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Nottingham Voice

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NEW
RIGHTS
COLUMN

don't let them
cut you off!

PAGE 8



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Nottingham Voice

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"The Lilac Leopards are so viciously unpopular they should be disposed of as soon as possible"

(Cllr Andrew Hamilton,
Chairman of the City
Transport Committee)

Long standing (the word is carefully chosen) users of Nottingham's very wonderful transport system will need few reminders of the amazing efficiency with which the Tories ran the buses last time they were in power. In those good old days of not-so-long-ago (1967-72, to be precise), it was not uncommon to be kept waiting for an hour or more (or all night if it happened to be your last bus) for the simple reason that the city's clapped-out fleet was almost as often off the road in a state of mechanical collapse as on it carrying passengers. Naturally there was a mass migration of disillusioned passengers to private cars, bicycles or shoeleather, and of disillusioned bus crews to more sensible occupations like driving ice-cream vans or issuing cloakroom tickets.

One of the good things about the recently ejected Labour Council (and there might be others if you think hard enough) was its commitment to public transport. Where the Tories believe that public transport is a sort of punishment for not owning a car, the Labour group rightly saw it as a positive contribution to the quality of life - and not just for those who use it, but for anyone else who hasn't enjoyed seeing Nottingham torn apart simply to digest ever-increasing numbers of cars.

But, of course, every Englishman's car is his Churchill tank, and every Corporation bus is a drain on the rates. Tory philosophy makes much of efficiency, but (for some mystic Conservative reason) efficiency is always defined in economic terms. An efficient transport system, therefore, is not one which promotes maximum accessibility for its users, but one which doesn't lose money.

"Break even by 1979" is the current objective, which means old buses will not be replaced, services will be "rationalised" (i.e. cut), and, of course (play it again, Sam), fares will be increased. Also, if you happen to be fond of actual music, as opposed to the homogenised bowel noises of "Sounds in Motion", it means aural pollution.

Still, as you while away the hours by the popular yellow sign, having arranged your estimated time of arrival to the nearest hour, warm yourself with the thought that when the bus finally arrives, at least it will be a wheezing, coughing, spluttering, draughty, dirty, clapped-out, and above all economical old heap of junk, rather than a nasty, sleek, warm and comfortable Lilac Leopard. ●

NEWS NEWS NEWS

Alternative SBC report

WHEN DAVID DONNISON, Chairman of the Supplementary Benefits Commission, came to present his Annual Report to a social workers' conference in Nottingham last week he had to face representatives from the People's Centre who had distributed copies of their own version of the SBC Annual Report, "The Truth".

David Donnison said that the SBC was not there to promote the welfare of claimants - all it had to do was make up their income to prescribed levels. And he said the SBC employed 50% of DHSS staff to distribute 13% of the DHSS money. It costs £1 for every £7.50 distributed.

He said social workers should take the trouble to learn the SBC rules. It was pointed out to him that these rules are covered by the Official Secrets Act. He said they could not publish the rules because they were too complicated to understand.

The People's Centre version congratulated the SBC on maintaining $1\frac{1}{2}$ million unemployed and $1\frac{3}{4}$ million pensioners at below the European poverty level minimum, achieved by a smokescreen of "Frauds on DHSS" and "Swindles by unscrupulous claimants", and urged Kenneth Clarke, MP for Rushcliffe, to keep the smokescreen up●

Tenants Association reformed

THE NOTTINGHAM and District Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations was reformed on 20th September at the International Community Centre on Mansfield Road. John Peck is acting as Secretary. Common issues to be fought together include the perennial problem of rising rents together with the tenants' responsibility for a wider range of repairs. As well as co-ordinated local activity, it is hoped to raise the scale of activity to a national level.

Voice readers may remember the saga of the Kendale Road complex of flats which was depicted in cartoon form (see Voice No. 46).

A Tenants Association was formed at the end of August and a march to the Housing Department on King Street followed on 3rd September. A petition protesting about the conditions at the flats was handed over to Mr Campbell-Lee, the Housing Department Director. One outcome of this was a visit to the flats by the Housing Committee who had probably forgotten what the place actually looked like. Some new safety measures have been promised (e.g. anti-climbing devices on the walls and safety chains on the windows) and an Adventure Playground was proposed. However, the Council has made many promises in the past and it is to be hoped that implementation of these measures will not inhibit the Tenants Association's long-term aim of rehousing all tenants with children. Greater militancy may be required if this is to have any chance of success.

The Mapperley branch of the local Labour Party has offered to "help" by staging a public meeting with the Housing Department at Morley Junior School, provisionally fixed for October 13th. One of the stars booked as chairman for this event is Cllr John Carroll who may be able to draw on his County Hotel experience and have the place pulled down. Let us hope, at least, that the new Tenants Association will be strong enough to resist any attempt by the Labour Party, however benevolently, to take control of its campaign●

Karnival grant

NOTTINGHAM STUDENTS' Karnival Committee is seeking applications for this year's Karnival money. The Committee has undertaken a complete review of how Karnival money is given out and has decided to ask for applications for a new project fund.

The amount available for the new fund will be a quarter of the total raised by Karnival. It is expected that it will have some £4,000 to £6,000. Applications should be for a new project in the Nottingham area whether run by a local organisation or by a local branch of a national organisation. Applications should be for a capital grant for this year only to establish a new project and should not normally include running expenses.

However, money will still be available for other projects as in the past. Applications should be addressed to the Karnival Appeals Committee, Students Union, University Park. Application forms for ordinary applications can also be obtained from this address.

The closing date is 31st October●

Labour pains

WITH THE CREST of their Socialist wave crushed by the Tory victories last May, County Hall's rulers are thinking deeply about the implications of a future in opposition.

Ironically, and despite their lamentable track record, the Conservatives could well find themselves pushed into office by next year's county council elections. If they then stop their internal wrangling over the leadership long enough to glance across the chamber the Labour front-runners will have changed dramatically.

Already Resources Committee chairman John Moore has decided not to stand next year. He wants to return to his Post Office career - very sensible: if you're not a well-lined or retired Tory, life on the opposition benches is not lucrative enough for a full time political career, living on the insecure guarantee of attendance allowances.

What is more, the amiable Mr Moore has already tasted the misery of defeat, when he lost his seat on Newark district council in May.

Nottingham's "terrible twins" John Carroll and Len Maynard are also not standing for the County again. Still leader and deputy leader of the City Labour group, though now just a motley handful, the duo apparently don't like the way things are run on the other side of the Trent: the officer domination? the highly complex budgeting system? or the machinations within the group which keep the intellectual faction Dick Wilson and Michael Cowan plus the pro-Europe lobby of Jim Cattermole and Michael Gallagher at the helm.

Whatever it is, the "way things are run" is too much for our wily, seasoned, pair.

After this year's dismal election returns, few of the Nottingham seats can be considered safe Labour tickets - when Clifton begins to go Tory you know the foundations are shaking.

So the scramble for seats in safer pastures of Mansfield, Ashfield and Bassetlaw may conceivably leave the likes of Cowan and Wilson high and dry next spring.

Dick Wilson could presumably adjust quite happily to opposition, devoting more time to his former work as a translator. But what for Cowan if he has to defend his Wollaton seat? His reputation will go before him. And his attitude toward Trent Polytechnic since he gave up his work there, is unlikely to endear him to most woolly-minded college principals.

Perhaps in the long term the new safe Sherwood constituency is in his sights. Its complexion could well prove to be Socialist if the Boundary Commission's plans come to fruition. It would be the Parliamentary foothold he has sought for so long.

Then again, a couple of recent appearances on ATV have helped him peddle his image of pompous financial whizz-kiddery to a wider audience.

Were the Whitehall mandarins watching?,

is he the man to help save the "drowning pound" for doleful Denis? There's many a way into a civil service niche and as financial spokesman for Labour on the Association of County Councils he already has access to many Whitehall ears.

Or how about Jack Straw's job as political adviser to Peter Shore?

What will fate decree for the unfortunate Frank Higgins? The affable environment supremo has had to endure backpeddling on the planners' admittedly intelligent traffic management programme. Many selfish motorists may feel they have a grudge to bear against the man who tried to sell them park and ride and the notorious zone and collar experiment.

Whether he was right in theory remains to be seen - the Environment Department's after-study on Nottingham's pioneering traffic experiments should be published in the next few months.

But the fact that he misjudged the political temperature with such forward-thinking proposals has proved all too sadly true.

If all this stimulates a wry smile on Tory faces, it will be short-lived. The larger looms the prospect of a Conservative take-over the more intense the leadership battle will become. New boy Herbert Bird may be an objectionable character but his advance through the ranks is irresistible. He has injected more than a little vigour into council debate, however ill-informed it may be. He has also dominated Tory contributions on the committees on which he sits.

And on his other side, present leader Peter Wright still has the politico-financial manipulation, courtesy of Michael Spungin, with which to contend. And if all else fails can the "old guard" of Anne Yates be completely discounted?

We shall see very soon. There are only about half a dozen full council meetings to go. And this year's Tory group elections take place in about three weeks time●

NAC asks for views

ABORTION AND CONTRACEPTION

Have you ever:

- Had an abortion?
- Been unable to get one when you needed it?
- Waited weeks for a birth control clinic appointment?
- Worked in an abortion or birth control clinic?

If so - PLEASE contact us - the Nottingham Group of the National Abortion Campaign - and describe your experiences (all privacy respected).

The National Abortion Campaign is fighting

for free and readily available abortion and contraceptive facilities under the National Health Service, and for a Woman's Right to Choose whether or not (and when) to have children, believing these facilities to be prerequisites to women's equal rights.

