

Nottingham Voice

TENANTS FIGHT

RENT RISE



FACED WITH rent increases of up to £1.75 per week, over 2,000 Top Valley council tenants signed a petition to the City Council.

To some of them these rises mean that their rent has almost doubled in the last three and a half years.

The petition was presented to Top Valley's Conservative Councillor, Philip Owen, after more than fifty angry tenants had marched from the Forest to Market Square. However their cry of "houses for the needy, not the greedy" is unlikely to melt the iceberg of Owen's heart - he voted for the increases because tenants had such "trappings of affluence" as colour television sets.

ROBBED

At the rally which followed the march Les Tomlinson, chairman of the Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations, spoke of the rapid growth of tenant organisations. "The whole housing programme in the country needs revision" he said, instancing the practice of selling council houses while many people were still in dire need of decent

accommodation. The high interest rates charged by financiers meant that "not just council tenants but also owner occupiers are being robbed".

SAVAGE

Following this John Peck, vice-chairman of Nottingham Trades Council, condemned the rent increases as 'savage' - the equivalent of a cut in wages - and denounced the fact that 65p in every £1

rent goes on interest payments to bankers. "That is the big scandal" he said.

Top Valley Tenants Association should be congratulated on their initiative in organising the petition and march, he continued, and was obviously growing in strength and numbers. "The fight must be kept on to build a tenants' movement as powerful as the trades union movement", he concluded.

MISERY

In his attitude to rents and tenants' living standards Councillor Owen is sadly misinformed. But he is right in saying that the Tories were just "acting as agents for this lamentable Labour

government" and had to "spread the misery that the government is imposing on the city".

This is more than Labour MP Bill Whitlock can understand. He refused to accept the petition, saying that the tenants had only themselves to blame because they failed to vote in the last city elections.

Someone should tell him that Environment Secretary Peter Shore has ordered ALL councils to increase rents by 60p in the pound.

DIVIDE AND RULE

Even so the Tories are still to blame for the fact that they have taken this figure as an average. This means that while tenants in flat complexes (who, curiously enough, have been the most militant group in recent months) get no rise, tenants at Top Valley are paying three times the average.

To divide and rule is a traditional Tory tactic...but this time the tenants at Top Valley are determined that they're not going to get away with it.



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**DEATH TO
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CENTRE?**

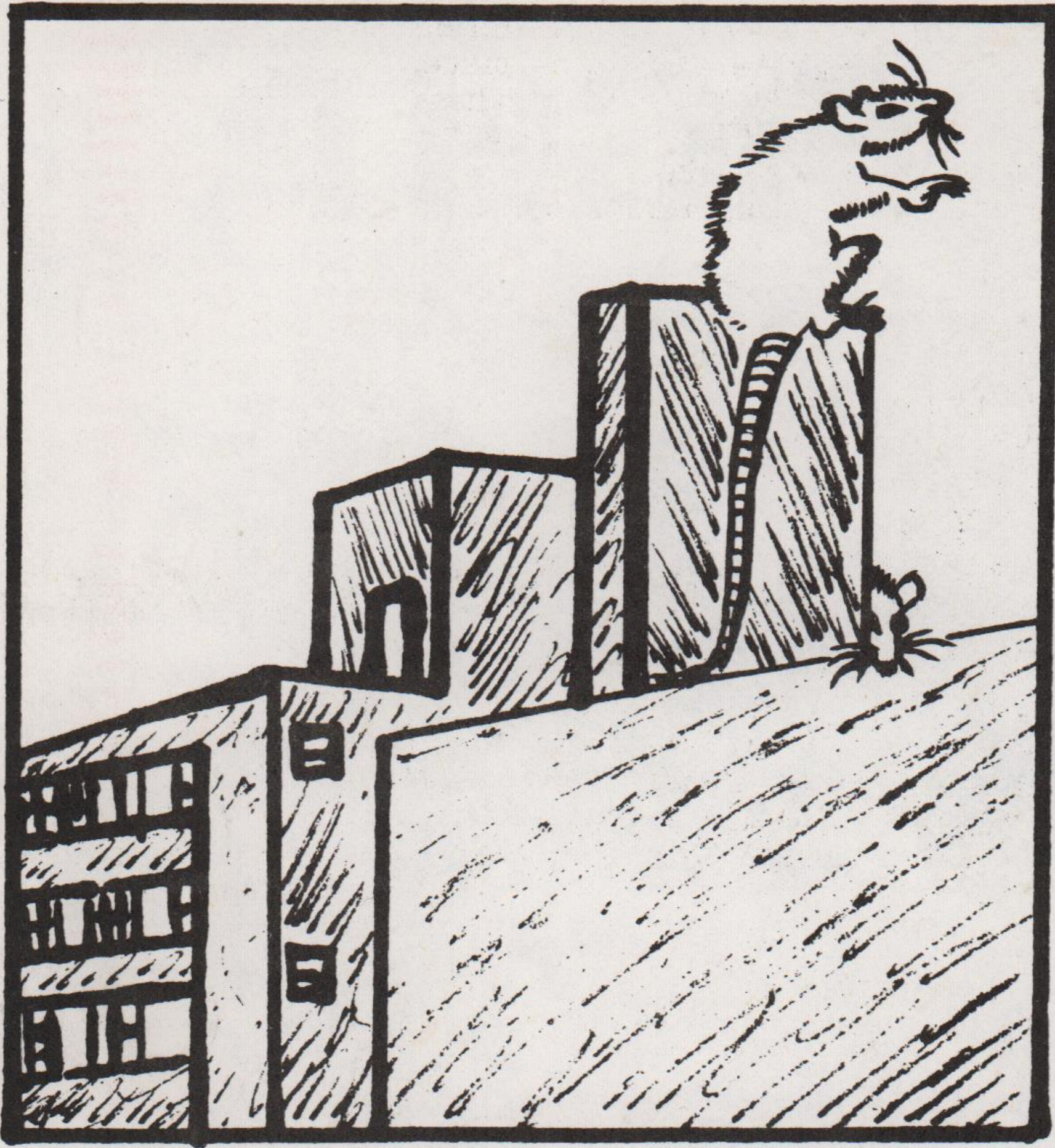
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MILL'S
GRUNWICK**

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COUNCIL GAGS PRESS

VERMIN IN CITY MARKET



MICE NOW ROAM THE VICTORIA CENTRE MARKET. THE VOICE SPOKE TO MANY TRADERS WHO CONFIRMED THAT THERE IS A RODENT INFESTATION.

Chief Environmental Health Officer, Sidney Hill, says the Victoria Centre has a "minor infestation of mice, but we have this under control". Traders claim that the mice problem is extensive and the Pest Control Officer is present on most days.

report this". None of the local media carried the story.

POISON

Ron Coles, Assistant Manager, of BBC Radio Nottingham said to the Voice that he "felt that the story did not stand up". This is clearly not true as the Voice found ample evidence of a large scale infestation.

In the loading areas there is a sign which says "danger poisoned bait laid, do not place any foodstuffs in front of cages".

