REPORT from
Jeremy Corbyn MP

Parliamentary/House of Commons, London, SW1A OAA
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 ***Dec 05/ Jan 06*: *numbers 269/70***
Website: www.jeremycorbyn.co.uk

The past two months have been busy despite the interruption of the festive break. The issue of Iran's nuclear weapons has dominated the political scene internationally, and nationally, the debate about the education and the health white papers (including the future of the NHS and its funding problems) has been a concern.

Locally, I am appalled at the proposal by the Council to sell of the homeless persons hostels in the borough, which I suspect will lead to homeless families being shunted back into B & B accommodation. This twist of priorities by the Liberal Democrat Council will ultimately cost the Council far more money than they could have imagined, and they have not so far shown any sign of acknowledging the dangers in selling off such assets.

Highlights from my Diary

17/11: The annual Defence in the World debate took place in parliament, in which I spoke on a number of issues, mainly on the way to use the opportunity of the forthcoming obsolescence of the Trident missile system to adhere to all the terms of the 1970 Non Proliferation Treaty, and for Britain to finally get rid of its weapons.

I also attended an Islington Stop the War (STW) public meeting at Union Chapel, though most of us were disappointed that local rap artist Skinny Man was unable to come. He has apparently promised to appear at a future occasion. The meeting was to raise awareness for the STW Peace Conference which was held on 10th December.

21/11: Lord Avebury had organised, along with Sujet Sen, an event in parliament on Bangladeshi human rights, at which the issues of religious attacks, human rights abuses, and assassinations were raised with a very large audience including the Bangladeshi High Commissioner.

22/11: I was interviewed on Sky's breakfast discussion about a number of current political issues including Iran.

I had secured a Westminster Hall adjournment debate on issues of Caste Discrimination in South Asia and West Africa. I am a trustee of the Dalit Solidarity Campaign and raised the need for a more coherent policy against caste discrimination in India, as well as in West Africa. Perhaps as many as 200 million people are affected by this around the world.

I addressed a group of Civil Servants on the Work of an MP, and later I spoke to the RMT (National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers) Black and Minority Ethnic Advisory Committee on issues before parliament, as well as employment matters in the railway industry.

A Multi Faith Room in Holloway Prison was opened and I was privileged to join in the event. This room will of course serve women from all faiths and none – a welcome improvement in the facilities provided at the prison.

24/11: I visited Holloway school and was given an excellent tour by its head, Bob Hamlyn. Huge improvements have taken

place in computer facilities and a new sports centre is also under construction.

After an Advice Bureau at Caxton House I attended the opening ceremony of Hanley Primary Care Centre, an excellent new facility with salaried GPs working alongside NHS and other support workers

I later addressed a STW meeting at Birkbeck College followed by a large rally of public sector unions concerned about their pension arrangements (at the National Union of Teachers conference centre).

A large number of local Trade Justice campaigners met at St Augustine's church. Many thanks for their hospitality. We discussed the forthcoming Hong Kong Trade round, issues of food dumping, and fair prices for imported finished goods from developing countries.

25/11: I spoke at a conference on Chechnya which was held at SOAS, before heading off to my advice session at the Muslim Welfare House, which included many people with significant problems.

26/11: I spoke outside Kings Cross station on the anniversary of the dreadful fire that took place there in 1987. We now have much tougher safety regulations on the underground system. The Rail Maritime and Transport workers Union (RMT) held a national demonstration at which we highlighted serious concerns about the draft regulations which the Home Office have prepared on fire cover. I also made the point that the loss of fire appliances from Islington and Camden put everyone at greater risk.

27/11: Together with Emily Thornberry, I attended the Service celebrating International Islington at St Mary's church.

I went on to attend a silent national demonstration outside Downing Street against the use of torture. This event was organised by groups including Amnesty International and Liberty.

28/11: I spoke at an LSE Anti war meeting as part of the build up to the peace conference, and I later chaired Liberation's Central Council meeting.

29/11: I met a group of students from Birkbeck College to discuss the work of an MP. They were American students studying here, and we compared the two political systems.

On the same day the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) held a successful lobby of parliament to raise awareness of the current and very active occupation of the country. In the evening I spoke at a public meeting on this subject.

30/11: I met with Dr Steve Tilling and colleagues of the Fields Council to talk about their excellent work which ensures students are able to go on field trips. We discussed opportunities for Islington schools as well as funding issues.

I later met a number of Iranian organisations including Jebeh Meli as well as Said Armen, (the latter is an International Organisation of Iranian Refugees). We discussed both the situation in Iran and the direction it could and/or should take.

I attended a lecture on urban design by Marion Roberts at Westminster University, who focuses on improving design in public spaces to make people feel more involved as well as to reduce crime.

I later spoke at an STW public meeting at SOAS, alongside the (now infamous) Walter Wolfgang, and Lindsay German of the STW coalition.

01/12: Cecelia Flores-Oebanda came to meet me at parliament following receipt of her anti slavery international award for her work in exposing the virtual slavery of domestic workers in the Philippines. Part of her trip included this visit to parliament, and I later tabled a parliamentary motion congratulating her.

At the request of Emma Ginn of NADC (National Coalition of Anti Deportation

Campaigns) I chaired a meeting on Congolese Asylum seekers. The meeting was absolutely packed and many present were victims of the political situation there.

I was very sad to learn of the death of Jim Mann, a founder of Islington Carers Forum. He died recently and I spoke at his funeral at St Silas and All Saints church.

I met Ethiopian Development Association members and later went to my usual monthly advice session.

03/12: I attended the World Poverty and Disarmament Conference, Central London, chairing the morning session concerning issues of Trident non-replacement (at Caxton House).