Last year the Government set up a Select Committee of MPs, after the defeat of the James White Abortion Amendment Bill, to examine the situation. The MPs on the committee were by no means unbiased, and their recommendations (some of which are already in force) will make it much more difficult to obtain a safe legal abortion. The National Abortion Campaign thinks it is important to hold an independent inquiry and is gathering information to present at a tribunal in the New Year. This issue is crucial to all women (and men and children too!). Please let your views and experiences be known about (complete anonymity if you wish) so that the voice of the people can really be heard at the tribunal, and join the National Abortion Campaign in the fight for - FREE ABORTION ON DEMAND - A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE.

In Nottingham we are fortunate to have out-patient abortion clinics at two hospitals for early abortions. Even so, some women have to have backstreet abortions, which can be very dangerous. In some cities and areas where the consultant doctors are anti-abortion the situation is much worse. The Nottingham NAC group

is collecting information locally for the tribunal: come and discuss these matters at our next meeting on TUESDAY 12th OCTOBER at 8.00 at the WOMEN'S CENTRE, Room 26, NEWCASTLE CHAMBERS, ANGEL ROW, NOTTINGHAM (near the BELL INN, just off the MARKET SQUARE) - or write to us at that address, or contact us via the People's Centre. We can also give advice or information about abortion and contraception facilities in Nottingham●

(This article was submitted by members of the Nottingham Group of the National Abortion Campaign.)

Late opening

THE CITY COUNCIL have decided to open the Fletcher Gate multi-storey car park until late in the evening for an experimental period. The car park, the scene of recent expensive modifications to stop the danger of cars disappearing over the edges, has never been used much and so, in a bid to force more people into it, the Council has thoughtfully fenced in the vacant bits of land in the Lace Market which were being used as car parks.

This, together with the liberal use of double yellow lines, has deprived the Lace Market Theatre of the parking space next door to them which patrons previously used. When the Theatre approached the Council they were told to use the multi-storey car park until they pointed out that patrons would be unable to remove their cars after a performance since the park closed at nine. The Council remain adamant about people not parking on old bits of cheap waste land when they could be parked in a nasty new expensive multi-storey car park. Hence the new "experimental" late night opening●

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Drs unfit?

A LITTLE-PUBLICISED change of Social Security rules is due to take place on the 4th October. From this date GPs will no longer be able to issue certificates for unfitness to work (a job they are obviously unsuited for) and the job will be transferred to officials of the Department of Health and Social Security (who are much better qualified). This change could have far-reaching effects for many claimants. There will be a full account of the new regulations in the next Voice●

Peetz expelled

DIETER PEETZ, the loony philosophy lecturer who stood against Jack Dunnett, Labour MP for East Nottingham, in the last election, has finally been thrown out of the Labour Party.

But it was a close thing at the Annual Conference which he was allowed to address for ten minutes in an attempt to overturn his expulsion. On a show of hands he won his case, but just lost the subsequent card vote - 2,800,000 votes for readmitting him to 3,100,000 against. Rumour has it that the National Executive Committee didn't want to create a precedent which might mean readmitting Reg Prentice if he stands as an independent in Newham.

Dieter Peetz is one of only a few Labour Party members who have had the guts to stand up to Jack Dunnett and the local Labour Party machine which keeps him in power. He got over 600 votes in the '74 election on a platform of "Clean up the local Labour Party", one of the highest votes in the country gained by an independent candidate.

Meanwhile, we presume that Mr Peetz will still be seen frequently foaming at the mouth denouncing Jack Dunnett and the local Labour Party leaders on every available occasion●

Council houses

AMID ALL THE PROPOGANDA and figures on the sale of council houses by the Tory City Council one aspect has been carefully neglected. Part of the policy concerns selling off new houses which had been bought from private contractors by the previous Labour Council.

These houses include those at Hollydene Park and Cinderhill. Now, of course, they won't be let to council tenants and will stay empty until bought privately. Enquiries at the Housing Department receive the reply "not available for letting, these houses are strictly for sale".

Just down Vernon Road there are people living in damp, unfit housing. It's easy to understand the wish of these people to see this housing used immediately - if not for themselves then at least to reduce the overall waiting list●

PEOPLE'S CENTRE 33 Mansfield Road

412269/411676

HOUSING, WELFARE & LEGAL ADVICE

Open Mon - Fri, 11am - 6pm, for general advice and at the following times for special areas:

WELFARE RIGHTS	Mon 10am - 6pm
HOUSING ADVICE	Tues 2pm - 6pm
LEGAL ADVICE	Mon 6.30 - 8pm Wed 6pm - 8pm
GAY ADVICE	Thurs 6pm - 8pm
OFF THE RECORD (Youth Counselling)	Mon, Wed, Fri 7.30 - 9pm

COMPETITION!

DO YOU REMEMBER back in the old days when they were trying to convince us of the wisdom of doing away with real money in exchange for metric currency the Decimalisation Board treated us to little jingles on TV to explain how simple it all was? Well, they're at it again - this time preparing us for the trauma of metric weights and measures with little rhymes in the daily press. For example:

"A metre measures three foot three
It's longer than a yard you see."

Well, we thought this was a little poor and so came up with a rhyme of our own:

"There was a young lady called Rita,
Whose boyfriend decided to treat her.
She said, 'Oh dear me,
That's not three foot three,
In fact it's not even a metre!'"

Now we'd like to see what you can do. Send in a limerick or short verse explaining the true facts about metres, kilos, litres, etc, in whatever way you feel appropriate. There will be a prize of a metre of ale for the best.

OFF THE PRESS

All right Jack!

AT LEAST ONE local MP figures in a recent civil rights survey undertaken by the National Council for Civil Liberties. The survey, which assessed MPs' record on civil rights matters, placed all local MPs in what they termed the "grey majority" (that is, not in either the top thirty or the bottom thirty) with the exception, that is, of one - worker hero Labour MP for East Nottingham (you've guessed it) Jack Dunnett. So appallingly did Jack emerge from the survey that he managed to come 622nd out of a field of 635, and was the lowest placed among both Labour and Liberal MPs being beaten only by four Ulster Unionists and nine Conservatives.

The survey gave points both for sponsorship of "civil liberty motions" and for asking questions in the House of Commons. On neither point did Jack score. The survey also gave points according to the voting record on a total of nine civil liberty votes in the Commons. Jack was absent for five and voted, the NCCL consider, against the interests of civil liberties in the other four. In fact Jack voted for capital punishment for terrorist offences, supported the Prevention of Terrorism Bill, voted to reappoint the Select Committee on Abortion, and was against an amendment to the Police Bill to strengthen the powers of the Police Complaints Board.

Source: "RIGHTS!" (NCCL). See review on page 18.

Meter tests

THE CONTROVERSIAL Clorius heat meters used, among other places, in Nottingham's District Heating Scheme are being investigated by both the Building Services Research and Information Association (BSRIA) and the Building Research Establishment (BRE) - an offshoot of the Government. BSRIA and BRE are to test how accurately these meters measure heat as this has never been established. As BRE put it "it amazes us that field tests have never been done" despite many thousands being in use for up to thirty years.

A Common Market panel is currently considering standards for heat meters although it is unlikely to even consider Clorius Meters as it can only look at meters "with some sort of legal standing".

A new French law concerning meters in communal heating schemes will effectively exclude the use of Clorius, or similar, meters.

All this will be no great reassurance to the thousands of St Ann's tenants whose heating is metered by Clorius Meters.

Source: New Scientist.

POINTS

FAITHFUL READERS of the Voice will recall our various comments on the Bell Inn in the Market Square. No doubt as a response to this pressure Mr Jackson, the landlord of the Bell, is to start selling real ale. We hear that CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, are having some difficulty in deciding whether this is a major breakthrough or a severe blow to their cause.

READERS WHO habitually travel on the top decks of buses will have had experience of the dreaded "Sounds in Motion" scheme.

Sounds in Motion is not listening to your trannie in the loo but the name given to the music and ads now forced on respectable fare paying passengers on City Transport. We hear that the actual location of the tape deck is being kept secret - presumably not so much to stop people nicking the tapes, but to stop them putting anything decent on.

WE NOTE WITH some dismay that "Down to Earth", the "whole food" shop in Hockley, is now charging 5p for a copy of their price list. While appreciating that they might wish to cover their losses in providing this service, we fail to see how something that should have cost at most little more than 1p a sheet for materials, ends up costing five times this.

IN THESE HARD TIMES of cuts in public spending we are pleased to inform the dog-owning public that the needs of their canine companions are not neglected. At this very moment, two county council employees - graduates, no less - are tirelessly scouring the county - counting lamp-posts!

WE HEAR THEY are having difficulty selling the Evening Post. The street vendor on Mansfield Road was recently heard shouting "Evening Po', two for 12p".

RIGGERS

AS THE COST OF FUEL, especially electricity, continues to rise people are facing bigger and bigger bills. The Electricity and Gas Boards both have a policy of taking out pay-as-you-go coin meters making it impossible for people to budget weekly. And after the Ronan Point high rise flats in London collapsed as a result of a gas explosion there are now several blocks of flats in Nottingham which are electric only - meaning very high bills. £100 per quarter is not uncommon for a flat in Balloon Wood. And the Electricity Board is very keen to cut off people who can't pay.

Weekly payments

What should you do if you can't meet a fuel bill?

As soon as you get a bill you won't be able to pay, get in touch with the Board. Don't wait until disconnection is threatened.

For electricity bills 'phone 291151, ask for accounts section - Mr Dodd or Mr Aldous - give account number if possible.

For gas bills 'phone 56234 - ask for Mr Hardy.

Offer to make weekly payments. Keep these as low as possible or you will not be able to keep them up. Unless there are really exceptional circumstances you will have to pay off the bill before the next one comes - about ten to twelve weeks. For example, if the bill is £60 you will have to pay at least £5 or £6 per week.