George Howe, Chairman of the Public Services Committee, admitted to the Voice that "it was rather emotive, best not to talk about it" and it is clear that the Press have Kow-towed to Chairman Howe and the Council keeping important information from the public.

Senior Pest Control Officer Parkin remains silent on the frequency of visits to the market on the orders of his boss Chief Environmental Health Officer Hill and would only say he could not comment on any "particular treatments".

MYSTERY

What they are is a mystery but they are obviously not working. As one trader told us "if the Council didn't own this market then it would be closed down".

RATS

Porters in the loading bay confirm this and not only do mice regularly inhabit the warehouse but that rats have also been seen.

One market trader, in the meat section, said that "he had found mice on the tills" and other people had seen rats.

Porters said that the inner linings of refrigeration units had been eaten away and if the public wanted more evidence to come early to the market and see the mice for themselves.

Why has this not been brought to the public's notice?

COVER UP

The answer is that although the September Public Services Committee had a report on "rodent infestation in the Victoria Centre market" the Council "requested the press not to

CITY ABORTION DEMO

"NOT THE CHURCH, not the State, women must decide their fate" - "Every child a wanted child, every mother a willing mother".

These were some of the slogans heard outside an anti-abortion meeting in Nottingham last month.

About forty supporters of the National Abortion Campaign (NAC) picketed the meeting at the Albert Hall Institute with placards.

The meeting - "The case against abortion" - was organised by the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC).

The police were called by SPUC but left without taking any action.

A NAC member complained to a local representative of the journalists' union, the NUJ, about a short report of the incident in the Evening Post. The Post completely ignored a NAC press statement. Both the first and last sentences of the report began with the word "Police".

UNITY

SOCIALIST UNITY is coming to Nottingham. Having put up several candidates in recent by-elections such as Ladywood, they are now hoping to contest a number of seats in the next general election and possibly in local elections.

Their main concern is not so much the number of votes which are cast for them, but rather to "make propaganda for socialism and to put across a programme that can help the workers fight back against the present offensive of the bosses and the Labour government.

"Elections" they say, "can be used to strengthen a variety of campaigns from those against bad housing to those for free abortion on demand".

One suggestion they are considering is to put up a genuine socialist against the current Labour MP for Nottingham East, wealthy businessman Jack Dunnett.

There is to be a public meeting on Oct 20th to launch Socialist Unity in Nottingham. The speaker will be Bob Pennington, the Socialist Unity election agent in the recent Ladywood by-election in Birmingham. 7.30 at the International Community Centre, 61B Mansfield Road.

SAVE HOSPITAL PLEA

A "SAVE Highbury Hospital Committee" has been formed to fight the run down of the hospital which is in Bulwell.

The health authorities plan to close the maternity and gynaecology unit and abandon a plan to increase the number of geriatric beds from 27 to 60.

The committee includes hospital staff and represent-

atives of the Bulwell Tenants Association. No prizes for guessing that the well known Bulwell activist John Peck is the chairman and publicity officer.

They already have over 1,000 signatures on a petition and are planning further action including mass leafletting and a mass meeting.

the silly bit

WHAT A DRAG

I CAN'T tell you how delighted I was when they wrote to me in Bermuda asking me to scribble for the new Supervoice. It was so nice to get their postcard; I didn't even mind paying the excess postage.

I see Players are continuing to sell their herbal "NSM" ciggies even though sales are "disappointing". I understand that only four packets have been sold in the entire city, and two of those were shifted by an enterprising salesman at Bob Martin's who convinced a lady they would make good sedatives for her hamster.

Personally I think Players would be better off selling their stock out to Tampax Ltd, who could probably market them more successfully as Virginia Tampons.

And speaking of novelty flavours, the same J Players say, intriguingly, that they will not be launching strawberry, banana or whisky flavoured cigarettes.

But the writing is on the wall as such gourmet gaspers are already available abroad.

We have just about got used to potato crisps dressed as main course: Smoky Bacon; Toad in the Hole; Otter and Sweetbreads etc.

Now we are faced with the prospect of lighting up our puddings.

Before long, the traditional Nottingham Voice working lunch (bag of crisps; 10 fags) could soon present itself as Roast Beef, Yorkshire Pud, Spuds and Sprouts (that's the new crisp flavour) followed by a passion fruit and nine whiskies.

In fact it's already happened in some of the posher pubs, where the lager and the scampi are now indistinguishable. And both served under pressure into baskets, being consumed, so they tell me, by other baskets under equal pressure.

"THE CURSE OF PAPA DOCH"

The story so far:

PAPA DOCH, having run off with Doris and deserted Mufc,

his prodigal protégé, has fled wrathfully to Norway, to manage a darts team on an oil rig. Meanwhile Big Don, tiring of diplomacy, shunts off to the East, bribing Sheik Yermoney with a bag of potatoes and a season ticket to view the Magic Forest, home of Kluf.

Papa Doch hears of this and points the bone at Mufc from afar, uttering cabalistic curses: "D'ye think ma heed buttons at the back, Jimmy, tha noo?" Mufc finds himself banned from Urup and Ufacup. The curse of Papa Doch strikes again.

NEXT EPISODE: Papa Doch hits Derby as Big Don hits Abu Dabi. Kluf breaks wind.

P J GROB WORTH

SILLY TORY

TOM WALTON of Top Valley Tenants and Residents Association tells us that he asked Tory City Councillor Eunice Timson whether it was the policy of Conservatives to raise rents so that people will have to break the pay policy to make ends meet.

She said she didn't understand the question.

TORIES AGAIN

THERE HAVE BEEN delays in getting back gardens of disabled and elderly council tenants attended to.

This is because before any work can be done a work measurement expert has to go and assess the work. It is not long since the work measurement people had to reassess the gardens after the Tories said that only front gardens would be done.

Now the Tories say back gardens can be done but they will have to reassess the whole job again.



COUNCIL VANDALOUTS

WHO ARE the real vandals in West Bridgford? The answer is - council workers!

Rushcliffe Borough Council is mounting an exhibition of vandalised items at the moment. But half of them were smashed up on council orders!

Prize specimens of genuine vandalism had been collected for weeks for the exhibition. But some tidy person went and threw them

out. So a directive went out to find items like old toilets which had been replaced - and vandalise them. These are being passed off as "the real thing".

Now there is a rumour that a flower bed in the Central Park is to be officially trampled on and presented to the gullible public as yet another example of how standards in our society are falling.

GAY TORY NOT QUEER?

TORY County Council leader Peter Wright has accused the local branch of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality of impertinence.

They had sent him a letter asking for a meeting to discuss the policy of the council to gay people in such areas as employment.

Wright answered "I must say that I considered it an impertinence for you to send a letter as you did. I have

always regarded homosexuality as one form of perversion and I very much regret the progress on permissive lines that has taken place during the last few years".

He went on to say "I also take exception to the use of the word 'gay'. From time to time I feel that I am gay, but at no time queer. I have reason to believe that public opinion is on my side".

