

# Nottingham Voice

## NO INVESTIGATION - CLAIM



GALLAGHER



O'BRIEN



WRIGHT

## Three Wise Men

"IF YOU PUT ANYTHING in print we will take court action", said Michael Gallagher when we asked him about a secret County Council investigation into the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS).

Gallagher is Labour group leader. He joined with Tory group leader Peter Wright and Chief Executive Ray O'Brien in a "discussion" with CVS officers.

Amongst other things they discussed the support given by CVS to the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE). According to Gallagher it was suggested that perhaps the CVS had not got its priorities right.

That must have been very worrying for CVS - they depend on a grant of around £20,000 a year from the County Council.

We have been unable to establish whether any threat was made to reduce this grant if the CVS continued to support CHE.

In the end it was agreed

that the CVS had the right to decide who to support. But Gallagher said that as a result of the meeting some recommendation may be made concerning future grants.

This sort of meeting is highly unusual. The County Council declined to tell us the last time that both group leaders and the Chief Executive were involved in such an investigation.

### NOT INFORMED

Social Services chairperson Brenda Borrett told us that she was not even informed that the meeting was taking place. This was in spite of the fact that it is her committee which decides on grants to CVS. She confirmed that the usual meetings

between CVS officers and her department had been taking place as normal.

She gave her word that no investigation of CVS was being made by her department and no pressure was being put on CVS by her or through her.

### WHOSE AUTHORITY?

So on whose authority was the meeting arranged? We have been unable to find out. Gallagher said Wright initiated it in his capacity as chairperson of the Policy Committee. He seemed to think (wrongly in our view) that it was this committee which made decisions on grants to voluntary groups. Gallagher said he was invited as a "courtesy" and went as leader of the Labour group.

This is even though the Labour group was refusing to co-operate with the Policy Committee at that

time.

Everyone seems to be denying everything. Ron Collier, general secretary of the CVS, who was at the meeting said that he could not comment. But he did say that there was no question of them disaffiliating CHE.

John Pendleton, chairperson of CVS, made a joint statement with the County Council "deploring and denying any reference to this discussion as being an 'investigation'" and "expressing serious concern that some account of the meeting has been given to a publication such as 'Nottingham Voice'". He even said that the CVS representatives "welcomed both the fact and content of the meeting".

### DISASSOCIATE

The East Nottingham Labour party is taking a different view. The matter is to be discussed at their December meeting when the County Labour group is to be asked to disassociate itself from attacks on CHE.

At their November meeting Gallagher was the guest speaker and faced a barrage of questions on the subject. Asked whether any threats had been made to cut the CVS grant he hedged for some time before eventually denying it.

### VERY DIFFICULT

But what exactly is the involvement of CVS with CHE?

CHE runs a gay switchboard and befriending service from CVS premises two evenings a week. Members sit at the end of a telephone ready to talk to anyone who phones with problems.

Richard Webster, convenor of the Nottingham CHE group, told us that it would be very difficult for them to operate if they were not allowed to

**REVOLUTION  
IN TOP  
VALLEY?  
page 3**

**FIGHT  
YOUR WAY  
THROUGH 1977  
page 10**

**PLESSEY-  
CALM BEFORE  
THE STORM  
page 12**

**REVOLUTION  
IN NOTTS  
(1817)  
page 14**



use CVS premises. They mainly deal with problems of social isolation, he said. A lot of gay people are totally isolated and are pretty miserable, often being scared of being found to be gay. Sometimes people are in a virtually suicidal state, he said.

In befriending these people we are doing a job which the Samaritans can't do, he added.

Mr Webster said it seemed extraordinary that the leaders of the Labour and Tory groups should get together and overturn the policy of the previous Labour group which was supportive.

## CHRISTIAN

Former Labour leader Dick Wilson told the Voice that he had supported a policy of non-discrimination against homosexuals which was adopted in February and is still County Council policy.

He said that as far as he was concerned CHE was basically about civil rights and had his full support in that respect. He described their befriending service as an act of common humanity and christian charity (Wilson is a committed Catholic as are Wright, Gallagher and O'Brien).

Also mentioned at their meeting with CVS was Off the Record which uses the CVS premises for a youth counselling service. A similar organisation in Mansfield run by the County Council was closed down by Gallagher when he was chairperson of Leisure Services.

He told the Voice that he was concerned about "anonymous" advice. He didn't think that schoolteachers and social workers (the sort of people involved in the Mansfield service, he said) were qualified to counsel people on such things as pregnancy. He said that people could have gone elsewhere for the advice given.

Ron Scott from Nottingham Off the Record told us that pregnancy advice was only a small part of their work. He said they had a four stage selection procedure for counsellors and a continuous training programme.

At the CVS meeting questions were even asked about the People's Centre which rents premises from CVS and Nottingham Voice which does some printing for CVS. Neither group gets any support from CVS. (shame! - Eds)

## COINCIDENCE

By a coincidence, at the same time that the County Council was leaning on the CVS the Evening Post suddenly stopped putting in an advert for the CHE gay befriending service. This had been going in twice a week for over a year.

Post Managing Director Pole-Carew wrote to CHE explaining that he had taken the advert out personally as a "balanced business judgment". Some subjects, of which homosexuality was one, were offensive to a significant number of readers, he claimed. But he didn't answer a CHE question as to how many complaints had been received.

Pole-Carew went on to say that he also withdrew the advert for a strictly personal reason - he does not approve of homosexuality and "disapproves most violently of the current drift to decadence".

He did not say whether he approved of his paper taking over £100 from CHE over the past year!

CHE has written to him asking for a meeting. They hope to be able to convince him that befriending lonely homosexuals is a humanitarian act and nothing to do with any drift to decadence.

\*CHE gay switchboard, Mon & Thurs, 7-10pm, 46881.

# Secret details

SECRET PERSONAL details are kept by the City Housing Department on everyone on their waiting lists.

This has been revealed by the local Housing Action Group in their paper which is distributed free to 10,000 council tenants.

The details are shown in a twelve letter code given to applicants. The key to the code has been published by the Group and distributed to tenants' associations. It is very detailed and runs to four pages.

The code shows whether you

are Asian, West Indian, or white, whether you are a problem family, size of family, income, as well as other details such as type and size of property.

The Group is demanding to know why such details are recorded without telling people.

For a copy send sae to 2 Willoughby Street.

Also featured in Housing Action is the new get-tough policy of the City Council over rent arrears. they are now demanding immediate payment unless proof of poverty can be given.

Even agreements to pay by instalments have been cancelled unilaterally - not the way that good Tory gentlemen should behave, surely?

Tenants who can't pay are threatened with the bailiff. As Housing Action says, the bailiff can take almost anything if you are only one day in arrears. For council tenants no court order is necessary. Even goods on hire purchase can be taken and sold by the bailiff.

Is it all part of a plot to frighten council tenants away?

## Children's rights

IN THE LAST Voice we reported on the problems caused by the County Council in closing two small children's homes for economic reasons and putting the children and staff into a larger building.

So it was interesting to read a few days later in the Observer about how a similar case was prevented in Worcester.

Two councillors threatened to sue the authority under the 1975 Children Act if a small children's home was closed. They said it would infringe the children's rights.

The authority backed down.

## Council dodges Act

SEVENTY-THREE council tenants will have become homeless "intentionally" if they are evicted for rent arrears by the city council.

This was decided by a housing sub-committee in November. The committee

gave the go-ahead for evicting 74 tenants if they don't keep up with agreed payments.

And "for the purposes of the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977" all but one would be regarded as having become homeless intentionally, they went on.

What this means is that the council only has to find somewhere temporarily for them. They can legally dodge their duty under the Act to find permanent accommodation for homeless families. They have said that people will be given only six weeks to find somewhere else.

"The Act seems to have made things worse", said a local social worker, "it's going to be pretty grim."

The Government's Code of Guidance on the Act says "The numbers of those to be regarded as having become homeless intentionally are expected to be small".

The Voice will be writing to the Government asking them to send the committee a copy of this Code as a matter of urgency.

## Sneinton participation

"LET US HOPE the council does not rue the day it mobilised local feeling", we said in May in a report on Sneinton - the council had encouraged local people to oppose the plans of a Trust to develop Belvoir Hill and the old windmill.

So it will come as no surprise to Voice readers to hear that the Sneinton Environmental Society has since been at odds with council policy.

Now they have produced their own plan for Sneinton.

And in the foreword they complain of the shabby treatment they have got from the City Council. They say that they had taken consultations

with the planners seriously.

One of the questions asked by the planners was "What are your views on the use of the vacant or soon to become vacant sites?" Many thoughtful proposals were made including playspace and council housing.

But behind their backs the council had already offered many sites to builders.

The residents weren't even listened to before the decision was made to have private development everywhere.

As someone wrote in France in 1968: I participate, you participate, we participate, . . . they profit.

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

Please contact us with any information you would like to see in the next issue. This will appear on Feb 8th. Deadline for contributions, ads etc Jan 30th.

Voice editors are to be found in the Peacock Hotel, Mansfield Road on Wednesdays from 12.30pm onwards. Readers are invited to join us.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: £2 for 12 issues, including postage.



# Top Valley Revolution?

TOP VALLEY may seem an unlikely spot for the revolution to occur.

Nevertheless the local media's ceaseless quest for news recently threw up such headlines as "Militants take over Top Valley Community Council".

Our story begins at the AGM of Top Valley Community Council held on November 25th - when it renamed itself the Top Valley Community Association. Originally formed as an umbrella organisation for local youth club, lunch club, care group, etc, the name change reflected the desire to run the new "community point" (a hut donated by Woolco and controlled by the City Leisure Services).

