

COMMUNITY ACTION

No 46 30p

THE ARGUMENTS
FOR
INCREASED
PUBLIC
SPENDING

FIGHT THE
CUTS
-SAVE JOBS-

heating system victory
anti-dampness charter
scandal of asbestos in council housing

PHOTO: JOHN SPURROCK (REPORT)

NEWS FROM **COMMUNITY ACTION**

As mentioned in CA45, in recent weeks we have been travelling to Bristol, South Wales, Leeds, Bradford and Liverpool making contact with local tenants associations, trade union and other campaigns, projects and groups.

We have gained some valuable feedback on how the magazine is used (or not!), and sources for future news and articles. Within the next few months, we hope to visit South Lancashire, Humberside, Teeside, Leicester, Derby, Stoke, Manchester, Oldham, Stockport, Brighton, Southampton, Portsmouth, and Glasgow. If you are active in any of these areas and would like to see us, please let us know. We would also be glad to hear from anyone we were unable to see in the places we have already visited and who would like to get in touch.

In this way we hope to make Community Action more useful and more widely available to tenants and action groups, and those campaigning in the labour movement. We will also be holding a Readers Meeting in the Spring, which will be advertised in the next issue.



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Editorial Group

Karen Escott, Mary Ryan, Matthew Shaps,
Peta Sissons, Dexter Whitfield,
Deb Worsley.

Thanks to the following people who helped to put this issue together: Ian Christie, Fran Cox, Elsie Sharples, Pam Mossman, Prentiss Cox, Jane Rogers, Christina Lorrimer, Archie Onslow.

We have produced a new leaflet listing the contents of back issues, the price of the special packages, and a subscription form. If you would like a copy, or several to hand out to others, please send a stamped, addressed envelope to us at the address below.

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NEWS

REPORTS FROM TENANTS & ACTION GROUPS, COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS AND OTHER LABOUR MOVEMENT ORGANISATIONS

OXFORD

COUNCIL CLOSES NURSERY SCHOOLS

In a package that included closing 15 schools, an old peoples', and a childrens' home, the cuts-happy Oxfordshire County Council closed down nursery education in its area. The 12 nursery schools and 16 nursery classes which catered for 1,500 children and employed over 100 teaching and nursery staff are to go by 1982.

Campaign begins

When the closure was suggested by an education sub-committee a campaign started immediately. A well attended public meeting was held. Despite differences in opinion among those involved, an effective campaign was mounted which included lobbying, letter writing and a petition which attracted nearly 20,000 signatures in one day alone. Each school mounted its own campaign but an umbrella organisation, Save Our Nurseries, existed to coordinate activity. The proposals went before the Education Committee on October 4th. During the course of the meeting the councillors cut something else so that when they came to consider nurseries; the money had already been saved. To everyone's surprise, the cuts seemed to have been averted. In spite of this apparent victory the campaign split into two groups. Differences had emerged at the beginning over how political the campaign should be and over whether the campaign should oppose all cuts or just nursery



cuts, but a fragile unity had enabled the campaign to proceed. Pressure from council officials was being brought to bear on nursery head teachers and they were the first to leave, setting up a supplementary Campaign for Nursery Education. So two campaigns were being waged in the run up to the full council meeting a month later. The split in opposition made the Tories task of reversing the education committee's decision, despite many abstentions, less difficult. All nursery education in the county was ended. The council meeting on November 13th was lobbied by about 100 people compared with 300 at the committee meeting.

Closure: the effects

The cuts will destroy any hope of providing a comprehensive free nursery service. As for the 100 teachers, nursery and other workers' promises of re-deployment in primary schools seem unlikely to be fulfilled

against the background of other education cuts in which primary school closures are prominent. Not much hope is held out either for the County's latest offer of a do-it-yourself nursery service. The council, embarrassed by the storm they have provoked both locally and nationally, have talked of putting aside a meagre £77,000 for playgroups to be run and almost completely funded by parents. This compares with the £475,000 saved by axing nursery schools.

The Save Our Nurseries Campaign has continued to fight against the decision and took the initiative in calling a meeting on December 4th of other anti-cuts groups with the aim of setting up a broadbased anti-cuts campaign in Oxford which did not previously exist.

Save our Nurseries
Larry Sanders. 65 Stratford St.
Oxfordshire Campaign for
Nursery Education: Liz Kierney
155 Dean Road.

NORTH EAST

REPORT ON THE CUTS

"The cuts in public expenditure have been thrust upon us. We dislike them as much as you. But we're only doing a job of work and we're asking the Unions to help us." No, not another of Margaret Thatcher's lies, but a quote from a Durham County Councillor asking a meeting of union officials and shop stewards to help the local authority make cuts in its expenditure. Durham County has already made cuts, and other councils in the North East, most of them labour controlled, are preparing to implement serious cutbacks.

Effects of the cuts

For example, Durham County Council's cuts in education expenditure are already hitting hard. The 70 teaching vacancies are being filled by moving teachers already employed by the County from one post to another and at least 2 schools are known to be closing. By Christmas all non-vocational adult educational courses will have stopped. As well as this, the opening of an old people's home is to be delayed indefinitely and the council have admitted that cuts will result in 485 lost jobs despite their promise to the unions that cuts will involve no redundancies:



In Newcastle there are proposals to increase rates from 94p to 131p in the £, to increase council rents, to let 60 teaching vacancies go unfilled to cut adult education and recreation programmes.

- But the resistance is growing

Demonstration

The demonstration held in Newcastle on November 10th clearly showed the determination of the fight against cuts in public expenditure in the North East. 10,000 people marched through the City demonstrating their disgust at the recent wave of arts and displaying solidarity between different sections of the labour movement across the region.

The organisation of a campaign to resist the cuts at grass roots level is growing, particularly in local trade union branches and community groups.

Joint trade union/ community action

Both NUPE and NALGO members are following a policy of not filing in on vacancies in local authorities. In Gateshead Technical College, NALGO succeeded in forcing management to fill staff vacancies by employing new workers and NUPE members at an old people's home in West Auckland forced Durham County Council to replace staff who had left by refusing to cover night shifts until the posts were refilled.

Understandably, most local union branches are primarily concerned with protecting the jobs and working conditions of their members. But many in the public services are equally committed to protecting and improving the standards of public services.

eg The North East Tenants Association is organising to build up resistance amongst council tenants to rent and rate increases, and to the low standards of service.

The Durham County Association of Trades Councils is launching a campaign to get all sectors of the Community working together in towns across the region to oppose the deterioration in service provision and job losses which are already occurring.



Clearly, the campaign of resistance is growing rapidly, but not without powerful opposition from many councillors and sadly, some sectors of the trade union movement.

Written by: Linda Perks of Durham Street Press, c/o Folkus, Alington House, 4 North Bailey, Durham.

A Conference Against Cuts attended by 35 organisations was held on 27th October 1979 jointly organised by Newcastle-on-Tyne Trades Council and Newcastle District Labour Party. Copies of a report on the Conference can be obtained from the Secretary, 199, Hugh Gardens, Newcastle 4. Price - 10p + postage.

The report also includes a leaflet on the campaign and conference papers on NHS, Tyne Wear County Council, Education and Housing.

BIRMINGHAM ANTI-DAMP CAMPAIGN

The Birmingham Anti-Damp Campaign for Council Tenants (see C.A. No. 43) has grown to include Disrepair as a major problem, hence B.A.D.D. Plans are well advanced for build up the campaign for the oncoming winter.

A six-point petition to the Council is being distributed by the tenants groups involved. It demands proper investigation and action on damp; an effective system of repairs using direct labour; economic and efficient heating and proper insulation; compensation for any damage and inconvenience caused by damp and disrepair; increased tenant control; and an end to cuts in street cleaning and litter collection.

Complaints forms, threatening legal action if repairs and the damp continue to be ignored, are being sent to the housing department by tenants with the

help of various advice agencies.

Day of action


A Day of Action was planned for Saturday December 1st in the Bullring markets area. It was to publicise the campaign, with stalls, street theatre, photographs and stunts. In mid-December, there was to be a demonstration to present the petition to the Housing Committee. It is hoped that these activities will draw many more tenants into the campaign.

For further information, contact Jon Stevens, Community Forum, 161 Corporation St., Birmingham B4, 021-233-1115.

B.A.D.D.

**B'ham anti-damp & disrepair
A campaign by council tenants**

**If your council house or flat is damp
or needs repairs join us to fight
the rotten conditions we live in.**



Sign the petition

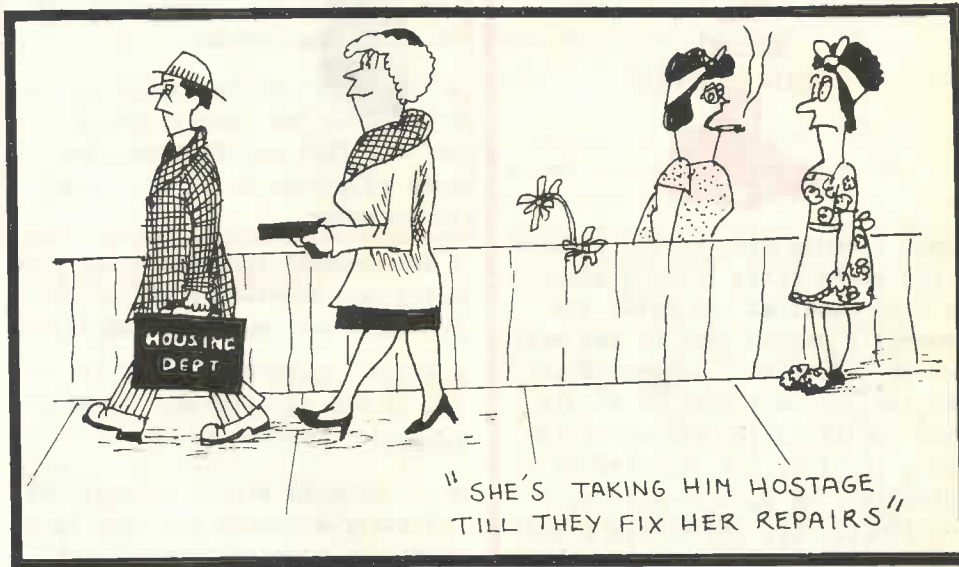
DAY OF ACTION

Sat 1st Dec 12am-4pm

St Martins Square

(bull ring)

to join us



LONDON SERTUC CUTS CONFERENCE

The conference was held on 20th October in London, and despite being called at short notice over 400 delegates attended. Speakers from the floor detailed the effect of the cuts in their areas, gave information about their local campaigns and the action that was being taken, and suggested ways that the TUC could give support.

Many speakers stressed the importance of cuts campaigns having the broadest possible base, involving both the local community

and trades unionists. Speakers from active cuts campaigns detailed the support they were receiving from the local community in the form of active support of occupations, leafletting, petitioning and demonstrations.

The TUC was called upon to provide support for local campaigns in the form of resources and co-ordination. What was needed was money, leaflets and posters that could be put to general use.



CARDIFF

"NO MORE DEATHS" CAMPAIGN

At least seven homeless people died on the streets of Cardiff last winter. Cardiff Homelessness Group held a week of action in November to launch a campaign to prevent any deaths this winter and broadcast their message to the City Council and everyone else that Housing Policy (as it is implemented by housing officials in Cardiff) kills people and has been causing death and suffering for years.



their fight against demolition of their homes. Following the Inquiry last February (C/A No. 42) the Department of Environment has accepted the Inspector's recommendation and refused to confirm any of the Compulsory Purchase Order.

The main reasons for the DOE decision seem to be:

Eight houses considered 'unfit' by the Council were reclassified as 'fit' by the Inspector. This increased the proportion of 'fit' housing in the CPO from 38% (already unusually high) to 62% and meant that 'fit' houses far outweighed those thought to be 'unfit'.

Inadequate report by officials

Before councils can make CPOs under Part III of the Housing Act 1957 ('slum clearance') they have to be "satisfied" that clearance "is the most satisfactory method of dealing with conditions in the area". WRAG argued that this means they must first look seriously at the costs of improvement and alternatives to clearance before coming to any decision and that Wigan had totally failed to do this. The officials' report to the Housing Committee had consisted of a single sheet of paper with no mention of costs. At the Inquiry, they argued, rather weakly, that costs were available to councillors who wanted to ask them.

The Inspector accepted WRAG's argument. In his report he makes a statement which should be useful to other groups fighting CPO's:

"Whilst I accept the Council's contention that information on improvement costs were available at the Committee meeting (at which the decision on clearance was made) if any councillor had asked

and its Code of Guidance should be fully implemented

- the restrictions should be removed from the council house waiting list and it should be open to anyone in housing need to register
- the council should provide more emergency short-stay accommodation (and use its empty houses)
- there should be a properly run day centre service for homeless people
- the council should support the voluntary agencies and bona fide charities already working with the homeless.

Representatives of the Campaign met with the council to discuss these demands and some emergency accommodation may be made available. The Trades Council and many Trade Unionists are supporting the Campaign.

Dave Roberts, 'No More Deaths', 90 St. Mary Street, Cardiff. Tel: Cardiff 30283.

LEIGH

ACTION GROUP'S FIGHT AGAINST DEMOLITION

The Warrington Road Action Group (WRAG) in Leigh have won

Who killed Frank Francis?



Frank Francis died on the streets a few weeks after being discharged from hospital and after the council's doctor said he was well enough not to need accommodation, despite the fact that he should have qualified for accommodation under the 1977 Act and Code of Guidance - he was approaching pensionable age and he had a medical certificate from his GP confirming he suffered badly from bronchitis.

Organisers of the 'No More Deaths' Campaign who published details of this case (and others) are now being sued by two council officials for defamation of character.

A procession of seven coffins went through Cardiff to the town hall, commemorative black balloons were released and a public debate was held where a Public Inquiry into last year's deaths was called for.

Demands of the campaign

The immediate demands which the Campaign presented to the Council are:

- the 1977 (Homeless Persons) Act

for it, I am not convinced from the evidence that the Council had given adequate consideration to the alternatives to clearance".

(our emphasis)

Local residents give evidence

One of the attractive features of our area is its position between a main road with shops on one side and industry on the other. The last thing some of the objectors wanted was to be moved away into a completely residential area which lacked the liveliness and vitality of our area. As one elderly resident said at the Inquiry:

"At times I do not get about very well, so I can open my gate, watch people passing on the main road, or go to the front door, and see the work people at the factory, so I do not feel lonely."