FACT MOST FAMILIES IN NOTTINGHAM FIND CO-OP MEMBERSHIP — PAYS —

SHOPS EVERYWHERE KEEN PRICES AND CO-OP STAMPS — JOIN NOW AND SAVE AS YOU SPEND

APPLICATION FORMS IN ALL SHOPS OR FROM: — GREATER NOTTINGHAM CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY, PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPT 14, BROAD STREET NOTTINGHAM. TEL: 46094



HOUSING CRISIS

BAD HOUSING CONDITIONS in Nottingham are getting worse. The waiting list has nearly doubled in the last year from 5,000 to 9,000 and there are still over 4,000 families to be rehoused from clearance areas.

In April the Tory city council cut 4,000 houses from their building programme. And they are trying to sell off 4,500 council houses over the next four years in addition to 1,000 already sold.

The private sector will only build 2,000 dwellings in the next four years - less than the number of unfit private dwellings to be cleared. Most of the houses to be cleared are rented but most of those to be built will be for sale.

The policy is good news for people with money to buy their houses. And very bad news for the majority who can only afford to rent.

SALE OF THE CENTURY

SALES of large numbers of council houses are continuing. 1468 houses were sold by the end of September, 762 of them to sitting tenants. Nearly 2,000 more are in the pipeline.

The Tories hope to sell over 5,000 council houses by 1981, only about half of them to sitting tenants. Many new houses are being sold at £5,000 less than it cost to build them.

The Tories claim they are making money by selling

houses. This is only true in the short term. A recent report by Nottingham Housing Action Group - "The Case Against the Council" - shows that after only five years they start to lose. This report will be presented to the District Auditor - the person who checks the council's accounts.

There were 1,435 council houses empty awaiting sale on 23rd September according to Housing chairman Charles Borrett.

NEW HOUSES SLASHED

SAVAGE CUTS were made in the council building programme by the Tories in April. They cut 3,700 houses which would have been built over the next five years.

Only 90 will be started this year according to figures given to the last Policy and Resources Committee. Completions will fall from 2,200 this year to 330 in two years time.

The 3,700 cut will be replaced by 1629 houses privately built for sale. Many of these houses would have been built anyway perhaps on sites outside the city.

Because of the change in policy hundreds of houses were deferred. According to

Labour leader John Carroll this included 718 houses which already had government approval.

The Tories have been claiming that Housing Associations will fill the gap in rented accommodation. But the Tories can not increase the number of houses which the Associations can build.

The council only intends to lend enough to Associations for them to complete 915 houses in the next five years. They would have lent this amount anyway. In the last two years of the Labour council Housing Associations completed 371 houses on money borrowed from the council.

BROKEN PROMISE

CLEARANCE would be increased by 1,032 families this year promised Tory leader Jack Green in May. This can not be done because there are not enough houses available.

The promise was quietly dropped at the July Policy and Resources Committee. A report on bringing forward the clearance programme carefully avoided giving any numbers.

This will cause serious problems in 1979 because there could be a backlog of 1,000 clearance families and only 330 new council houses to be completed in 1979/80.

The massive sale of council houses, especially relets, has caused severe hardship for many people in clearance areas who have been left for many months surrounded by tinned-up houses and all the rubbish, rats and vandalism which this attracts.

So much pressure built up against the council, mainly in

the Radford area, that 359 new houses in the area will now be made available for rent without being offered for sale first.

The Voice predicted in June that the Tories would have to give higher priority to clearance and a lower priority to sales. But they will have to climb down a lot more than this if they are to give clearance families a reasonable choice.

In particular, more relets will have to be made available.

So desperate are the Tories to rehouse people quickly that they have been sending out lists of the flats they can't get rid of to people in clearance areas. And because this is all that is offered many people have been taking them instead of waiting for three reasonable offers which they used to get under the last Labour council.

TORIES CAUSE HOMELESSNESS

9,192 PEOPLE were on the waiting list at the end of September, nearly double the figure of 5,001 a year ago.

Because of the lack of houses hardly anyone has been housed off the list in the last few months. There have also been very few transfers.

This is because clearance families get priority for the new houses which are not sold and there are hardly any left for anyone else.

There is supposed to be a policy of transferring families with young children out of high-rise flats. We do not know of any who have made it recently. But many such families are still being moved in!

There was a well-publicised case recently of an ex-soldier who had been on the armed forces list for eleven years. Normally he

would have got a house within a few days but because there were no houses he and his family were made homeless and had to go into hostel accommodation.

The Tory policy will make many more homeless in the next few years.

For the homeless, only three houses in a month were made available recently while there were 35 homeless families registered. This was revealed by Labour councillor Ben Allsop at the last City Council meeting.

To keep this number of families homeless in hostels or boarding houses costs the council over £50,000 a year according to figures given by Housing chairman Charles Borrett. He admitted each homeless family cost £30 to £40 a week.

MORE CUTS

VICIOUS CUTS in housing have been made by the Labour government over the last few years. And even though Nottingham is a "housing stress" area they have refused to stop the council selling houses which were built with large government subsidies for people who couldn't afford to buy.

They have even refused to only allow sales to sitting tenants which is all that was promised in the Tories' manifesto.

Now they have told the council they can spend only £2.2m on clearance in spite of being asked for permission to spend £4m - and that was the amount necessary before the Tories said they would speed up clearance. This is a serious restriction of which the government should be ashamed. They are being asked to think again.

Another government re-

striction is allowing only £22.7m on housebuilding instead of £27.3m needed. But because the building programme is well behind schedule some of this may not need to be paid until next year. And because the Tories are running down housebuilding that will not be a problem.

This would have been a savage cut of 20% in housebuilding by the government. But it is minute compared to the Tories' 90% cut in building within two years.

This didn't stop Tory leader Jack Green using it as an excuse recently when a government minister, Ernest Armstrong, demanded to know why the council had slashed its building programme while selling off large numbers of houses.

Green told Armstrong: "dissidents in the city have fed to you, through the offices of local Socialist MPs, some dubious information".

OPEN GOVERNMENT?

RECENTLY WE wrote to the City Council asking for some more information about house allocations and about council bailiffs using "distress warrants", without a court order, to seize goods of people owing rent arrears. We received this reply:

Dear Sir, While I am only too willing to respond to reasonable requests from members of the public to be supplied with information about the City Council's activities, it is another matter to expect the Council's officers to engage in lengthy and

QUESTION

1. How many people on the waiting list and transfer list have been housed in recent months?

2. How many relets have been given to families from clearance areas?

3. Which section of which Act allows distress warrants to be enforced without a Court Order?

4. Have you ever distrained on peoples goods without first obtaining a Court Order when they have arrears for mortgage or rates payments?

detailed research of the kind your requests require. I regret, therefore, that it is quite impossible for the Council to supply you with the detailed information requested in your letters as this would require a great deal of staff time, which is simply not available for this purpose.

Yours faithfully,
M.F. Hammond
Chief Executive.