If weekly payments are refused contact the People's Centre. Even if weekly payments are refused, pay what you can when you can afford it - this may help to stop disconnection. Both Boards should accept part payments. If they insist that you pay the whole bill or nothing 'phone the numbers given above or contact the People's Centre.

If you can't meet weekly payments which you have agreed, continue to pay what you can and inform the Board immediately why you are in difficulties.

Remember that you can save towards future gas and electric bills by buying thrift stamps in the showrooms, and the Electricity Board will let any quarterly customer have a payment book to make payments at any time for future bills.

Disconnections

If someone comes to cut off your supply don't let them in. Contact the Board immediately.

If your supply has already been cut off it will be much more difficult to get it turned back on. They will ask you to pay off half or even the whole bill immediately. Bargain with

them on what you can afford. Stress the hardship it is causing and the reasons why you couldn't pay the whole bill.

In the case of theft from a coin meter you are always liable for the whole bill even if someone else is found guilty. Promise to pay it off. Even if they suspect you robbed your own meter there is no reason why they should cut off the supply if you agree to weekly payments (but they normally do disconnect).

Social Security and fuel bills

Where DHSS are involved the fuel boards are conspiring with them to automatically disconnect unless DHSS pays the bill and they will only do this where crippling deductions are made (DHSS has the power in law to cut down benefits as much as it likes).

Only £2.20 a week per household is allowed in Supplementary Benefit rates for all heating bills. In most cases this is hopelessly inadequate.

Where claimants have to pay fixed amounts for heating DHSS should make up the difference. They should also pay extra where there is central heating or there are other reasons for extra heating charges such as illness, young children, damp rooms. If the local DHSS office will not pay these extra weekly amounts you should appeal. Get advice on this from the People's Centre.

But these additions only apply to a small number of claimants and even those who get them are not getting enough to pay their bills. Consequently many claimants are facing disconnection because they cannot meet their bills. In such "exceptional" cases DHSS should meet the bill. If the local office refuses (they normally do) send a letter appealing against this.

A serious problem now is that where such payments are made because weekly benefits are not enough, DHSS is making the weekly payment even less by making compulsory deductions to meet future bills, thus causing extreme hardship in many cases. They frequently deduct £4 or £5 a week and sometimes as much as £10 even though only £2.20 is for heating. This means that many claimants are being deprived of several pounds each week which they need for food. And Appeal Tribunals are upholding this dangerous inhumane policy.

Balloon Wood

In one case a woman and her child at Balloon Wood had £4.50 per week to live on after deductions for fuel bills and rent.

continued →

(RIGHTS continued)

Representations could only get this increased to £6.50. In another case at Balloon Wood a couple with children have decided to keep their electricity disconnected because the only alternative was to have £9.50 per week stopped out of their benefit.

Half of the problem here, of course, is the City Council's because the Balloon Wood flats are a gross architectural blunder in common with other projects such as Basford flats. They are very poorly insulated so that heat is lost rapidly causing condensation on the walls, the heating system is amazingly inefficient as in many cases it is impossible to heat a bedroom without heating the entire flat, and the system is totally electric and therefore very expensive. DHSS is already paying a lot in benefits to subsidise this Council cock-up but even this is not enough.

Social Services and disconnections

Social Services have a basic policy of never spending any money on anything except administration and residential homes. So even where the law says they must provide things like telephones for disabled people they don't.

Where young children suffer because of disconnection Social Services should provide emergency heating, lighting and cooking facilities so that the children do not suffer (or they could take the much more expensive step of putting the children in care).

But all they have is twelve calor gas stoves for the entire city area so they are hardly ever available (we are also reliably informed that they shouldn't be used in Ronan Point type blocks like Balloon Wood and Basford flats because of the danger of explosion).

So the chance of Social Services being of any use in the case of disconnection is virtually zero ('phone 866511 for the administration at County Hall or 56200 for most areas in the city). They are most likely to act where it is necessary to avoid a bad press. So try to conjure up pictures in their mind like "Family burns to death after accident with candles . . . Social Services has no money to buy emergency lighting - claim"●

NIGEL LEE

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Quiet as a Mao

ONE STATISTIC that has made more impression on me than fifteen tons of Workers Presses, Morning Stars, Daily Expresses, etc., is the fact that last week one fifth of the human race observed three minutes silence in salute to their leader.

It impressed me in two ways; A: Tributes don't come much bigger than that, and B: It must have been bloody quiet in China that morning - I mean, 800 million people being quiet must create a silence 400 million times greater than me and Old Bert sat at opposite ends of the lounge bar at 6.30 on a Tuesday evening. It stands to reason. But frankly I'm worried about the side effects. Eight hundred million people talking create a lot of sound energy and vibration. An awful lot. And when they stop

talking, they generally stop moving as well.

The combined energy of 800m voices and bodies must have a part to play in the world's energy balance. Stop them suddenly and you throw the whole lot out of kilter; tidal waves and sonic booms come to mind. Drought, disaster and plagues of boils, I shouldn't be surprised.

But what a tribute! We've seen nothing like it since the days of the Pharoahs. "Right lads - Cheops has snuffed it. He were a good lad, so I for one says we give him a right grand send-off. Any ideas?" And that is how the pyramids began.

What will become of Mao? An enormous memorial? Stuffing and pickling like Lenin? Or hacked into shreds and peddled round as holy relics, like saints, buddhas, etc.

Which brings us to Mr Callaghan. When he succumbs to terminal bonhomie who will mourn? The Cabinet will back each other to the hilt of their daggers; parliament will re-shuffle their feet for a minute or two; and the editorials will delve deeply into the file "Useful Platitudes for Deceased Prime Ministers, Dames of the British Empire, etc."

But I suspect the general reaction will be that of Dorothy Parker when someone told her that Calvin Coolidge had died: "Indeed? How could they tell?"●

P. J. GROB WORTH

CINEMA - the

The commercial...

IF TITLES ARE anything to go by, Nottingham's tastes haven't changed much since some brave soul put on the first film way back in 1895. Called "Fatima's Dance", it would probably still pack 'em in if it was revived at that haven of insalubriousness, the Tatler Cinema Club (members only).

Ms Fatima must have been some dancer for she soon gyrated her way into the lives of most of the inhabitants. She had some help and hardsell from cinema owners, like the owner of "The Picture House" opened on Long Row in 1912 and described as "an ornate and commodious picture theatre, which, for chaste embellishment, picturesqueness, and comfort, may fairly be said to be up to a new standard."

In simple ways, history shows the obvious - the cinema has always been a means of escape. The harder the times the greater the need to escape so the last few years have really seen the "Dream Factory" pull out all the stops. Last year's brew of shark jaws, burning buildings and black magic earned Hollywood £700 millions as its share of box-office receipts.

The movie industry has also realised that co-existence with the old bogy television is not only possible but profitable. People will still pay to see the "big screen" and, when they stop, TV is ready to pay to show films on the small screen. The logical conclusion was "Akinfield", shown on the BBC the same day it went onto general release and so successful that a whole series of new films is planned for later in the year.

messy

Yet, despite all, the British film industry remains in a mess. Pitifully dependent on American finance it survives chiefly because the falling pound makes its facilities cheap to use. Much the same reason produced the spate of "Spaghetti Westerns" in Italy.

A large part of the trouble lies in the unique way that the British film industry is organised. Two companies - EMI (through their ABC subsidiary) and Rank - distribute most of the films shown in Britain and own most of the big cinemas in which they will be seen. Between them they control in Nottingham the Odeon, ABC, ABC Elite and Savoy, leaving the Classic as the only independent city centre cinema.

As long ago as 1966 the Monopolies Commission found that the ABC and Rank "so conduct their affairs as to restrict competition" and recommended that the industry should "be organised on more competitive lines as in other European countries". Yet, if anything, their monopoly has grown even stronger since that date.

The result is that only the types of film which the "Big Two" like, or think will sell, are likely to be widely distributed. That's why one (randomly chosen) day this summer sixteen out of twenty-two main films advertised could be classified as "sex" or "children's/Disney". No criticism here - obviously tastes vary - just the observation that sheer weight of numbers crowds other films out of the market.

This lack of any real competition also explains the remarkable similarities between the ABC and the Odeon in town, including the fact that they both charge about a pound to get in. Even if this is justifiable for the plush acres of the ABC 1 or the Odeon 1, it's certainly too high for the poky little Odeon 5 where irritation at the small size of the screen is compounded by the lights being left on all through the performance.

low prices

By contrast the out-of-town Savoy on Derby Road seems a haven of reasonableness. Prices (50-60p), a habit of showing new releases soon after they finish their first run in town plus, for the amorous or the merely nostalgic, the charms of double seats make a regular look at its programme well worth while. Sometimes it is even capable of producing flashes of real enterprise such as the unusual, and interesting, Polish Week that it ran earlier in the year.

Alas, this originality is smothered by the sad fate of the ABC Elite. Once renowned for premiering Continental films, like those of Truffaut, in Nottingham, it now awaits conversion to a Bingo hall.

From "Fatima's Dance" to "Diana Dors and her Fours" the projector swings full circle - and who's to deny that the one is any less valuable than the other.

Certainly not the "Big Two". Their size - £450m of assets in the case of the Rank Organisation (who include Xerox, Odeon & Gaumont cinemas, Rank, Bush, Murphy TVs, etc.,

State of the Art

Wharfedale hi-fi, Top Rank and Butlins) - 400m for EMI (EMI records, ABC cinemas, Golden Egg, ATV and Thames television) indicate that they satisfy a lot of demands. Millions get the entertainment - but only a few thousand get the profit●

... and the serious

FILM SNOBS COME in all shapes and all sizes, casting a jaundiced eye over all directors and all genres. Some are born to the condition . . . others have it thrust upon them. They share one characteristic - an intolerance towards whichever films they happen to dislike.