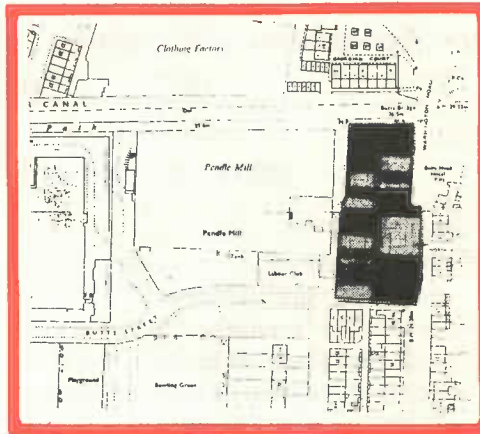
The council argued that this mixture of land uses was "unsatisfactory" and a "detriment to health". They even had the arrogance to argue that although "elderly residents liked a busy atmosphere this did not necessarily mean it was the best environment for them" (ie we know best what's best for you).

The Inspector accepted WRAG's argument. One of his conclusions was that a "significant number of existing residents not only wish to remain in the area and improve their houses but appear to prefer the situation of the area and its busy and convenient location". This was a victory for ordinary people's tastes and preferences over the town planners' mania for separating different land uses into neat and lifeless single-use zones.

A good case

We are convinced that one of the reasons we won was that we presented our own case at the

Inquiry and didn't rely on a solicitor or other professionals to do it for us. We had technical help from an independent public health inspector, a local builder and an estate agent. SCAT and a local community worker helped us prepare our overall case. This assistance was essential to our argument that the houses as houses were capable of being improved to a high standard at reasonable cost.



Community spirit

But when it came to the second main line of argument - that we the residents were willing to carry out these improvements, valued the community spirit in the area and didn't want to move away from an area in which many of us had spent most of our lives - then only WRAG could argue with the conviction and passion needed to convince the Inspector. All the objectors members of WRAG were involved in preparing this part of the evidence (coming to meetings to discuss different drafts, writing their own individual letters to the Inspector giving their reasons for wanting to stay) and nearly all turned up at the Inquiry on the day. We put the social and community arguments for retaining our houses first and used the technical arguments about improvement costs etc to back them up - and not the other way round.

Why we won the inquiry

Recently there was another In-

quiry in another district of Greater Manchester. The residents started off their evidence by getting the architects they'd employed to present the technical case for saving and improving the houses. The social arguments limped along rather weakly afterwards - and in the hands of a solicitor. They lost their case and the CPO has been confirmed. There may be a number of reasons for this - for instance, the houses may have been in a worse condition than ours. But even the architects who worked for them are now convinced that the way the residents lost control of the presentation of their own case was an important factor in their losing it.

Towards the end of our Inquiry after hours of cross examination and technical evidence about legal duties of the council, improvement standards and costs, maturity loans and so on, the Inspector asked if anyone who hadn't spoken yet had anything to say. One woman near the front then said: "Does our happiness come into this at all?" - and the whole Inquiry came to life with other residents joining in with questions and statements. You can't plan for that sort of spontaneity but provided you've already presented a thorough and well-argued argument it can add great strength to your case.

Our struggle to reverse the

SHELTER

Shelter rally and lobby of MPs on the 1980 Housing Bill.

Tues 22nd Jan. Free entrance.

Fellowship Hall, Central Hall, Parliament Sq, Westminster.

Rally 2pm. Lobby 3.30 onwards

Details from Les Burrows, Shelter, 157 Waterloo Rd, London SE1. Tel 01-633 9377.

blight that has affected our area for years isn't over yet. Wigan are not used to have their CPOs overturned by the DOE and this is probably the first time in Leigh that a complete CPO has been quashed as a result of organised group action. Certainly Ward & Goldstone, the multi-national owners of the factory next door to the housing must have been surprised by the decision. We have reason to believe that, as late as a month before the DOE decision, they were drawing up plans for a car park on the site of our homes.

Our evidence included a number of alternative proposals to clearance - including environmental improvements and the declaration of a HAA. The Inspector states that these "merit further consideration" by the council. WRAG will now campaign to make sure they do.

Copies of the Inspector's Report and the Decision Letter can be obtained free from the Department of the Environment, Regional Office, Sunley Building, Piccadilly Plaza, Manchester M1 4BE (Tel. 061 832 9111 Ext 2109). The title of the CPO was the Wigan Borough Council, Warrington Road/Elizabeth St., Leigh, CPO 1977; the date of the Decision Letter 27/9/79.

A few copies of WRAG's evidence are still available for £1 (p & p) from Ted Hilton, Elizabeth Street, Leigh, Greater Manchester.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

A Transport Policy should enable people to meet their transport needs rather than be based on commercial objectives. Current transport management pursues profitability with ever-increasing

ruthlessness as train and bus services are cut back while fares rise and subsidies follow the dictates of industry into roads and those who can afford to run cars rather than into the provision of a comprehensive and responsive public transport system. Transport need is affected by other political and economic forces which result in the siting of housing estates away from facilities and services, the increased distance to work, the concentration of shopping into hypermarkets or shopping Centres (transferring transport costs from retailer to customer) and the centralisation of health and educational services hastened by the cuts. Immediate defensive battles are being fought for the retention of services and against fare increases and the withdrawal of free school transport. But alongside these campaigns community groups and local projects are discussing the political

scale ingenious schemes can substitute for a fundamental redirection of transport policy and provision, they are of immense value in demonstrating what might be elements of a cheap, flexible transport service, responsive to community needs.

These were discussed by consumer groups and local projects at a Community Transport Conference held at Keele University in September.

John Sutton of Community Transport Charity was at the Conference and writes:

Community transport schemes range from the small rural social car scheme to help the elderly and the housebound through to the much larger urban schemes some of which operate several mini-buses and double decker buses which can be used as play buses, mobile day centres and advice centres as well as providing a transport service to the poor,



issues which underlay decisions about who gets transport and where resources should be directed, which cannot be isolated from the deeper economic questions needing to be attacked before transport priorities and requirements can be in the best interests of the whole population. While no number of small-

the elderly and the disabled. Very crudely, community transport can be divided into 2 types of service, a "package service" such as taking disabled people to a day centre (the transport is provided for a social activity) and an "independent service" where cheap transport service is provided to community groups by a

specialist community transport organisation. This latter type of organisation is being developed in most large cities.

Examples of Action :

★ Rural

★ Experimental bus services where buses are provided as a social rather than profitable service. A member of Bassetlaw CVS described the operation of such a bus in Nottinghamshire and how it has come to be known locally as the 'Freedom Bus' as without it many village people would be literally stranded.

★ A good case was made for combining goods delivery with passenger transport, an example being the Border Courier Service which carries supplies between hospitals and clinics and is able to pick up passengers. This service is geared towards both needs and results in a considerable cost saving (£60,000) to the Area Health Authority.

★ Urban

★ Edinburgh Voluntary Transport described their innovative Disabled Persons Taxi Service using an adapted mini-van which is modified to accommodate a wheelchair user in the back by raising the roof and lowering the floor. There was an interesting discussion on the potential of urban social car schemes using as an example the experience from Birmingham.

★ The self-drive Community Mini-Bus scheme in Leeds was described. This is available to community groups in the inner city at cost price.

This neighbourhood transport idea is also being implemented in Wythenshawe, Manchester. Hatfield CVS described their experience in co-ordinating transport amongst voluntary organisations, which has been a success in its 4 years of operation.

If progress is to be made a far greater commitment by central and local government towards solving present day personal mobility problems (including making

more money available) rather than creating transport systems designed to cater for future needs (mostly by car).

Anyone interested in community transport and wants to know more can contact John Taylor, Community Transport Charity, 29 Poland Street, Ancoats, Manchester M4 6AZ. Tel: 061-205 1473

BRISTOL

CAMPAIGN AGAINST EVICTION

Licences won

4-6 Durdham Park, Bristol are owned by Avon County Council and were originally bought to provide an extension for Redland College. However, the council bricked them up while awaiting finance and in October 1975 they were occupied by members of the Self Help Housing Association (SCHA) in an attempt to secure a licence for occupation from the council.

Later, licence agreement was undertaken and the 17 people occupying the houses took on management and maintenance of the houses under the auspices of S.C.H.A. The houses were rewired and replumbed and rates have been paid annually by the Association.

No. 4 has also served as the HQ for SCHA since 1975. It is there that weekly meetings are held and the house is known throughout the city as a referral centre for the homeless. In the past 6 months more than 600 homeless people have applied to us for housing and out of those 80 have been offered short-term places under licence.

Council decides to sell

In July 1979 we heard that Avon's Education Committee had decided that these 2 houses and an adjoining one were surplus to requirements and handed them over to the County's Land and Buildings Committee for disposal. This comm-

ittee decided to put them up for sale by auction and to this end proceed with the eviction of the occupiers.

For some time prior to this, the occupiers of the two houses had been engaged in the setting up of a Housing Cooperative called 'Fair Shares', in order to apply for purchase of the houses. In consultation with the Housing Corporation, Solon South West Housing Association, as potential development agents for Fair Shares Housing-Cooperative, made an offer to Avon for the two houses based on the District Valuation.

This application to purchase by Direct Treaty, which was supported by a petition signed by 2,000 people and several letters from individuals and organisations, was turned down by the Land and Buildings Committee, who reaffirmed their intention of going to auction by eight votes to four.

On October 10th the Social Services Committee of Avon, after an objection to the proposed sale by auction of the houses raised by the Shadow Chairman of the Committee, decided to investigate why the property was not offered to other public bodies as is the practise.

Picket and appeal for support

At the moment the occupiers have been given notice to quit, which expired on October 20th. We are awaiting the results of the inquiry launched by the Social Services Committee and the initiation of Court proceedings.

As part of the campaign to prevent the eviction we held a benefit on Oct. 30th and a picket of Avon County on Nov 1st. We have also sent out hundreds of our proposal to persuade the Estates Dept. to sell by private treaty to councillors, MPs, Trade Union Branches etc. and so far the response is sympathetic.

Even if an eviction takes place, Solon South West is still intending to participate in the auction

and bid to the District Valuation although we feel that the houses, being in prime development land, would probably go in auction to a developer who could invest in a speculative scheme.

SCHA determined

We feel that Avon's eviction of SCHA and the families living in these two houses is not only unnecessary and bound to cause hardship to the families involved, but also false economy. We have estimated that to house the number of families we have housed over the past five years in Bed and Breakfast accommodation would have cost over £175,000 in public funds. The extra money that Avon will be able to make by selling the houses at auction will hardly make up for the loss in terms of accommodation having to be provided for people thus made homeless and the disruption of the work that SCHA has been so far carrying out.

For more information contact: Jose Ospina, Self Help Housing Association, No. 4 Durdham Park, Redland, Bristol 6. Tel: 33159/ 25573

SOUTH EAST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE ON MEDIA

Can we achieve a fair press

The media's vitriolic treatment of the low pay workers' strike last winter has fuelled the debate within the labour movement on how to achieve a press which is free, democratic and serves working class interests. This debate was furthered at a conference called by the South East Region of the TUC (SERTUC) in November attended by nearly 400 union delegates.

Multinational ownership

The pattern of ownership was identified as one major cause of the problem, with the commercial press declining in number and control being concentrated in fewer hands. Three multi-nationals produce 80% of all national and Sunday newspapers, six out of nine national dailies are in the ultimate control of single individuals or trusts and five companies own 52 provincial dailies and over 200 weeklies with large shares in commercial radio and TV. This results in the media generally reflecting the interests and values of the few rich businessmen and corporations which own them. (It was suggested that although the new Daily Star was unprofitable to its owners, Trafalgar House (whose riches were made from property), it was worth the company's while to spend 2% of its finances on a paper covering up what the other 98% was doing, while the biased press is always ready to scream hysterically about the strikes of workers it hardly gives a mention to the crippling investment strikes of capital or the implication of the removal of export controls on money.)

Make links with media workers

Some speakers urged more direct action against outrageous items in the media, recalling recent

occupations of newspaper and radio offices. A vital strategy for the longer term was a campaign to make workers in the mass media realise how they are providing weapons which can be turned against their fellow workers and for there to be greater co-operation between the unions of media workers and other unions. An important task was for workers in the media to build solidarity with community based organisations and campaigns and for all unions to create these alliances and explain directly why they take industrial action.

Greatest control will come from local and national papers and broadcasting organisations controlled by the labour movement and its campaigns with the direct involvement of readers, viewers and listeners. While some delegates wanted a new independent daily paper of the labour movement others considered it was more important to have local papers, and the establishment of municipal publishing corporations was prepared to fund them. Another view was that television and radio were far more influential than the press and they should be made democratic and truly independent. A French trade unionist spoke about a trade union radio station in North France, and a cable television project in South London was described. One important warning was that init-



atives such as the Campaign for Press Freedom (see page 34) must have the strength of union and local action group support if they are not to become talking shops dominated by intellectuals.

Proposals for action

SERTUC responded to the points made at the conference by saying it will write to trades councils suggesting discussions between print unions and other unions; give a more effective response to misrepresentation in the media; encourage the maximum amount of local initiatives and run a seminar for unions and trade councils to help them communicate more effectively.

One positive recent development is that the Tories' have dropped their dangerous Protection of Official Information Bill (as a result of the Blunt affair) which was condemned at the conference

COIN STREET

INQUIRY FINISHES Developers' scheme emerges

In CA 45 the story of the Coin Street Inquiry had reached the point where Greycoat Properties Ltd. had submitted their second planning application and were trying to disguise the full extent of its office content (a Berlin wall which, together with other blocks, contains the equivalent of eleven Centre Points). They're using intense public relations to promote the housing and leisure content in the scheme. The Inquiry has now finished a hearing over 100 witnesses and examining 770 documents. In the closing stages of the Inquiry the full implications of Greycoats scheme became clearer. The architectural drawings had been deliberately vague, and Greycoat changed the details of their scheme as they themselves began to work them out! In part-

icular, the amount of housing and leisure/recreation was steadily reduced until it formed only half of that in their original application. Significantly, they refused to set a minimum figure for the amount of housing and leisure in the plan and admitted no study had been made of the viability of the commercial leisure centre in the scheme.