We have decided to provide our own answers to a few of the questions:

ANSWER

"Hardly any because we don't have enough houses".

"Hardly any because we're selling them all".

"We don't know offhand - but it must be alright because landlords have always done this sort of thing".

"Of course not! What sort of people do you think we are?"

RATE PAYERS OWE £1m

VICIOUS Tory city councillor Philip Owen wants council tenants who are in arrears to be blacklisted and thrown out on to the streets. But he says nothing about ratepayers who are in arrears.

This shows his prejudice because ratepayers owe twice as much as council tenants - and they take six times as long to pay!

At the end of March rent arrears were £448,630 including £105,291 from former tenants. 10,298 current tenants owed an average of £33 each - about six weeks arrears.

But the latest figure for rates arrears at the end of September shows that £441,451 is still owing from last October or before - i.e. twelve months in arrears. And over £600,000 is owing from April this year.

In other words ratepayers owing over £1m are on average more than 35 weeks in arrears.

LOOKOUT

FLYPOSTING in the City Centre is a problem for the City Planning Officer.

He reported to the August Planning Committee that the main offenders are record advertisers who are experienced and produce very extensive displays.

They cannot be caught because they employ lookouts.

Only the amateurs concerned with charitable or political causes are vulnerable.

You have been warned - If you go flyposting use a lookout!

GYPSIES BEWARE

A PEST CONTROL firm won a contract with the City Council in July for "the removal of itinerant caravan dwellers". Their fee is £20 an hour.

The firm, J A Kent Services, say they are "essentially a Pest Control and Weed Control Contracting Company".

They also wanted to quote the Council for "sewer baiting".

Gypsies in the city had better be careful!

BUSINESS MOVES

TRADITIONAL areas of shopping in the City Centre have declined because of the development of the Victoria and Broad Marsh Centres.

Now businesses like Building Societies and Insurance Offices are wanting to move into shopping streets says a report by the City Planning Officer to the August Planning Committee.

The committee decided that only a few streets would be fully preserved for shopping. These are: the direct route from the Victoria Centre to the Broad Marsh Centre, the route from the Square to the Broad Marsh Centre, the north and west sides of the Square, King Street and the top end of Upper Parliament Street.

On almost all other streets changes to "non-retail uses" will normally be allowed.

TORY ATTACK

PHILIP OWEN, the nastiest Tory of them all on the City Council, has been at it again.

At the last Leisure Services Committee he launched a political attack on the Home Office-backed Community Relations Council - which is not noted locally for any revolutionary fervour in pressing the needs of the black community.

Owen lashed out at them because they had the nerve to display "left wing" posters. One backed the struggle of black people in Rhodesia for majority rule. And another backed the struggle against the CIA backed military dictatorship in Chile.

There are many Chilean

refugees in Nottingham who have fled from the threat of mass torture and massacre by the right wing regime in Chile.

Owen denounced them as left wing "thugs and cut-throats", completely ignoring the fact that it is the left wingers who are getting their throats cut in Chile.

This did not prevent Radio Nottingham, well known for its policy of "impartiality", from giving him time to air his obnoxious views. They did not offer the right of reply to any of the Chileans in Nottingham who fled from their country to escape death in the concentration camps.

WOMEN DEMAND

MORE REFUGES NOW

BATTERED WOMEN demand the right to control their own lives and an end to women's forced dependence on men. Battered women demand also money, housing and legal protection.

One of the main reasons women stay with violent men for so long is that they haven't the money to leave and set up on their own. Many battered women have to wait months, maybe years, before they are rehoused after a stay in a refuge.

Battered women demand that wife assault is dealt with in the same way as any other violent crime.

There are at present over 100 refuges affiliated to the National Women's Aid Federation. There is a need for over 1,000 refuges throughout England and Wales.

In Nottingham there is only one refuge and another refuge is desperately needed in the city. At the moment another local Women's Aid group is campaigning for a refuge in the Rushcliffe area.

WOMEN'S AID NEED AN ACTION WEEK EVERY WEEK OF THE YEAR IF WE ARE SERIOUSLY GOING TO FIGHT AGAINST BATTERING.

A WOMAN who is living in the Nottingham refuge explains what happened to her:-

"When I got married I did not know that my husband was a violent and jealous person. His previous wife divorced him because of physical and mental cruelty.

"Three weeks after the marriage I got my first beating. We were homeless. One evening he started to kick me all over and cut my eye and lips open.

"His violence carried on and later when he got to know that I was pregnant he kicked me very hard in my stomach. He wanted me to miscarry and I nearly did. I could not go to a doctor as he would not allow a male doctor to handle me.

"When I was six months pregnant I managed to find a woman doctor and started ante-natal clinics. As soon as the baby was born he was very jealous of it and wanted it adopted. With help from a social worker he changed his mind.

DRAGGED

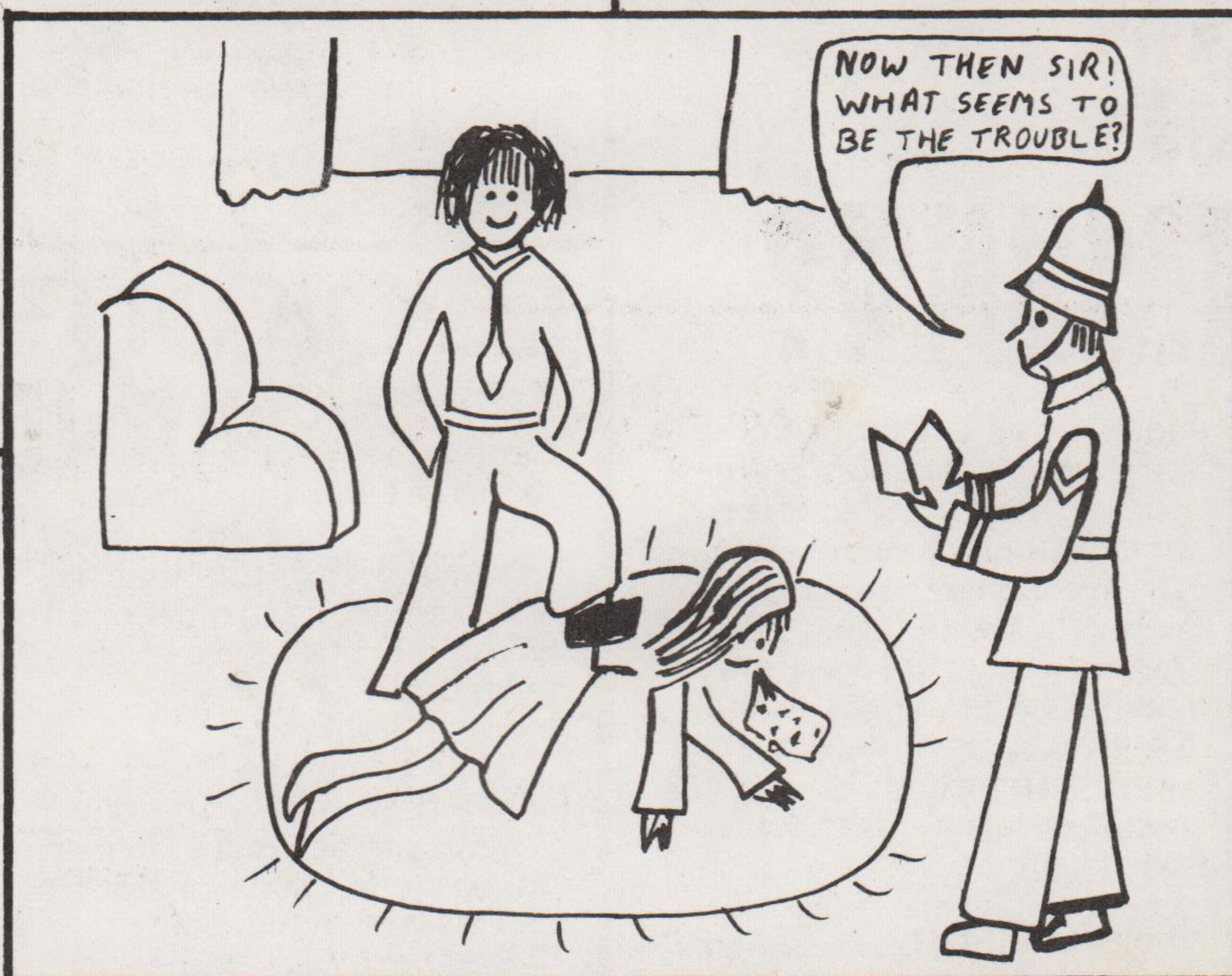
"Later on, I got pregnant again. This time he threw a gallon of paint at me and dragged me by my hair up the stairs. I started to bleed heavily from my womb.