Happily, the breed shows signs of extinction, though the British Film Institute continues to come under fire for "elitist" tendencies. Be that as it may, the BFI's local associate, the Nottingham Film Theatre, has a reasonable record of providing the city with good films without leaning too far to the esoteric.

In part this reflects the ambiguous position of the Theatre. On the one hand it exists to "show the great classics of the screen" and to "develop a serious interest in the cinema" amongst its audience - a role made all the more necessary by the deficiencies of the commercial circuit. On the other it receives considerable sums of money from public sources (e.g. £800 p.a. from the East Midlands Arts Association) and has to attract sufficient customers to make the operation viable.

All in all, the Theatre rides these potential conflicts of interest with some success. Those films which are shown are, by almost anyone's criteria, "good" and are usually well-supported. The organisation, done on a voluntary basis, is efficient and seat prices are considerably lower than comparable venues such as Derby Playhouse.

For all these things we offer up our thanks - but with reservations. Take the new season, for example. Initially becalmed in a Sargasso Sea of Modern American Directors, it drifts, aimlessly, a celluloid "Marie Celeste", to the shores of the "avante-garde" film world - Brownlow, Ozu, Fassbinder, etc.

In this catch-all category of "Modern American Directors", six films are shown, five of them being made by different men. Only Alan Pakula receiving the accolade of two showings, and even then there has been no attempt to provide any sort of background information on the similarities (or differences) between "Klute" and "The Parallax View".

Leaving aside the fact that several of these films have been on general release in the not-so-distant past, it would be interesting to know how this stew, stocked with good ingredients though it may be, advances the Film Theatre's objective: to "develop a serious interest in the cinema" amongst its audience.

Far more sensible would be a return to the old practice of developing "themes" by showing films which have something in common, e.g. the director or the subject they deal with. Such a policy doesn't have to degenerate into culture-vulturism. Two or three films by Alfred Hitchcock or Robert Altman can be shown as easily under this formula as the films of any more esoteric director. This happens at Derby Playhouse, which covers such areas as "The Western", "History of the Comedy" and "Ingmar Bergman" between now and Christmas.

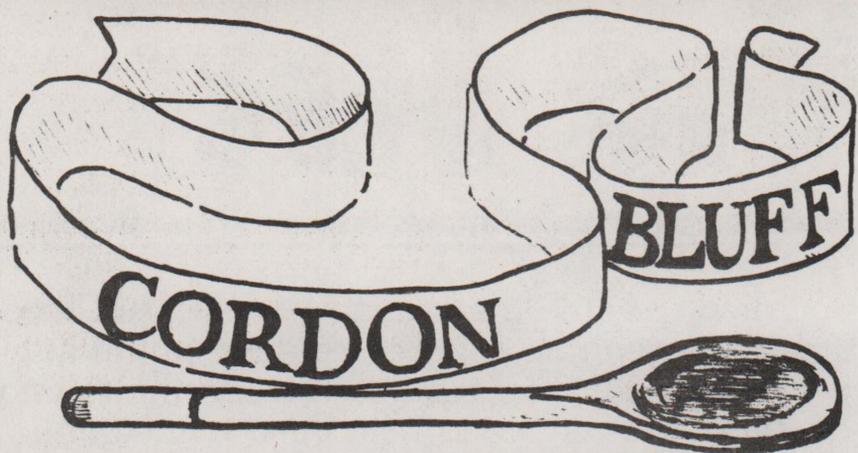
no continuity

Underlying this lack of continuity is a troubling lack of attention towards the Theatre's members. During the last year there has been no attempt to gather any sort of opinion about the films people would like to see, no information as to how precisely the Theatre is run or how anyone who wishes to could take a more active part in its affairs. In fairness, there was a meeting I am told, some eighteen months ago to consider these points - but this is a bit irrelevant for people, like myself, who joined since that date.

Nor is criticism of the Film Theatre a new event - a couple of years ago "dissidents" broke away to form the short-lived "Peachey Street Flick". In the near future some of the people associated with this are hoping to show films at the new Midland Group Gallery on Carlton Street.

These are not major points, especially as it seems likely that very few people do want to take an active interest. They are more an indication of an attitude of mind, symbolised by the grudging and hostile co-operation of the East Midlands Arts Association when asked for information on the Theatre.

"Go along and join the committee. I'm sure you'll get on it", they said. Unfortunately, it doesn't seem to occur to them that it is precisely this kind of in-group cliquishness that some people find distasteful about the way in which the Theatre is run●



A Basic Guide To Good Cooking

THIS COLUMN AIMS to bring you the best in do-it-yourself cooking so you can help put Heinz and Birds Eye out of business. Since the pickling season is not yet over, this month I am writing about this ancient art.

There are two types of pickle - those with vinegar only and those with a mixture of vinegar and sugar. The latter, if of Indian origin, are called chutneys. The point of pickling is to preserve veg. and fruit and to make them tasty. Vinegar preserves things because it is a dilute form of acetic acid and stops the growth of moulds and yeasts. Sugar and salt are also preservatives and so are often added to chutneys and some pickles.

An ordinary clear pickle is simply a vegetable immersed in vinegar. The vinegar must always be boiled first to stop the growth of bacteria which will send it "mothery", as my grandma used to call it, which is the formation of glutinous strands in the vinegar. The boiling kills the bacteria. Similarly, it is necessary to sterilise the jars by putting them in a low oven for, say, fifteen minutes.

You can use any old jars (coffee, orange juice) which you have, but don't put plastic tops in the oven - they will melt! The easiest way to seal is to use the original screw top over a couple of sheets of greaseproof paper. This is necessary with metal tops as well as plastic because the vinegar will attack the metal.

When the vinegar is boiled, spices are normally added to give flavour to the pickle. The most common spices are peppers (black peppercorns, allspice, cayenne, chillies, etc.) and cloves, cinnamon, mace, mustard seeds. The best place to buy spices are Indian shops which often sell them loose and are much cheaper than buying the prepacked variety. To a large extent, the spices are interchangeable and the amount used is a matter of taste.

PICKLED ONIONS

Peel 2lb small onions - not too small unless you want to spend days peeling them.

You must then "brine" them - that is, leave to steep in salt for 24 hours. This extracts water from the vegetable. Use about a tablespoon of salt to every pound of vege-

tables - the amounts are not critical. Then rinse and drain well. If you don't "brine" the vegetables the water from them will tend to dilute the vinegar - and the salt helps to preserve them anyway.

Then take 1½ pints of either malt or clear vinegar. It doesn't really matter which you use, but while the malt vinegar will tend to discolour the vegetables, it will give a better flavour.

For a mild spiced vinegar add a ¼oz of cinnamon stick, cloves, mace, allspice, and black peppercorns, or use some ready-mixed pickling spice. For a hot spiced vinegar add 1oz mustard seeds, a couple of mean-looking chillies chopped (don't get chillie from your hands onto any other part of your skin and especially not into your eyes because it will sting badly), 1oz allspice, 6 cloves, and ½oz black peppercorns.

Boil the vinegar with spices and allow to cool. Pack the onions into sterilised jars and pour over the vinegar to cover and seal. Allow about three months before eating.

Pickled red cabbage (slice quite finely) can be made in exactly the same way.

PICCALILLI

The slightly more adventurous piccalilli is made from a mixture of veg. and has a thickened and flavoured sauce instead of plain vinegar.

Take a small cauliflower (or half a big one) divided into "florets", 4oz of runner or french beans sliced, a small marrow peeled and cut into ¾ inch dice, ½lb onions peeled and quartered or left whole if small, and a small cucumber diced. Brine all veg. as above for 24 hours.

Then mix together 1 dessertspoon ground ginger, 1 dessertspoon turmeric, 4oz sugar, 1oz mustard powder, 1oz cornflour, and blend together with a little vinegar. Put into a saucepan with 2 pints malt vinegar, 6 cloves, and 1 heaped teaspoon mustard seed, and add the rinsed and well drained veg. Simmer for ten minutes (no more). Remove the cloves (if you can find them) and put into jars. This recipe will give you about 6 1lb jars. Allow a couple of weeks before eating.

APPLE CHUTNEY

A nice sharp apple chutney can be made from 4lb cooking apples peeled, cored and chopped, 1½lb onions peeled and chopped, 4oz of both sultanas and currants, ¾lb brown sugar, 1 tablespoon black treacle (optional), ¾ pint malt vinegar, 1 tablespoon salt, a good pinch of cayenne pepper, 6 cloves and ground black pepper to taste.

Simmer all ingredients together for 1 hour (more if the chutney is too liquid, although it shouldn't be) and bottle while hot in sterilised jars. You can taste and add more sugar if the chutney is too sharp for you, and you could add a couple of chillies to give it a bit more kick. Make sure you take out the chillies and cloves or someone will get a nasty surprise. Eat as soon as you like.

continued



DAMSON PICKLE

I can't resist passing on this recipe for damson pickle, although I must point out that I haven't eaten any yet and that the original recipe says it is only for the discriminating.

Take 2lb damsons and pierce with a needle. Put in a china or enamel bowl with $\frac{1}{4}$ pint cider, white, or wine vinegar, 2 lb sugar, 3 blades of mace, 1 stick of cinnamon and a teaspoon of allspice. Leave for two days.

Remove to a saucepan and gently bring to a gentle simmer for 10 minutes. You have to be gentle otherwise the damsons will disintegrate. Bottle while hot - again being gentle. Do not eat for at least 1 month and preferably three.

I'll let you know how they turn out in a future article. It is recommended for eating with boiled gammon, bacon, etc●

FRED BROAD

Letters

Dear Nottingham Voice,

It was with great consternation that the mothers of the Lady-Bay area of West Bridgford heard of the imminent closure of the Montessori Nursery Group. This was at the beginning of June and by the end of the same month, the nursery group finally closed.