## WALK-OUT

At the meeting existing chairman Don Devine lost a close vote and was replaced by Mick Wood (who is also chairman of the Top Valley Tenants and Residents Association whose march against rent increases was featured in Voice 71). Devine and

about four other officers walked out taking the books with them.

Perhaps this was because they were angered by an article in "Action", the broadsheet of the Tenants and Residents Association.

## SLUSH-FUND

Under the heading "Slush Fund" the article dealt with a "social evening" held by the old Community Council earlier in November to which city councillors and officers were invited.

It was claimed that the evening cost the Community Council around £100. They even brought out disco equipment which the city council had banned the youth club from using!

Anyway, three days after the AGM one of the officers who walked out, Dave Buckley, formed his own Top Valley and areas Community Association (note the subtle difference) and put out a press release complaining of a takeover by "militants".

He also deposited the £1,000 or so funds of the old Community Council (which he had refused to hand over to the new officers) with the City Leisure Services. They put it in the bank and then, of course, couldn't work out who to hand it back to.

This money was largely grants from County Social Services for the youth club, care group, etc. Because this was no longer available the Tenants Association had to donate money from a jumble sale to allow a children's Christmas party to go ahead.

## MACHINATIONS

Then machinations started behind the scenes. City councillor George Small held discussions with the two "community associations" and eventually chaired a joint meeting on December 9th.

Unfortunately Small proposed that both groups "disband henceforth" and join to form yet another new body.

We can't discuss this until we go back to the membership,

said chairman Wood. We thought it was a discussion meeting not a decision making meeting, he said.

Many of Buckley's former colleagues on the Community Council called on him to explain why he had walked out of the AGM but he refused to give any reason.

## VALID ELECTIONS

A representative of the Social Services Department said they had come to the conclusion that the elections at the AGM had been valid and they would recognise Wood and the other new officers.

It was eventually decided to hold a public meeting on December 15th to try and sort it out.

Meanwhile Leisure Services still had the £1,000 - money which they had no right to lay their hands on.

"It's an embarrassment", said Cyril Swift, chairman of Leisure Services. "The quicker I can get rid of this money the better I shall like it".

## Man with an iron mask

SUPERSLEUTH George Howe, Chairman of the Public Services Committee, is not only a great detective but a difficult man to talk to. The demanding task of controlling the rat population at the Victoria Market has turned him into something of a recluse and master of disguise. The last meeting of the Public Services Committee heard the Ratman, as he is affectionately called, say he would be swooping on the market to discover the extent of the rat takeover. He then warned the press not to report this as he wanted to catch the rats unawares.

## THANKLESS

On trying to confirm whether he had much luck in his thankless and valiant attempt we came up against a wall of silence. The Ratman was not able to answer the phone and his secretary was remaining very tight-lipped about the whereabouts of her boss.

Hearts were heavy in the Voice at the prospect that

George had been injured in some way. Rumours were circulating the Guildhall that he was scarred for life and ventured out only at night with an iron mask to cover the dreadful mutilations.

## IMMIGRANTS

For his valiant tasks he receives no praise and the City only coughs up £1800 for the eradication of the monsters. However, it has now been confirmed that the rats do not come from Nottingham originally but have come over the border from Derbyshire - in fact so good are the pickings at the City market that rats from all over the country are to be seen scurrying to the new rat temple.

The word is out that the national executive of Rats Inc has put out a contract on the Ratman and that the days of seeing our mackintoshes 'tec walking the corridors of power in the Guildhall are numbered.

## Bright Christmas

RATEPAYERS will be pleased to learn that the generosity of the city council knows no bounds where Christmas is concerned.

The budget for a Christmas tree in the Square and street illuminations was increased by the October Finance Committee by over 140%. The original budget of £5,500 was increased by £7,900 to £13,400 though this will be partly offset by traders' contributions of about £2,500.

The reason given for this extra is "inflation of wages, plant and materials together with overheads".

Obviously council workers should claim their 140% wage increase before Christmas!

## Less police

CRIMINALS and dangerous drivers will be pleased to hear that the number of police officers in the county is continuing to fall.

At the end of September the police force was 84 officers below strength, as well as being short of 100 cadets, 32 traffic wardens and 54 civilians.

## ABC Defence

THREE PEOPLE spent an evening talking together last February. Each of them could now go to prison for 14 years.

The reason is that they are accused of breaking the Official Secrets Act by receiving or communicating secret information about military communications.

The Official Secrets Act was condemned several years ago by the Franks Committee as being too draconian. Ironically, one of the members of the Committee was a certain Merlyn Rees - the very man who, as Home Secretary, has authorised the present prosecution.

Of the three defendants one, John Berry, is an ex-soldier who became a social worker. The other two, Crispin Aubrey and Duncan Campbell, are journalists. They join Philip Agee and Mark Hosenball as pressmen who have been prevented from publishing embarrassing information.

The Nottingham ABC Defence Group, which is affiliated to the national ABC Defence Committee, is organising a campaign against the charges and their implications. Contact them at Mushroom, 10 Heathcote St., Nottingham. Tel 582506 (messages only)



# SUTTON INQUIRY

**MOST TEACHERS** at Sutton Centre school are refusing to co-operate with a County Council inquiry. One reason is that the inquiry is illegal because it does not conform to the 1944 Education Act.

The main concern seems to be that teachers have seen fit to discuss swearing as part of a course for adolescents. Why do people swear? they have been asking, and why does it cause offence?

The idea has certainly caused offence to some parents. So they naturally went to see Ray O'Brien, County Chief Executive. And he, of course, took up

their case. What a fine man he is, to jump so readily to defend the public morals. What a loss it will be to the County when he moves to Liverpool shortly.

It seems that other serious questions were raised such as the noise made by children coming out of the school. Questions were even raised concerning the private morality of some of the staff.

Obviously a case for an inquiry by councillors, said the County Council.

Wrong, said the NUT - the main teachers union. They pointed out that an inquiry had to be made by properly appointed inspectors. And they instructed their members - about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the staff - not to co-operate.

They are waiting to see what the council does now.

Many points about the case concern teachers at the school. The normal procedure is for complaints to be referred to the Head, and then to the Governors if necessary. Only if this was not successful would an inquiry normally be considered. The County Council should have advised parents to take up the matter with the school first, they say.

They have not been told what points the inquiry is covering, but from what they have heard many of the complaints could easily be dealt with by the Head or the Governors.

Meanwhile, the Council is telling other schools in the County that they must hold religious assemblies. We must uphold the letter of the 1944 Education Act, they are saying.

But only when it suits them, of course.

## Highbury

**SIX MEMBERS** of the Save Highbury Hospital Committee visited Parliament in November as part of a national lobby against public expenditure cuts.

They handed a petition with over 6,000 signatures to Nottingham North MP Bill Whitlock who promised to hand it on to Social Services Secretary David Ennals. They also saw another five local MPs.

They said that Whitlock refused to budge from his support for the run-down of Highbury and Nottingham East MP Jack Dunnett took a similar line.

But Nottingham West MP Michael English said he was fully with the lobby against the cuts and said the 1976 cuts had been unnecessary as the Treasury had miscalculated by £2,000m. He wanted far greater resources for the Trent Region Health Authority because it had been badly underfinanced in the past.

The committee also saw the MPs for Ashfield and Beeston who expressed concern about the proposals for Highbury and the MP for Carlton who was opposed to the closure of small hospitals.

## JUMBLE WANTED

Clothes, toys, bric a brac, etc., needed by independent organisation to raise funds. Guaranteed not supported by governments, monopoly capitalism, Gulbenkian, etc.

## PEOPLE'S CENTRE SHOP

**33 Mansfield Road**

## Socialist Unity

**SOCIALIST UNITY** will be getting a pre-election campaign under way in Nottingham in the new year.

This is the organisation which fought the Ladywood by-election earlier this year in Birmingham. It is an attempt by a number of socialist groups to work together around a common election platform.

The main group locally is the International Marxist Group but many other socialists are involved as well. A campaign will be run in Nottingham East against the wealthy capitalist Labour MP Jack Dunnett.

A leaflet has been produced by Socialist Unity locally to explain why it should be supported. It says: "The election campaign can be used to strengthen all of the campaigns in which we are involved; anti-racist, for a woman's right to choose, for decent housing, against the cuts.

"We are interested in winning votes, but our greatest indicator of success will be the extent to which we involve people in our continuing campaigns and foster the self-activity of working people."

They say, "The last twelve months saw the most serious deterioration in working-class standards of living this century - engineered by incomes policies and inflation. The mass media made racialism almost respectable and the fascists recruited and won big votes.

"The miners' ballot, the anti-fascist victory in Lewisham and the mass demonstration for a woman's right to choose held in Birmingham have shown that the fight back is on." (The leaflet was written before the firemen's strike and the strikes at Raleigh and Stanton & Staveley.)

Some points from their suggested programme are:

- \* No to Healey's 10% limit on wages.
  - \* A national minimum wage of £50 a week - to be paid also to those who are not working.
  - \* Housing for people, not for profits. Build hospitals and schools.
  - \* Reduce the working week without loss of pay to reduce unemployment.
  - \* Freeze all prices and rents.
  - \* Free abortion on demand on the NHS. Free 24 hour nurseries. Equal pay for equal work.
  - \* Fight racism.
  - \* Withdraw all British troops from Ireland.
  - \* End all compensation payments to the old owners of the nationalised industries. Stop all interest payments to the banks and money lenders.
- The next meeting of Socialist Unity is Tuesday 17th Jan, 8pm, at the International Centre, 61b Mansfield Road.

## Toe-Stubbing

**TOE STUBBING** - stumbling against the edges of the protruding slabs in the city pavements - has now given way to a new, more exciting, sport of "Slab Squelching".