"I had no treatment at all. We had moved away from the

WOMEN'S AID NEED MORE WOMEN TO STRENGTHEN THE CAMPAIGN.

Please contact: 411475 (afternoons).

(This article was written by NOTTINGHAM WOMEN'S AID)



'The other women have supported me'

area where the female doctor was. I could not go to any ante-natal clinics.

"The birth of the baby was extremely difficult. The baby had to have special care. I had had severe internal injuries from my husband, the medical staff said.

"The battering became worse and worse. He accused me of all sorts of things that were untrue. He kept a close eye on everything I did. Whenever I went out shopping he would time it and if I had been out for a few minutes too long he would hit me.

"I got really desperate and did not know what to do. I worried more about the child-

ren and what would happen to them.

Over 1,200 women and children marched through Birmingham on Saturday 24th September at the end of the week of action.

One of the women from the Nottingham refuge who went on the demonstration writes:-

I joined in the chant again and again saying "What do we want?" - "Refuges!" "When do we want them?" - "Now!"

The banners waved round me and the blasting out of our needs and grievances took my mind back over the last seven years.

SUBSERVIENT

During the past seven years I changed from being a free thinking person to becoming a subservient housewife. An invisible prison wall was built round me and I am still finding it diff-

icult to break out from it but I will do.

When marching through Birmingham I really felt that I was fighting back and soon the beatings will be just a memory.

My husband put me and my child through terrible mental cruelty. He told me that I had no rights whatsoever. He acted more like a child than an adult and was never able to help himself.

NO REFUGE

When I left him the first time there was no refuge in Nottingham. I got no help from the police or the social workers. I had to go home again following a lot of pressure.

He got even more cruel and I had next to no money or food to live on. My daughter and myself were both going through absolute hell just like somebody else must be doing right now.

This is why WE MUST HAVE MORE REFUGES NOW.

red and my ankles were swollen. An electric fire was thrown at me once and then I couldn't move my shoulder.

"I have no explanation at all for his violent behaviour. I only know what I suffered for over three years.

"One day he told me to get out. I grabbed the children, some nappies and a tin of soup. I was terrified that he would change his mind and follow me up the road.

"I finally got to social services but I was too scared to say anything at all. They put me in touch with the local refuge.

MORE CONFIDENT

"When I got settled in at the refuge the children became much less restless. They slept during the whole night without crying. That hadn't happened for months.

"I have been at the refuge for some time now. I feel much more confident in myself. The other women here have supported me.

"I feel I am well on the way towards establishing myself as a person again. I feel stronger and can begin to fight for my own and my children's rights.

"It will take a long, long time before I will stop feeling hatred and mistrust towards men".

IDIOT

"He told me I was an idiot, yet I tried to do everything I could for him. I used to think I was going mad but now I know that he should have had treatment or something.

"My face used to be black and blue and I had to wear sunglasses to hide it. The skin around my wrists was

Modern Third

FULL CREDIT to Nottingham Film Theatre for presenting "something for everyone" in their current season. The offerings range from such Hollywood products as 'Farewell my Lovely' to the very latest in Third World cinema.

Highlight of the programme is a series of films called "Challenge to Imperialism", screened on Friday nights at 7.30. These were made in such various countries as Brazil, Bolivia, Cuba, France and Senegal but are brought together by the fact that they deal with the effects of imperialism and colonialism on both the Third and First Worlds.

"EMITAI"(Oct 21st) by Ousmane Sembene is the story of a Senegalese village which refused to surrender part of its rice crop to the French Army during World War Two. Sembene is usually regarded as the foremost film director in Black Africa so this is a rare chance to see one of his best films.

World

Cinema

"THE BATTLE OF THE TEN MILLION"(Oct 28th) is a fascinating study of the attempt to raise the Cuban sugar harvest to 10 million tons per annum during the late sixties. The scheme failed; director Chris Marker shows why but still gives a sympathetic picture of Castro and the Cuban revolution.

"IRELAND BEHIND THE WIRE"(Nov 4th) is a bit nearer home - Northern Ireland. The film gives an impression of the role of the British army there from a Catholic viewpoint.

Arts

G-String Drama

BEDROOM FARCE

Nottingham Playhouse

ALAN AYCKBOURN writes plays you either love or hate. I hate them for their superficiality, their sexual innuendo, their trivial scratching of middleclass scabs. This is G-string drama: it promised everything but reveals nothing.

On the other hand his plays draw large audiences who laugh hugely at every joke . . . they love it.

With "Bedroom Farce" Ayckbourn at last enters that sacred territory mention-

ed but never shown in his previous plays - the bourgeois bedroom. Three bedrooms to be precise, filled - in various combinations - by four couples.

The play centres on the broken marriage of one of the couples and their subsequent reconciliations, but touches on the hidden frustrations of the others. Best performance is by Tim Pigott-Smith who seems to get most of the funny lines. As always the sets are excellent.

Go if you like light comedy.

Letters

TORIES BACK PLAYGROUND-CLAIM

Dear Editors,

The City Council Leisure Services Committee has been the target of a certain amount of criticism in the columns of Nottingham Voice during recent months particularly with regard to the attitude of the members of the committee towards Adventure Playgrounds. I am pleased to be able to pass on to Voice readers the glad tidings that at the September meeting of the Leisure Services Committee the members had nothing but praise for the St Ann's Adventure Playground following the presentation by the Playground of a comprehensive survey to the Leisure Services committee.