Inspector's report

Environment Secretary, Michael Heseltine, has said that he wants the Inspector's report within three months - an incredibly short period for these type of applications - which shows the intense political nature of the Inquiry. For if Heseltine favours the commercial scheme against the scheme for housing and a riverside park he sets the seal on the fate of inner city areas for years to come and calls into question the whole system of Local Plans and the public participation which is an essential and statutory part of the process.

Favouring the commercial scheme would overturn the approved 1977 Waterloo District Plan, which took five years to draw up in consultation with local people. This has begun to worry even the planning and allied professions and the community groups' evidence has been given a favourable press in many national and professional papers. This contributes to the highly-charged political atmosphere and the community groups are treating the next three months as a crucial period and plan to ensure that the issue is not quietly forgotten. They are planning to hand their petition in the the House of Commons and to stage other events that will attract publicity. They've also got a tape/slide show available for showing to other groups (bookings to address below).

Microtechnology

The Coin Street Action Group gave evidence towards the end of the Inquiry. One issue that

they brought into prominence was that of microtechnology. The Action Group and their witnesses argued that on the evidence al-



ready available microtechnology would cause a massive reduction in the demand for office floor-space by reducing office employment, reducing the space needed for office equipment and through the introduction of electronic mail, speed the decentralisation of some or substantial parts of their operations of the larger Central London firms. These firms are already feeling the high costs in London and will be able to take advantage of the technology first because of their size.

Other community groups came to support the Action Group's case. Amongst them Covent Garden Community Association spoke of the way the planning process had been similarly upturned in their area and of the consequences of that. Paddington Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations spoke of how commercial interests, in the form of hotels, had taken over in their area with depressing consequences for the local economy.

Whatever happens, there are plans to write up the experience of local groups and publish it as a guide and help for other groups in future inquiries. Watch this space!

Association of Waterloo Groups/Coin Street Action Group, Waterloo Action Centre, 14, Baylis Road, London SE1.

DANGER!

Asbestos is deadly - it causes cancer and similar incurable diseases and there is no safe level for its use. A year ago the U.S. Government estimated that more than 2 million Americans would die of cancer due to asbestos exposure in the next 30 years. The equivalent for Britain is half a million - more than were killed in the armed forces in the Second World War.

IF ITS DEADLY, WHY USE IT?

Asbestos is also profitable. It is used in fire-proofing at home and work, in trains and the underground, ceilings, roofs, pipes, brakes, textiles and insulation. The British asbestos industry is worth 200 million pounds and the profits in the years after the Second World War were very high, often double the rate of profit of UK manufacturing industry as a whole.

The hazards are now being recognised in the workplace, but asbestos, including the deadliest blue asbestos, has been used in the construction of housing estates (affecting an estimated 1½ million tenants), hospitals and thousands of schools throughout the country. Not only do those who use these buildings remain largely unaware of the hazard - both local and central government are trying to keep all of us in the dark. The cost of stripping out asbestos (and replacing it with safe materials) would be huge, and more public expenditure to protect our health is the bottom priority of the Government. The same holds true for local authorities - even those who claim to be 'socialist' and opposed to the cuts, but who still operate within the capitalist system and expose their working class tenants to killer diseases.

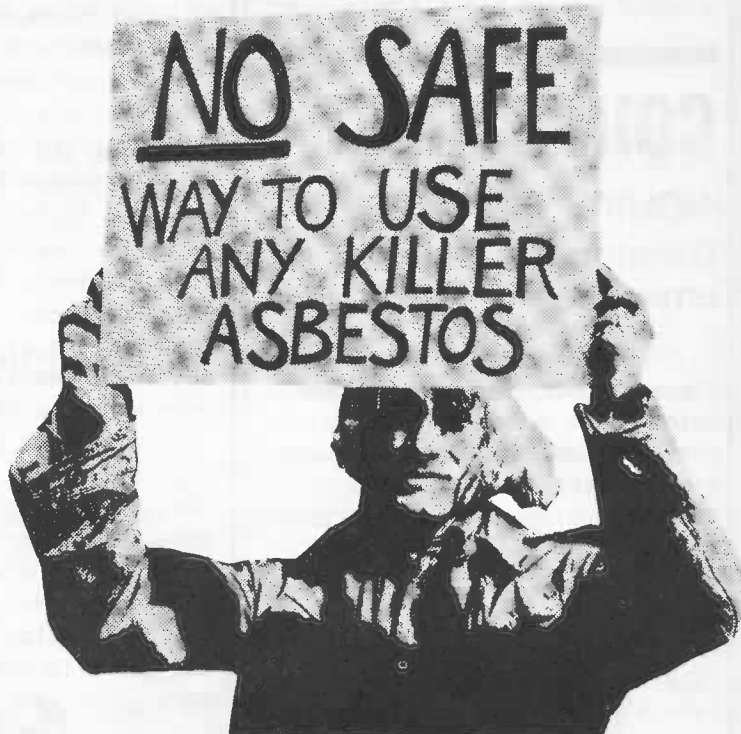
COVER UP IN LAMBETH

A few years ago Lambeth Council held an exhibition to warn the public how dangerous asbestos was to health. Yet from the end of December 1978 until October 1979 Lambeth Council hid from tenants in the Loughborough Estate in Brixton the fact that they were exposed to deadly blue asbestos and it did not tell tenants on other estates that they were at risk from all the forms of asbestos which had been discovered there.

Towards the end of 1978 a tenant suspected blue asbestos in her flat and called in an Environmental Health Inspector to take a sample to establish whether it was blue asbestos. The Council deny that the sample was ever taken and as late as 26th October 1979 the Chief Environmental Health Officer claimed to be unaware of the situation. Nevertheless, at the end of 1978 Lambeth Council sent off samples for analysis and received the results of tests confirming the presence of different types of asbestos (including blue) on the Loughborough Estate. A meeting was held with the Greater London Council where GLC officers advised how to conduct an asbestos survey on housing estates without telling tenants what was being looked for (as they had done on the Pepys Estate in Deptford, South London a few years ago).

Findings kept secret

Not many Lambeth Borough officers and councillors were let into the secret, but by May 1979 a District Maintenance Officer wrote to a senior housing official expressing his concern about the legal



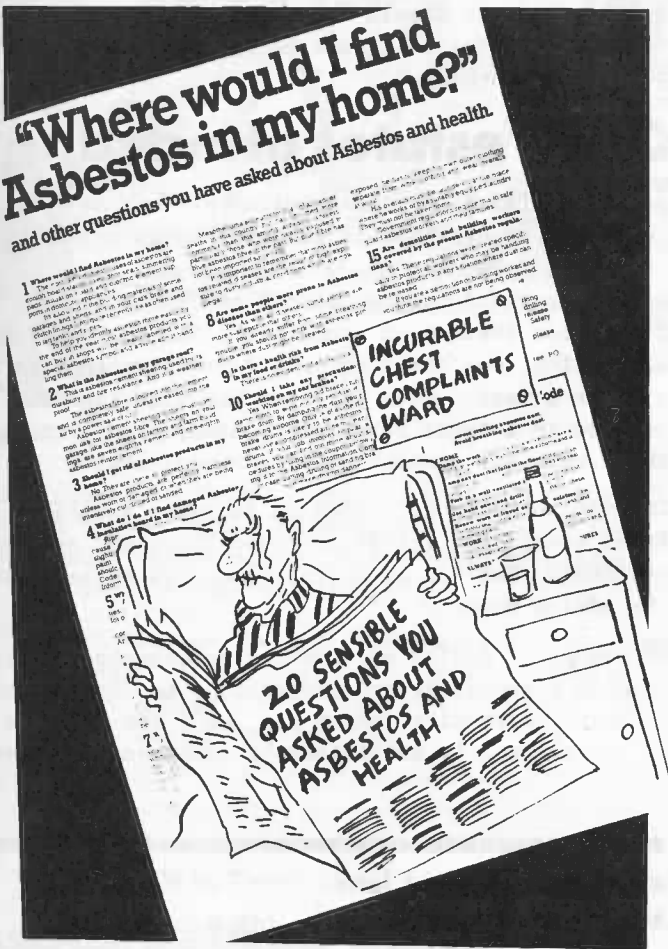
risks to the Council and the health risks to the tenant caused by turning a blind eye to the problem. He was worried that blue asbestos dust might be raised by tenants drilling holes in the asbestos panels (in fixing desks, Shelves etc.) or by simply scraping or rubbing against the panels and wrote:

"This might be hazardous for specialists, let alone a tenant who is unaware of the danger and the relevant safety regulations." Yet the tenants were still kept in the dark when further exposure could

ASBESTOS

"Where would I find Asbestos in my home?"

and other questions you have asked about Asbestos and health.



Tenants kept in the dark

The council preferred to inform central government about the asbestos hazard on its estates rather than its own workforce and tenants and it met with the Health and Safety Executive and the Department of the Environment. In August Ted Knight, leader of Lambeth Council, wrote to Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for the Environment, asking for a confidential meeting. Heseltine refused to meet because he said there was "considerable doubt whether or not asbestos materials used in domestic buildings constitute a health hazard" and Lambeth Council would have to ask for help with finance or re-housing as part of next year's Housing Investment Programme.

The Tenants Association was not told anything by the council until a meeting with the T.A. committee on 18th October 1979 when the council revealed the presence of asbestos and its plan to cover the asbestos panels with marine plywood. Not everyone accepted this and one tenant who said the estate should be evacuated and stripped of asbestos completely was given two offers of rehousing shortly afterwards (not a common event in a borough with a waiting list of more than 16,000).

Trades Council sponsors public meeting

A group of concerned tenants contacted the Lambeth Community Law Centre and Lambeth Trades Council and held a public meeting on November 8th 1979 sponsored by the Trades Council who provided a chairperson. A leaflet circulated by the tenants was headed "Asbestos can kill - and you have it in most rooms in your home if you live on the Loughborough Estate" and it brought nearly 100 tenants to the meeting. The council sent round their own leaflet which was full of false and contradictory information about the real hazards of asbestos, claiming that it has only recently been known to be dangerous and that covering it up would eliminate all risks. The council leaflet said the Direct Works Department would do the work, but there had been no proper consultation with the unions about this.

Dangers spelt out

At the meeting independent experts spelt out the danger of asbestos on the Loughborough Estate and said it was preferable to strip it out. The Chairperson of the Housing Management Committee said he had known about the asbestos in July and even he

have been prevented. In June 1979, housing officers knew there was brown asbestos dust being blown about the rubbish chutes and there was a recommendation that their use be stopped because of the health danger. Of course it wasn't.

Half hearted measures

At a meeting in August 1979 the leader of the council and other senior councillors decided to start immediate remedial works on empty properties only. Rather than strip the houses and flats of asbestos and eliminate the risk that asbestos panels might be damaged in the future, the meeting decided "in the interests of speed and economy that it would be best to cover all existing asbestos surfaces." Nothing happened for sometime, meanwhile the tenants on the estate were puzzled why empty properties were not being re-let and why, when the council was installing central heating, the workmen did not drill through the (asbestos) wall panels but attached wooden batons instead - except for the flats where asbestos panels were drilled by mistake.

thought the council's proposal to cover it with wood was a cop-out as "there's always a chance someone is going to disturb it". He said he would be the first to propose rehousing in 'ideal circumstances' and a surplus of housing stock. However, Lambeth Council is 11,000 houses short and so he concluded "you are utterly safe once we have covered these panels up". The Chairperson of the Health Committee (also a ward councillor) claimed he was only told about the asbestos on November 2nd and said it was right to criticise the council for the way the risks were handled. Tenants described how children had already been handling the asbestos and how they had drilled into panels when putting up fixtures. Some pointed out the inadequacy of covering up from the inside when the panels are also on the outside and dust gets blown about in high winds. Many asbestos panels are crumbling and decaying, especially where there is damp and condensation, and asbestos particles are released when there is flooding on the estate.

Fear of future accidents

There was general concern that accidents could happen in the future and a motion was passed demanding asbestos be removed under safe conditions (giving those who prefer the option of having it boarded up) subject to close consultation with all tenants and the relevant unions. The trade unions involved were urged not to carry out the work the council is proposing until full reports are made

available by the council in the interests of the health and safety of workers and tenants. Everyone supported a demand that the costs of the work should not be met by Lambeth ratepayers and the Loughborough Asbestos Action Group was set up to negotiate with the council. It was agreed that X-ray machinery should be set up on the estate to measure asbestos related disease and to be monitored independently.

Other estates affected

As more information leaks out other tenants are beginning to organise in Lambeth, including those on Vauxhall Gardens where there is also blue asbestos, although they didn't get their information from their ward councillor, the Chairperson of Housing, who has known about asbestos in Lambeth for a year. Blue asbestos has also been discovered in a loose form behind other panels through which warm air central heating circulates.

Lambeth Council has formed an Asbestos Advisory Panel consisting mainly of councillors and senior officers. But how much confidence can there be in its advice when:

- ★ Lambeth's policy of covering up asbestos panels with plywood was not proposed by the Health and Safety Executive (which has not given positive advice) and is criticised by independent experts.

Rt. Hon. Michael R.D. Heseltine, M.P.,
Secretary of State for the Environment,
Department of the Environment,
2 Marsham Street,
London, SW1P 3EB

Dear Mr. Heseltine,

I feel it my duty to write to you personally requesting a confidential meeting with you to consider what action should be taken to eradicate the danger to the health of tenants which arises from the presence in flats of varying quantities of blue asbestos.

As a result of investigations which I have had carried out in this Borough it is apparent that there are many flats which still have large panels or areas of blue asbestos on the inside (with which the tenants are in daily contact) and that due to the dangerous properties of the material, people are subject to a high risk of serious illness if the asbestos fibres are disturbed (say by damage to the panel), so that they escape into the air. For example, on our Loughborough Estate there are 1309 units with a substantial part of one wall (around the windows) of the living area panelled in blue

Extracts from text of letter from Ted Knight,
Leader of Lambeth Council 16th August, 1979

asbestos, protected only by wallpaper, distemper or similar flimsy covering. We have a detailed survey currently under way of all the council housing in the Borough and it is likely that this will show that there are other estates where the occupants are at risk from being exposed to blue asbestos.....