But those citizens who hope to be able to make a case for damages against the Nottingham Corporation are not in luck. It seems you cannot take legal action unless the pavement slab protrudes more than one inch and a quarter above the pavement level. Sorry - that should be 32 mm. (With no apologies to the EEC.)

The only snag about the new sport of Slab Squelching is that it can only be practised when it has been raining. To qualify one must tread on any of the broken slabs in the city area, to produce a "squelch".

The highest squelch recorded so far is 5ft 6inches high, all over my best suit.

This was in St James St, although some good ones are to be found on Angel Row, and elsewhere (where angels fear to tread). There do not appear to be many protruding slabs in the area of the Council House forecourt, but then this is as good a reason as any for the spending of £32,000 to re-surface that area.

It has not gone without notice that the pavement area around the Tollhouse office block is now the scene of great activity by the City Technical Services Department. It is pure coincidence that Boots have just leased two floors of offices.

## VOICE ABOUT TOWN

## Nottingham

### Workshop

**NOTTINGHAM Workshop** - the new information unit for trade unionists has finally got off the ground, though it doesn't have any money of course.

At a meeting on December 5th a small committee was elected and work is starting on gathering together information and contacts.

Next meeting: Tues 3rd Jan, 7.30, 118 Mansfield Rd, and every first Tuesday of the month.

## Big Brother

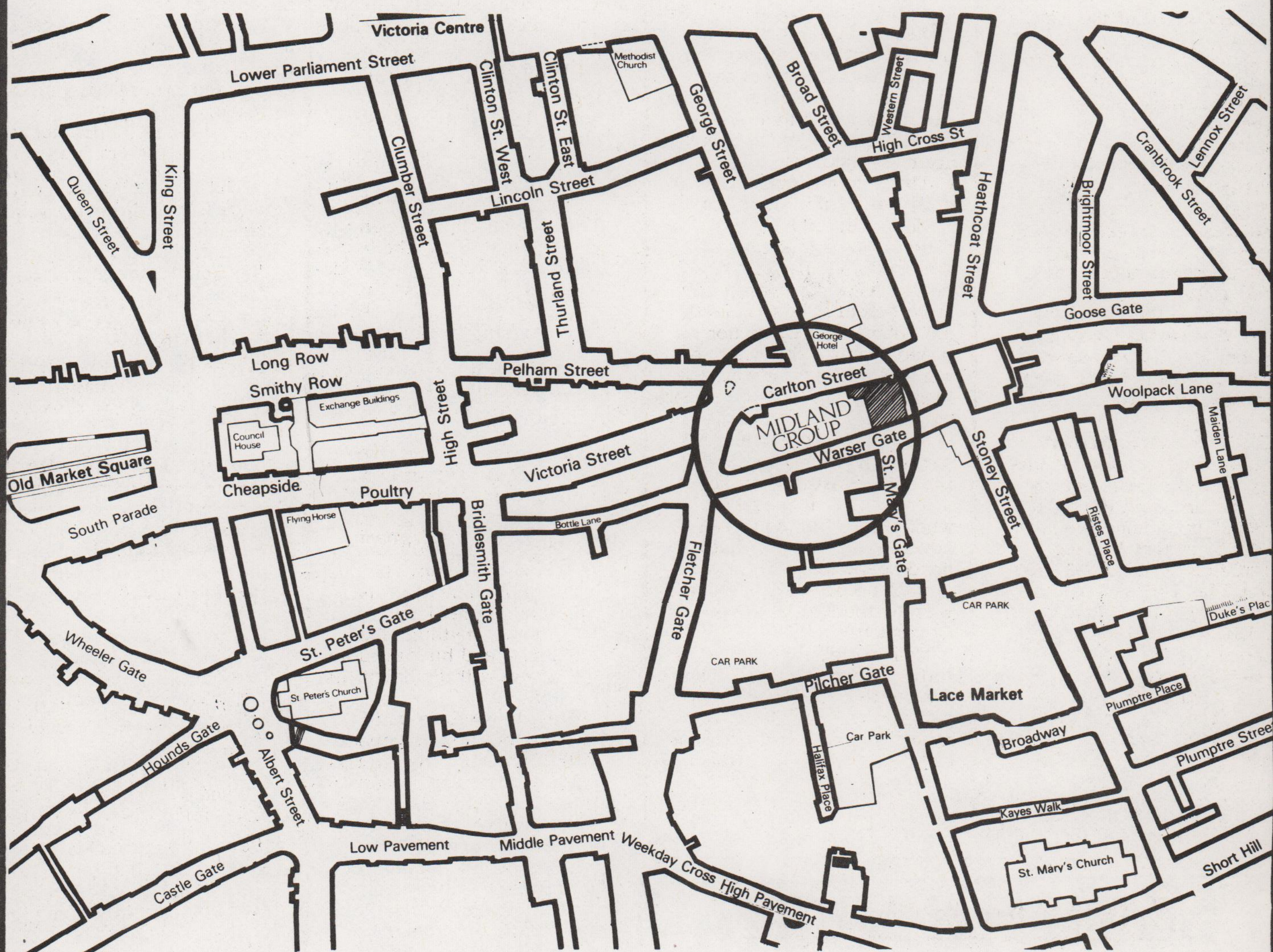
**SPOTTED** in the Municipal Journal of 4th November, a comment on a new charter adopted by the National Tenants' Association: "One point that must be resisted is that tenants and residents should be given the right to participate in decisions affecting housing policy".

Big Brother rules OK!



# MIDLAND GROUP NOTTINGHAM

24-32 Carlton Street (Warser Gate Entrance) . Nottingham NG1 1NN . Telephone 0602 582636/7



The Midland Group has moved to a new visual arts complex in Nottingham's Lace Market. The Midland Group is one of the country's leading contemporary art organisations showing film, painting, performance, photography, print, sculpture and craft.

The current exhibitions are:  
 "Qualifications" — a range of craft work by 39 recent graduates.  
 "History & Drawings" by Terry Atkinson and photographs of Nottingham 1914-18.  
 "Towards Another Picture" an exhibition of painting and sculpture that have appealed to different sections of the public since 1945.  
 (Held at Nottingham Castle).

The Midland Group is open from 10.30 to 17.00 Monday to Saturday. For further information please write or telephone The Midland Group 24/32 Carlton Street, Nottingham NG1 1NN. (0602) 582636/7.



# Bring back

# KOUNCIL KUTS

## Cowan

THE LABOUR group on the City Council didn't fare very well at the December meeting of the full council.

Len Maynard was the first Labour councillor to put his head on the block. He put down a ridiculous motion congratulating the government on increasing the City's housing subsidy from £1M to £9½M and the rate support grant from £6.75M to nearly £12M in the last three years.

Unfortunately he hadn't done his homework before writing the motion. The figures came from Hansard, he said, so they must be right.



LEN MAYNARD

But Tory Finance chairperson Bill Bradbury didn't agree with the figures and he had done some homework.

"If we'd got £12M in rate support grant we would have paid a dividend", he said. "We only collect about £10M in rates".

Maynard couldn't answer because he didn't know where the Hansard figures came from.

It gave Bradbury the opportunity to launch a well justified attack on government cuts. He accepted that taking

into account inflation there had been an increase in the Housing Grant from £6.1M to £7.9M but the Rate Support Grant had gone down from £1,435,000 to £1,380,000 (figures adjusted to 1974 prices).

But in other areas the government was much less generous. For example the money allowed for improvements was down from £5¼M in 75/76 to £3.85M this year. "True Labour generosity", he said.

Maynard had wanted to withdraw his motion because he couldn't explain the figures. But the Tories said the motion had to go ahead "to show how little the Labour group knows about the City finances", said Bradbury.

Labour councillor John Pennington even got the wrong answer when he tried to do simple take-aways.

How the Labour lot have missed the financial genius of wonder boy Michael Cowan MP (failed).



BILL BRADBURY

Labour leader John Carroll was the next to step up. He wanted the Tories to stop selling "relet" houses. Very good, we thought, he must have read the last issue of the Voice which gave lots of facts he could use as ammunition.

But no, unfortunately Carroll has become obsessed with all the empty houses waiting to be sold. He speaks

about little else these days.

And the Tories are not concerned about this - they claim to have made several million pounds on the deal and like all the best speculators they know it is more profitable to leave houses empty than to put people in them. They are not even worried about warnings that these quick profits will turn into much bigger losses within a few years. They'll have made their pile and retired by then - someone else will have to sort out the mess.

Carroll did give some interesting figures. Since March 1669 relets and new houses built for rent have been offered for sale. Only 411 have been sold and 482 have been returned to the Housing Department for letting. This leaves 776 somewhere in the course of being sold.

That is quite enough to be going on with, said Carroll.

It was all too much for Tory leader Jack Green who is responsible for the house selling policy. He and Bradbury left the chamber while Carroll was speaking leaving poor Housing chairperson Charles Borrett to face Carroll alone. Even Housing Director Campbell-Lee walked out.

## EYE TO EYE

It has been said that Borrett does not entirely see eye to eye with Green. The problem is that Borrett is the only one on the Tory group who knows anything about housing - and his views do not agree with the hard line Tories.

But, as we have said before, he wanders around with his head in the clouds and has difficulty communicating even with his friends - not that he has many friends on the Tory group.

It has even been said by malicious gossipers that Borrett is against the Tory policy of trying to sell every council house which comes vacant. This is perhaps because the policy causes so many problems for his staff in the Housing Department - who are supposed to help people who cannot afford to buy houses - that he doesn't have many friends there either.

But enough of this gossip. Back at the council meeting Housing vice-chairperson Ted Hickey took the floor. It is widely expected that he will take over from the tired Borrett next year. What a laugh that will be.

