

WHY WE ARE IN OCCUPATION

Over the past few years we have seen our education being eroded, academic facilities are being stretched to breaking point and financially we are increasingly worse off.

◇ With no Housing Benefit or dole and grants frozen at a low level, students are being asked to live on a *third* less than they received in 1980. The recession has severely shrunk the part-time jobs market and the so-called "access" fund is derisory. Graduate job prospects are very poor, making the repayment of any loans a daunting prospect.

◇ There is virtually no extra money for Higher Education, yet student numbers have been increased by *one fifth* this year on top of previous increases. At the same time a £3 million deficit due to mismanagement has led to an 8% cut in staff at Middlesex. In the next few years they plan to increase the number of students by almost 4,000!

◇ Management argue that they are not responsible for Government policy, yet they are ruthlessly implementing those policies.....and getting very well paid for it. Huge secret pay rises mean that our new Director probably earns as much as £80-100,000 a year!

◇ They also argue that occupation is disruptive and ineffective. But unfortunately we live in a society in which employees and students are not taken seriously unless we cause disruption. *A two day occupation at the Quicksilver Place Fine Art site last week forced the director to visit the site and won improvements in the provision of technicians crucial to their courses.*

We have the power to bring Higher Education to a halt and so prevent any Government plan. Occupations are fun, they create solidarity and they show us the potential of our collective strength. Widespread actions could start to inspire others to take strike action against redundancies and wage & welfare cuts. This may seem too optimistic, but at a time when the Labour Party is no longer pretending to offer any real alternative to Tory austerity it is vital that we begin to build a real opposition to our rulers' policies of cut-backs, recession and war.

COME AND JOIN US!

We've Had Enough!