I also spoke at the "Hands off Venezuela" conference at the Natfhe centre, and I was later one of the speakers at the Latin America 2005 conference held on the same day.

04/12: I was invited to take part in turning on the lights of the Philip Noel Baker Park in Elthorne - an excellent multi faith affair.

05/12: I attended the Robin Cook memorial at St Margaret's, Westminster, later visiting Islington Carers Forum.

A group of Venezuelan Trade Union leaders who were visiting Britain (including Carlos Polanco and Rubin Linares) came to talk to me and I found our discussion very productive.

06/12: Many of you are already aware that the Chagos Islanders were illegally prevented from returning to the islands by the 2004 Order in Council which is not debatable in parliament, and unchallengable in a parliamentary sense. The 'Islanders, represented by Olivier Bancoult received permission to mount a judicial review and I attended as much of the hearing as I could at the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand.

I later took part in a film interview by American film maker, Sarah Melikian on this subject.

This was followed by a CND public meeting in Westminster which I chaired, on the subject of the non-replacement of Trident.

The day concluded with a vegetarian meal in honour of the Mordechai Vanunu campaign.

07/12: I was a guest speaker at Camden Islington Unison Health Meeting at St Pancras Hospital at which they discussed the problems of the reorganisation of the Primary Care Trusts in the government White Paper.

I also did another press interview with the BBC.

I raised the issue of Dalits in an Adjournment Debate in Westminster Hall entitled "UK Trade with India". Later in the day Gareth Pearce visited the Commons to advise on the Terrorism Bill.

Last but not least I participated in a meeting with Lord Rea (a constituent) and Bici Williams, at St George's in a public meeting on the subject of school meals.

08/12: Today I held an Advice Session at Mildmay Library, and did another press interview for the BBC.

09/12: I met with a number of Iranian visitors who were in London for the STW conference including a former female MP from Iran, all of them critical of Iran's record but opposed to any attacks on Iran.

I attended the Chance UK charity graduation ceremony at Islington Town Hall

Sadly, I attended a memorial meeting for Anwar Bhayatt in Holloway Rd. Anwar worked tirelessly for the Chagos Islanders and I spoke at this event following his tragic and sudden death from a heart attack whilst playing football in Mauritius.

10/12: I spoke at the very large STW / Iraqi Peace conference at the Royal Horticultural Society with speakers from all over the globe, including Iran, and later I attended the showing of Dario Fo's play on the life of Cindy Sheehan (at Pimlico School) and had

the pleasure of a fascinating discussion afterwards.

I also spoke at the Islington Chinese Association celebration of their volunteer awards, and was able to thank them for their work and for the great work done by Milton Babulall and Talal Karim in ensuring its survival.

11/12: I was a guest speaker at Halkevi's Annual General Meeting (AGM) which included Robert Evans MEP and Jules Pipe, the executive mayor of Hackney.

Later that day I attended the 50th edition celebration of the Jewish Socialist, hosted by the comedian Ivor Dembina. Jeremy Hardy and others were present at what was a packed event.

12/12: I went to City and Islington College to be photographed with Ali and Robel, the two African students who are threatened with deportation despite having been here for a long time, and despite them being great achievers at City and Islington College.

The Migrant Training Awards with Errol Smalley were as successful as in other years, where international students received well deserved awards in computer and literacy training as a start to going on to further studies.

I then went on to Disability Network to discuss the needs of deaf people across the borough, and the lack of facilities provided for them by Islington Council.

13/12: I visited Mount Carmel school with the head Paul Kehoe, and saw the excellent work in the technology department there, and I saw the students at work.

I also met a delegation from Medicin Sans Frontier concerning the situation in Chechnya .

I was interested to hear a TU report-back on Venezuela, with British and Venezuelan trade unionists.

14/12: This morning I went to City and Islington College to give a talk to a 6th form group who are doing politics A level, and later on I attended the Council leaseholders forum at Islington Town Hall with Emily Thornberry.

15/12: The most significant events today included meeting officials from the Department of Education and Government Office for London, concerning the necessity of funding for the Margaret McMillan Children's centre, which I'm pleased to say now looks really promising.

I then hosted a Unison event at the House of Commons with delegates from all over London.

17/12: I attended a stall in Highbury barn to protest about Islington's apparent recycling materials having made their way to Indonesia!

19/12: I met with the Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP and the local Congolese community concerning aid to the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the political problems of outside army operations in the Eastern Congo.

20/12: On the last day of parliament, the Secretary of State Alan Johnson gave a statement on the outcome of the World Trade Organisation and I asked a number of parliamentary questions.

21/12: I visited Cheverton Lodge for a coffee morning.

22/12: My Advice session today was followed by a meeting with the Algerian Community at North London Central Mosque.

10/01: In parliament I spoke in the Families with Children Removals Debate (requested by Chris Mullin MP) regarding the problems of children who have grown up here being deported.

11/01: John McDonnell organised a meeting I joined in to protest about deportations to Iraq which was extremely well attended (the Boothroyd Room) and informative.

13/01: The Somali community in Islington have set up a new umbrella organisation and they celebrated its formation with an Eid meal, and the Mayor, Councillor Greening and Councillor Sidnell and myself spoke.

I attended the following Christmas gatherings, all of which I thoroughly enjoyed and will repeat, should I be invited to do so, in future years:

09/12: Islington Support Christmas party
09/12: INLP Christmas Party at the Red Rose
10 /12: Hanley Crouch Christmas Party
11/12: Ecology Centre Christmas event
25/11: Andover Christmas Party
16/12: Mayville Pensioners Christmas party

For information on Jeremy Corbyn's Advice Sessions which are held every week, please contact the constituency office on telephone: 020 7226 5775.