The Montessori Nursery had been well-established in West Bridgford for over eighteen years. Catering for the three to five year olds, it not only provided the necessary play with sand, water, etc., but taught the children to be aware of themselves and their surroundings.

Many of Montessori's ideas are now incorporated in the state educational system.

The parents of the children realised that with the closure of the MNG the 24 children who had been catered for would now be without nursery facilities as the other local playgroup was unable to accept any more children. Therefore a meeting was held at the home of one of the parents, the object of which was to form a committee to start a playgroup of our own.

Our first job after forming the committee was to find out if state nursery education was scheduled for this area, as this would affect the fact of whether we were a long or short term proposition.

On finding that there were no immediate future plans for state nursery education in this area we then set about finding suitable premises and ideas for fund raising.

All premises that are going to be used for any nursery group, playgroup, etc., have to be examined by the Social Services Department and also by the Fire Service.

I would like to state at this point that the Social Services Dept. have been extremely helpful with ideas and any new group forming would be well advised to contact them at the

beginning.

The Playgroup Association in the Victoria Centre also provided a number of useful handbooks for starting a playgroup and are also willing to advise.

We have been extremely fortunate that in a period of about four months we are, subject to the Social Services re-examination of the premises, ready to open our nursery group, now known as the Abacus Nursery Group.

This would never have been possible without all the help we have received from the community.

People have supported our fund raising efforts (coffee mornings, cheese and wine parties, jumble sales) by giving time and money. The Methodist Church Hall, where the playgroup is to be held, have assisted us in every way possible. The local community association have given us a donation for a piece of apparatus, and husbands have been busy painting furniture etc. for the group.

When the nursery group opens, it will be run by Mrs R. Twinn, who apart from being a mum with two children is also a qualified teacher. She will have two assistants and also help from local mothers who will work on a rota basis.

We feel that this has been a real example of self-help in the community.

Yours, Glenys Austin, 14 Holme Rd, West Bridgford.

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Dear Nottingham Voice,

I wish to point out an error in your article headed FIELDWORK in your issue of 15 May, number 38.

NALGO is the abbreviated version of the National & Local Government Officers' Association and not, as stated in your article, National Association of Local Government Officers. As well as Local Government Officers, NALGO is composed of workers in 12 other public services: Electricity Supply, Gas Supply, the National Health Service, Industrial Estates, Inland Waterways, New Towns, Ports & Harbours, River & Catchment Boards, Road Passenger Transport, Universities, Valuation Panels, and Water Supply.

Perhaps you might like, as a matter of interest and information, some brief facts on NALGO. It is the fifth largest trade union in Britain - and the biggest white-collar union in the world. It is affiliated to the TUC and to the Scottish TUC. NALGO remains independent of party politics. It has an enlightened attitude nationally to homosexuals and to women. However, there is still a lot needing to be done within NALGO to strengthen the Union's attitudes both to Gay Rights and the Women's struggle.

Yours, Howard Hyman, Secretary National & Local Government Officers' Association Gay Group.

Nottingham writers

IN EXAMINING Nottingham's likely claims I am fully aware of the fine writers in Derby, Leicester and places round about. I am also aware that a fair proportion of Nottingham's best known contemporary writers have, like the Arabs, stolen away in the night and pitched their tents elsewhere.

Alan Sillitoe, who found inspiration in exotic spots like Radford for such fictional works as "Saturday Night And Sunday Morning", "The Loneliness Of The Long Distance Runner", and "The Ragman's Daughter", now prefers to dwell in more distant locations, though these do not seem to inspire him so much.

Author of some 77 books and other works, Geoffrey Trease also lives in other parts, although Nottingham does figure quite a lot in some of his work. Cecil Roberts, who started his working and writing career in local journalism, has spent a good deal of his long life in more southerly climes. Of those who remain and still write books, Eric Malpass of Long Eaton, although drawing upon typically English themes for "Mornings at Seven", "Yes My Darling Daughter", and the Shakespeare trilogy, finds more acclaim in Germany where two of his novels have been made into films.

Stanley Middleton, who combines school teaching with the composition of novels and scripts, has usually tackled less cosy aspects of life for his writings and acquired some fame and praise in the process. Peter Macey has made use of the science fiction vogue in three published novels - "Stationary Orbit", "Distant Relations", and "Alien Culture". He introduces an element of wit and humour into these science fiction spheres - and why not? Even those little green men with built-in television aerials must have a laugh some time - if only at us.

romance

The romantic story, whether in the short or long form, is, perhaps not surprisingly, a great favourite with the lady writers, though male writers have also been known to have a go. There is, for example, Gwladys Bungay of Tollerton, who used to write plays under the title of Gwladys Duke. Now appearing under the name of Kate Cartwright, her tenth novel has recently been bought by IPC for paperback publication. Like Eric Malpass and others, she is translated and published abroad. "The Fragile Dream" is making a material appearance in Holland.

Barbara Watt, writing under the pseudonym of Barbara Bennett (pseudonyms are obviously the fashion with Nottingham lady romantic fiction writers) has had her novel "There is a Season" published this year, and the publish-

ers are anxious for more. This novel is being brought out in the USA and Spain, while one of her short stories has been sold in France. Little enough is said about this particular contribution by Nottingham to the export market.

A number of local writers do well with the romantic short story, while others venture into the Just So realms of the pseudo-true confession story. A man who had spent a life time at sea, and who claimed he had been everywhere and done everything, tried a book full of his confessions on this market. It is doubtful whether the editor has recovered yet from the shock of reading the outpourings of somebody who had something to confess.

short stories

In past years Nottingham writers have done well with the short story market, but this is in a very sad state of decline. Whereas years ago writers like Geoffrey Trease had a variety of magazines like "Strand" to try, there is little enough left now, the demise of "Argosy" making the position even worse. Several Nottingham writers have been successful in getting in on the innocuous Radio 4 Morning Stories series, while Madge Hales - also a successful poet - has managed to have a story broadcast on the much more adventurous Radio Three.

Despite claims by various editors that Romantic Stories tackle more controversial subjects, and even feature cases of "older love" (how daring of them), this remains a very restrictive medium for the general short story writer. Unfortunately, some adjudicators of local short story competitions seem to regard it as the criterion for everything else. One can imagine O. Henry and Guy de Maupassant, to name but two, having difficulty with the short story market in its present state.

Writing books for children is another field in which the ladies seem to lead the field. It is a fact that females usually outnumber men at Nottingham Poetry Society and Nottingham Writers Club meetings. Joyce Towers did very well a little while ago with such titles as "The Seaside Donkey" and "The Flower Garden Donkey". I did know of male writer who, a couple of years ago, was writing some extremely funny animal stories, an anthropomorphic comedy line that had people who heard these stories rolling on the floor. Unfortunately this writer has never, as far as I am aware, bothered to send these stories out. There are a number of quite promising writers who say: "I never bother to send it anywhere".

As Thomas Gray said - "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen."

Writing of poetry is another popular local



Pubs

CONTRARY TO POPULAR belief my diet does not consist entirely of real ale. I also happen to enjoy eating and during the summer vacation when I was able to indulge in lunchtime boozing (an activity I curtail during term-time when I have to lecture - yes, really!) the paucity of pub food was brought home to me.

At the risk of annoying my landlord friends (and enemies as well, but I'm not bothered about them since everything I say annoys them) it is fair to say that the standard of food in Nottingham pubs is pretty abysmal. I am sure that most are scrupulously clean, but it is the lack of choice and imagination that is staggering.

One almost gets the impression that a lot of licencees are trying to bore the hungry worker into submission with the biggest selection of cheese cobs in the country. It's not so much the fact that cheese cobs or sandwiches seem to be the extent of catering imagination in Nottingham alehouses, it's the plastic cheese and plastic bread that they are usually made from.

It does not need me to point out that the reason why we are having more and more processed food forced upon us is the nature of the industries that supply them. It was no coincidence that the introduction of pasteurised, filtered keg beers occurred at the same time as the brewing industry became concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. In other words, the emergence of large, national companies led to a lowering of standards, product rationalization, etc.

The same thing has happened in the food industry. The bread industry is concentrated in three major groups, which have dedicated themselves to producing a damp, soggy, tasteless product. The same has happened in the dairy industry and we now see the emergence of the dairy factory where "Cheddar" cheese is produced in huge rectangular blocks and wrapped in plastic. It is not matured long enough and consequently is soapy and bland.

If it is allowed to go unchecked, monopoly capitalism will remove all quality and taste in



Exhibitions at the Midland Group Gallery

11, East Circus St (opp. Playhouse)

Tel. (0602) 48981

ALAN DAVIE - Paintings and Prints

GEOFFREY DOONAN - Ceramics

October 9-November 6

Opening Hours: Mon-Sat 10.30-5.00

Admission Free

the food we consume!

However, it is hardly fair to blame poor standards of pub food on monopoly capitalism! In the end the landlord and customer are the people who decide what is sold and bought. If landlords and their wives were more discriminating in the food they put on and the customers more discriminating in what they buy then the manufacturers would not get away with it. So come on you real ale landlords, let's see some real food and real choice in your pubs.

It is not only the pubs of Nottingham that provide poor food. The city is not well endowed with decent, varied catering establishments either. Where can you go in the early evening for a well-cooked meal that does not cost a fortune? An enterprising landlord would do very well if he were to provide evening food.

Some people will object to what I am saying on the grounds that pubs are pubs and not restaurants. I agree with this, and in some ways there is nothing worse than sitting in a pub where most people are attacking plates of chips with everything while the smell of hot fat pervades the whole place. But where there is more than one room I see no reason why a restricted menu could not be offered by a thoughtful landlord for people who are staying in town in the evening before going to the cinema, theatre - or anything else that one does in the city, even if it is simply boozing.

CHRIS HOLMES

ROCK

AT THE

IMPERIAL

ST JAMES'S STREET

ROCK SEVEN DAYS A WEEK!

