

REPORT from Jeremy Corbyn MP

Parliamentary/House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

Tel: 020 7219 3545, fax 2328

Local/213a Blackstock Rd, London, N5 2LL

Tel 020 7226 5775, fax 020 7219 3775

Email: corbynj@parliament.uk *August/Sept 2005: number 265/6*

Website: www.jeremycorbyn.co.uk



This report covers a period since July 20th which has been very busy despite it being the official holiday period.

We mourn the very sad loss of Robin Cook, Mo Mowlam and local party member Anne Cesek.

Robin Cook had a fantastic analytical brain and his dramatic resignation speech on the eve of the parliamentary vote on going to war with Iraq will be remembered for a very long time. It was a clear and prescient warning about what would happen if we went to war illegally and under the pretence that Iraq held weapons of mass destruction.

Robin's visits to Islington over the years have ranged from foreign policy issues to health matters, and he will be remembered for his wit and wisdom on these occasions. Indeed his visit during the recent general election campaign had an enormous impact, as did his support for Emily Thornberry and myself in the election itself. Labour has lost a great figure and I think we should all send our condolences to Gaynor and his sons.

Mo Mowlam will forever be remembered in history for being the first and so far only woman Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and for her enthusiastic and warm hearted approach to the politics of the province: something that I fear was never understood by either the Reverend Ian Paisley or David Trimble!

Mo was the architect of the 1997 ceasefire, and of the Good Friday Agreement which has brought relative peace to Northern Ireland, because it recognised the differing political traditions of the two communities in the

North. It was an honour for me to speak alongside Mo at the great anti war rally on February 15th 2003, and Mo was a steadfast opponent of the government's policies in the Middle East which led us to war.

She suffered terribly from illness in the latter years of her life, but nevertheless managed to carry on making a significant political contribution.

Anne Cesik, former chair and active member of Islington North Labour Party in the late 70s and early 80s, has died from cancer which she suffered with for the past 14 years. Her funeral took place at Golders Green on the same day as Robin Cook's, and was attended by a large number of friends dating back from her IMG days of the 70s, to newer colleagues from Labour Party head office, and of course her local friends. Michael Meacher and former General Secretary Larry Whitty were prominently present. Anne had an incredible ability to argue her case and pursue with enthusiasm whatever cause she was involved with, and she was particularly effective at fundraising with the Labour Party at head office. Her daughter Laurie is a great credit to Anne's verve and sense of humour.

The bombs in London on July 7th have had an enormous effect, as have the failed bombs of 21st July. I have had numerous meetings with the local police and the mosques, as well as others in the faith communities, to ensure that London does not turn in on itself, but remains a proudly multi cultural city. In that sense I strongly support the statements made by Ken Livingstone in July. Much of the success of

the emergency services, who did a magnificent job, together with the transport workers, is down to the dedication of ordinary public workers.

I was appalled at the shooting of Jean Pierre Menezes on July 21st and indeed supported a vigil in his memory the following day in Parliament Square, just before his memorial service was held at Westminster Cathedral. There cannot be any approval of a “shoot to kill” policy on the streets of London in my view.

I am very unhappy with the new anti-terror proposals being put forward by the Home Secretary which involve lengthy periods of detention without charge by the police, and increasing executive power for ministers. The threat of terrorism must not be used as an excuse to systematically remove our freedom of expression and other civil liberties. We should be proud of the fact that we’ve passed the human rights act into law in 1998 and not sought derogation from it.

I have been very active in continuing opposition to the war in Iraq and will be taking part and speaking at the demonstration in Central London, Hyde Park this weekend, 24th September. The situation seems to be getting worse, not better, and British and American forces are increasingly the problem not the solution. Too many people have already died and the war must be brought to an end. I’ve also been very involved in a large variety of local issues which appear in the selection of my diary activities which follow.

27th July: I was Al Jazeera’s guest of the day in a half hour interview and discussion on the satellite channel concerning the London bombings, Iraq and Anti-terror legislation. Later that day I attended a local history event to pay tribute to the doughty secretary Pat Haynes, the longest serving Fabian Secretary ever.

29th July: I joined Haroon Siddiqe, formerly of the Highbury Express outside the Home Office for a photocall in support of the two City and Islington College students who are threatened with deportation. Later I attended the North London Central Mosque at Finsbury Park.

1st August: I met a delegation of Mexican MPs to discuss issues of trade, poverty, policing and human rights. I am taking part in a parliamentary delegation visit to Mexico in the first week of October where I will meet human rights groups there, including around the border area and in the Yucatan. Later that day I took part in a protest at the silencing of demonstrators in Parliament Square and now, only Brian Haw is allowed to remain there (having won his courtcase as an ongoing demonstrator)!