We're redistributing the

wealth of the city, he claimed. "Communist", cried the Labour rabble. Let us give power in housing to the people, to the rank and file, he ranted. "Trotskyist", came the reply. "Have you got that down?" shouted Maynard to the Voice reporter in the gallery.

It was the only time in the afternoon that the Labour group looked really happy.



"TROT" HICKEY

But if Labour did badly Jack Green did even worse. He has taken a hammering recently. The last issue of the Voice showed that he lied to the May City Council over his claim that the Tories would bring forward the clearance programme. And at the previous Housing Committee it was shown that he lied to the November City Council when he said that a list of 140 homes could not be let by the Housing Department.

So on this occasion he was keeping his mouth shut. He was asked four questions at the beginning of the meeting. He didn't give a satisfactory answer to any.

Carroll asked him whether he agreed that a long list of new houses were still empty and whether he would let them go for rent. Green's answer: No.

Carroll asked him to admit that his statement in November about the 140 homes was false. Green's answer: I have nothing to add, nothing to subtract, nothing to alter.

Pennington asked him to give details of the catering contract for the Theatre Royal. Green's answer: see minute 87 of the Theatre Royal sub-committee held on 31st October. He refused to give details. (The Voice can reveal that this appoints a Mr J Harker of Oxford as Catering Consultant for £5,500 a year (plus expenses) payable quarterly in advance. He will be expected to give a quarterly report.)

Carroll also asked Green about a list of houses which had been sold. He wanted to know how long they were vacant and how long they had taken to sell. Green refused to answer.

## DOWN TO EARTH WHOLEFOODS

20 Hockley Tel: 584322

for cheap wholesome foods with a personal service

Honey 48p/lb Cashews 26p/qtr  
Walnuts 30p/qtr Raisins 46p/lb

Open: Monday - Saturday 10am to 6pm.

Closed Lunch 2.30-3.30pm.



# Hostel for rich

HOMELESS PEOPLE who are put into Nottingham's new hostel for homeless people - opening in January - will have to pay at least £10 a week. Some will have to pay over £20.

There will be hardly any rent rebate because it is "hotel-like" accommodation.

This was decided by the November Housing Committee. But the vote was only taken after Housing chairman Charles Borrett misled the committee by wrongly claiming that families would have to pay £8 less after the first week.

The decision means that in

future only the rich can afford to be homeless in Nottingham. The only exception is those fortunate enough to be out of work and claiming supplementary benefit - for them the government will pay the extortionate charges.

Charges are £8 per family per week plus £2 for each bed used. An extra £4 per week will be charged for

furniture storage as well as the removal expenses.

## FRYING PAN

It'll be out of the frying pan into the fire said Labour councillor Tom Harby. Labour leader John Carroll pointed out that it cost £60 a week if children had to be put into care. He asked whether the £8 "admission charge" would be only charged once and not every week. Borrett assured the committee that this was so and then took the vote.

It was only later that Tory leader Jack Green admitted to the committee that he had known all along that the £8 would be charged every week in addition to £2 per bed. But it was too late to

change the decision.

No-one asked what would happen if families have to be evicted from the hostel because of arrears. As homeless families we presume they would have to be found temporary accommodation by the council - back into the hostel and further into debt.

It'll make sure the homeless rapidly become as bankrupt as the Tory housing policies.

## Rent protection

DID YOU KNOW that city rent collectors and housing assistants have been having such a rough time recently that they can now claim £35 a year for "protective clothing"?

## Advice ignored

WIMPEY has been given the go-ahead to build 36 houses in the Wilford Village Conservation Area. This was given at the November City Planning Committee in spite of reservations by the Conservation Areas Advisory Committee.

One local resident claimed that the scheme together with an earlier phase would mean two hundred children with nowhere to play.

### CIVIC SOCIETY

And to stress their policy of conservation of building companies' profits, the same committee ignored complaints from the Civic Society concerning a proposal by Costain to build 82 dwellings for sale on North Sherwood Street.

The original plan was to build council houses on the site. But that was chopped by the Tories earlier this year.

The Civic Society said the Costain scheme did not have proper regard to the scale and type of design. The City Planning Officer said "the proposal does not conform to all the requirements of the development brief".

The committee approved the scheme.

The committee then approved the building of a Conservative Club in the Clifton Village Conservation Area.

Be sure to visit the

## NEW MARKET HOTEL

Parliament Street (opposite Palais)

FINE HOME ALES from only 22p

LUNCH-TIME SNACKS

ROOM AVAILABLE FREE FOR PARTIES

BUFFETS ON REQUEST

STUDENTS WELCOME

TEL. NOTTM 411532



# SPANNER IN THE WORKS



## Strikers return

1,000 STRIKERS at the Stanton and Staveley spun plant went back on December 12th after being out for a month.

The strike was over a pay claim. Management had offered only 7%. The main reason for the decision to go back was the refusal of the union to make the strike official. This was explained to us by works convenor Brian McGinley. He said it was the national executive of the General and Municipal Workers Union who had let down the strikers and not the local stewards. The majority for going back was only 30 out of 700 at a mass meeting.

Negotiations would continue, he said, but he couldn't see a productivity deal being

rediscussed.

Before the strike, management offered an extra £10.50 for an extra 20% production. They said the spun plant, which makes pipes, had been making a profit since the middle of the year, unlike the rest of British Steel.

But Mr McGinley said this was a short term boom. When demand dropped they would have to agree to losing one in six workers to maintain the bonus. Management had made it clear that there would have to be paid redundancies which the workers wouldn't accept.

He said 1,000 jobs at Stanton were lost four years ago when a complete blast-furnace complex was closed. More recently the Erewash foundry had been run down with the loss of several hundred jobs.

The decision to go back to work had set back the union five years, he added. It would raise difficulties for the next two or three years.

# Raleigh tragedy

"WHAT A TRAGEDY" said the Raleigh Managing Director in a letter to his 4,700 workers on strike just before they held a mass meeting on December 5th.

"I and my Directors are distressed by the financial hardship that is being encountered by so many; particularly at this time of year", he went on, hypocritically. Raleigh couldn't afford to pay more than 10% he claimed, even though Raleigh is one of the most profitable sections of Tube Investments.

What a tragedy indeed, for him, because the meeting of 4,000 plus workers voted overwhelmingly to stay on strike.

This was after Jack Hallam, district secretary of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, attacked the "penny-pinching" by the management during the years of wage restraint. It was bound to explode, he said.

Works convenor Les Chapman gave details of wages at other Tube Investment plants in Leicester and Birmingham. Even if we get the full claim, we will still be the lowest paid, he said.

If we don't get parity, he went on, there's no future for us. And without us

there's no future for Raleigh.

Since then the management has not communicated with them. But the strike is beginning to bite. Already plants at Derby, Carlton and Birmingham are closed.

Senior stewards in the car industry have been asked to black components from TI Cox in Leicester which is still working even though Cox in Nottingham is stopped along with the rest of the Lenton factory.

The strikers have been particularly bitter about the way facts have been "censored" by the media.

The worst offender, perhaps, was Radio Trent. After broadcasting an interview with an anonymous worker who wanted to return to work Trent gave out a Raleigh management phone number. Anyone ringing it was urged to picket a shop stewards meeting to urge a return to work.

As the works committee says in a leaflet "Getting information to you by radio and local newspapers is almost impossible".

**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**



## Firemen continue

FIREMEN in Nottinghamshire may be willing to take 10% now as long as guarantees for the future are good enough, according to a local Fire Brigades Union spokes-

man.

This depressing possibility was put to the Voice after a mass meeting on 13th December, attended by almost all 450 members, voted overwhelmingly to continue the strike.

Although the government's offer was rejected, it could form the basis for a settlement, said the spokesman.

The offer was to put firemen into the "upper quartile" of earnings by November 1979 with half the increase in a year's time. If they got that now it would not quite meet the claim, he said, but it wouldn't be bad.

The offer contained many other points which needed making more watertight, he said, the main one being a reduction in working hours from 48 to 42 with no loss of pay.

Any action against the West Bridgford firemen who are still working would depend on a national agreement. They were pleased, he said, that there were only two part-time stations working in South Notts.

The firemen were already preparing to picket over Christmas.

## MARCH

A PROTEST MARCH from Langley Mill to Heanor is being held on 17th December in support of the workers of E&H Architectural who have been in a union recognition dispute for five months.

Speakers include Joe Whelan, district secretary of the Notts miners; Eric Goodall, assistant general secretary of the furniture trades union; and Dennis Skinner, MP for Bolsover.

The three main customers of "E&H" have been blacked so there are very few outlets for the products. Blacklegs still working are working in the cold because supplies of fuel oil are not being delivered, along with other essential supplies.

Mass picketting is continuing once a fortnight.

This is a battle which can be won.



# Building site safety

"CONSTRUCTION workers will receive three or four serious injuries in their working lifetime. 1 in 100 can expect an early death; some experts put this figure even higher".

This information is contained in a report of the County Council Research into Site Management Unit.

"Standards of safety in the building industry are actually deteriorating", it says, "while most industries are improving in this respect".

"Most accidents are due to the neglect of well known safety precautions, yet workers are endlessly expected to work from unguarded heights or down deep unpropped trenches and they hardly ever refuse".

One of the reasons given for the poor record of safety is the way work groups are reformed for each new job and laid off at the end which makes union organisation



Fireman Don Nelson addresses a rally in the Market Square.

very difficult.

The report includes chapters on the law and the health of building workers and discusses the organisation needed to build safely.

We haven't seen the full report but every building worker should try and lay their hands on a copy.

It's on sale from the County Architect at County Hall (price £5 unfortunately). Or your friendly county councillor can get a copy free and may agree to lend it out.