**Restaurant and
Bar Snacks**

REVIEW

theatre

TWO PLAYS as different as chalk and cheese kick off the new season at the Nottingham Playhouse - Shakespearian tragedy vies with the intellectual sophistications of Tom Stoppard.

"Othello", directed by Richard Eyre, drew more than the usual mixed reception from the "critics". High praise from the Daily Telegraph was contradicted by two damning reviews in the Times and the Guardian, the latter describing it as "not up to the Playhouse's usual standard".

Part of the trouble was the new interpretation of Iago offered by Timothy West. Realising the melodramatic dangers of the sordid plot - a coloured immigrant, encouraged by his mate, strangles his wife in a fit of jealous rage - Eyre changes him from the traditional personification of devilish evil into a more human villain, a sort of particularly nasty spiv.

Othello too is no longer the tragic hero, towering above his fellows, but a definite product of social circumstance - an immigrant hoping to be accepted by Venetian society yet remaining an outsider because of the colour of his skin. Such social and psychological insecurity makes him a gullible prey to Iago's insinuations that Desdemona is being unfaithful with his (white) subordinate.

This is not an outstanding performance - Daniel Massey's Othello does become rhetorical at times (marked by the volume of spit he splutters out) and several passages move very slowly. Nevertheless, the nationals have been unfair - it is worth going to see.

So too is Stoppard's "Travesties" - a heady brew of quirky Irish humour (James

Joyce), revolutionary politics (Lenin), and Dadaist art (Tristan Tszara). The scene is 1916 Zurich when all three characters were living there, their lives linked by one Henry Carr, an official in the British Consulate.

Carr knew them all - but sometimes his memory is not quite accurate. The one indisputable truth is that he sued James Joyce for the cost of a pair of trousers, ruined when working for a group of actors of whom Joyce was the business manager. The Irishman reciprocated by bringing an action for slander and the price of ten tickets he had given to Carr. With such trifles is the life of genius strewn.

In the play, Joyce spends most of his time begging a few bob from the other characters, though finding time to slip in the odd limerick and song-and-dance routine. Tszara, in red and white suit like a Forest supporter, assembles poems by picking words from a hat and attacks with vases and cakes all manifestations of the bourgeois order. Lenin, a much simpler person, confines his attacks to the soap box.

All fine stuff too, for the most part witty and erudite as is all Stoppard's work with some deeper reflections on the precise relationship of "Art" and "Life". Sometimes, true, one feels that he becomes too carried away by the sounds of his own characters' voices - or, more specifically, Lenin's - and sometimes too the humour is a bit too cerebral. But, in the balance, another qualified success.

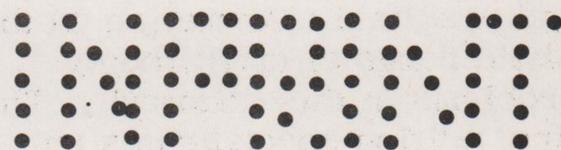
PETE JAMES

The last performance of Othello is Wednesday, 10th November.

Travesties ends on Saturday, 20th November.

'Phone Nottingham Playhouse, (0602) 45671/2, for further details.

THE FINE Phoenix Theatre at Leicester is running a trilogy of Shakespeare plays on the theme of "leadership". Already running are Richard III and Hamlet, to be joined later in the year by The Tempest. All well worth going to see.



"HOUSING - AN ANARCHIST APPROACH", Colin Ward, £1.25, Freedom Press. This is an important book that details the struggle, past and present, to involve people in the field of housing. It includes a section on human needs in housing; the social effects of imposing policies on people whose needs are ignored. It deals with self-help "do-it-yourself" housing in Britain and abroad; particularly the 3rd World squatter settlements. It asks whether architecture can be transferred from the concern of bureaucrats, to the concern of people, and argues that tenant takeover is the only future for housing.

This is a book that should bring hope to everyone who feels the importance of housing in people's lives - except, perhaps, planners and landlords!

"LAND FOR THE PEOPLE", Ed. Herbert Girardet, £1.20, Crescent Books. This book sets out to investigate the implications of land use and ownership, with the object of initiating the foundation of a popular movement for the redistribution and control of land. It begins with a twelve point manifesto which, amongst other things, states the importance of land and agriculture, questions the ownership of land, and advocates a movement back to the land with agricultural

growth and the establishment of new villages.

The three main points of the book (protection of land; production of food; distribution of land), are then analysed from historical, political, social, ecological, and economic points of view in separate essays.

"RIGHTS!" (20p) is a new magazine published by the National Council for Civil Liberties, and replaces the old "Civil Liberty". The magazine ".... aims to bring news, opinions, and practical information on the whole range of civil liberty problems in this country". The first edition concentrates on those who look after civil liberties, and investigates the achievements (or not) of the present Labour Government and individual MPs, and studies the role of the Press on immigration and race relations.

"THE OPTIMIST", (20p), is a large format comic produced by a small group of cartoonists who hope to illustrate political and social issues in a humorous manner by means of cartoon strips.

NB. All these publications are available from Mushroom, on Heathcoat St.

STEVE HENSTRIDGE

"NOTTINGHAMSHIRE - A VISITOR'S GUIDE"

By Cynthia Anne Shepperson. Published by Dalesman Books in paperback at 80p.

THIS NOTTINGHAMSHIRE authoress has spotlighted much of what there is and what happens in Nottinghamshire. Historical notes on Nottingham begin with the legendary Ancient British of Tiuogobauc by way of the early Saxons up to the present time. Other places in the county receive similar treatment.

Tavern Talk takes the reader from the earliest known inns and taverns to the contemporary mixture of old and new, including such titbits of information as that Dick Turpin often

stayed at the Cock Inn, ironically situated on the site of the present day High Pavement police station. We see that much English history was made in and around Nottinghamshire's drinking houses.

Tales of Myth and Meaning include the adventures of Robin Hood, along with the less known St Catherine's Well at Newark, and the Miller of Mansfield. Lord Byron and other famous people associated with the Shire have their brief biographies.

There is a selective featuring of churches and abbeys, the abbeys being at Newstead, Rufford and Welbeck, and the churches in the city and county. There is a potted history in each instance, with hours of opening to the public and other amenities in the instances of the abbeys.

Museums and art galleries are not neglected, with Nottingham Castle and Wollaton Park - again with historical background - being featured along with Clumber Park, Thoresby Hall, Thruppington Hall, and art galleries and museums at Mansfield, Newark and Worksop. As with other locations mentioned in the Guide, directions and distances from Nottingham are quoted.

The Midland Recipes section provides some intriguing extra dishes for the gourmet's table. Palates are whetted by such appetising delights as Nottingham Batter Pudding, Mansfield Pudding, Welbeck Pudding, Bridgford Cake, Rutland Rabbit and Mushroom Pudding, Northamptonshire Fig Pudding, Northampton Seed Cake, Staffordshire Hotpot and Leicestershire Medley Pie. More familiar to most will be the Bakewell Tart and Melton Mowbray Pork Pies.

A brief summary of Nottinghamshire sport is followed by a chapter on annual events in the county covering every month except March.

The line drawings are by local artist Alwyn Sivell, comprising illustrations of the Major Oak, Aslockton Church, the Flying Horse in Nottingham,

Newstead Abbey, Shelford Church, and Wollaton Hall stables (now housing the Industrial Museum), and the Butter Cross at Bingham.

Photographs are by E. Hector Kyme and Iain Matteson.

AUBREY BUSH

films

SCIENCE FICTION is the order of the week at the ABC. First, "Food of the Gods", an awful film based partly on an H.G. Wells story and starring a motley collection of "giant" rats, chickens and wasps who make various meals of noxious humans. Best acting is from the rats, who sport an air of hurt innocence at the inanities they are put through.

From Sunday is "Logan's Run", a dazzlingly packaged cross between "Rollerball" and "1984". Scene: a futuristic city controlled to the point where people die at thirty to be regenerated - the Logan of the title is actually Logan 5 to differentiate him from his previous reincarnations.

In true American style, Logan rebels and becomes a "Runner", the name given to those who rebel against the automated luxury. A long odyssey begins, in search of paradise and mom's apple pie, culminating (but of course) in the destruction of the city. Rubbish, but beautifully done, partly through use of heliotrophy, a new laser-based three-dimensional photographic process.

Judging from both these films, sci-fi seems to have inherited the mantle of the Western for emotional heavy-handedness. In "Logan's Run" love happens to a gush of music which even the most cynical soap opera would hesitate to use. "Food of the Gods" solves the problem in even more direct fashion - "I want you to make love with me," says the nubile heroine, beating off a couple of rats. "O.K." says the hero, then it's back to the rats again - who are proba-

bly more interesting.

At the Odeon is "The Omen", billed as the new "Jaws", and following in the well-trodden footsteps of all those other black magic movies. The presence of Gregory Peck and professional production make it a cut above "The Exorcist" at least. Watch out too for Alan Parker's "Bugsy Malone", a pastiche of thirties gangster movies performed by children and with custard pies substituted for machine guns!

Several good films are on at the Film Theatre in the next few weeks. Coppola's "The Conversation" (Oct 1st - 3rd) anticipated Watergate in its story of a professional spy - "the best bugger on the West Coast" - eavesdropping on a young couple. His gradual involvement in their lives shatters his own eagerly preserved privacy - he throws his woman when she gets too curious about him - and makes the film a finely observed study of a man trapped in guilt.

Polanski's "Chinatown" is a brilliantly done "private eye" piece set in California of the thirties, albeit with yet another dose of Jack Nicholson as the cynical hero. Its concentration on the drought-stricken city of Los Angeles strikes an oddly contemporary note

Finally, two excellent films which are usually very

difficult to see - Robert Bresson's lyrical "Lancelot of the Lake" (Oct 22nd - 24th) and Kevin Brownlow's "Winstanley" (Oct 29th - 31st). Winstanley was leader of the "levellers", a movement thrown up in the English Civil War and ancestor of the "Radical tradition" which figures so large in English social history. On Friday 29th, Brownlow will be answering questions after the film has been shown.