My purpose in seeking a confidential discussion is to bring to your notice (if you are not already aware thereof) the potentially large-scale problem of blue asbestos which is likely to exist throughout the United Kingdom as a whole, both in terms of finance and rehousing and also the potentially dangerous situation in terms of adverse publicity and public relations which could arise from an illness or accident to an occupier attributable to asbestos fibres. Even the remedial work we are undertaking on the Loughborough Estate could lead to considerable public concern which may be reflected in other boroughs. I am hopeful that you will feel able to assist me and the Borough of Lambeth both materially and with advice on this problem.

Breathing into your lungs asbestos fibres invisible to the naked eye causes or contributes to the following diseases:

- Asbestosis - a disabling and ultimately fatal scarring of the lungs
- Lung cancer - a painful and nearly always fatal disease.
- Mesothelioma - a rapidly fatal and painful cancer of the lining of the lung or stomach nearly always due only to asbestos exposure.

All diseases take at least 10 years to show up. They are nearly always killers and the only cure for asbestos diseases is preventing the inhalation of asbestos dust. One day's exposure can be enough to give cancer.

An insulation worker who smokes and works with asbestos has 92 times the chance of dying from lung cancer as compared with a non-smoking, non-asbestos worker.

How great is the chance of dying from lung cancer of tenants who live with asbestos dust, smoke and take no safety precautions because no one tells them of the danger?

savings are short-lived as massive sums are needed to put right or replace the countless blocks of unsafe and unhealthy housing years later.



- ★ neighbouring Camden Council operates a directive that "where 'blue' asbestos is identified in whatever concentration, the balance of judgement must be towards removal".
- ★ even as late as the end of November 1979 a UCATT shop steward claimed to be given work with white asbestos in Lambeth without any safety precautions.
- ★ and in December, fire surrounds containing blue asbestos have been ripped out in the Howard House block without any protection being given to workers or tenants.

Asbestos used because its cheaper

When the estate was built by the London County Council in the 1950's the UCATT organiser was not told of the dangers of blue asbestos to the workforce. It need never have been used at all. The architects who insisted upon it were not accountable to the workforce or the tenants and used asbestos because it was cheap. With local authorities having to compete in the money market to finance council house building, quality and safety suffer in the drive to minimise costs. But the



The Action Group would like to hear from anyone with experience of similar campaigns: contact Marie Pythoras, Secretary, Loughborough Asbestos Action Group, 64 Howard House, Barrington Road, London, SW9.

Highly recommended further reading: Asbestos Killer Dust - A Worker/Community Guide: How to fight the hazards of asbestos and its substitutes. Available from Trade Union Book service, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London, N4 2DE. Price £2.25 to individuals; £1.20 a copy plus £1 postage to trade unionists and community groups who order five or more copies; £10 to companies, councils and libraries.

ANTI-DAMPNESS

NATIONAL ANTI-DAMPNESS WORKING PARTY

National problem

The National Anti Dampness Working Party is about to launch a Charter of demands designed to raise the issue of dampness as a widespread national problem requiring radical solutions. The ANTI DAMPNESS CHARTER contains a number of demands under each of the following headings:

1. Repairs and remedial works
2. Cuts and finance for repairs
3. Housing development and tenant control over design and standards of council housing
4. Heating
5. Rehousing and demolition of estates
6. The sale of council housing and land
7. Rents and compensation
8. Direct labour organisations
9. Health and housing
10. Information

Not the tenants fault

This wide range of issues has been chosen for several reasons:

- To show that dampness is not the tenants' fault, but has its roots in the way housing is designed, built and financed and by whom.
- To widen the debate within the labour movement and in the press about both the causes of, and effective remedies for, dampness.
- To argue for positive alternatives to the ways councils deal with dampness at present.
- To show that there are ways of preventing councils, private builders and architects from building in the future new houses and flats with the sort of design and materials that would lead to dampness.

Some of the demands in the Charter

The demands include the following:

- Repairs and remedial works must deal with all the causes of dampness and provide a permanent solution to dampness.
- Dampness is a national problem, therefore central government must make extra funds in the form of grants available for local authorities for major repair or remedial works or demolition and rehousing if necessary.
- Where dampness cannot be permanently removed by remedial works because of basic design faults, poor construction or materials, demolition of the housing must be the only solution. The housing must not be relet.
- Joint Tenant/Direct Labour Organisation committees should be set up and special dampness sections established within DLO's.
- A crash council housing construction programme should be carried out to meet all outstanding needs including general/specific waiting lists, homeless families, slum clearance, rehousing out of high rise flats and damp houses, and all those wanting a council house.
- Tenants should be compensated for all damage caused by or resulting from dampness, including the cost of redecorating, moving out if necessary, damage to clothes and furniture.
- A legal standard should be laid down for the maximum amount of money tenants should have to pay for heating their homes to a certain temperature. If the council has installed a more expensive or less efficient heating system, the council would have to subsidise the extra cost, not the tenant.
- Council house building and design work should not be put out to private contractors. Instead Direct Works Depts should be rapidly expanded with skilled labour and fully accountable management to carry out building, improvement, repair and maintenance. Council architects Depts will also need to be expanded.
- Councils must make available to tenants the plans and specifications and other information about how their houses and flats were built.
- Councils must take legal action against private builders and architects responsible for bad workmanship and/or bad design in order to recover the costs of remedial work.

CHARTER

How the Charter can be used

In drawing up the Charter, the National Anti-Dampness Working Party have not intended it to be used as a substitute for local demands made by local campaigns, but rather as a means of adding strength to those local demands. If anti-dampness campaigns around the country in many different kinds of housing took up the basic demands in the Charter, that can only strengthen and unify the campaign for decent, damp-free housing.

The Charter is being sent to many anti-dampness-campaigns, to tenants federations and to the Trade Unions representing building workers and local government employees. It will also be released to the national press, radio and TV, and sent to the Dept. of the Environment. The Working Party is urging tenants affected by dampness of any sort and building or council workers to:

- 1 Discuss the Charter at anti-dampness campaign, tenants association and federation meetings; at the Trades Council (many now have Housing Sub-Committees); in your union branch or shop stewards meetings.

- 2 Pass copies on to new anti-dampness groups or tenants associations on estates with dampness.
- 3 Use the Charter as the basis for resolutions at local and regional conferences and meetings about dampness, repairs and the quality of council housing, or the defence of Direct Labour organisations.
- 4 Send the Charter to other organisations and individuals whose support would be valuable to your campaign, such as resource and action centres, law centres, people with specialist skills committed to the labour movement.
- 5 Raise the demands in the Charter with local councillors and MPs.
- 6 Use the Charter to get publicity in the local newspaper, radio or TV.

Copies of the Charter are available at 10p each plus a large stamped addressed envelope, from National Anti-Dampness Working Party, c/o SCAT, 31 Clerkenwell Close, London, EC1.



CAMPAIGNING AGAINST DAMPNESS

60p (inc post) to tenants and trade union organisations
 £1 (inc post) to all others

A SET OF 10 PAPERS

- 1 Strategies, Demands and Victories
- 2 Understanding the Root of the Problem
- 3 Dampness: Causes and Remedies
- 4 How Repairs are Paid For
- 5 The Need to Expand Direct Works
- 6 Joint Action by Tenants and Building Workers in Sandwell
- 7 Health and Housing
- 8 Legal Action: Its Limits and Potential
- 9 Making Use of Specialist Help
- 10 Useful Reading

Published by Services to Community Action and Tenants
 31 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1 (01-253 3627)

Services to Community Action and Tenants is a national housing and planning project set up in 1973. It works closely with tenants and community groups and federations, trades councils, trade unions, anti-dampness campaigns and other labour movement organisations.

Tenants given control over estate improvement

The Alexandra Garden Tenants' Association are employing their own professional consultants to help them produce plans for improvements to their estate in the London Borough of Hounslow. The tenants have been asking for modernisation, some repairs and the improvement of drab and unsatisfactory outside facilities and have set up a special tenants design project to help all tenants get involved, including children. They have used a small council grant, approved by Hounslow's Director of Housing, to appoint an advisory design team from Support, a group of architects and designers who concentrate on work where the users of the buildings or projects are in control of design decisions and have been carrying out design and building projects with community groups, tenants associations and trade unions for the last 2 years. A vacant flat on the estate is being used as an office where tenants have called in for talks and meetings with Support, using models, drawings and photos to discuss options and ideas.



Women, the cuts and the state

The North West Region Socialist Feminists held a conference on 17th Nov. in Liverpool, on Women, the Cuts and the State. Papers presented and further information can be obtained from the Socialist Feminist Group, c/o The Women's Centre, Rialto Community Centre, 70-76 Upper Parliament Street, Liverpool 8. Tel: 709 8639.

We hope to have a report on the conference by the women involved for the next issue.

Heseltine helps white Rhodesians

Anyone who is homeless in Britain, or at risk of being so, will be shocked to discover that Mr. Heseltine, Secretary of State for the Environment, is taking a personal interest in helping people with housing difficulties. Of course, nothing has changed really. The object of his concern is those White Rhodesians fleeing to Britain in disgust at the limited scope they will have for racism and exploitation in the new Zimbabwe. Heseltine is so concerned they should be able to carry on here as in Rhodesia that he has contacted the Housing Corporation to ask whether any special arrangements can be made. The Corporation's deputy chief executive circulated this information in a letter to all his regional chief officers and it is quite possible that some housing associations could come up with available properties. Heseltine also wants to be kept informed of all enquiries made by the immigrants to the Housing Corporation. Some contrast to the treatment given to the Ugandan Asians in 1972

Tories increase landlords' power to evict

Homelessness will increase even further if new Government proposals announced quietly on 30th October are introduced. The Government proposes to extend the scope of Order 26 of the County Court Rules which gives landlords a speedy way of evicting a limited number of occupiers - squatters, and people whose 'licence' to stay has been ended by the landlord. These people need be given only 5 days' notice of a Court hearing to evict them while all other tenants and occupiers must receive at least 21 days' notice.

The Department of Environment now proposes to extend Order 26 to include all occupiers except home-owners who default on their mortgage and tenants against whom the Court has discretion to grant an eviction order. This change would affect all those with landlords living on the premises; workers whose home is tied to their job; the growing number of people compelled to sign false licence agreements; and those against whom a landlord would normally be automatically entitled to an order.

All these occupiers would only be given 7 days notice of the hearing to evict them. This will result in a large number of local people losing their homes because they won't have had time to prepare a defence against the alleged 'facts' presented to the Courts by landlords who will be encouraged in greater numbers to 'try it on' by taking proceedings against tenants who are in fact perfectly entitled to stay.

These changes were proposed with no publicity in a DOE 'consultation paper' which was not sent to local advice and law centres. A submission has been sent to the DOE from the Deptford Housing Aid Centre and the North Lewisham Law Centre opposing the move. They point out that nearly every eviction case would be turned into a last-minute emergency for advice centres and law centres, and few private solicitors would be willing or able to help at such short notice.

Copies of submission available from Deptford Housing Aid Centre, 171 Deptford High Street, London, SE8. Tel: 01-691 1300/1602

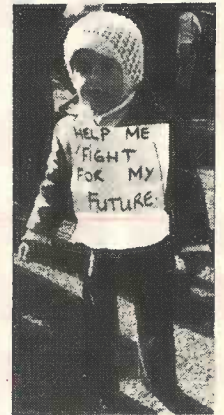
Sir Keith splashes out for North East unemployed

Keith Joseph has sent a personal contribution to the Unemployment Centre in Newcastle to help the unemployed in the North East. Intended, no doubt, as compensation for the thousands of pounds of aid he has cut from the area, the donation has stunned workers at the Centre who wrote to the Department of Industry asking for assistance with the cost of producing a booklet on unemployment. On the other hand, it's all that can be expected of this Knight who was paid £14,300 as Industry Secretary (before the MP's wage rise), can claim £3,529 of his MP's salary plus a £4,000 secretarial and research allowance and who was a joint beneficiary of his late father's £148,000 will. What was the magnificent sum? - five miserable pounds.

WHY PUBLIC SPENDING IS IMPORTANT



This is the first of a series of articles on various aspects of public spending. In this issue we look at where the money could come from for increased spending, some of the common myths about public spending and what the Tories aim to do. In future issues we will be looking at the question of cuts and rate increases, the effect of cuts on women and the family, alternatives to the cuts and action around the cuts. We would welcome your contributions.



Need, not profit

Everyone has needs - such as housing, health care, heating, transport, education, and sufficient food, clothing and extra resources. The wealth produced by a country and its workers should be used to supply these needs - it should not become private profit.

Services for all

The distribution of public spending can be democratically decided and controlled so that the needs of particular groups can be met irrespective of personal resources and market forces. In this way the needs of children, the elderly, ill, disabled, and those living in remote or less productive areas can be catered for. Services would be of the highest possible quality and level, and relevant and accountable to local communities.

Creating jobs

Public spending provides jobs directly and indirectly - no-one should be unemployed who wants to work while there are services to be made available.

Industry needs public spending

The provision of public services also supports jobs in the industrial and other sectors of the economy, eg. through the use of buildings, equipment, vehicles and materials. The productive and manufacturing sectors themselves rely on an infrastructure providing energy and fuel, communication, and transport which can only be provided by the public sector. Public expenditure cuts affect industry and jobs in other sectors in the long term and provide a cash crisis for companies in the short-term.

Socially useful production

Public spending in the form of public ownership and real democratic control of industry and financial institutions enable production to be geared to the requirements and needs of the working class and the country generally, rather than being at the mercy of market forces and profiting private interests.

a profit could be made and only to those people who could afford to pay.

There is waste and too much red-tape in the public sector — but the main waste is that of local authority workers spending time and resources making cuts when they should be running and improving services. There is far greater waste in the private sector when labour and resources are used to make and advertise useless or shoddy products, or when factories are closed and skilled experienced workers made redundant.

CUTS IN PUBLIC SPENDING WILL LEAD TO A RECOVERY IN THE ECONOMY

But we have already had four years of severe cuts and yet the economy has had its deepest recession since the 1930's. So why should things be any different now? Private investors will continue to put their money where it produces the greatest profit, and there is no mechanism to make them put it into useful and productive industrial activities.

In fact, the opposite is true. An increase in public spending would create jobs and boost the economy. For every £1,000 million of public spending it is estimated that 200,000 jobs would be created within a year, there would be savings on dole and other benefits and an increase in tax income. In fact, at least £500 million of the £1,000 million would be recouped in this way.