4th August: I spoke at a large Stop the War (STW) event on the anti-terror laws in Friends House, Euston Rd.

5th August I joined David Lammy MP and leaders of all the local Muslim communities and the police for a special meeting at North London Central Mosque, to support community unity. Later that day I was guest of the day on CNN concerning Hiroshima Day.

6th August: I presided over the Hiroshima Memorial event in Tavistock Square. The sad news of Robin Cook’s death came through shortly after, at which point I did quite a few press and television interviews concerning his life.

8th August: I attended a meeting at the Red Rose with the Islington Somali community to discuss issues of housing, employment and discrimination.

30th August: I attended the East Area planning committee to make representations regarding the proposed redevelopment of the Hornsey Rd site. I objected to the closure of the baths in return for a mere £750,000. There should have been a higher proportion of housing for affordable rent and I made this clear.

3rd September: I was a speaker at a conference “Preventing Trident

Replacement”, at the London Voluntary Centre at Holloway Rd. It was attended by representatives of a number of organisations including CND and Greenpeace.

4th September: after attending NILP Garden Party I went off to the Jews for Justice for Palestine Summer Fundraiser. I also attended Islington People’s Rights AGM at Manor Gardens with Emily Thornberry, and I emphasised the need for more advice facilities being available in Islington. I later spoke at a public meeting in Wandsworth as part of the build up to the 24th September Demonstration.

9th September: I attended a hearing for Robel Kahsay (City and Islington) who is appearing against his removal order. Incidentally, he was named Student of the Year at City and Islington College but this sort of information seems to pass the Home Office by! I later spoke to Friday prayers at North London Central Mosque and Muslim Welfare House with Chief Inspector John Frost of Islington Police. We held an open meeting afterward with local people concerning security and safety.

10th September: I took part in a STW demonstration in Leeds, including a large meeting at the University.

11th September: I went to the 20th Gillespie Festival and joined the Mayor, opening the event, speaking about the inadequacies of the developers’ plans of the current Highbury Stadium site and the lack of social housing included in the new development, as well as the loss of local, usable sports facilities. The Musicans Against Nuclear Arms concert with John Flinders and Tony Lamb concluded the day and the musicians, as always, were terrific. It’s one of those rare occasions where I get to share the platform with musicians in my role as guest speaker.

13th September: I met Guy Philips of Remploy to discuss the issues surrounding relocation of the Factory from Ashburton Grove. I received a briefing on the excellent work that Remploy do. I later supported the Ugandan community via a letter hand in to Downing St concerning Aid and its use in

Uganda. I later spoke at the Haringey STW meeting.

14th September: I spoke at a fringe meeting at the TUC in Brighton on behalf of CND against Trident replacement. I attended a FITA leaseholders forum at the Town Hall in which I gathered a large amount of information concerning the horrendous charges for improvements that some leaseholders have to face. I am taking the matter up with both the Council and the ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)..

15th September: I was invited by London Advice Services Alliance to their 20th anniversary event at City Hall where the main speaker was Clare Raynor. Clare was her usual witty and cheerful self, despite having become a part-time wheelchair user as a result of MRSA.

16th September: together with Emily Thornberry I had a very useful meeting with Police Commander Barry Norman about local anti-social issues, impressing upon Barry the need to bring in Neighbourhood Policing in every ward in Islington as quickly as possible. We also expressed our gratitude to him, (and the Mayor) for pushing the program along so quickly.

19th September: Along with Theresa De Bono and the Reverend Stephen Coles I met the Mayors’ planning advisor to protest about the lack of consultation regarding the loss of local sports facilities and lack of social housing at the proposed Arsenal development. Later I went to Liverpool to speak at a large STW meeting at Friends House.

20th September: I met John Hallam, an Australian weapons expert followed by participating in a STW press conference. The afternoon consisted of a visit to Holloway Prison to open their First Night Centre, meeting a number of the prisoners and the governor and senior management, including Tony Hassell, and representatives from the Prison Officers Association. They have made fantastic achievements at Holloway, with their positive approach in ensuring that all prisoners receive training and pre-release

information about housing and employment.
In the evening I spoke at two events including
an RMT meeting, followed by a public STW
meeting in Tower Hamlets.

Details of Jeremy Corbyn's Advice Surgeries
are available by telephoning 020 7226 5775.
If you have a political query of any sort please
telephone the parliamentary office on 020
7219 3545.