SURVEY

The survey is in three parts, the first of which was completed by six students from Trent Polytechnic under the guidance of Joan Matthews. The students interviewed the occupants of 450 houses in the immediate proximity of the Adventure Playground and found that 75% of the occupants were in favour of the project. One of the seven questions was, "Does the Adventure Playground

inconvenience you in any way, e.g. too noisy, an eyesore, not sufficiently organised, other?" Twelve of the 450 considered the Playground an inconvenience because it is not sufficiently organised and seven because it is an eyesore. Startlingly low figures. The survey team generally found that most people in the area were aware of the Adventure Playground and had something constructive to say about it. Many showed an interest and were keen to express an opinion about such a central issue.

REGISTER

The second part of the survey covers the numbers and ages of children using the Adventure Playground. A detailed register was maintained upon the Adventure Playground during January, April, June, July and August thus giving a fair indication of the Playground's usage during winter, spring and summer. During the five months a total of 1,102 different children visited the Playground at an average of 100 children per day. Almost all of the Playground children are aged between seven and fourteen and live within a one mile radius of the Playground.

The third part of the survey covered the activities which take place upon the Playground as evidenced in the daily Playground diary which is maintained by the full time play leaders. The activities included a wide variety of art and craft work, quiet games, woodwork, indoor sports, the construction of outdoor play structures, gardening, a wide variety of outdoor games, fund raising and many and various others.

SUCCESS

Those of us involved closely with the Playground were delighted with the results of all three parts of the survey as were the members of the Leisure Services committee. Councillor Mrs Margaret Crowe and Councillor Philip Owen, both of whom were involved in setting up the survey, both praised it in generous terms and both said that in their view the survey showed that the Playground was an outstanding success. Other members of the committee spoke in support, thanked the Association for completing the survey and no dissenting voices were to be heard.

INFORMATION

Should any Nottingham Voice readers be interested in the survey and wish a copy of it they should write to the address given below, enclosing a large stamped addressed envelope. Further details about the Playground itself can also be obtained from the same address.

Michael Morris, Chairman, St Ann's Adventure Playground Association, 222 Bluebell Hill Road, St Ann's, Nottingham.

(Eds: The same Leisure Services meeting decided not to back any more adventure playgrounds "until the success of the present ventures can be assessed.")

LETTING OFF STEAM

THE VOICE welcomes letters from readers, and will do its best to publish all those received. Obviously, short letters are more likely to be included than long ones. Letters must be signed and have a contact address but this information will not be published if requested.

FOUR HUNDRED and five new nursery school places were axed by the County Tories in July. Only 16 new places will be provided this year in the whole of the county.

Almost all of the places would have used empty classrooms in primary schools caused by the falling birthrate.

When the Tories went out of office four years ago, the County had one of the worst records in the country for nursery places. Labour had made some steps to improve this but there is still a crying need for thousands more places.

Now the Tories seem determined to put the clock back. They will save less than £70,000 a year in running costs and debt charges.

The local branch of the National Union of Teachers is organising a "Defend nursery education" campaign, which includes a stall in the Victoria Centre on Oct 22nd.

This is part of a "National Education Week" promoted by the Campaign for Educational Advance.

Tories bring back death to centre

BRING BACK LIFE to the city centre has been the cry of local Tories on the City and County Councils. The way to do this they say is to allow as many cars as possible to drive round and round the centre looking for parking spaces.

The Chief Constable disagrees. He wrote: "I like the idea of a traffic-free central core - in fact if anything we have not gone far enough in taking traffic out of the centre. I should feel considerable regret if the progress which has been carried out over recent years were now to be reversed."

Because of the Chief Constable's "concern", the County Director of Planning and Transportation refused to back a request from the City Council to make it easier for cars to drive round the centre.

But the Chief Constable lost on the question of more parking spaces even though he turned up in person to oppose this at an Environment Committee meeting.

The committee agreed to provide 68 more parking spaces though a report said this would mean an extra 2,000 vehicles a day round the Market Square "together with associated additional pedestrian/vehicle conflicts".

A police report said that increased parking would cause more accidents, more work for traffic wardens, more difficulties for goods vehicles making deliveries, delays for emergency vehicles and problems for disabled drivers.

The police report also said that since the scheme was only brought in after widespread public consultation it should not be changed without asking the public again.

The Tories completely ignored this advice.

TORY TRANSPORT AXE

CONGRATULATIONS to the Tories for the hatchet job they carried out on the Notts County Council transport programme - over £9 million lopped off the old Labour figure of £66 millions for the year 1978-79.

The Tory axe cuts down on such obviously unnecessary luxuries as "road safety education and remedial measures", "bus shelters" and "school crossing patrols". However, with precious little regard for consistency, they manage to increase expenditure on major road schemes by 11.4%.

Worst hit of all is support for bus services, cut by £6.5 million to a level only 30% of that allocated by the previous Labour council. This Tory contempt for

public needs means:

1. reducing peak-hour bus services by removing 87 buses.
2. ending support for the much-loved and much-used 77 and 88 services (criticised even by the Conservative Group on the City Council).
3. reducing the number of Saturday Park and Ride sites.
4. reducing subsidies to Trent, Barton, etc., meaning higher fares and poorer services.

In their indecent haste to push these cuts through, the Tories have not even allowed the full County Council to debate or approve these changes. But then, lack of consultation (except with supporters) is the hallmark of Tory policy as West Bridgford and Meadows bus users have recently become aware.

23,000 jobs needed

IRONICALLY, the County Council are considering trying to alleviate unemployment in Nottinghamshire - unemployment which cuts in their own expenditure are helping to create.

An officer's report on "Unemployment in the County" was presented to the October meeting of the Accounts and Review Committee.

IMPOSSIBLE

The report is honest, at least. "Over the next four years we believe it is impossible, however hard we try, for the local economy to meet the demand for jobs."

23,000 extra jobs are needed to bring the unemployment rate in the County down to 3% by 1981. The chances of achieving this target are virtually non-existent.

RAGBAG

To try to deal with the problem, the County's officers proposed a ragbag of job creation schemes, increased assistance to business, early retirement policies and such like.

Probably the most significant is the provision of advance factory accommodation which might help create a meagre 300 to 400 jobs.

The effects of the other proposals, like assistance to business, are not quantified but probably do not amount to much. Meanwhile, the County Council's building programmes will employ 450 fewer workers by 1979/80 and cuts in buses and road building will put a further 350 people out of work.

POLITICAL

The only really valuable speech at the committee came from Chief Executive Ray O'Brien. He asked that his speech should not be seen as political but he then made out a case for socialist planning and an end to public spending cuts.

This was a remarkable achievement for a man in charge of a Tory Council. He will surely be missed when he moves to Liverpool next year.