MORE THAN £11,000,000,000 EXTRA CASH COULD BE RAISED FROM THESE SOURCES

These measures could all be achieved within the present economic system without even starting to talk about the money that would be available for public spending in a planned economy based upon public ownership and control of industry and the financial institutions.

EXPOSING THE MYTHS ON PUBLIC SPENDING



THERE ISN'T ENOUGH MONEY AVAILABLE, SO CUTS ARE NECESSARY

In fact there is money which could be available now for public spending but which successive governments have decided not to call on. This includes:

- Taxes not collected from companies because of numerous government concessions and “incentives”
- Taxes not collected on capital assets such as land and property because of further exemptions.
- Tax relief allowed on mortgages — this includes relief for people on very high incomes.
- Tax and national insurance contributions not collected because people are out of work.

In addition, more money could be raised for public spending by:

- The introduction of a wealth tax
- A reduction in military spending

THE PRIVATE SECTOR COULD PROVIDE MANY OF THE SERVICES WE NEED MORE EFFECTIVELY AND WITH LESS WASTE

The private market, because it is based upon the need to make a profit, will never provide good quality services for those who need them.

It will only provide health, education, housing or transport when and where a profit could be made and only to those people who could afford to pay.

WHERE COULD MONEY COME

With public ownership and a planned economy the problem of finding and allocating funds for public expenditure would not exist. The economy would be directed to provide socially useful products and profits and wealth would be publicly owned. Thus, public spending could be calculated by reference to need, rather than by "what we can afford". Under the present Capitalist system however, public spending is mainly funded by redistributing wealth through taxation. Now it is argued that there is not enough money in the Country to maintain, let alone increase, public spending. This section shows that even using the present method of redistributing wealth, a large amount of previously untapped wealth and profits could be made available, thus allowing for increased public expenditure.

★ National Insurance

These contributions, deducted from earnings, go towards the payment of unemployment and sickness benefits, and pensions. The contribution is 6.5% of your earnings, if you earn more than £19.50 a week, up to a maximum of earnings of £135 a week (£7,020 a year). So a person earning £15,000 a year pays the same as someone earning £7,000. Had this upper limit been abolished in 1978/9 a further £370 million would have been collected in that year in contributions. Still on the subject of benefits, increased public spending would create more jobs for people in the public sector. This would reduce the amount the government is paying out in unemployment and supplementary benefit, and would increase the amount it received in tax and national insurance contributions. NALGO has estimated that £1,000 million of public expenditure would produce 200,000 jobs within a year, and, assuming current tax rates and an average wage of £3,500 a year, the government would recover £580 million in savings on benefit payments and in receipts from contributions, and both direct and indirect tax.

★ Income Tax

There is a widely held belief that people in Britain are overtaxed. In fact, the latest figures show that no less than 10 European countries are more heavily taxed than we are.

What gives rise to the "overtaxed" belief is that since 1973 wage and salary earners have had to pay

a much larger proportion of the tax bill to compensate for the rapid drop in the amount of money collected by the government in company taxes and taxes on capital

In the last 4 years income tax receipts have risen from £10,000 million to £20,000 million, whereas corporation tax receipts have actually fallen from £2,800 million to £2,500 million. Taxation falls most heavily on low and middle income earners, and not where the money really is - with high income earners, companies and owners of capital.

★ Company Tax

In the financial year 1977/8, 13 of the biggest U.K. companies paid no tax at all, and the remaining 7 paid only £117 million. The total profits of these companies for that year were £4,276 million. Among these 20 companies are: B.P., Marks & Spencer, Allied Breweries, I.C.I.

The White Paper on public expenditure estimates that in 1978/79 tax revenue foregone because of Corporation Tax Stock Relief will be £1,350 million and because of Capital Allowances £2,650 million. If automatic corporation tax relief was ended for big firms (ie those with a turnover of more than £50 million in 1973) except on the basis of need revealed through a negotiated planning agreement, approximately a further £1,300 million would be collected in tax.

★ Taxing the rich

TAX RELIEF ON MORTGAGES

Mortgage relief - ie tax relief on the interest element in mortgage payments, costs the Inland Revenue £1.1 billion a year. Even if mortgage relief was restricted rather than ended to those paying the standard rate of tax, excluding those on high incomes a further £380 million could be raised in tax.

TAXES ON CAPITAL

Examples of taxes on capital assets such as

land and property are Capital Transfer Tax and Capital Gains Tax. Like Corporation Tax those taxes are made considerably less painful for the rich by including numerous exemptions and possibilities for deferring payment. For example: no Capital Gains Tax is payable on

THE FROM?

the sale of a family's "only or main" residence. This costs the Treasury £1,500 million a year in lost revenue.

WEALTH TAX

The Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth clearly shows the scale of inequality which exists in this Country. 20% of the population own 82% of private wealth (see CA no 37, centre page). Had the Labour Party's commitment to a wealth tax been carried through by the last government the burden of financing public spending would have already been lightened by the increase in government income from this source.

A very high (ie generous to the wealthy) tax threshold of £100,000 would have made 12.2% of all private wealth taxable in 1975, and would have been levied on only 1.25% of the population. A low tax rate of 1% a year rising to a maximum of 5% at £500,000 with reliefs for "natural heritage" land and property, agricultural land small businesses and forestry, would yield approximately £500 million a year.

★ Money from North Sea Oil

Estimates of government revenue from North Sea Oil and gas in the mid 1980's suggest a total yield of about £4,000 million a year. NALGO has argued that a minimum of £1,000 million a year from this yield should go towards public spending.

★ Reduction in military spending

Defence spending is being increased by £500 million in 1978/9 - 1980/1. It is estimated that total defence spending in 1980/1 will be £8,062 million, as opposed to spending on housing which will be £5,078 million. In addition spending on law and order will be £2,540 million. In 1976 military spending was 5.2% of Gross Domestic Product in the U.K. as opposed to 3.9% for France and 3.5% for West Germany. To bring our percentage down to that sort of level by 1981 would require a cut in military spending of about £1 billion a year (at 1978 prices). This money could then be released to fund more useful programmes.



★ Government borrowing

Even if all this money was made available, funding public spending from redistributing wealth rather than from a system of public ownership and a planned economy means that governments have to borrow money to cover the gap between what they spend and what is collected in taxes and other contributions - this gap is the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement (PSBR). From 1945 until the early 1970's it was generally agreed that public spending and therefore government borrowing was economically sound because it created employment - which in turn meant that the government recouped what it was spending because of increased receipts from both direct and indirect taxation and National Insurance Contributions. Also the demand for goods increased which encouraged the expansion of industry. However, spiralling inflation and the world wide recession of the 1970s has led to a major change in government attitudes to public spending:

From being the driving engine of the economy, the public sector is now presented as a burden on that economy:

economic recovery is now sought by cutting state expenditure and allowing the public sector to stagnate. Finally, whereas the growth of public expenditure was once designed to promote social welfare, economic justice and the redistribution of income, major mechanisms of social and economic change are now sought in the reduction of taxation and in the free play of market forces.

Public Expenditure into the 80s. Published by NALGO

In the next section we look at the present government's monetarist economic policy, and how far removed the basis of this policy is from the aims of full employment and increasing and improving public services.

THE TORYS

In the interests of boosting the profits of big business and the rich, the Tories have begun the wholesale destruction of services vital to the lives of working people.

The government has forecast that in the coming year

- ★ living standards will fall (by 15%)
- ★ inflation will rise to at least 17½%
- ★ that unemployment will reach 2 Million.

These frightening predictions are the direct result of the economic crisis and of the government's policies. The Budget in July 1979 set out the overall Tory strategy, and has been described as "the most class biased and socially divisive since the war".

What lies behind Tory policy?

The aim of the Tory government is to cut inflation by reducing public spending through cutting the money supply and the amount the government has to borrow. This is inherent in their right wing economic theory - called monetarism - which believes that given the chance the private sector will provide all. This is linked in practice to the withdrawal of government intervention in the market and increasing reliance on private resources to provide services. The argument presented by Thatcher's government is that cuts in public spending are for the good of the economy and that once the cuts have been made, the economy will revive and grow to produce wealth which in turn will be spent on services where necessary. In other words, the public sector is seen as a burden on the economy and cuts are said to be inevitable if the private sector is to respond. In fact, a gamble is being taken - that cuts in public spending will lead to a miraculous expansion of private sector activity, an expansion which has been non-existent in the 70's.

We would argue that there is no basis for the assumption that less public spending and more unemployment and higher interest rates (ie deflationary policies), will lead to economic growth. Rather they are likely to deepen the economic recession and do permanent damage to our public services.

This is because :

the argument that public spending actually prevents growth is very weak - it is clear that while there have been severe cuts



in public spending over the last four years the U.K. economy has also experienced its deepest recession since the 1930's.

★ the idea that once inflation has been brought under control private sector "confidence" will be restored is highly questionable. Cuts in real wages and increasing unemployment will reduce public demand for goods and services in the economy. Less public spending means fewer orders for private business, and lower wages plus 2 million unemployed means that most working people will be forced to buy less. In other words, markets are likely to shrink, profits fall and there will be no incentive for the private sector to invest in wealth creating enterprises let alone public services.

Public spending cuts into the 80's

★ The effect of the cuts in public spending announced by the Tories in early November and the expected proposals to be announced in January for the next 3 years will have a devastating effect on the welfare state.

Millions of people will be affected and some of the most important achievements gained since the war will be reduced or wiped out.

★ The Thatcher cuts effectively represent a continuation of the policy adopted by Labour in 1975/6 a monetarist policy. However the emphasis on where the cuts should fall differs and the cuts proposed are larger than any before - they imply a cut of 3.6 billion or over 5% on Labour's plans for the year 1980/81 - which is worsened by the

STRATEGY

fact that inflation, wages and higher costs are not taken into account in this cut.

★The White Paper* disguises new Tory cuts. But what is clear is that the actual total expenditure next year on programmes is planned to be £1,050 million less than for 1979-80.

And what is worse - the cuts in what we regard as necessary public services will be sharper because some programmes such as defence and law and order have been allowed to increase.

Meanwhile other programmes have had to absorb very severe cuts and among the proposals are:-

★COUNCILS

The cuts package will fall particularly on the local authorities (and Heseltine will soon introduce new legislation to impose more rigid cash limits and spending cuts on labour authorities). The White Paper envisages a cut of 3.3% on local government current expenditure, (ie services), 9.3% on capital expenditure (ie investment and building projects) - averaging out at a 4.5% overall cut from the 1979-80 figure. Local government is once again being asked to take a disproportionate share of the cuts in public spending. Over the period 1974-1980 L.G. expenditure will have fallen by 14% in real terms while central government spending will have risen 8%.

As well as reducing effective local services this long term shift also allows Central Government to keep a tighter rein on public expenditure.

The largest aggregate cut in current expenditure (£350m) will be applied to the education budget and the largest proportional cut is in social services (7% reduction).

★EDUCATION

Education spending will be cut 4.3% - most of this will be achieved by cutting school meals, milk and transport. Most under 5's will also be denied nursery education and even fewer over 16's will get the chance of higher education. Spending on new schools is to be cut by half and 21,000 teaching jobs are threatened.

★SOCIAL SERVICES

Current expenditure on personal social services is to be cut by 7% and capital expenditure by 4% next year. The White Paper states that the government expects cuts to be made by "increased efficiency, reduction of low priority provision and helping people to help themselves" - but in reality it will mean a cutback on services already recognised as inadequate with the closure of many establishments run by local authorities.

★HEALTH

The main cuts in this field which come on top of the existing plans to close many hospitals and cut back on beds available, are - the rise of NHS prescription charges from 45p to 70p next April Dental charges (already up £2 in the Tory budget) will be raised "in line with increased costs".

★SOCIAL SECURITY

The projected 1% increase in social security spending conceals a depressing picture - with more old people and more unemployed total expenditure is bound to rise while benefits won't be improved and there are no plans for increasing child benefit. Patrick Jenkin also has a proposal to take on 600 extra "fraud" investigators - this indicates that the Tories intend to make it even more difficult and humiliating for claimants to get the benefits they deserve.

★HOUSING

Public housing programmes are to take the brunt of the cutbacks which means that even more families and single people will be condemned to homelessness or to live in slums. The cuts are massive - £660m this year and £1,250m (20%) in 1980/81. Housing has already suffered disproportionately in recent years.

From 1974/5 to 1977/8 housing expenditure fell 22% while public spending as a whole fell 8%. The government expect only 45,000 starts on new houses in 1980-81 compared with an average of 91,000 a year in 1970-77. These cuts are brutal and will mean escalating unemployment in the building trade and further delays in dealing with housing problems affecting at least 13% of the population.

●LATEST NEWS

Another £1,000 million of public spending cuts on top of those already planned are now forecast for the Spring Budget by economic experts.



photo: Andrew Ward (Report)

*The Government's Expenditure Plans 1980-81 HMSO

Assets Gone?

iii) loss of council houses available for rent - we estimate between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ of relet houses were sold during the two years the policy lasted in Nottingham.

■ Most sales will be of good quality houses while only a small proportion of poor quality houses will be sold. This means that the average standard of remaining council houses will be lowered with corresponding increases in unit costs of maintenance and management.

■ There is a need for a thorough investigation of the valuation system. It is our suspicion that values were fixed deliberately low in order to encourage sales.

