Authority and asked how many doctors in Finsbury knew anything at all about homoeopathy. There isn't one. Not one. A doctor is unlikely to refer you to something he knows nothing about.

Homoeopathic treatment does not come cheap. It entails the hospital consultant talking with and listening to the patient for some time in order to find out the exact cause of the trouble. Treatment may extend over several months.

If your doctor comes under the Camden and Islington Health Authority he will have to justify the cost of RLHH treatment to that authority. Difficult if he knows nothing about homoeopathy.

If your doctor is a GP fundholder the cost is down to him personally.

So there is your friendly local GP, stopping you getting to the RLHH unless you kick up a fuss.

Despite the name, it's not just homoeopathy at the RLHH. Acupuncture; osteopathy and osteopathic medicine; nutritional medicine; allergy management and enzyme potentiated desensitisation; autogenic training and stress management; trans-cutaneous electrical nerve stimulation; complementary cancer therapies; children's allergies and asthma. Services which cost a bomb privately. All on the NHS and all paid in for by you.

Reference to the RLHH must come through a GP. Few patients get referred. Wards have been closed down. The building is practically in darkness.

To make matters worse, the RLHH is on a prime site. It has to meet Central London rental costs to the NHS out of its income although it owned the hospital itself prior to 1948. This pushes up overheads, making the cost of treatment even dearer.

There are only 3 NHS GPs in the whole of London and the Home Counties who know anything about homoeopathy. Fortunately for Finsburians, one is in Camden and Islington, at the Belsize Health Centre.

Don't all rush at once.

INVISIBLE SEWAGE

Central London was noticeable this July for extreme levels of pollution, caused by all the lorries, vans and cars that came into the place. Asthmatics in particular suffered.

All the political parties know what's wrong. They all know that action is needed right away. They are all chary about calling for that action.

Political parties need members and supporters. Many members and supporters drive. Calling for a ban on lorries, vans and cars entering Central London might alienate them. This applies as much to communist, socialist and green parties as to Labour, Liberal Democrat and Tories.

The term for such an unprincipled attitude is opportunism. A particularly dodgy form of opportunism is one which says that public transport should be made so good that people will get rid of their cars or leave them at home. Meanwhile, the asthmatics can wait.

One hundred and fifty years ago people used to sling pailfuls of excrement out on the street, spreading disease. As public main drainage came in, houses were compulsorily connected to the sewer. People were expected to stop using the street. Nobody was given the choice. If they had been, we might never have had a sewage system.

Public transport is still fairly adequate over much of England. Yet lorries, vans and cars are permitted to emit invisible sewage into the air.

Finsbury readers will remember the notorious fire at Kings Cross Underground in 1987 when several people rather obviously were killed. Smoking was banned on the London Underground at once.

No one can count on a few thousand asthmatics dramatically turning up their toes in public. London's pollution is, therefore, likely to continue until.....Until when?

The fear is that those most badly affected will realise that there are many simple, if unofficial, ways of deterring the polluters.

EDUCATION FOR THE ELITE

Tony Blair's kids will probably end up in public school as Jeremy Corbyn, MP, did.

What is it about public schools? Perhaps Jeremy will tell us sometime. There is, of course, boarding in, enabling one to make friends with other toffs who might do you some good some day.

As the Eton Boating Song puts it "Nothing in life shall sever the chains that have bound us now". Apart from that it's ordinary conventional education, well qualified teachers, small classes and plenty of after school hours work. Not a life-enhancing experience to be seen.

Results are good. Few toffs are out of work. Unless, of course, they want to be.

A BALANCED ECONOMY

Everybody wants full employment. However, it is now evident that this cannot be based on everybody providing services to each other. Nor can full employment be based on British workers solely doing

high pay, high tech work.

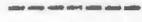
There is only one other alternative left.

The alternative is nations, or groups of nations, doing some high tech, some middle tech, some low tech. Whatever exchange between nations, or groups of nations, that is necessary would be on an equal basis.

This alternative may be termed a balanced economy. There are all sorts of problems involved in moving over to a balanced economy. The foremost problem is over what area a balanced economy should operate. The larger the area, the easier it is to move over to a balanced economy.

As far as Western Europe is concerned, should there be a balanced economy on a national level, a state level, or a European Community level?

We should appreciate it if our readers would give some thought to this problem.



CAMPAIGN OR CURE?

Manu Manchanda, the famous communist campaigner, abandoned campaigning to study homoeopathy in his last years. Perhaps this was for family reasons.

This was unwise. His talents would have been better employed in campaigning for homoeopathic treatment than in providing it himself. The RLHH needs someone like him today.



A PROBLEM SHARED

Communists, of course, contend that the signalmen should all get the unconditional 11% they are asking for in respect of past productivity improvements. However, there are problems in arguing the case if communists are to keep their reputation for telling the truth.

An article in 6th July's Morning Star implied that the average signal worker's wages are £16,000. Figures elsewhere in the article proved, to anyone equipped with a calculator, that the average is, in fact, £19,000. Most Finsbury Communist readers get less than £19,000. Should communists speak up or shut up?

On July 22nd, the Morning Star carried a story about a scabbing signal supervisor being issued a certificate of competence to run Llanrwst semi-automatic signal box. Research reveals that a normal day's work at Llanrwst signal box is to stop the 10.10 northbound train from proceeding, switch the 10.14 southbound onto the other side of the loop, switch the points so that the 10.10 can proceed, change the signal to GO, let the 10.10 proceed, switch the points so that the 10.14 can proceed, and signal it to GO.

The usual Llanrwst signalman should get the 11% if only for the boredom of being there all day. Scabbing must be condemned. However, no real danger was involved. But if communists conceal the facts when the bosses know the facts, what use are they to the working class? What do you think?



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