He said it was a tragedy

that this country did not have any employment policy to speak of. This had often led to contradictory and idiotic policies.

It was "fine" for every industry and council to make decisions good for itself, he said, but this just increased social problems.

TRAGIC

And he said it is tragic that the results of policies

are financially quantifiable while social factors are forgotten. He gave the closure of Chilwell Ordnance Depot as an example where only the defence budget had been looked at and not the whole picture.

He said cuts in public expenditure are "fine" but because the country won't accept two million unemployed local government is expected to create jobs.

This often means that high

priority schemes go by the board, he said, while low priority schemes are used to create jobs.

He attacked delays caused by bureaucracy saying that a scheme for refurbishing schools had been delayed several months.

It is "vital to develop one policy corporately", he concluded. He wanted everyone to work together instead of different bodies each looking at their own small bits.

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Information unit for trades unionists?

AN INFORMATION UNIT for trades unionists should be set up in Nottingham say a local group. As well as doing local research such a unit could be a resource centre for trades unionists and publish regular bulletins on national and local issues.

Most of the people in the group which has suggested the idea are involved in other issues like housing and community facilities. But they feel there is a need to extend their work to cover problems in workplaces. A report they have prepared has been distributed by the local Trades Council to over 300 local union branches.

RESERVATION

But there was reservation from some unionists when the idea was discussed at the September Trades Council meeting. A letter from Bob Jones, divisional organiser of NUPE, the public employees union, was read out.

He wanted to know why the move had come from a "self-appointed steering group" outside the recognised trades union movement. And he was worried that some political group could be behind the idea. He wanted the Trades Council to investigate.

Julian Atkinson (NATFHE - further education teachers union) said this was a negative and over-cautious response. The group were only floating the idea to provoke a discussion by the unions.

MORE FUNDS

John Peck (vice-chairman) said that Bob Jones was right to be cautious. But he said Trades Councils didn't have the resources they needed as unifying bodies. He wanted the movement to provide more funds for a strongly based Trades Council. And he wanted anything like an information unit under the control of the Trades Council.

Harry Loach (UCATT - construction workers union) said it reflected on the lack of initiative in the trades union movement and the movement would suffer for it. A unit was inevitable in the not too distant future, he said.

Brian Simister (vice-president) objected to suggestions that the movement was being by-passed since the idea had been put through the Trades Council. He wanted some people from the steering

group invited to thrash out the idea.

INDICTMENT

Vernon Gapper (assistant secretary) said that as a union official he was more than aware of the need for such a unit. And he said that it was an indictment of the trade union movement as a whole that unions haven't the necessary research workers. Often he had to do his own research and this was a hard task.

"Are we afraid" to join with even spurious groups? he asked. "There are more of us than there are of them". He said they should go to a meeting called by the steering

group to air their views and help get the project off the ground.

Delegates accepted a proposal by chairman Don Devine that the matter be referred to the Executive Committee and more information be sought from the TUC.

Bob Jones spoke to the Voice later and said that the idea of an information unit would perhaps be useful. But it should be quite clearly done by the TUC through its regional machinery linked to the Trades Council, he thought. He added that there was scope for more to be done to pull together information.

The steering group has already visited a trade union information centre at Coventry and will be visiting another in Newcastle. They will then be calling a meeting to set up a more formal structure before applying to various bodies for funds.

CO-OP SPEAKER

THE CO-OP should be increasing profits to give members and their workers a better deal, Frank Doherty, a Co-op executive, told the September Trades Council. He was possibly the first speaker to arrive at the Trades Council in a chauffeur driven limousine but he was warmly applauded at the end of his speech.

Mr Doherty was speaking on the problems of the co-operative movement. He complained that the movement did too much talking and spent too long on doctrinal issues.

REDUCTION

He reported that this year there had been a reduction in the volume of food sold, affecting all shops not just the Co-ops. And there has been a move to cheaper foods. This followed a drop in sales of goods like colour televisions and washing machines. Recently there has been a big drop nationally in sales of wines, spirits and cigarettes - the last things to fall in a recession according to Mr Doherty.

He complained that hypermarkets were being built by concerns which have no base in an area and they are creaming off the profitable trade.

But he said the Co-op has more superstores than anyone else in the country. One is being developed at Bulwell but another had been turned down at Trowell.

Mr Doherty said that because the Co-ops have not been outstandingly successful the principle of the Co-operative movement started to fall.

The main question is, he said, are people better off as a result of having the Co-op "or should we give the money back to the members and leave it to Tesco and Asda?"

SERVICE

During discussion time one Trades Council delegate said that they shouldn't just look at profitability but should look at the Co-op as a service to the working class. Another said that the Co-op hadn't expanded its cultural, social and educational activities into suburban areas along with their shops. And it was said that Top Valley had been campaigning for three years to get a Co-op without success.

One delegate said that the Co-op should be pushed as one of the three wings of the Labour movement. People should feel like a blackleg or a scab if they shop elsewhere, he added.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Bosses want more money

"AVERAGE RATES of pay for manual workers in the East Midlands are lower than in any other part of the British Isles". This is claimed by the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce, who say that the figures include Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Since they are the employers who are paying these atrocious wages, what do they intend to do about it?

Their answer is to ask the government to give them more money in regional aid handouts. Secretary Ronald Walton claims that of a total £63.1m granted for this aid the East Midlands got only £78,000, though he wasn't able to tell us exactly where these figures came from.

Will any of this extra money go to the workers? Of course not - "It is vital that intervals of at least 12 months between pay awards should continue and that settlements should not exceed the 10% limit", they say.

The Chamber goes on to call for strict controls over public expenditure, saying that "the Government should make this perfectly clear to those monopoly trade unions in the public sector".

Well, what about price controls? Ronald Walton told us: "We do not believe prices can be artificially controlled by the government".

NOTTINGHAM PEOPLE'S CENTRE

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meaningful ongoing negotiation situation

THE LONG RUNNING saga of who should carry out emergency duties in City Social Service offices continues.....

Social work staff have long been unhappy at having to carry out these compulsory duties, especially as the pay for them is so derisory - about 15p per hour, after stoppages.

During the summer the social workers decided not to carry out the duties after the beginning of August. The result was that the management and NALGO hastily negotiated a new agreement.

Under the agreement duty becomes voluntary for senior social workers, and their payment rises to £2.45 per hour for both evening and weekend work.

Weekend duty also becomes voluntary for ordinary social

workers, who will be paid £1.80 per hour (plus 15% unsocial hours and 5% pay supplements). However, evening duties remain compulsory and, to add insult to injury, will only be paid at the old rate of 15p per hour.

Even if County Hall manages to recruit special emergency teams - the last attempt foundered because no unsocial hours payment was offered - they will not be able to cover all evenings and weekends. Social workers will continue to be used as cheap labour.

Meanwhile, back at County Hall, NALGO are still pursuing 'meaningful negotiations'they'd better get a move on because many of their social worker members are now thinking of joining other unions such as ASTMS or NUPE.

bakers compromise

NO-ONE can pretend that the bakery workers won their two week strike in September. They wanted an end to bank holiday working which they say is unnecessary because bread can be baked on the previous day and kept in cold storage.