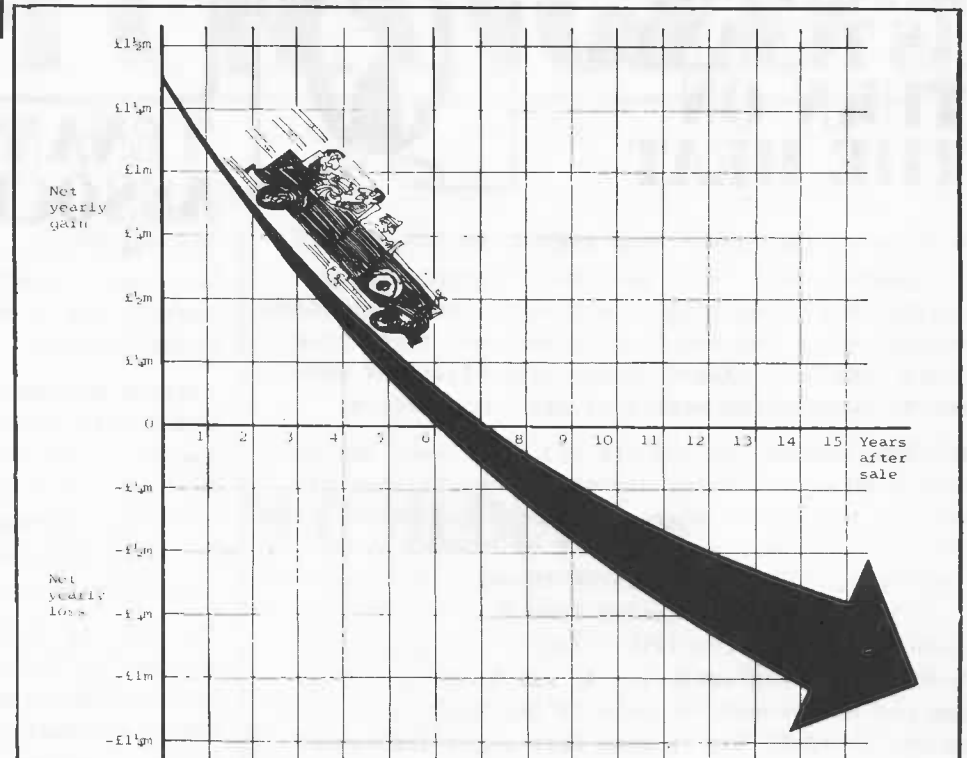
Mortgage default

They also add the following points about the danger of encouraging owner occupation.

● Mortgage default is as serious a cause of homelessness as rent arrears (as is shown by DoE statistics). Nottingham's vice-chairperson of the Housing Committee admitted on a radio phone-in programme earlier this year that an average of 16 people a week who had bought council houses were asking the council to buy them back.

● Encouraging home ownership has serious implications for monetary policy. It would appear to be a massive contradiction in Conservative policy. The greater the borrowing required for property ownership, of course, the less investment will be available for productive industry.

● The present tax system means that it is in the long term financial interests of individual home owners to be mortgaged to the hilt. This means that it is financially desirable for the individual to move house every few



Yearly net gains and losses which will be made by Nottingham's Housing Revenue Account as a result of selling 5,356 council houses from May 1976 to May 1979.

years to maintain the highest possible value of mortgage. This could have serious disruptive effects on community life on any council estate where a high proportion of houses are sold.

● It is in the interest of all involved in the owner-occupied system (except new purchasers) for house prices to rise steadily. This depends on there always being a shortage of good housing and means that the private sector will never solve the housing problem.

End sales now!

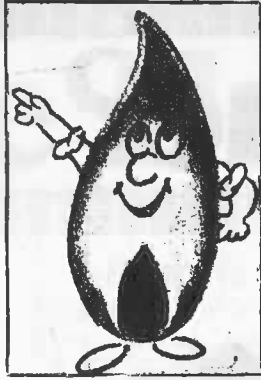
The authors of the report believe that not a single council house should be sold. Public housing provides the only means by which everyone can be adequately housed. The answer to the housing crisis is not to "sell the best and stuff the rest" (in the words of the Battersea Redevelopment Action Group), but to improve and extend the council housing system for the benefit of all.

The main demands made in the pamphlet are for:

- 1** An immediate end to all sales.
- 2** No further action to be taken on the section of the proposed Housing Bill relating to the Right to Buy.
- 3** An immediate inquiry by the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee into the financial effects of council house sales.
- 4** The Cabinet, the Association of District Councils and the Association of Metropolitan Authorities should immediately investigate and make separate public reports on both the social and financial effects of sales.

Copies from Nottingham Alternative Publications, 83 Beauvale Road, The Meadows, Nottingham. Price: 50p for tenants and labour movement organisations; £1 for others; £3 for government and professional organisations. Add 15p for post & packing.

COUNCIL GET ROASTING AS TENANTS TURN ON THE HEAT



Tenants at the Church View Estate, Eastwood, near Nottingham, took heart when their tough campaign against the injustices of a District Heating Scheme won through. But the tenants were not victorious until they had refused to pay high bills and increased charges for heat they had not received.

The Tory controlled Council had threatened the tenants with eviction and disconnections if they did not pay the excess charges. The tenants stood firm and put forward a united front by forming a Tenants Association. The association thronged the Broxtowe Council Chambers at Beeston Town Hall and lobbied councillors and officials. And in the end, after tenants had been subjected to all kinds of criticism and harassment, members of the Housing Committee had to admit the tenants were right and agreed to replace the district heating with an individual gas fired system in each house, as well as waiving outstanding debts and making refunds, which in some cases amounted to £300.

SYSTEM ABANDONED

Associated Heat Services (A.H.S.), a part subsidiary of the Coal Board, supplied the heat from a central boiler house, and were also responsible for a maintenance contract. The Coal Board supplied the fuel and advised A.H.S. and the Council on technical difficulties. A Clorius Metering Scheme was in operation. (Earlier issues of CA have contained reports on the campaign against Clorius meters). Not only were the meters completely inaccurate but the heating system was badly designed and installed. The houses themselves lacked basic insulation and the system was poorly maintained.

When the Council was finally forced to abandon the District Heating System, the housing chairman said he had no confidence in the scheme. This was a completely different position from that previously adopted by the Council when the tenants started their campaign in September last year. At that time, tenants were being branded by the Director of Housing as "problem families" who might need transferring to more suitable accommodation if they couldn't pay the high bills or understand the complicated system of control and metering. There seemed little sympathy for the old, infirm, unemployed or those with large families as they investigated methods of terminating or substantially reducing the supply of heat to dwellings where the tenant was said to be using excessive heat.

TENANTS

TENANTS ASSOCIATION FORMED

Massive bills - amounts of £10 per week were not uncommon - mounting complaints and cold homes ensured a big turnout at a Public Meeting arranged by angry tenants.

Stories emerged of the elderly sitting in their own homes with overcoats on and boiling water in washing machines because they were too frightened to use the District Heating. There were also stories of single parents visiting friends and relatives to bathe their kids and of large families forced to share the same bath water in order to cut costs.

The meeting decided to form a Tenants' Association, to take collective action over the problems, and unanimously agreed to refuse to pay the proposed increased heating charges.

READY RESPONSE FOR ACTION

The subject was to be discussed at a Housing Services Committee meeting in November, 1978. The Housing and Finance Directors produced a joint report on the subject for the meeting. Members of the Tenants' Association attended the meeting in force, expecting to see and hear an informed discussion on the merits and economics of the system. It became very apparent that the majority of the Councillors attending the meeting had not bothered to read the report, let alone understand the complexities of the system or implications for the tenants if the recommendations of the report were accepted. Tenants left the meeting feeling dismayed and appalled that important decisions were being made that deeply affected their income and living standards on little or no factual information.

On reading the Council's report, tenants were flabbergasted by its contents. The document approached the whole subject in a very biased and authoritarian manner, having no consideration for the problems or hardships. The whole tone of the document was directed to retrieving money and levelling sanctions against tenants if payments were not forthcoming.

ILL-INFORMED

In an effort to get the decision overturned, the Tenants Committee wrote to every Councillor on the full Council Committee. The letter's arrival was

GET HEATING SYSTEM CHANGED

timed to coincide with a full Council Meeting, and drew attention to the unsupported claims, the contradictions and the illogical conclusions in the document.

A sympathetic local Labour Councillor agreed to take up the cudgel again by initiating a further discussion under a procedural rule.

LOCKED OUT IN THE SNOW

Anticipating a big turnout and trouble at the Council meeting, the Tories increased their Commissionaire squad on the door from one to five, with instructions to control and restrict entry. With only a few tenants in the chamber, the doors were closed. The enraged tenants who were left out in the cold demanded admission. The Council meeting was brought to a halt while the reasoning for the lock-out was clarified. The Mayor pointed out that it was a question of numbers. He said there was a restriction of 85 at the present time. It was pointed out to him that this was the first time other Councillors had heard of the ruling or seen it invoked. The tenants were finally let in and took up seats around the outer ring of Councillors.

Jeers, cheers and disruptive incidents punctuated the rest of the heated meeting. Tenants enthusiastically adding their comments and support or disapproval as the situation demanded.

The demonstration of strength was not enough; despite Tories abstaining or voting with the Labour minority group, the tenants' demand for a FULL AND THOROUGH REVIEW OF THE DISTRICT HEATING SCHEME was lost. In addition, the Council resolved that as far as it was concerned the heating was now a closed matter.

M.P. MEDIATES

In early 1979, with an eye on the impending General Election and with relationship between tenants and Council at rock bottom, the local Tory M.P. agreed to mediate. A meeting was set up. As well as the Council members and officials, representatives from the Coal Board, A.H.S. and Clorius Meters attended. The situation remained the same, the Council were not going to acknowledge that there was anything wrong with the system and used the meeting to indicate that they were quite prepared to consider, and carry through, a series of Court actions on tenants who would not pay the prescribed charges.

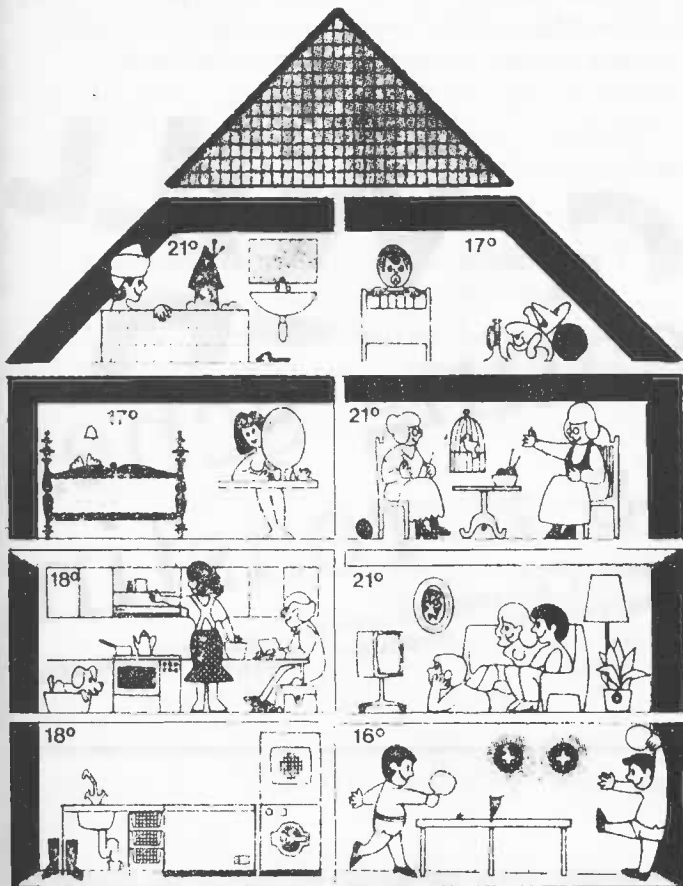
It appeared that the various officials considered the meeting to be an exercise in education and public relations, and it seemed they felt this would be sufficient to reduce the aggravation on the estate. They were prepared to talk for as long as necessary without actually meeting any of the tenants' demands for a drastic overhaul of the present system or a change to a completely different system; the intention was to provide only cosmetic adjustments in the administration of the system.

REPORT DRAWN UP

With the Council ignoring its obligations as a landlord and ruling out only further attempts by the tenants to negotiate, the tenants decided to make use of their main weapons, by stepping up the non-payment strategy and supplementing it with a propaganda campaign.

As well as the press, every person who was thought to have some influence or bearing on the situation and who would listen, was contacted formally and informally, or both. The aim being to get the tenants' view of the situation across, which was in direct contrast to the information being pushed out by the Housing Department.

In an effort to break the professional monopoly on information, the tenants decided to carry out a



survey, intended to judge the extent and nature of the complaints and gain hard evidence about the efficiency and accuracy, or otherwise, of the system of provision and metering. Evidence on social problems such as hardship, health risk was also collected as well as the exact facts and figures of the financial burden of the system on the estate.

The results of the survey and other information were put together in a full report called "District Heating: A Consumer View", along with a set of clear demands, to be presented to the Council and Councillors. The report highlighted the technical faults, the inadequate insulation and the inefficient individual control which prevented tenants from making best use of the system and called for an independent inquiry into it.

HOLES IN COUNCIL ARGUMENTS

During the Summer there was a series of sudden and dramatic swings in favour of the tenants. The reasons for these changes were in the first place a council decision to sell council houses, a policy incompatible with the district heating. Then an opportunity arose to present the report and to raise the whole subject again when the housing committee planned to meet to discuss what action to take against the defaulting tenants.

At the same time, to the tenants amusement, and the Council's dismay, the road collapsed. A large gaping hole appeared - the result of steam escaping from the underground pipes. The 'hot under the collar' council, hastily removed the item from the agenda. Over the next few days, many an expert and worried official was seen emerging or pondering over the infamous hole.

TENANTS SEE INFRA RED

In early July, tenants on the estate were startled but intrigued to see a gang of men creeping around under the cover of darkness - using a machine that resembled a camera. Worried by what the hole revealed, a red faced council had hastily commissioned an infra-red survey. A suggestion which had already been put forward by the tenants when they found they could trace the transmission pipes during periods of heavy snow (when escaping heat melted the snow) but rejected at that time because it was thought to be unnecessary and too expensive. The survey revealed 13 faults, many of which needed immediate attention.

EXPOSED

With the problems exposed the council had to agree with the tenants' demand for an early meeting. It was a sheepish and apologetic set of councillors and council officials that attended the meeting to reveal their proposals, that the District Heating be abandoned and replaced by an individual gas fired central heating system and that the Clorius Metering Scheme be discontinued and replaced by a flat rate charge at 1978 prices. Surcharges were to be refunded and rebates made where tenants were entitled. The Tory Housing Chairman claimed that they had been let down by the professionals who had given misleading information.

Tenants Association Secretary, Mrs. Jocelyn Nelson said at the end of the campaign: "We were once called a bunch of silly housewives by officials but the climb down proves we are not. We met the council officials to try and solve the problems, but they ignored the tenants proposals which could have brought an early solution to the problem."

VICTORY FOR TENANTS'

ASSOCIATION

ON FRIDAY

HEATING WILL BE REGETS a roasting

A CONTROVERSIAL heating scheme is to be scrapped after b the hearts — and pockets — of council tenants.