## DHSS RULE OK

TONY MORRIS of the National Union of Public Employees gave a talk on the Health Service Organisation to the November Trades Council.

The regional health authorities are supposed to be autonomous, he said, but "DHSS rule OK" because they hold the purse strings.

All of the Trent Region's 24 members are appointed by the Secretary of State. There is only one Trade Union nomination.

The Region appoints  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the Notts Area Health Authority, the other  $\frac{1}{3}$  being local authority appointments. The chairperson of the Area Authority - ex County Council leader Dick Wilson - is appointed by the Secretary of State.

Amongst other things the Area sets up the Family Practitioner Committee. Fifteen out of its thirty members are from the medical professional groups and eleven are appointed by the Area Authority.

### CLOSED SHOP

The Family Practitioner Committee is "a good closed shop", said Mr Morris. It is controlled by the professional groups, makes contracts with the professions, pays the money, and even undertakes

its own investigations.

At the District level there is a management team but no committee. There are local Community Health Councils which can speak at the Area meetings but don't have a vote.

It's a very undemocratic structure. The medical lobby is very powerful. As a result, according to Mr Morris, often expensive machinery gets a high priority at the expense of areas like geriatric and psychiatric care.

He brought the attention of the Trades Council to the "Regional Strategy Plan 1977-86" and the Area's plan for policies and priorities in Notts. Both documents are supposed to be publicly available and bodies like the Trades Council are supposed to be consulted.

But of course they aren't.

The health service is top heavy, said Mr Morris, with too many administrators. But he defended them. Most of them work very hard, he said, but a lot of the work they do isn't necessary. NUPE wants a two tier structure instead of three tiers with the Area level knocked out.

And Mr Morris wants a campaign for a democratic health service. It is too inward looking and incestuous, he said.

## No to 10%

STRIKERS from around Nottingham joined a Trades Council march against the Government's 10% rule on 26th November.

A large contingent of firemen led the march from the Forest through Hyson Green to the Market Square for a rally. They were followed by delegations from the 1,000 strikers at Stanton & Staveley and 4,700 strikers at Raleigh, both disputes involving pay claims well over 10%.

Speakers at the rally were John Peck, vice-chairman of the Trades Council; Don Nelson, chairman of the local Fire Brigades Union; Brian McGinley, convenor at Stanton; Les Chapman, works convenor at Raleigh; Joe Whelan, area secretary of the miners union and Brian Simister, vice-president of the Trades Council speaking on behalf of the "E&H" strikers at Langley Mill.

Joe Whelan said the firemen were fighting the battle for

the whole trade union movement. He compared the 10% allowed for the mass of workers with the record profits made by some of the big multinationals. Some of his examples were Unilever £605M - 84% increase, ICI £540M - 68% increase, and Midland Bank £170M - 100% increase.

He said that in 1972 workers didn't back the miners to get rid of Heath so a Labour government could follow the same policies. He predicted that because of these policies "a lot of Labour MPs are going to join the dole queues they have created for others".

A collection at the rally was divided between the firemen, Raleigh workers and Stanton workers.

Books Cards Magazines Crafts

## Mushroom

10 HEATHCOTE STREET TEL: 582506

Open: 10.30 - 6.00 (closed Thursdays)

**Nottingham's  
alternative bookshop**



# START...

THE OBJECT IS TO FIND YOUR WAY THROUGH TO 1978 WITHOUT LOSING YOUR FACULTIES. FOLLOW THE FOOT-PATH: IF YOU GET LOST, GIVE UP.

© NOTTINGHAM VOICE. (GAME DEVISED BY NOTTINGHAM VOICE AND TOTALLY MUTILATED BY NAVVIE BRICK, BUT STILL....)

A WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR.

NOTTINGHAM VOICE.

OUR EXPOSE STOPS COUNCIL GIVIN' TENANTS ADDRESSES TO DEBT COLLECTORS.

118 MANSFIELD RD. OPENS TO HELP TENANTS ASSOC AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

COUNCIL TURN DOWN PLANS FOR URBAN FARM....

DO IT ANYWAY!

MARCH

CILLR COWAN IS THREATENED BY CILLR FOSTER AND CILLR RUDDER

FEB.

TORY COUNCIL IN CITY STOPS ALL COUNCIL HOUSE BUILDING

COUNCIL STARTS SELLING COUNCIL HOUSES TO ONE + ALL + HOUSING ASSOC'S.

BIG FIGHT! TONITE

APRIL

RALEIGH STREET

LAW SOCIETY FORCES COUNCIL TO CONTINUE SELLING ADDRESSES TO DEBT COLLECTORS

UNIONS MARCH THRO' CITY TO OPPOSE PUBLIC SPENDING CUTS

BUILD HOMES NOT HOPES!

BAN THE CUTS

FOR GOD'S SAKE HELP US!

POLICE ARRIVE IN FORCE TO ARREST ONE BLACK YOUTH IN VICTORIA CENTRE.....

POLICE

GO GETTEM LADS!

MICHAEL COWAN LOS-ES ASHFIELD BY-ELECTION

NOT LATE ENOUGH POST

TORY LANDSLIDE VICTORY IN COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTION.

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER DISPUTE. EVENING POST APPEARS AS NORMAL.

NATION BRIAN

POLICE ARRIVE IN FORCE TO HANDLE MINOR INCIDENT AND ARREST SIX BLACKS

.... ARREST TEN "JUST TO BE SURE!"

BUY A PAPER, LADDY.

WHOSE NEWS?

JUST TO BE SURE!

1,000 NOTTM SCHOOL LEAVERS GO STRAIGHT ONTO DOLE.

TENNYSON STREET

HOUSE ACTION GROUP'S REPORT ON CILLR GREEN'S HOUSING POLICY

WE WANT HOMES NOT HOLES.

SO THIS IS WHY I SAT ALL THEM EXAMS.

ALL 600 CITY COUNCIL BUILDING WORKERS MARCH THRO' CITY IN PROTEST AGAINST CUTS

TENANTS ASSOC'S DEMONSTRATE AGAINST SALE OF COUNCIL HOUSES

QUEEN VISITS CITY. POLICE DETAIN LEAFLETING PROTESTERS.

SORRY, LUV. YER CAN'T SIGNON 'ERE

RACIST POLICE RACE TO BEAT.

BLACKS MARCH THRO' CITY IN PROTEST AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY

D'YOU THINK FOLK'LL JOIN IN?

WHY NOT EVERYBODY PLAYS GAMES!

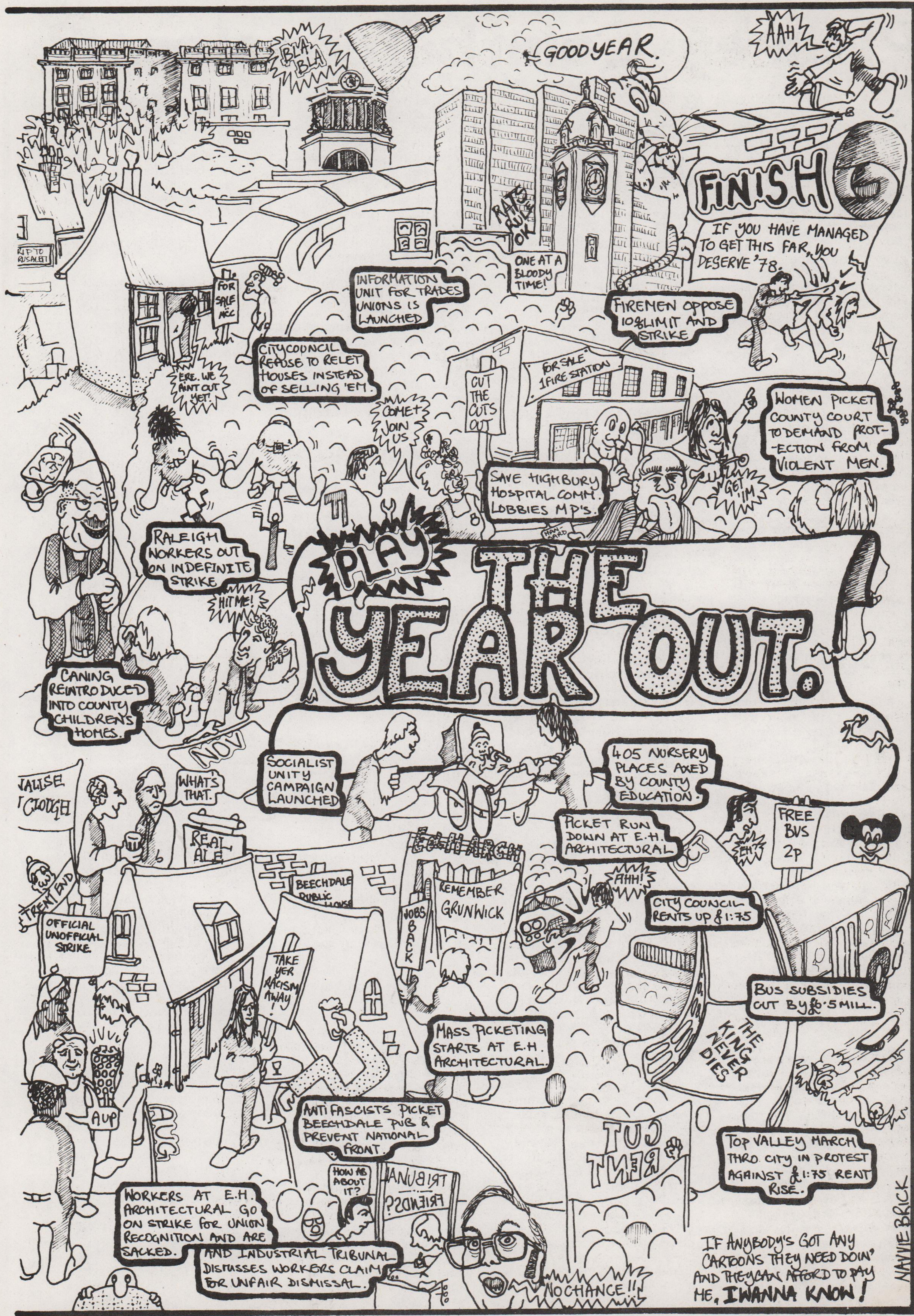
NOTTINGHAM ARE FORGET MAGNIFICENT

WE DON'T WANT WORK FOR YOU JUST DIGGING HOLES + FILLING THEM IN. BUILD HOMES

XYTPH VSRBHT

I DEMAND SOME WHERE TO LIVE





# PLAY THE YEAR OUT!

GOOD YEAR.