PETE JAMES

folk

THE REDRESSERS FOLK CLUB

HAVING HEARD that a new folk club had opened, at the White Swan, Basford, I screwed up my Wollaton Park courage, donned uniform (sports coat and tie) and sallied forth. On arrival at the aforementioned venue, my waning courage received a boost with the discovery that it was a Home Ales house. Feeling a little more secure about venturing away from the Peacock I entered the unknown portal.

Inside the pub, I became aware of a piano, being more or less played to the accompaniment of voices singing "Roll out the Barrel". I asked if that

was the folk club and, for my pains, was scathingly told to "go upstairs!!"

Advancing fearfully up the stairs - ready to bolt at the first sign of a cashdesk - I ascertained that entry was free. On entering the upstairs room I groped around for a seat, said hello to a few people I know, found a corner (nice and secure) and sat down to listen to the singer, Lawrence Platt.

At that point I became aware that everybody else was trying to listen to the singer during my arrival. Feeling chastened I tried to drink my beer without making a noise. Satisfied that I was now cowed the audience of fifteen or so, returned their attention to the singer.

The room was chilly, had fluorescent lighting and moulded plastic chairs. The wallpaper was domestically cheerful and the pint was good. Having settled in I turned my attention to the music.

For most of the first half of the evening the songs were of a revolutionary type, often sung without accompaniment. Among the repertoire were songs of the Spanish Civil War, "Rambling Royal" (Irish Green), "General Ludds Triumph" (Notts. machine-breaking song) and "Queen of the Land (Irish)."

The audience were obviously wrapped up in this part of the programme and listened in silence. Later on the songs became more of a social commentary, laced with a little nostalgia about the vanishing English pubs, "They're knocking down the old pubs and plastic's all the go". I enjoyed joining in with this one.

The club is manifestly left-wing and seemed split into two groups. At one end of the room was a group of Trotskyites while the balance seemed to be a mixture of International Socialists, old-type CP members and Labour left-wingers. There was at least one Liberal!!

The objective of Paul Waplinton and Lawrence Platt (the co-founders of the club) is to start a community folk club in the Basford area. This is the reason for the Redressers' existence (let's face it,

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14, BROAD ST. NOTTINGHAM. TEL: 46094



there are a few wrongs to be righted at Basford). The club does not expect an easy success - especially in Basford flats - and the intention is to leaflet the area in the hope of gaining new members.

Much as it grieves me to say it, I feel that the Redressers' repertoire will have to include the lighter, more spontaneous, side of folk music if they wish to attract the people of Basford. However, they might only wish to attract a certain type of clientele - whatever the case, I wish them well.

BD

MEANWHILE, over at Newark, the 2nd Nottinghamshire Folk Festival gets under way on the weekend of the 16th & 17th October. This promises to be a most entertaining event, featuring such notable folkies as Peter & Christine Coe (complete with clogs), John Kirkpatrick, Miriam Backhouse, and the High Level Ranters, not to mention the incorrigible Roaring Jelly.

Events include Morris Dancing, Punch & Judy, workshops, concerts, and ceilidhs. There will also be an exhibition of ethnic crafts. And of course there'll be bars and other refreshments.

Tickets (at £2.00 for Saturday, £1.50 for Sunday, or £3.00 for both) and the other more boring details are available from: The Palace Shop, Appleton Gate, Newark, 'phone 71156; or Clement Pianos Ltd, 17-23 Derby Road, 'phone 47912; or County Hall, West Bridgford.

SH

Sundays

- The Co-op Folk Club. 8pm, Crown Hotel, Western Blvd.
- Oct 3rd: Jon Betmead
- Oct 10th: John Kirkpatrick and Sue Harris (bar extension until 11pm)
- Oct 17th: Singers night
- Oct 24th: Alex Atterson
- Oct 31st: Singers night
- Southwell Folk Club. 8pm, Admiral Nelson, Westhorpe.
- Oct 3rd: Nic Jones
- Oct 10th: Singers night
- Oct 17th: Leon Rossleton
- Oct 24th: Bill Vanaveir and

Livia Drapkin
Oct 31st: Hebric

Wednesdays

- Beeston Folk Club. 8pm, Three Horseshoes, Middle St, Beeston.
- Oct 6th: Singers night
- Oct 13th: Brian Dewhurst
- Oct 20th: Martin Carter and Graham Jones
- Oct 27th: Singers night

Thursdays

- Lambley Folk Club. 8pm, Robin Hood & Little John, Lambley.
- Oct 7th: Haydn Taylor
- Oct 14th: Singers night
- Oct 21st: Norman Castle
- Oct 28th: Ying tong John
- Carlton Folk Club. 8pm, Windsor Castle, Carlton Hill.
- Oct 7th: Singers night
- Oct 14th: Ken Okines
- Oct 21st: Frances Gilray and Mick Burke
- Oct 28th: to be arranged
- Midlands Country Music Club. 8pm, Beechdale Hotel, Beechdale Rd.
- Occasional guests throughout the month.
- The Gregory Hotel, Ilkeston Rd.
- The Moonshiners: 8pm.

Fridays

- Redressers, White Swan, Percy St, Basford (see review).
- Nottingham Traditional Music Club. 8pm, News House, St James's St. During October guests will include Kevin Mitchell, Bill Vanaver and Livia Drapkin, and a ceilidh with Hugh Rippon and Chatterton Riot.
- Hemington Folk Club. 8pm, Three Horseshoes, Hemington.
- Oct 1st: Dave Green
- Oct 8th: Singers night
- Oct 15th: Archie Fisher
- Oct 22nd: Roaring Jelly
- Oct 29th: Gary and Vera
- Country Music Club. 8pm, Horse and Jockey, Mill St, Old Basford.
- Oct 1st: Nev Page
- Oct 8th: Misty Mountain
- Oct 15th: Karl Richmond
- Oct 22nd: Mick Mills Music
- Bingham Folk Club. 8pm, Wheatsheaf, Bingham.
- Oct 1st, 15th, 29th: resident

singers - John and Isabel Thorpe.

Other dates

- Oct 20th: Wayfarers Folk Club, Benjamin Outram Centre, Peas Hill Rd, Ripley. Foggy.
- Oct 21st: Test Match Hotel, Gordon Sq, West Bridgford. Ceilidh, featuring Flashpacket. Admission 40p.



Sunday lunch-times

- The Footwarmers, Bell Inn, Angel Row.

Sunday evenings

- Nottingham Jazz Orchestra. 8.30, The Old General, Radford Rd.
- The Harry Brown Trio. 8.00, The Green Dragon, Oxtun.
- The New Crescent Dixieland Band. 8.30, The Earl of Chesterfield, Carlton Hill.
- The Eric Pembleton Festival Big Band. 7.45, Festival Inn, Trowell.

Mondays

- The Johnny Hobbs Trio with Annie Hawkins on Double Bass. 8.00, Blue Boar, Nottingham Rd, Hucknall.

Tuesdays

- The New Crescent Dixieland Band. 8.30, Rutland Hotel, Ilkeston.
- Alternate Tuesdays, The Tike Cole Jazzband, or The Ken Each Jazzband. 8.00, Bell Inn, Angel Row.
- Harry Brown on piano, 8.00, Earl of Chesterfield, Carlton Hill.

Wednesdays

- Riverside Jazzband. 8.30, Old General, Radford Rd.
- Mercia Jazzband. 8.15, Tally Ho, Oakdale Rd, Carlton.
- Johnny Hobbs Trio with Annie Hawkins on Double Bass. 8.00 Blue Boar, Nottingham Rd, Hucknall.
- Jazz Night at the Federation Club, Claremont Rd, Sherwood

This month's guests include The John Marshall Quartet, and Ernie & Enrico Tornasso.

Thursdays

- Ken Each Jazzband. 8.30, Old General, Radford Rd.
- Harry Brown Trio. 8.30, Earl of Chesterfield, Carlton Hill.
- The Eric Pembleton Festival Big Band. 7.45, Festival Inn, Trowell.

Saturdays

- Eric Pembleton Festival Big Band. 8-11.45, Festival Inn, Trowell. (Couples only).

Fridays

- The Swingtet. 8.30, Earl of Chesterfield, Carlton Hill.
- Eric Pembleton Festival Big Band. 7.30, Festival Inn, Trowell.

Special Dates - October:

- Monday 18th. Musician's Union Annual Social Evening

in aid of the M.U. Benevolent Fund. There will be four bands performing including The Philip's - Charles Quartet and The Eric Pembleton Festival Big Band. 8.00, Festival Inn, Trowell.

- Tuesday 26th. The Monty Sunshine Full Band. 8.00, Rutland Hotel, Ilkeston.

LESS MEAT

THE WORLD Development Movement and the Vegetarian Society have held an exhibition in the Victoria Centre on the theme "Eat less meat". This exhibition led to much interest from the passing public and two broadcasts on Radio Nottingham.

A cookery demonstration was also held in the Gas Show-rooms under the title "Simply Meatless" which was a sell-out, many people coming as a result of the exhibition. The first basic vegetarian cookery

course is starting this October at the Cottesmore School and is already fully subscribed. However further courses are planned and will be taking place in other schools in Nottinghamshire.

If you would like further information about a more interesting and nutritious diet using less meat please get in touch with us and come to a meeting. Taste our food - perhaps that's the best argument!

Contact David Lane, Radcliffe-on-Trent 3396.

SMALL ADS

Rates: 2p/word, up to sixty words. 10p box number.