Church View Estate

Now the residents are over the moon after suffering massive bills and cold homes

R. C.

A limited number of the Reports are available by contacting: Mrs. J. Nelson, Secretary, Church View Tenants Association, 24 Manor Road, Eastwood, Nr, Nottingham. Price 20p (for postage & packing).

With thanks to Alistair MacInnes.

HOUSING

CUTS~CRISIS~FIGHTBACK

NATIONAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE

FOR: DELEGATES FROM TRADE UNIONS, TRADES COUNCILS, TENANTS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS, WOMEN'S GROUPS AND OTHER LABOUR MOVEMENT ORGANISATIONS AND CAMPAIGNS (Conference fee £2).

Saturday 23rd February, 1980. The Central Hall, Oldham Street, Manchester

This is the first national housing conference initiated specifically to draw together the tenants and housing movement with other parts of the labour and trade union movement.

Housing as an issue has been neglected by the labour movement in the past, but workers' living conditions are just as important as their conditions of work.

Housing is one area which is bearing the brunt of the cuts. Homebuilding has been slashed to to the lowest level since before the war. Existing council houses are to be sold off at knock-down prices. Councils' Direct Labour organisations and the services they provide are being decimated.

This conference is not just intended as Tory bashing. Let us not forget that the last Labour Government paved the way for the current round of cuts. We need to develop

alternative policies and demands, and we need a strategy for action to implement these alternatives.

That is what this conference is about - working out a direction for the labour movement on the housing fightback - breaking out of a defensive position and going onto the attack.

We need to pool practical experiences of local campaigns and learn from successes and failures.

It is hoped the conference will set up a steering committee which can provide a means whereby different sections of the broad labour movement can come together to increase the effectiveness of campaigns on housing. There will be full discussion, with resolutions, on future policy, future action, and the role of a steering committee.

Discussion at the conference will include:

- * Why housing is important to the labour movement.
- * Tory policies, their effects, and the campaigns resisting them.
- * Alternative policies and demands.
- * Strategy for action to implement these alternatives.

For further information, or if your organisation wants to sponsor the conference get in touch with Housing-Cuts-Crisis-Fightback-Conference c/o SCAT, 31 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1 Tel 01-253-3627. Also enquires via 607-2789 x5027/737-4144.

CDP PUBLICATIONS

For months, the reports from the Community Development Projects (CDP's) have been almost impossible to get hold of. Activists from a range of backgrounds have been ordering copies of titles such as *Gilding the Ghetto*, *The Costs of Industrial Change* etc. only to be met some months later with a statement that the report in question is published, printed but held by the Home Office and not available at present.

Now it looks as if things are getting better but it is important to understand the background to their saga.

In March 1978, the last local project of the national CDP closed. Established in 1968 as the government's response to racial tension and urban decline, the CDP quickly became the subject of official hostility at national and local levels. 3 local projects were shut down early and the Central Information and Intelligence Unit was axed prematurely (CA No. 28). Much hostility centred on the projects analyses of economic change, housing policy and the Poverty Programme itself as presented in the reports (10 major interproject reports and over 60 local reports were produced).

The reports were critical of almost every aspect of government policy and were therefore an embarrassment to the Home Office who paid for them. The fear of the Home Office was that demand for many of the reports was so high that they were faced with the possibility of selling them for years ahead. The answer lay in a classic bureaucratic strategy: to allow them to fade away rather than provoke a political rumpus.

Frozen stocks

After the closure of the last project the Home Office dealt with orders for reports very slowly and inefficiently. In autumn 1978 they announced that all stocks be frozen until stocks were transferred to Cambridgeshire. The freeze dragged on for 7 months and 400 copies of *Gilding the Ghetto* were lost in the meantime. PDC, the major distributors of CDP were told to end their standing agreement for trade terms and discounts and that they would have to buy at cover price plus carriage. Naturally PDC were unable to agree.

In August, the Home Office announced that no further reprints would be undertaken at all. The H.O. statement suggested that the decision was taken because of the need for public expenditure cuts but this is hardly the reason - high demand coupled with a cheap format meant that the reports could be modest money spinners for some years

Just as it looked as if the strategy of starving the market and killing demand might work, an anonymous donor has been found who has agreed to fund the reproduction of the key reports. This means that the major interproject reports and the local reports will now be reavailable and continue to be so for some years. Indeed, in what amounts to a resurrection, a key group of CDP activists has emerged under the title of the CDP Political Economy Collective and is publishing further reports which develop and expand on the arguments of the earlier reports. The first report from this group, *The State and the Local Economy*, was published in September 1979 and further reports are planned for early next year.

Book lists and individual copies from: Benwell CDP, 87 Adelaide Terrace, Newcastle on Tyne. Birmingham CDP, 2 Alum Rock Rd., Saltley, Birmingham 8.

LETTER



Dear Editorial Group,

With reference to Community Action issue No. 45 page 14, we would like you to retract the details printed about Chesterfield Borough Council. At no time have the Council offered the Chesterfield and District Women's Refuge Support Group a property they have subsequently had to refuse. We assume this information arose from some unfortunate misunderstanding - made more unfortunate by the fact that Chesterfield Borough Council have recently offered us a property we are very happy to accept and that a neighbouring District Council is also considering offering us a property.

We are very anxious that no further embarrassment should be caused by these inaccurate details and would be somewhat relieved if you would publish a retraction in issue No. 46.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Bailes
on behalf of the Chesterfield and District Women's Refuge Support Group.

Of course we retract what we said about Chesterfield Borough Council, and apologise for any embarrassment it may have caused.

ISLINGTON'S ECONOMY

The IEG has published a pamphlet containing 2 studies: "Small Firms: Magic or Myth?" and "Islington's Multinationals".

Are small firms the answer?

The study of small firms asks the question 'Are small firms really an answer to the problems of inner city unemployment?' Our response is 'No, definitely not'.

The present government is promoting small business, the entrepreneurial spirit and economic growth as an answer to industrial decline and job loss - particularly in areas where large firms have closed down and are most unlikely to come back.

We regard this policy approach as mythical and absurd. Official figures show that small firms have been in decline since the 1920's. The other side of the coin has been the rise of the large firm. By 1971 the largest 100 firms controlled half of manufacturing output and employment. Their growth has enabled them to absorb or drive out of business their smaller competitors, who are increasingly restricted to markets the multinationals do not regard as sufficiently profitable. These trends show no signs of slackening, and there will consequently be no scope for a small firm revival.

Local evidence

We show that the trend to small firm decline is replicated at the London level and at the local (Islington) level, where half the manufacturing job loss was in very small firms. Under the circumstances we suggest that it is absurd to rely on the petite bourgeoisie to produce large numbers of jobs, or any net increase in jobs at all. Yet council employment policy ignores these



realities and insists that by letting factories, sites etc. to industrialist and warehouse owners, they can encourage job creation. We take a detailed look at this policy and argue that it is not producing new employment, it is merely shifting established firms from one part of the borough to another or pinching factories from other parts of London. Meanwhile, manufacturing jobs are disappearing at a rate of nearly 2000 pa.

We also attack a number of myths about economic decline in the inner city. "Conventional Wisdom" argues that firms have been forced to close by local authority clearance and redevelopment policies and that this has been a major source of job loss. It is also argued that Planning policies have made it difficult for firms to locate in the inner city, that shortages of skilled labour have been a major reason why firms leave inner urban areas, that firms have closed because of a mismatch between skills available in the labour market and the skills that local companies need.

We dispute all of these argu-

ments, using detailed evidence from the Islington area.

Myths attacked

The study is important as it attacks the basic assumptions behind much local employment policy making - not just in Islington: the same myths are repeated all over the country. We hope that various local branches of the Labour movement can use our methods and sources to conduct similar research of their own. Our alternative is that since private capital (both manufacturing and service) is pulling out or dying off, then new jobs creating investment can only come from the public sector. Hence, we emphasise the importance of the fight against the cuts and beyond that, an expanded public sector, planned in accordance with what local people want.

Multinational power

Demonstrates, once again, that industrial decline in the inner city only makes sense in a national and international context. The IEG 'discovered' that many apparently independent firms are parts of some of the largest UK companies. Their closure has to be seen as part of the corporate strategy of these firms, in particular, their desire to cut out subsidiaries making losses or low rates of profit. This restructuring frees capital that the multinationals can then invest in areas where rates of profit are highest. The analysis is backed up by 17 detailed case histories of closures, explaining parent company motives for shutting down their Islington subsidiaries.

AVAILABLE FROM:

Pete Brimson

C/O 166 Upper St. London N1.

PRICE: £1.00 per pamphlet or,
£1.20 post + packing.

Cheques or P.O.s payable to
Pete Brimson.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

REPORTS · PAMPHLETS · BULLETINS · NEW COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS · PAPERBACKS

PHOENIX STORIES 50p from Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers, E Floor, Milburn House, Dean Street, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 1LF



Violence is trouble, trouble is bad,
While one persons happy, another is sad.
Violence is trouble, wild and alert
It could leave a person bewildered and hurt.

This is an anthology of children's writing from Phoenix School, East London in commemoration of the work of Blair Peach who was murdered by the Special Patrol Group in Southall last April. Any profits made from the booklet will be given to the Blair Peach Memorial Fund. The poem 'Violence' which ends the collection has obvious special poignancy but the short piece 'Royal Mint Square' which contrasts life before and after a child is rehoused into a concrete tower block is a vividly moving expression of a more subtle form of state violence.

TOWARDS PRESS FREEDOM By the Campaign for Press Freedom, 274-288 London Road, Hadleigh Benfleet, Essex SS7 2DE. 30p

States the Campaign's seven aims and presents the arguments and thinking behind them. An excellent, convincing document, demonstrating amply how the British press has "Power without responsibility", and suggesting ways in which the press can be made more accountable. It

scuppers the old fairytale that private ownership provides freedom from political bias, and suggests alternatives such as independent trusts or co-operatives, freed from the purse strings of both big business and the state. Industrial democracy within the media industries is called for, and a National Printing Corporation to provide a competitive public sector in the printing industry. The Press Council comes in for heavy criticism and a plan for giving it teeth is outlined. Greater freedom of information is called for, and the restrictive and undemocratic effects of the Official Secrets Act and libel laws are demonstrated.

Excellent factual information on the press and its failings, and dynamic suggestions for change; anyone who's ever read a newspaper needs to read this.

WOMEN'S AID; A Manual for Local Authorities. 25p plus 10p post from Welsh Womens Aid, 2 Coburn St, Cardiff

Starts at the beginning by explaining about domestic violence, what a refuge is, how Women's Aid works. Also has sections on the law, limits of the law, funding. Addresses itself to local authorities - "What can Women's Aid offer local authorities?" - good practice in housing which would improve the situation of women, how Women's Aid and local authority can co-operate. Excellent booklet.

WOMEN'S AID INFORMATION KIT £3 for 10 or 40p each. English and Welsh.

For social workers, housing officials, health visitors, police, GP's, solicitors, magistrates, samaritans, clergy, marriage guidance counsellors, CABx and all those who want to help battered women and their children in Wales.

BUILDING STANDARDS AND HOME IMPROVEMENT: Report of a public inquiry. 50 p to trade unions and community groups, £1 others, from Community Forum, 161 Corporation Street, Birmingham 4.

The report follows an independent inquiry reveals that considerable sums of public and private money are being wasted through the use of cowboy builders in the city's improvement programme.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

REPORTS · PAMPHLETS · BULLETINS · NEW COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS · PAPERBACKS

THE DAMPNES MONSTER: A report of the Gorbals Anti-Dampness Campaign by Richard Bryant. 78 pages. Price £1.25 from Scottish Council of Social Service, 18/19 Claremont Crescent, Edinburgh EH7.

A very useful detailed report by one of the people involved, about the anti-dampness campaign waged over 3 years by tenants in the 'new slums' of the Gorbals in Glasgow. Living in a pre-fabricated concrete industrialised building system developed for use in the South of France, not the wet climate of Glasgow, the Gorbals tenants have fought for official recognition that the mould and fungus growing on their walls is not caused by the tenants. The pamphlet describes how the tenants organised, the official reaction to their demands, the lessons learnt about the impact of different tactics which would be useful to other campaigns, and some useful sources of information and help. It's written for other activists in a clear and direct way. Profits from the sale of the pamphlet will go to the Gorbals Anti-Dampness Campaign.

YOU MUST REALISE OF COURSE THAT YOUR CASE IS BY NO MEANS UNIQUE.... WE ARE NOW BUILDING DAMP HOUSES ALL OVER GLASGOW



NEW GAMES U.K. NEWSLETTER - Available from New Games UK, 60 Park Road, Dartford, Kent. Membership £1.50 p.a.

This is the 1st issue of a newsletter produced by NEW GAMES UK. The group's aims include breaking down racial, economic and social barriers through play, developing games which disregard age, sex or ability, and which encourage creativity rather than competition. The Newsletter gives information and news and provides a forum for discussion.

DEMYSTIFYING SOCIAL STATISTICS Edited by John Irvine, Ian Miles and Jeff Evans. Published by Pluto Press.

As the title suggests statistics are usually used to dazzle people and if anything issues. They are also always presented as being "true" but in fact statistics are used in quite different ways. The authors of this book believe in the creation of a radical social theory and practice within which critical use can be made of statistics. There are sections on the history of statistics- what statistics are all about- how they are used by the state and by social science and concludes with a look to the future. The section on statistics and the state is especially useful for any activist wanting to understand how to deal with statistics.

HIGHFIELDS VOICE

A community paper for Highfields, St. Peters, Spinny Hill, North Evington, Charnwood and St. James, Leicester - Contains news and comment on local issues.

GLC HOUSING POLICY - AN INNER CITY VIEW - From Lambeth Inner City Consultative Group, 73 - 75, Stockwell Road, London, SW9. £1 (50p for tenants and council workers) incl. p & p.

This report, written primarily for use by councillors, tenants associations and trade unionists, aims to draw together the official policies and actual experience of GLC tenants and workers.

First the conditions experienced by GLC tenants in Lambeth are described and the GLC's recent performance as a landlord. The opportunities for tenant mobility within Greater London are examined in the light of the impact on Lambeth Council of the GLC's existing mobility policies. The report goes on to look at linked aspects of GLC housing policy - its Sale of the Century, future housebuilding programmes etc. and then outlines the implications for the Council, tenants, trade unions of the GLC's plan to transfer its housing stock to Lambeth Council - a plan which has so far been opposed vigorously.