AAH

FINISH

IF YOU HAVE MANAGED TO GET THIS FAR, YOU DESERVE '78.

ONE AT A BLOODY TIME!

FIREMEN OPPOSE 10% LIMIT AND STRIKE

INFORMATION UNIT FOR TRADES UNIONS IS LAUNCHED

CITY COUNCIL REFUSE TO RELET HOUSES INSTEAD OF SELLING 'EM.

HERE, WE AIN'T OUT YET!

CUT THE CUTS OUT

SAVE HIGHBURY HOSPITAL COMM. LOBBIES M.P.'S.

WOMEN PICKET COUNTY COURT TO DEMAND PROTECTION FROM VIOLENT MEN.

RALEIGH WORKERS OUT ON INDEFINITE STRIKE

CANING REINTRODUCED INTO COUNTY CHILDREN'S HOMES.

SOCIALIST UNITY CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

405 NURSERY PLACES AXED BY COUNTY EDUCATION.

PICKET RUN DOWN AT E.H. ARCHITECTURAL

FREE BUS 2p

CITY COUNCIL RENTS UP 1:75

BUS SUBSIDIES CUT BY £0.5 MILL.

MASS PICKETING STARTS AT E.H. ARCHITECTURAL.

ANTI FASCISTS PICKET BEECHDALE PUB & PREVENT NATIONAL FRONT.

WORKERS AT E.H. ARCHITECTURAL GO ON STRIKE FOR UNION RECOGNITION AND ARE SACKED.

AND INDUSTRIAL TRIBUNAL DISMISSES WORKERS CLAIM FOR UNFAIR DISMISSAL.

IF ANYBODY'S GOT ANY CARTOONS THEY NEED DOWN? AND THEY CAN AFFORD TO PAY ME, I WANNA KNOW!

NAVIE BRICK



# Plessey - Calm before storm?

ONLY A FEW YEARS ago Plessey Telecommunications, Ltd employed 7,500 people in 4 Beeston Region factories. Now it employs 5,000 people in 3 factories. By 1982, according to Brian Harrison, ASTMS Branch Chairman at the Beeston plant, "the Beeston region will be down to 2,000 workers".

The main reason given by the company for the 6,000 redundancies it has declared over the last two years, is due to cutbacks in investment by the Post Office. There is no doubt that this has been savage, with large amounts being lopped from planned capital spending in 1974, 1975 and 1976. And certainly the company is very dependent on the Post Office for sales, with about 50% of the output of Plessey Telecommunications going to it last year.

On the other hand, most of the work carried out in the Beeston Region is for private users, not the Post

Office. The real reason for job threats in the East Midlands is the very rapid change in technology within the industry - changes so rapid few people outside management and unions have fully grasped the effects they will have.

The basic problem is that the mechanical equipment (such as the Cross Bow exchange) which has been the mainstay of the 20th century telephone systems has been made obsolete by new semi-electronic equipment, such as the new TXE2 and TXE4 exchanges which are already being built for the Post Office in the Beeston Region.

In a recent speech Ken Corfield, Chairman of Plessey rivals Standard Telephone & Cables and President of the Telecommunications Manufacturing Association, predicted that only 40% of the old labour force would be required to produce this new semi-electronic equipment.

## 'SYSTEM X'

What few people realise is that on top of these changes, there will be a further technological development - the advent of the fully electronic, computer controlled telephone system. Under the name of 'System X', this is now being developed by the Post Office and the manufacturing companies, including Plessey. In addition Plessey Telecommunications is developing a digital exchange for private users - described in the Annual Report as "even more exciting than System

X at the Lenton plant."

The results of these developments, according to Corfield, will be to reduce the labour force to a mere 4% OF THE 1960's LEVEL. The present factory will, he says, turn into a laboratory "eliminating the dirt, drudgery and physical work of current manufacturing with its stamping, pressing, turning, milling, liquid soldering and labour intensive assembly".

A problem which faces Plessey in making these changes is that it lags behind several of its multinational competitors, such as IBM, Phillips and Siemens.

## COMPANY FAILURE

They have had fully electronic systems on the market for some time. This lag stems from the company's failure to invest sufficiently in research & development. In 1974-1975 the company spent only 3.2% of its income from sales under this heading, compared to the 7-8% of Phillips and Siemens.

## CARVED UP

One reason for this is the cosy and profitable way that Plessey and the 2 other British suppliers, have carved up the Post Office market: they have lacked the incentive to make them dynamic. This can also be seen from the worrying decline in exporting; but this had fallen to 8.7% by 1974, partly because of the company's slowness in developing Cross Bar.

Another aspect of the company which should worry Beeston workers is its increasingly multinational nature. Overseas production amounted to £194 millions in 1976-77 (including a significant amount in South Africa), or 34% of total sales. Of the two products which are "the most exciting mid-term prospects" the K-1 electronic branch exchange has been developed by Plessey Canada, whilst the digital private exchange is based on technology "brought in" from USA.

The company is also forging close links with foreign competitors, such as technical swaps with French companies, or the joint bid with Western Electric of the USA for a major Saudi Arabian contract. It is no wonder that Chairman Sir John Clark boasts in the 1976-77 Report that: "The international development of the Plessey group is undoubtedly the most important achievement to arise

from many years of painstaking development."

All this has made Plessey - in contrast with the workers they have made redundant - a prosperous outfit. In 1976-77 the company made £39.6m profit, a 14% increase on the previous year. These profits are likely to be even higher in the current year, partly because the group ended 1976-77 year, partly because of the effects of lower interest rates, a revalued pound and a smaller workforce. A large part of this will be contributed by the Beeston site which, despite shedding about 33% of the workforce has increased output by 20%.

## RUMOURS

Nevertheless rumours persist that Plessey is undergoing some financial difficulties, the most likely explanation being that the cutbacks affected cash generation within the company.

Another, more persistent, rumour is that Plessey may be on the verge of splitting up, either by making the product divisions into separate companies, or by selling off parts to competitors.

Whatever the problems of the future the Plessey Board manages to reward itself handsomely in the present. Sir John Clark received £69,054 in 1975-76 (making him the 6th highest paid chairman in Britain) whilst the other 14 directors shared £297,000 - or over £400 per week. In addition, Sir John and his brother Michael Clark each own about a million shares, a relic of the days when the firm was family owned.

## GIDDY HEIGHTS

Beneath these giddy heights, wages and salaries in the Beeston Region have slipped from the high levels of a few years ago to their present position of only equalling the regional average. In those days Plessey had to pay to cream off local labour: now they are sacking wholesale.

Each union negotiates wages and salaries separately. At present they have all settled around the 10% norm: the exception is ASTMS who are conducting an overtime ban plus restrictions on company travelling.

Each site also has a Joint Union Committee. The one at Beeston has negotiated a valuable agreement with management which prevents work being transferred to other factories until either the unions agree or the disputes procedure is exhausted.

## TRANSFORMATION

The new technology will also have a great effect on society. Brian Harrison, and other unionists, are worried that only one solution, ie sacking surplus workers, seems possible to deal with the problems.

They point to economic theories which believe that the new information technology which Plessey (and others) are developing could transform the world in the same way as the Industrial Revolution. Then technology could be used and jobs preserved because markets would be expanded.

They are also pressing for more internal retraining of workers as the company is still recruiting some skilled labour.

## MORE SACKINGS

They know that the company still thinks that the only outcome of changes in the work process is more sackings. They fear that Plessey is preparing itself for a new round of redundancies in 1978, and that its present tactics are an attempt to divide the unions before this happens.

However, there is a firm determination to fight these short-sighted policies. As Brian Harrison says;

"Unions must always fight redundancies: they cut across the basic interests which it is our job to protect. This applies to hidden redundancies where people are not replaced. The unions will attack this as well, because it takes jobs off the labour market for our sons and daughters."

For many of the union officials in the Beeston Region (and nationally) this year has seemed a brief calm before another storm.

All the signs are there for Plessey workers to heed. Now they must persuade the company to abandon its short-sighted policy of redundancy and seek a new form of co-operation with their workforce. It remains to be seen if this is possible as long as the company remains in private hands.



# NO NIP FOR CLAUS

(the silly bit)

The usual crowd were there, laughing a little too loudly, buying rounds of festive good cheer a little too convivially.

"What'll it be, Elsie? As if I didn't know!"

"Oooh, 'ark at 'im for the cheeky one! I'll 'ave a gin and It."

"Well, I'm not so sure about the gin, but you can have 'It' any time!"

"Oooh, 'ark at 'im for the cheeky one! Gin and Italian, I mean."

"We all know what you mean, Elsie! Pint or a half?"

"Oooh, 'ark at 'im for . . ."

I'd heard it all before. Too often. It was no place for kids.

.....

Time passed. I waited.

.....

Time slowed down a bit. I waited more slowly.

.....

By closing time, the joint was packed. The regulars were all there, hurling hospitality at each other: "You still owe me a fiver from last Christmas, you scrofulous old weasel."