All they won was an agreement that in future bank holiday arrangements will be subject to "mutual agreement" between management and unions locally.

The Bakers Federation also paid £100,000 to workers who lost bank holiday payments because they refused to work. But this wasn't before they spent £40,000 on anti-union adverts in five national daily papers including the Sun and the Mirror.

Mike Winfield, District Secretary of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union, described claims in the adverts over pay as ridiculous. He told us that payment for a basic 5 day 40 hour week is £28.50 plus £10.40 supplements

and overtime is based on 71.25p per hour. Shift workers get 20% extra.

He said workers would have to work over 80 hours to get £70 - the figure in the adverts.

650 workers at the Homepride factory at Watnall were amongst the first in the country to go on strike. After the union made the strike official they were joined by 350 workers at the Sunblest factory on Hucknall Road and 600 at Landers in Mansfield.

The big bakeries used the strike as an excuse to put up their prices. And, according to local reports, many people who tasted "real" bread during the strike are now refusing to go back to the plastic rubbish turned out by the "big three".

* Homepride is owned by Spillers French Baking, Sunblest is owned by Associated British Foods and Landers is owned by Rank Hovis McDougall. Profits of these big three bakeries increased by 25% last year.

NOTTINGHAM VOICE is printed and published at 33 Mansfield Road, Nottingham (Tel 411676).

Please contact us with any information you would like to see in the next issue. This will appear in the second week of November.

Deadline for contributions, letters, adverts etc is Oct 31st. There will be an open meeting at 7pm on Wed Oct 26th at the People's Centre, 33 Mansfield Road to discuss the content of the next issue and the general policy of the

paper. There will be another meeting at the same address to discuss the production of the next issue at 7pm, Wed 2nd Nov. All readers are invited to attend.

The editors would like to deny that they are receiving any financial support from councillor Philip Owen.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: £2 for 12 issues, including postage.

ADVERTISING: £12 per page, £6 per half page etc. Small ads 2p per word.

NOTTINGHAM FILM THEATRE

In association with John Player & Sons, the British Film Institute and the East Midlands Arts

at the Co-operative Educational Centre, Broad Street, Nottingham.

Ireland behind the Wire (X) GT. BRITAIN

Berwick Street Collective

Friday November 4th

A Walk with Love and Death (AA) USA

Directed by John Huston
with Angelica Huston, Assaf Dyan

Saturday November 5th, Sunday November 6th

Battle of Chile (X) CHILE/CUBA

Directed by Patricio Guzman

Friday November 11th at 6.45 pm

How Yukon moved the Mountains (A)

FRANCE/CHINA

Pt 1. The Pharmacy, An Army Camp

Saturday November 12th at 4.30 and 7.45 pm

Pt 2. The Oilfields, Impressions of a City

Sunday November 13th at 4.30 and 7.45 pm

Barefoot in the Park (A) USA

Directed by Gene Saks
with Robert Redford, Jane Fonda

Saturday November 19th, Sunday November 20th

Minamata (A) JAPAN

Directed by Noriaki Tsuchimoto

Friday November 18th

Seats: Members 50p; Non-members 60p

Student Members 45p

Friday 7.30 p.m., Saturday & Sunday 5 & 8 p.m. unless otherwise stated

DEMAND FOR UNION RECOGNITION

PICKETS FIGHT ON

MASS PICKETTING is continuing at the small Langley Mill firm of E H Architectural Products.

Nottingham Trades Council has offered the strikers help from their £1,500 disputes fund.

The dispute over union recognition started in February. Ten weeks ago members of the Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union went on strike and were immediately dismissed by the firm.

SERIOUSLY

The union is taking the matter very seriously. They have put their Assistant General Secretary Eric Goodall onto the case full time. That is in addition to local union officials George Hickling and Charlie Stevens.

Shop Steward Dennis Paine told us that this followed a meeting which he and George Hickling had with their General Secretary Ben Rubner in London. Rubner told them that it was of paramount importance that they win because if they didn't two thousand union members locally could tear up their membership cards.

BLACKING

Dennis Paine said the union was concentrating on traditional strike blacking but they were also pursuing legal action. He said that pickets had stopped all supplies going in except what the management was taking.

Electricity Board workers have refused to connect a new factory and pickets have warned that they will black anyone who rents or buys the factory from E H Architectural.

Other unions have been asked to co-operate to prevent finished goods leaving. Members of the public employees union NUPE at a school in Heanor have agreed to refuse a delivery of desks.

MORE UNIONS

At the last mass picket on October 5th Nottingham

Official thrown out

The dispute started because non-union members were being given more overtime than union members. When union official George Hickling asked the management to discuss the matter he was thrown out.

That was in February. The union asked ACAS in. By July ACAS had made no real movement so union members went on strike.

Dennis Paine said there were also problems with safety. This was particularly bad with regard to young untrained persons. They were often told to work on unguarded saws and other machinery. There was a lack of proper training for them and they were treated very badly.

George Hickling said the Health and Safety at Work Act was being ignored. The workers wanted things like unguarded machinery to be put right.

Trades Council vice-president Brian Simister told a factory gate meeting that they had got a better response than at the first mass picket because more unions were getting involved.

But he wanted more support from the large unions like the miners' union and the Transport and General.

He warned that if the strikers were defeated many employers in the area would refuse to recognise unions and it would be a great dis-



Shop steward Dennis Paine (white cardigan) talks to Pradit Patel from Grunwick.

STRIKE RISK

A DELEGATION from the Grunwick strike in London recently visited the picket line at E H Architectural Products.

In both disputes workers went on strike for union recognition and were immediately sacked. And in both cases an industrial tribunal could not consider claims for unfair dismissal because a loophole in the law excludes the dismissal of strikers.

CHALLENGE

Pradit Patel later spoke at a public meeting in Nottingham saying that Grunwick managing director George Ward was not just a challenge to the Grunwick strikers but to every trades unionist in the

couragement to other workers, particularly those in small firms.

George Hickling announced that mass picketting would continue once a fortnight. He told the pickets that a report by ACAS, the government conciliation body, was expected shortly. He thought it would find in their favour.

country.

He said the Post Office workers blacking had hit Ward very hard. But this had been lifted for a while because Ward said he would co-operate with ACAS, the government conciliation body.

The strikers wanted government backing so they could set up Grunwick as a co-operative.

At the same meeting Charlie Stevens from the furniture trade union spoke about the E H Architectural dispute. He said "If we lose at E&H it will be very risky for small groups of workers to go on strike". If there were only 50 or 60 workers in a factory who weren't very skilled they could easily be dismissed if they went on strike, he added.

MASS PICKETTING restarts at Grunwick on Monday 17th October. Coaches leave Salutation, Maid Marian Way, at 3am.

The next mass picket at E H Architectural is at 7am on Wednesday 19th October at East View Terrace, off North Street, Langley Mill.