Finally, the report argues that the GLC's present strategy will work against the interests of Lambeth's residents and suggestions are made for bringing issues into the open, with proposals for action.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

REPORTS · PAMPHLETS · BULLETINS · NEW COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS · PAPERBACKS

ASIAN WOMEN SPEAK OUT: A reader from National Extension College Publications, 18 Brooklands Ave, Cambridge CB2. £1 inc. post.

Designed for teachers of English as a second language, to be relevant to the lives of foreign women learning English. The usual material just reflects the values of society and represents Asians as stereotypes, if at all. This presents descriptions by Asian women in their own words of what it feels like to come to Britain and be confronted with cultural differences as well as sexist and racist prejudices.

"At home, in my country, money was for food or perhaps more land. But here the shops are full of things to buy and getting money at the end of the week made me think I could buy them. I didn't know for a long time that my pay was low and I worked harder than a lot of people."



The book also includes conversations with women about marriage, work, immigration and claiming benefits. It has photos of life both 'at home' and here. Comes with teacher's notes. Further readers and information packs are planned too.

PROVISION FOR THE UNDER-FIVES IN AVON

15p plus 10p post from Bristol Resource Centre, 62 Bedminster Parade, Bristol BS3

Gives useful background by outlining the need for day care nationally, the poor provision that there actually is and public spending on under-fives. Then Avon is looked at in detail with good statistical evidence - the demand, actual provision, cost, private provision. Concludes that the present policy of relying on voluntary playgroups is miles away from the comprehensive and universal free service of care and education which all parents and children should have access to.

REPAIRS ACTION NOW : A report on dampness and repairs by Tanners Friendly Tenants Assoc. Price 20p. Send s.a.e. to Mr Bowling, 52 Tanners Hill, Deptford, London SE8.

This is a report of a survey of conditions in housing of all types and ages covered by the Tanners Friendly Tenants Association. It was written because of the council's neglect of repairs, dampness and other problems in the area. Apart from arguing the case for a proper repair system adapted to tenants' needs and good, cheap heating, the introduction states that the report is intended to be part of an argument for an improved, publicly controlled repairs service carried out by the council's Direct Labour Organisation. The tenants want a closer liaison with the building workers, and wish to support the workers in obtaining decent wages and training.

HANDBOOK: WHAT'S FOR RETIRED PEOPLE IN ISLINGTON IN 1979. Islington Age Concern, 149 Rosebery Ave, London EC1. Free in Islington.

Full of information and suggestions of activities and how to get to them or get them to come to you. Detailed information on, among other things: money, keeping warm, housing, health, law, work, consumer rights, advice on survival. Useful addresses all the way through, and a list at the end of voluntary agencies who can give help or advice.

BENEFITS by Zoe Fairbairns. Published by Virago. Price £2.95 from bookshops.

An excellent and imaginative political novel which follows the lives of a group of women from 1976 to early next century, against a background of increasingly repressive action by the government and the destruction of the welfare state. The author shows how the current demands of women for the right to free contraception and abortion on demand, and for 'wages for housework' are in fact turned against the women of the future. We see the emergence of a new political party which has a remarkable parallel in the current emphasis on the family in right wing politics. And we are made more optimistic by the supportive and courageous action of the women at the centre of the story. A very good book.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

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A WOMAN'S PLACE: Family Break-up and Housing Rights. Published by SHAC, 189a Old Brompton Road, London SW5 Price £1 inc. post.



what to do if your husband disappears...

A revised and expanded edition of the housing and family rights guide. It not only deals with what to do about housing both in the short term and the long term, but with the whole area of family breakdown for both married and unmarried women. There are sections explaining how the courts work and the different remedies available in different courts; legal aid; how to get a solicitor; what to do about violence in the relationship- explanations of divorce and what happens- information on custody and finally on money- what you can get whether you're in or out of work. A very comprehensive and useful guide.

LIBRARIANS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

60p from John Noyce, P.O. Box 450, Brighton BN1 8GR

The latest issue covers a wide range of libraries of an alternative, trade unionist, community-based nature*. Also looks at problems the 'alternative librarian' faces!

*Includes the Labour Party Library, Govan (see CA no. 43), Leeds and Liverpool TUCRIC, Women's Research and Resources Centre and many others. An eye opener to see the range of alternative libraries.

PLAIN ENGLISH - Plain English Campaign Magazine, available from 78 Wiltshire Street, Salford, M7 OBD. £3 for 1st 4 editions or £1.50 unwaged.

The first issue of the magazine produced by the plain English Campaign. Provides information about the campaign; news items; round up of examples of incomprehensible official letters and notices.

EMPLOYMENT PLANNING IN LONDON BOROUGHS. - From London Voluntary Service Council, 68 Chalton St. London NW1 1JR. Price £1.50

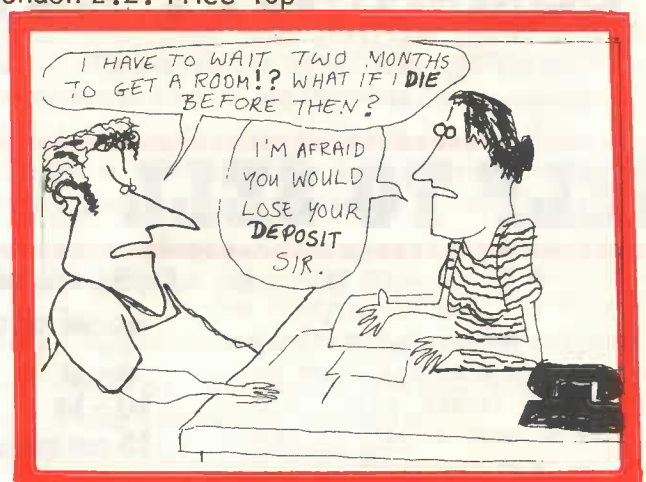
The first half of the report comprises a profile of each of the 32 London Boroughs showing briefly the employment problems and the policies and procedures adopted by Councils to meet them.

The changes since 1975 and current strategies are evaluated and the overview is concluded with more wide-ranging evidence about London's employment. Employment trends in manufacturing, services, construction and public services, levels of unemployment and the whole range of training opportunities are then looked at.

The conclusions indicate that there should be support for manufacturing industry and that the decline in many local service industries need urgent attention. Overall a useful document with figures and facts about the current employment situation. However, rather brief and sketchy in places and lacking any political analysis of London's economy. ie it looks at effects rather than causes of employment problems.

THE ALTERNATIVE HOUSING HANDBOOK

From Organisation for Student Community Action, Oxford House, Derbyshire St., London E.2. Price 40p



This very useful handbook provides information on how to find accommodation in the private rented sector and how to cope with difficult landlords. Aimed at single people it explains the possibilities of alternative housing including squats, cooperatives and shortlife housing as well as telling people about council housing and local policies concerned with the single homeless in London.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

REPORTS · PAMPHLETS · BULLETINS · NEW COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS · PAPERBACKS

ROUTE CAUSES - A Guide to Participation in Public Transport Plans by John Abbiss and Les Lumsdon. £1.25 or £1.40 by post from Macdonald and Evans Distribution Services, Estover Road, Plymouth PL6 7PZ

In the face of public transport which is slowly being whittled away, the National Council have produced a guide to help people get local transport policies that suit them. It includes sections on Public transport Plans and their relationship to other local authority procedures; points to look out for in counties' draft plans; how to present a case for improving plans, and lists of people and groups who can give advice. It contains detailed information which anyone opposed to local transport policies will find useful.

CAN HOUSING ACTION AREAS WORK?

A Report by South Hill St. HAA Residents Group. 75p incl. ptp from 43, South Hill Street, Oldham OL4 1DZ Lancs.

The residents hope that this report will be useful to other groups in Housing Action Areas. It includes



a description of the area and its problems, information about the legal position, how the problems were tackled by the local authority, the residents experience of the Housing Association working in the area, and recommendations for action. Lots of material useful to other groups.

COMMUNITY ACTION BACK ISSUES

A Package of all available back copies which will include the Supplements to the Investigators Handbook + all Special Packages (with the exception of the out of print parts of the C.I.C. Action Reports for which photocopies can be ordered at 75p. extra) Special Price £4.00 inc post. Order Form on back.

HELP TO SELL COMMUNITY ACTION

Please fill in the form below. We will send you some C/A posters and information sheets describing C/A aims together with a list of contents of back issues. Each issue of C/A will be sent on sale or return basis. We must however have payment and unsold copies returned on a regular basis.

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HOUSING BILL CONFERENCE

A one-day conference is being organised by SHELTER and Community Forum to help Residents' Associations in Housing Action Areas in campaigning more effectively, both in their own locality, and nationally in the light of the forthcoming Housing Bill.

DATE: Saturday 2nd February 1980
10.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

VENUE: Dr. Johnson House, Birmingham

Some assistance may be available towards travelling expenses.

For bookings contact Gavin Clements at SHELTER, 157 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UU
Tel: 01 833 8377 ext 31

THE HOMELESS

Five nationwide training sessions on homelessness for staff of housing departments, advice centres and social service agencies in York (24th January), Nottingham (16th February), Salisbury (21st February), Cambridge (18th March) and Hereford (19th March). Total cost including coffee, tea, course papers and 4-course lunch is £19.50. Further details: John Gayle or Louise Foulkes, Shelter National Housing Aid Trust, 157 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UU. Tel: 01-837 9877 Ext. 45. Deadline for booking is 14 days before each course.



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Advice Centres in Crisis

The London Independent Advice Centres Group is holding a conference

on: Saturday 2nd Feb. 1980

at: The Carlton Centre, Granville Road, NW6
from: 10.30 a.m. - 4.30 p.m.

to discuss the effect that the cuts are having on the work of advice centres not represented by the Law Centres Group or The Citizen Advice Bureaux

For further details contact Jane Tallentire, 69 Charlton Street, NW1. Tel. 01-388 0241

Workers Wanted

HILMICO NEIGHBOURHOOD AID CENTRE: provides a legal, housing, employment and immigration and welfare rights service and also initiates, supports and serves as a base for community groups. We are looking for two COMMUNITY WORKERS to join two others to work as a team involved in all aspects of the Centre's work.

The first post will take responsibility for the general administration of the Centre.

The second post will take responsibility for maintaining and disseminating the Centre's information service.

Both jobs will involve giving general advice and being involved in local neighbourhood groups.

Salary £4902 (presently under review). 6 Weeks annual holiday.

Closing date is December 14th (this may be extended - please phone if interested), and interviews will be held at the Centre on 7th/8th January 1980.

Details available from PNAC. The Hut, Deans Place, Moreton Street, London, S.W.1.
Tel. 034-2862.

Community Development

ST HILDA'S EAST requires a new DIRECTOR to lead a team working in a community development agency in Bethnal Green.

Salary: JNC Scale 3H (£5661 - £6240 pa)

Further details and application forms from:

The Director
St Hilda's East
18 Club Road
London E2

Informal enquiries to:

Terry Simons (the retiring director)
Tel. 01- 739 8081.

ACTION NOTES

- NO. 1 (C.A.19) HOW TO ORGANISE AND RUN A PUBLIC MEETING
- NO. 2 (C.A.20) ORGANISING A PETITION
- NO. 3 (C.A.21) CONSTITUTION FOR TENANTS AND ACTION GROUPS
- NO. 4 (C.A.22) WRITING A REPORT
- NO. 5 (C.A.24) LOBBYING
- NO. 6 (C.A.27) PROPAGANDA - PUSHING OUT YOUR OWN
- NO. 7 (C.A.28) MEMBERSHIP - HOW TO BUILD IT UP
- NO. 8 (C.A.30) SETTING UP AN ADVICE CENTRE
- NO. 9 (C.A.38) BEING A DELEGATE
- NO. 10 (C.A.39) STARTING TO ORGANISE
- NO. 11 (C.A.41) ORGANISING A DEMONSTRATION
- NO. 12 (C.A.42) ORGANISING A COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

These issues also include other articles directly relevant to organising, for example TENANTS FEDERATIONS - PROBLEMS AND POWER (C.A.20), TENANTS AND WORKERS TAKING JOINT ACTION (C.A.22), CLAIMANTS ORGANISE (C.A. 24), and FIGHTING FOR UNDER FIVES (C.A.30).

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ACTION REPORTS

A Set of 6 comprehensive Action Reports covering all types of CPO's - for housing, motorways etc. - and looking at rehousing, compensation, politics and tactics for fighting for or against CPO's, was contained in Issues 9 - 14. The changes in compensation dealing with disturbance payments were contained in No. 16. Price of all these (including cost of photocopying out-of-print issues and postage) £1.75.

Action Report on HAA's - Issue No. 20 - look at the politics, legislation and practice affect HAA's and alternative strategies. Price 18p. including postage.

Guide to Rehousing and Compensation in 2 parts (Issues 39 and 40) covering Redevelopment, Improvement and Council Modernisation Price 50p. including postage.

Special price for all the Action Reports £2.25 including postage.

Fight the Attack on COUNCIL HOUSING

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A 3 part report (in issues 14, 15 and 16 of Community Action) on the laws which affect direct action by tenants, community groups and workers, and the role of the police in trying to control it. Includes marches, processions, occupations, public meetings, blocking of streets, police involvement in squatting and tenant/landlord disputes, picketing, flyposting, street selling, and much more. Plus a description of how the Criminal Trespass Act affects direct action (in issue 35).

Community
Action.

INVESTIGATORS HANDBOOK

A comprehensive guide for tenants, workers and action groups on how to investigate companies, organisations and individuals. Many situations at home and at work can arise in which it is essential to establish what decisions, deals, contracts, takeovers are taking place, who is involved and why. It is important to arm yourself with accurate information before starting a particular campaign or taking action. The Handbook shows what information is available and how to get it.

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A year's subscription (6 issues) to Community Action costs £1.80 (or more if you can afford it), £1.80 abroad (surface mail), and £3.50 to libraries, local authorities, firms, etc. Please let us know if you belong to a community group/tenants' association.

Cost of back copies: issues 8-18 are 15p each plus postage; issues 19-29 are 18p each plus postage; issues 30-41 are 25p each plus postage; issues 42 onwards are 30p each plus postage. Issues 1-9, 11 and 18 are sold out. Postage is 10p for a single copy, 6p per copy for more than one.

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