I delved into my inner pocket and by the light of my cigarette lighter consulted my Taxonomy of Popular and Esoteric Expressions Likely to Cause a Breach of the Peace. Eighth edition. The best. I go nowhere without it. Scrofulous . . . Scrofulous . . . 'pertaining to scrofula.' Hmm. Might be actionable. But some other time. Not tonight. Tonight is special.

10.45. Derek has just bought Elsie her twelfth gin and It and his banter is becoming rather less heavily veiled.

"Plenty of gin and plenty of 'It', eh, Elsie?"

He has his hand on her left knee. Unknown to him, Elsie's stockinged right foot is making the old gentleman opposite her very happy.

I recognise him as he sits bolt upright with the look of a startled gopher. It is Albert Codd, the answer to a number of maidens' prayers in the late 20s/early '30s. Those eyes are unforgettable. But by the look of his jawline, his teeth are not. He stares transfixed, gummily.

The smoke is thickening now, turning the room into a Transylvanian setting for a melodrama.

A melodrama! I smile wryly. It feels good. I do it again, glancing into the mirror behind the bar. It looks good. I freeze it. I sit for several minutes, smiling, frozenly wryly.

It feels good, but frozen.

A melodrama! Somehow it doesn't feel real, but it is. It is real, melodrama or not. I scoop the slice of lemon from my Cointreau and Cream Soda and suck it apart, globule by bitter globule. I look in the mirror. I am smiling wryly.

It is 11.10. The last drinks have been served. Time has been called. In the corner, Edna and Noreen are pulling crackers with two regular clients - Clive and Byron - 'Mr and Mr Sticky-fingers', who once set up a firm called 'The Faulty Tailboard Transit Company' till we closed them down for insolence.

In the past twenty minutes the four of them have pulled 68 crackers. Each. My hackles of suspicion arise, but I force them down again. Another time. Another time.

Derek has his hand on Elsie's thigh. Albert is into terminal catatonia, stretched rigid, heels on the tiles, neck on the window sill, not touching the bench at any point, like an off-duty Traffic Warden stacked up for the night. His empty bottom gums are touching his palate.

11.20. I smell something fishy. I look down. The landlord has placed a tray of sardine sandwiches on my table. I smile, sardonically. It feels good. I reach for a sandwich. The white bread, soft as a virgin's throat, gives slightly beneath my fingertip. It feels good. I do it again. And again, smiling sardonically. And again.

After a while the landlord removes the tray. His eyes fall to the indentations in the sandwiches; some have holes right the way through. He makes as if to speak, but says nothing. He knows we could close him down for conspiracy or insolence -- anytime.

With lowered lids I order a cheese roll.

11.25. It won't be long. The smoke has deepened. The ceiling remains only as an ontological construct, and the decorative stuffed ostrich has its head in the clouds.

I glance around the room. Edna and Noreen are sitting alone, sharing a bottle of creme de menthe.

As I expected, Clive and Byron are moving slowly among the tables, with bulging rucksacks. I hear the clink of money.

The cheese cob arrives and grins at me with yellow teeth. I smile, cheesily. It feels different. I look in the mirror. I look stupid.

Like a greased whippet, I turn and bring the heel of my hand down, hard, on the insanely beaming cob. I strike it slightly off-centre. The cob is crispy, yet well-greased with margarine, and screams off the plate like an ice hockey puck, buzzing faintly as it spins past Elsie's right knee and under the table.

There is a sickening crunch as Albert suddenly jack-knives forward. His chin smashes into the table. His nose smashes into his chin. His eyes touch. End of the line.

Elsie does not appear to have noticed.

"Pssst. Got an eye for a bargain, mate?"

Clive. Standing in my turnup, and not seen through my disguise.

I assume the patois: "What's the gear?"

"Crackers."

I freeze, wryly, and allow myself two jiggers of irony. "Who is, Clive?"

"Good grief . . . it's . . . er. All straight now, sir . . . settled down now, I have . . . errr . . . Happy Christmas, then. Cheers, er."

He leaves three boxes of crackers on my table and melts into the sea of faces around him.

Still smiling wryly, I count the seconds off on my fingers. Bang on the

count of ten Byron appears. "Er . . . Seasons er Greetings, then, Inspector. Err . . . Clive said to . . ." He reaches into his rucksack and leaves me three big Easter eggs. In December. What a loser.

11.45. I stiffen the sinews and summon up the blood. The action is about to begin, unless my hunch is malformed.

Someone is complaining to the landlord about Albert bleeding, and I have just seen Clive sell someone a barstool for 50p.

Suddenly, behind me. An echoing tap; a rumble in the brickwork. A dank smell drifts up from the skirting-boards. I glance around. No-one has noticed. The Gas-Miser is rocking slightly; rumours of sulphur waft across to me. I sit alertly, but relaxed. Slowly, with infinite care, a short and rather dumpy figure squeezes himself from behind the fire. No amount of soot and grime can conceal his clothing. The red two-piece; white trimmings. Matching accessories.

So far no-one has noticed, which is how I figure he wants it. He passes within slightly less than a metre. I note the rheumy eye, the tell-tale red nose and trembling hand. I almost feel pity, but crush it back.

The cougar has the rabbit in sight.

A sooty fiver is waving at the landlord. "Just one for the road, Maurice?"

Like Pavlov jumping to the sound of a bell, I have his arm in a full Nelson.

"OK, Claus. This is it. No more 'Just one for the road' for you. Let's go."

.....

And that's it. Drive. Wryly, if you can; sardonically if you must; but never drunkenly. OK? Or we close you down.

Insp. P.J. Grobworth

contact:

NOTTINGHAM  
'phone 411676 VOICE

for

letterheads, leaflets,

and all

printing

gprintingprintingprintingprintingprintingprin  
ntingprintingprintingprintingprintingprinting  
gprintingprintingprintingprintingprintingprin  
ntingprintingprintingprintingprintingprinting  
printingprintingprintingprintingprintingprin



# Reviews

Signed reviews or articles do not necessarily represent the views of the editors.

## Rebellion in Notts

England's Last Revolution, Pentrich 1817.

John Stevens.  
Moorland Publishing, £5.40

Threats of Revolution in Britain 1789-1848.  
Malcolm Thomis and Peter Holt.  
Macmillan, £2.50.

IT'S OFTEN forgotten that the Notts area once had the most turbulent and rebellious population in the country. In 1812 more soldiers were dealing with local Luddism than were fighting Napoleon in Spain.

On June 9th, 1817 a band of revolutionaries set off

from the small village of Pentrich to seize Nottingham and declare a British Republic. They reached as far as Kimberley before being dispersed by troops. Three of the leaders were hanged and beheaded and another 14 transported to Australia for life.

So much for the bare bones of what social historian E P Thompson calls "one of the first attempts in history to mount a wholly proletarian insurrection without middle-class support".

### NOTTINGHAM CAPTAIN

Stevens' book is the first detailed study of the rising and gives much new and interesting information about its' background, participants and results.

The leader was Jeremiah Brandreth, alias the "Nottingham Captain" (the title of a neglected play on Pentrich by local author Stan Middleton), though it was partly instigated by 'Oliver', the notorious government spy and agent-provocateur.

Their promises that everyone who joined them would get a 100 guineas, bread, beef and ale no doubt had a

great effect on the half-starved population. Pentrich, as Stevens concludes, was very much "a revolt of necessity".

### CHALLENGE

The second book puts Pentrich into a national setting. In it the authors chart the movements which, from the food riots of the 18th to the Chartist of the mid-19th centuries, challenged the rise of capitalist society. Despite glossing over the extent of the misery which produced the unrest, they do valuable service by showing how widespread it was.

Most interesting is their analysis of Luddism. Despite playing down its' political aspects they give a sock in the eye to those who decry the power of ordinary people when they conclude that "in terms of sheer administrative efficiency Luddism was a notable demonstration of the possibilities of working-class organisation and protest".

### FIGHT FOR RIGHTS

They also show the extent to which civil and political rights that we now take for granted have been fought

for by men and women in the past. The 1832 Reform Act, limited as it was, only came about because of mass action such as the burning of Nottingham Castle or Beeston silk mill in 1831.

Equally relevant to the present day is the authors' conclusion that part of the reason why all this discontent failed to change society in any fundamental way was the failure of the working-class to produce "a unified response to industrialisation".

The past lives amongst the present. Both these books will be of interest to anyone who wants to understand our social history.

pete james

## Goose Fair

Historic Fairground Scenes.  
Michael Ware.  
Moorland Publishing, £4.20.

A collection of photographs from the 19th and early 20th centuries - the days when fairs were really fairs. It contains some interesting pictures of Goose Fair when it was held in the Market Square. An enjoyable trip into nostalgia.

# DILLON'S BOOKSHOP

## 1-3 Lincoln Street

We stock a wide range of  
general books including  
film, art, photography,  
science fiction, children's  
and many more.

We can also order any book in print.



## Charlie at the Chocolate Factory

"CHARLIE and the Chocolate Factory" at the Nottingham Playhouse is well worth a visit - even if you can't find a five year old to take.

Charlie Bucket, our hero, comes from a poor family and longs to eat some of Willy Wonka's famous and delicious chocolate.

He has to endure living in the shadow of the huge and mysterious factory that produces the mouth watering chocolate and he only gets one bar a year on his birthday.

Meanwhile, Willy Wonka, the Howard Hughes of chocolate has put five golden tickets in the bars and yes, you guessed it, Charlie wins one.

The ticket allows him a trip around the factory with such diverse and strange characters as the upper-class snob Violet Beauregarde, the fat Augustus Gloop, and the pistol-packing Mike Teavee.

