

FD, contelle 1, 10

TO THE LABOUR PARTY NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

We are writing in support of the Maureen Colquhoun Action Committee, to protest at the action of Northampton North Labour Party in sacking Maureen Colquhoun as their candidate at the next general election. We demand that you, the National Executive of the Labour Party, rescind this decision, by any of the means available.

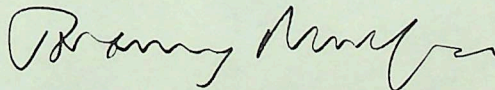
As men, we agree with Wages Due Lesbians, in their letter to you, that a vote against the reinstatement of Maureen Colquhoun is a vote against *all* women, not only against the millions of lesbian women in this country. We would add that it is a vote against all men, too. Indeed, it is a vote against the whole working class.

Maureen Colquhoun's action in coming out publicly as a lesbian is a threat in the first place, not to 'conventional morality', but to the bondage of financial dependence on men which keeps women in their place. This dependence on us means that we are kept in *our* place, as 'head of the household' whose function it is to keep women and children to their allotted tasks, and which in turn is a discipline on *us* in the factory or the office or wherever our waged work is.

From the point of view of government and industry, gay men are 'bad enough', in stepping out of line and refusing their allotted task. But lesbian women who refuse all the work that is tied to dependence on men represent the biggest threat of all, because the whole of this society is *based* on women's unrecognised and unpaid work in the home.

In punishing Maureen Colquhoun for coming out as a lesbian, Northampton North Labour Party is giving a lead to all those forces whose interest is in maintaining the status quo; whose interest it is to keep all the different sectors of the working class in our places—miners in mines until they are 65 (or maybe 62½); children out of the way in schools for at least eleven years, officially for their own benefit but learning precious little; countless lesbian women looking after husbands because they have no option because they have no pay . . . All of us in our places—and *divided against each other*.

The action of Northampton North Labour Party does not surprise us. Using a small electoral majority as an excuse (under the guise of 'pragmatism') for an attack on the working class is all too familiar. But Northampton North Labour Party, and the Labour Party generally, should know that, in response to actions like the sacking of Maureen Colquhoun, the working class is increasingly going to be coming out against *them*. In particular, all the sectors of the working class—notably women—whose needs have traditionally been put last. Since their coming out is in the interest of us all, you—the National Executive of the Labour Party—should consider urgently whether *your* interest is with them, or against them.



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