PHOTOGRAPHY - Nigel Pert undertakes photographic assignments. Box 1.

FLAT WANTED near city centre. 'Phone Steve 256611

ACROSS

- 1. Bugs in the studv.(8)
- 8. Way in, or in the way.(6)
- 9. No lab hue or shade is worthy.(10)
- 10. Flit with Ted for a rise.(6)
- 11. Deer goes back around donkeys to South, and took another look.(10)
- 12. Amin (for example) leads around back street.(6)
- 13. Dumb language.(4)
- 15. Sugar with reduced feet, by the sound of it.(8)
- 19. I set gin alight.(7)
- 21. (see 7 down)
- 22. My field is partly wasp heredity.(6)
- 25. I boot a mule to make it go.(10)
- 27. Boat tackle used for assault.(6)
- 28. Variable, in a mathematical term.(10)
- 29. Navy spread about in the West.(6)
- 30. Safe for a year or two.(10)

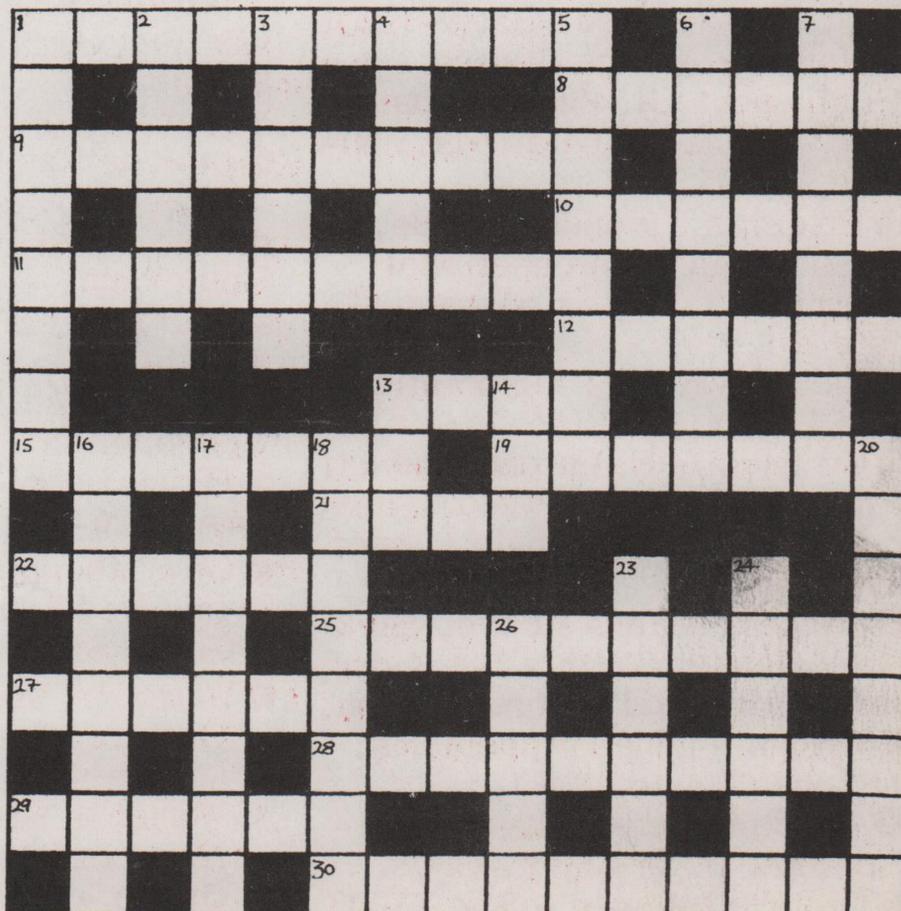
DOWN

- 1. Point to an article in fact hardly there.(8)
- 2. Indian transports heavy air.(6)
- 3. Stick a point into a rodent; that's sweet.(6)
- 4. Tends to be in a simple answer.(5)
- 5. D.I.Y. Nigel is producing results.(8)
- 6. Soldier avoids distressing duty on the wall. (8)
- 7, & 21 across. The Asian Deep brought great relief.(5,3,4)
- 13. You wouldn't cross it with 25 across.(3)

- 14. Spiritual trap.(3)
- 16. Ape around a little, before dinner.(8)
- 17. Generate confusion after 12.00.(8)
- 18. Talking of fossil man with relaxed air.(8)
- 20. Chosen tennis player evades angry Gaul.(8)
- 23. Free to a point.(6)
- 24. It's an illusion that I'm upset and angry.(6)
- 26., what can the matter be?; a bit of a smell we hear.(5)

Number 1

Solution next month!



INFORMATION

ADVICE

- People's Centre, 33 Mansfield Road, 412269. General, gay, and legal advice. Tribunal representation.
- Citizen's Advice Bureau, 2 St James's Terrace, 411792. General and financial advice, solicitor. Mon 10-7, Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-12.30.
- Eastwood CAB, Library, Nottingham Road. Langley Mill 68065. General advice.
- Beeston CAB, Library, Foster Ave. 221074. General advice.
- Confidential Advice, 31a Mansfield Rd. 46714. Sexual identity problems, drugs, gambling, etc Tues, Wed, Thurs 9am-3pm.
- Free Legal Advice, Mon & Tues 6.30-8pm, People's Centre, 33 Mansfield Rd. Thurs 6.30-8.30 CAB, 2 St James's Terr., or contact CAB any time. 411792.
- Off the Record, 33 Mansfield Road. Youth counselling. Mon, Wed, Fri, 7-9.30pm.
- Alcoholics Anonymous, Thurs 7.30, People's Centre, and Fri & Sun 2.30, International Community Centre, 61b, Mansfield Rd
- Gingerbread (one parent families). Mon 7.30, ICC.
- Consumer Advice Centre, Beastmarket Hill. 411741. All consumer problems. Mon-Fri 9-5.30 (6.30 Wed), Sat 9-12.30.
- Housing Advice Centre, Upper Parliament St. 40814. Housing advice, tenancy relations. Mon-Fri 8.45-5.
- Pakistan Friends League, Sat & Sun 2-4pm, International Community Centre, 61b, Mansfield Rd.
- Indian Workers Association. Sun 2-4pm, ICC.
- Community Relations Council, 61b Mansfield Rd. 49861. Advice on immigration, housing, race relations.
- Race Relations Board, Birkbeck House, Trinity Sq. Complaints of racial discrimination.
- Women - general problems. 'Phone Carrie 43081.
- Abortion referral - 'phone Sue, 77230, or Mary, 42808.
- Battered Women - Sue 77203.

- Sex Discrimination advice. 609852, or 344-2667 for advice and support.
- Gay advice; Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE), Mon, Tues, Wed, c/o 31a Mansfield Rd. 46714. Thurs 6-8pm People's Centre, 33 Mansfield Road. 412269.
- Gay Liberation Front. 76410.

LOCAL MPs

- Jack Dunnett, East Nottingham, 'phone 40555.
- Bill Whitlock, North Nottm, 'phone 861595.
- Michael English, West Nottm, 'phone 861595.

CONTACTS

- Anti-Fascist Committee, 126-128 Derby Rd.
- Campaign Against Criminal Trespass Law. 'Phone 46714.
- National Abortion Campaign, 'phone 43081 or 42808.
- Friends of the Earth, 33 Draughton St, Sherwood. Meet every Tues 8.00, Horse and Groom, Wheeler Gate.
- East Midlands Alternative Technology Group 239 Westdale Lane.
- Claimants Union, c/o 33 Mansfield Rd. 412269.
- International Marxist Group, 56 Park Rd, Lenton. 47304.
- Communist Party, 65 Castle Boulevard.
- Solidarity with Portuguese Working Class, 23 Mansfield Gr.
- Troops Out Movement, 18, Corporation Oaks. 601037.
- Black People's Freedom Movement, 126-128 Derby Rd.
- Gay Liberation Front. Meet every Wed 8.00, 'La Chic', 5 Canal St.
- Women's Groups: Battered Women & Nurseries Campaign - Sue 77230. Women's Street Theatre, News Letter, and Writing Group - Carrie 43081.

- Sex Discrimination - Liz 344-2667.
- Lesbian Group - 76410.
- Discussion Group - Rachel 43081 or Mary 601593.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

CITY (COUNCIL HOUSE)

- Mon, 4th, Oct. City Council, 2.30.
- Tues, 5th. Policy & Resources (Personnel) Sub Cmtt. 2.30.
- Wed, 6th. Allotments Cmtt. 2.30.
- Fri, 8th. Transport Cmtt. 3.00.
- Mon, 11th. Housing Cmtt. 2.30.
- Tues, 12th. Finance Cmtt. 2.30.
- Thurs, 14th. Planning Cmtt. 2.30.
- Fri, 15th. Public Services Cmtt. 2.30.
- Thurs, 21st. Land Cmtt. 2.30.
- Thurs, 28th. Leisure Services Cmtt. 2.30.
- Fri, 29th. Planning (Plans) Sub Cmtt. 2.15. (Guildhall)

COUNTY (COUNTY HALL)

- Tues, 5th, Oct. Leisure Services, 11.00 am.
- Wed, 6th. Environment Cmtt. 2.30.
- Thurs, 7th. Education, 2.30.
- Mon, 11th. Environment (Development & Control) Sub Cmtt. 11.00 am.
- Tues, 12th. County Council 2.15.
- Tues, 19th. Policy Sub Cmtt (not open to public) 10.30, followed by Policy Cmtt.
- Wed, 20th. Environment (Development & Control) Sub Cmtt. 11.00am.
- Thurs, 21st. Resources Cmtt. 2.30.
- Mon, 25th. Education (Schools) Sub Cmtt. 11.00.
- Tues, 26th. Education (F.E.) Sub Cmtt. 11.00.
- Thurs, 28th. Finance Cmtt 11.00.