The journey takes them around a world of confection-

ery wonder which is inhabited by Oompah Loompah's.

The sets are marvelous and the songs allow all the kids to join in.

The whole cast carry off this magical tale well and it is a must for all parents who have bored kids over Christmas.

Shows at 10.30am Dec 21st-24th; 28th-29th; 31st and Jan 2nd-3rd; 6th-7th; 10th-13th. At 2.15pm Dec 21st-22nd; 28th; 30th-31st and Jan 3rd; 6th; 9th-12th.

steve humphries

## Man's search for identity. (etc)

VOICE READERS, like many other people, may have missed the most important local art happening of the year.

### PREMIERE

This occurred during the recent electricity blackouts, when Radio Nottingham carried a world premiere performance of the "Nottingham Street Guide".

The two hour broadcast included recitations of every street name in the county

(and some from other counties) and the electricity areas into which they fell.

### WORLD REACTION

World reaction to this literary coup has been instantaneous. In a special feature the Casper, Wyoming, World Bugle described the work as: "a modern masterpiece; an electrifying epic of one man's search for himself in the modern world".

Especially praised has been ace producer Ron Coles' use of untrained actors. These men and women - plucked from the daily drudgery of their lives as newsreaders - have shown us all that artistic ability can lurk in the most surprising settings.

Ron is understood to be negotiating for the film rights to the Midlands Commercial Classified Telephone Directory.

## Star Jaws?

EVER ANXIOUS to protect the Voice's reputation of being first with the news, ace sleuths recently hijacked their way to America. From there - and above the noise of popcorn crunching - they filed this report.

NEW YORK - STOP - Difficult to understand just why

Star Wars has already become the most profitable film ever made - stop - The story has a young boy, helped by an old republican (Alec Guinness), avenging his father's death by destroying an evil Empire - nothing more than a space-age Western - stop - Nor, with the exception of Guinness, is the acting that good - stop - In fact, the whole film is very tongue-in-cheek: a huge joke, with its stars 2 human-like robots (who K9, currently starring in Dr Who, is surely copied from) - stop - Some

### NAZI FILM

American critics have seen a more sinister aspect in the military atmosphere of the film - the ending, for example, is copied from the Nazi film "Triumph of the Will" - stop -

Though this is extreme, the fact remains that this film, like Jaws, is one of those specially manufactured for a market-researched audience - stop - Watch out for a wave of Star-Wars T-shirts, vibrators, toenail cutters, etc - stop -

It's not worth joining the inevitable queues when released in a few years - wait a few weeks or, better still, wait a bit longer and see it at the Savoy - stop -

## Bob Dylan - Hawaiian Style!

WHEN I INQUIRED about tickets for Alberto de los Trios Paranoias at the Poly building the porter guessed they must be Italian.

In fact, though the group thanked the audience for appreciating their playing of "Bob Dylan Hawaiian Style", the group comes from Manchester and is in a very British humorous tradition. To label them, they're the Bonzos of the late 1970's - a musical Python or the Rocking Berries of rock.

At their best their material is as sharp as the Bonzos. In Country and Western classic "Old Truss" the faithful old dog runs off with his master's girl and car. Or "Jesus Wept" - the rock star struck down with a bad dose of BG (Billy Grahamitis).

Other parts of their repertoire are less lethal, perhaps because it was only their third public performance of a new show. The band has chosen to throw up the opportunity of continuing the successful West End run of their musical "Snuff Rock" in favour of getting back on the road.

But the dips on the laughter meter are also due to a growing paucity of piss take targets.

Much of current rock is too bland. It's too soggy to be punctured. Much else is its own parody. Lou Reed and Iggy Pop, two of the Albertos' victims are currently recycling themselves as farce.

The Albertos try hard but, minus the title of "Mindless Boogie", their Status Quo parody sounded just like a K-Tel cover version.

For newer "genres" they do a creditable "Snuffing in a Babylon" and stick a rather weak two fingers up at "New Wave" with an extremely minimalist pogo dance.

They didn't give two hours of continuous fall-about fun. Nevertheless there was full guffaw and giggle value. It seldom dragged, and had lots of verbal and visual gags. They hit the target more often than not, if not always vandalising the bulls-eye. Rock needs them.

george christopher

# WE'RE HERE!

BOOKS, POSTCARDS,  
CIGARETTE CARDS,  
BADGES AND  
RECORDS.

SWOP, BUY OR SELL.

**Jermy & Westerman**  
**119 Mansfield Road**

**OPEN SIX DAYS A WEEK**



# TOMMY'S AND TEXTILES

TERRY ATKINSON, lecturer in Fine Art at Leeds University and founder member of the Art and Language group, is a deeply committed artist.

His work, large drawings and pastels, reveal a cynicism and bitterness about the First World War. The drawings are from photographs at the Imperial War Museum. As he says, "clearly this work on 14-18 could not have been done alone without photographs - and many of the photographs do record a psychological insight into the 'sitter' - the Tommy as stereotype, but a true stereotype....".

His objectives, his thoughts are contained in his Notes (available at the Gallery) which, though difficult at times to comprehend, show how he arrives at his political attitudes towards art. They contain his remarks on Marxism and art analysis, with personal selections from Berger, Brecht, Hegel, Shelley and, above all, Marx.

The starkness of his Marxist commitment is quickly apparent in the titles he chooses for his work - "Private Riga-Mortis", "Private Burnthand" and "Private-For-The-Rest-Of-Your-Life-Face". The faces of the men, the enlisted, are at once hard, emotional and somehow also warped, as if shaped by this nationalist horror show.

The drawings show distaste for war and the Generals game. In "Theatre of War, April in Arras" two dead bodies lie in front of a stone wall while behind the reddening dawn of a clear April day emerges, almost mocking the Tommy's useless attempts to survive.

Alongside the exhibition there are photographs of troops in Nottingham at the time. The spectacle, the relentless need to justify the jingoism shines through the flagwaving and the marching bands.

Two pieces sum up Atkinson's approach to the War. One is the drawing of Marshall Foch and Sir Henry Wilson which, with penetrating style, shows their eyes glazed and supercilious expressions, almost impervious to their surroundings.

The second is from the Notes, in a comment by a soldier: "Those poor buggers on our left today - a machine gun cut up the lot - then Jerry pumped some shrapnel into them.....that poor bastard from Doncaster with

shrapnel up his bollocks - all he kept saying 'I've lost my fucking wedding-tackle'. I'll remember that phrase 'Fucking wedding-tackle' for the rest of my life".

Realism and perception in art are rare commodities: when combined with political awareness they are almost non-existent. Atkinson has all three.

He is subjective and individual. Support a bold attempt to stretch your political and historical perspective of the First World War.

"TOWARDS Another Picture" at the Castle Museum has something for everyone. The range is varied and in many ways perverse. However, it is a new definition of art, and it stimulates the imagination and shows that British Art is by no means dead.

The post-war era has seen many changes in the approach that the public has to art and the artist. No longer are they vilified to the same extent as they were. Many of today's artists have gained the financial independence that their predecessors never dreamed of attaining. The public's attitude to the artist has changed fundamentally over the last 30 years and the Midland Group exhibition shows many of these changes.

Particular favourites stand out: the Bomberg "Sunset Bideford Bay, North Devon" is exciting and fresh though its roots go back to the late 19th Century; the Bacon "Figure Study II" whose manic qualities are frightening and relevant while my own preference must be the Kitaj "Kennst du das Land".

I enjoyed this show and the chance to reacquaint oneself with loved paintings and discover new ones. One of these was by a local painter Paul Waplington. His "Lace Factory, Leavers Machine Shop, Nottingham" is full of colour and passion - a trade he knows well as he is a part-time lace designer.

Talking with him he said that as a painter he was trying to show people the real Nottingham.

His painting is political and deserves a place in this exhibition. One can only hope that we will not have to wait 30 years for another chance to review the artistic work and experiences of many valuable artists.



Terry Atkinson's 'Infantrymen at the 13th Yorkshire and Lancashire staring at the camera. Passchendaele Ridge. 1917.'

IN "QUALIFICATIONS" - the first exhibition in the second part of the new Midland Group complex - is work from 40 students who have finished their degrees or diplomas this year.

The exhibits are of the very highest standard and cover many and varied crafts in Britain today - domestic and sculptural ceramics; jewellery and silversmithing; embroidery; woven, knitted and printed textiles; furniture; wood and glass are all well represented.

Five people stood out in this excellent exhibition, which is very well put together.

Angela Bovington's embroidery - more like 3D sculptures, as she says - are exciting and warm: a greenhouse with a difference. Eleri Mills couples her embroidery with painting: they are superbly executed with a real touch of authenticity to them.

Tessa Struminger's weird and wonderful hats covered with strange animals are comic - as well as being an insight into the vanity of certain women.

Jane McDonald's Klee-like ceramics work well and

stand out amongst the other high standard of ceramic work, whilst Sally Smith's amusing birds add the required touch of lunacy to a most rewarding exhibition.

All the exhibits are for sale. Some prices are high, but this reflects the fact that they are all individually designed and made. Anyone looking for a different Xmas present (or anyone who isn't) will enjoy themselves thoroughly for a few hours.

steve humphries

History and Drawings  
Recent work by Terry Atkinson. Midland Group Gallery, 24-32 Carlton Street (entrance Warser Gate)  
30th Nov 1977 - 22nd Jan 1978  
10.30am to 5.00pm (mon to sat)

Towards Another Picture  
Nottingham Castle Museum  
10th Dec 1977 - 25th Jan 1978  
10.00am to 4.45pm daily.  
(except Christmas Day)  
(Closed Midday 24th Dec to 2nd Jan 1978)

"Qualifications" - New Craftsmen's work at Midland Group Gallery.  
Times as above.