

The shape and form of this paper was discussed at two open meetings. At these meetings people talked about the things they liked about the first issue, the things that they thought were wrong with it, and what should go into the second issue.

A much larger number of people contributed articles, etc. to No. 2, but it was still a very small group who went through the hard grind of putting it together and laying it out. More people must participate in the lay-out if the paper is to continue - and that's where the important decisions are made.

We want this newspaper to be used as part of getting to know each other. Organising to fight

together. We want it to be used as a weapon to fight for our own control of Hackney.

We want more and more people to write about their experiences, to use the *Hackney Gutter Press* to tell each other what's going on in the area.

No-one owns this paper, no-one is seeking to make a profit from it. Its articles and policy are talked about in open meetings. If you aren't satisfied come and do something about it. Lets make the third issue even better.

The next open meeting, will be held at Centerprise, 34, Dalston Lane, E8 on Thursday, June 8th at 8pm.

3p

HACKNEY GUTTER PRESS

NUMBER
TWO



Housing Associations Con
Police Complaints
Hackney Hospital Horrors
SS found guilty
rent tribunals
Message from Brixton

PLANNERS, TENANTS AND BULLDOZERS



The Minister has just agreed to a request by Hackney Borough Council for a compulsory purchase order to knock down 107-185(odd), Sandringham Road, 36-46 and 52-74(even) of Downs Park Road, 50-76(even) of Cecilia Road, all but two houses in Ferncliffe Road and all of Mountford Road. He has rejected the request to knock down 133a-181(odd) of Amhurst Road. Work to demolish the area will commence at the end of 1973 according to the Council's planning department. The houses are due to become empty within six months of the work starting. That is, they want us all out of the area in 12 months!

The argument given for keeping Amhurst Road as it is, is that it would be cheaper to renovate the houses and make them habitable. Implying that at the moment they are uninhabitable. Why doesn't the same argument apply to the rest of the area. Probably, because most of the houses in that stretch are privately owned. Money wins. But if the private landlords invested their rent profits in the homes they take them from, then the area would be more than adequate as it is.

Let the Tenants

There was a public meeting some time ago to discuss this 'redevelopment' - but of course tenants, not having any interest in the property, were not informed. Surely, if anyone should decide the future of an area it's the people that live in it.

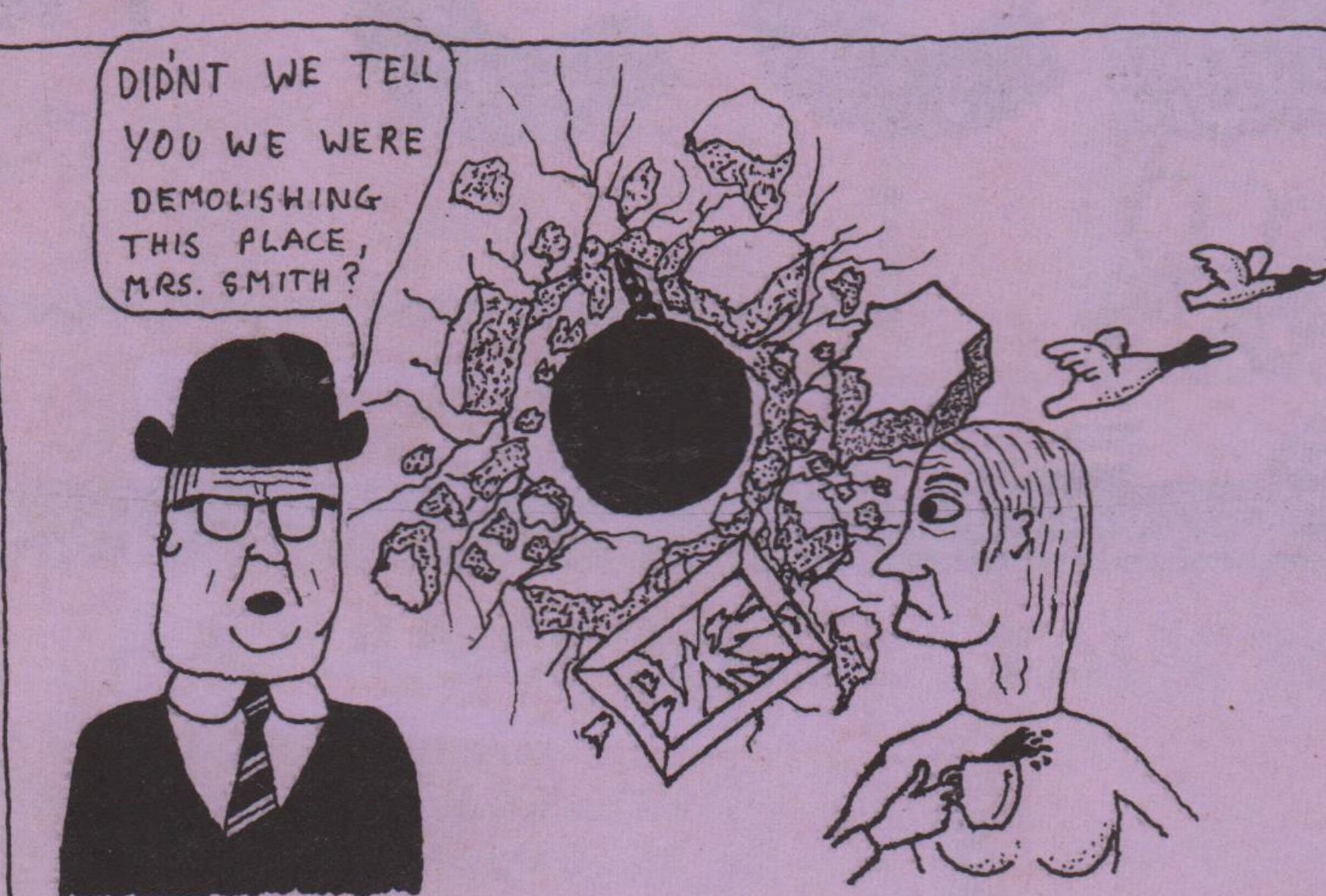
Will the people lucky enough to be rehoused, really be happier in their new homes? Nearly all council estates that are designed in this country are ugly, grey, dingy, boring and lacking in facilities of any kind. Nowhere for

the kids to play and nowhere for the grown ups to meet each other. The mental health record in council blocks continues to deteriorate each year.

What's the point in knocking down the area anyway? At the most it would have only rehoused a hundred more people. And even this number, which is somewhat short of solving Hackney's housing problem, is doubtful now that the knocking down order against Amhurst Road has not been confirmed.

After the compulsory purchase order has been advertised in the newspaper, there are six weeks for those with interest in the area (landlords) to object, for the good it will do them.

Lets all object and demand that the development of the area, if there's to be one, be decided upon by those who have homes in it.



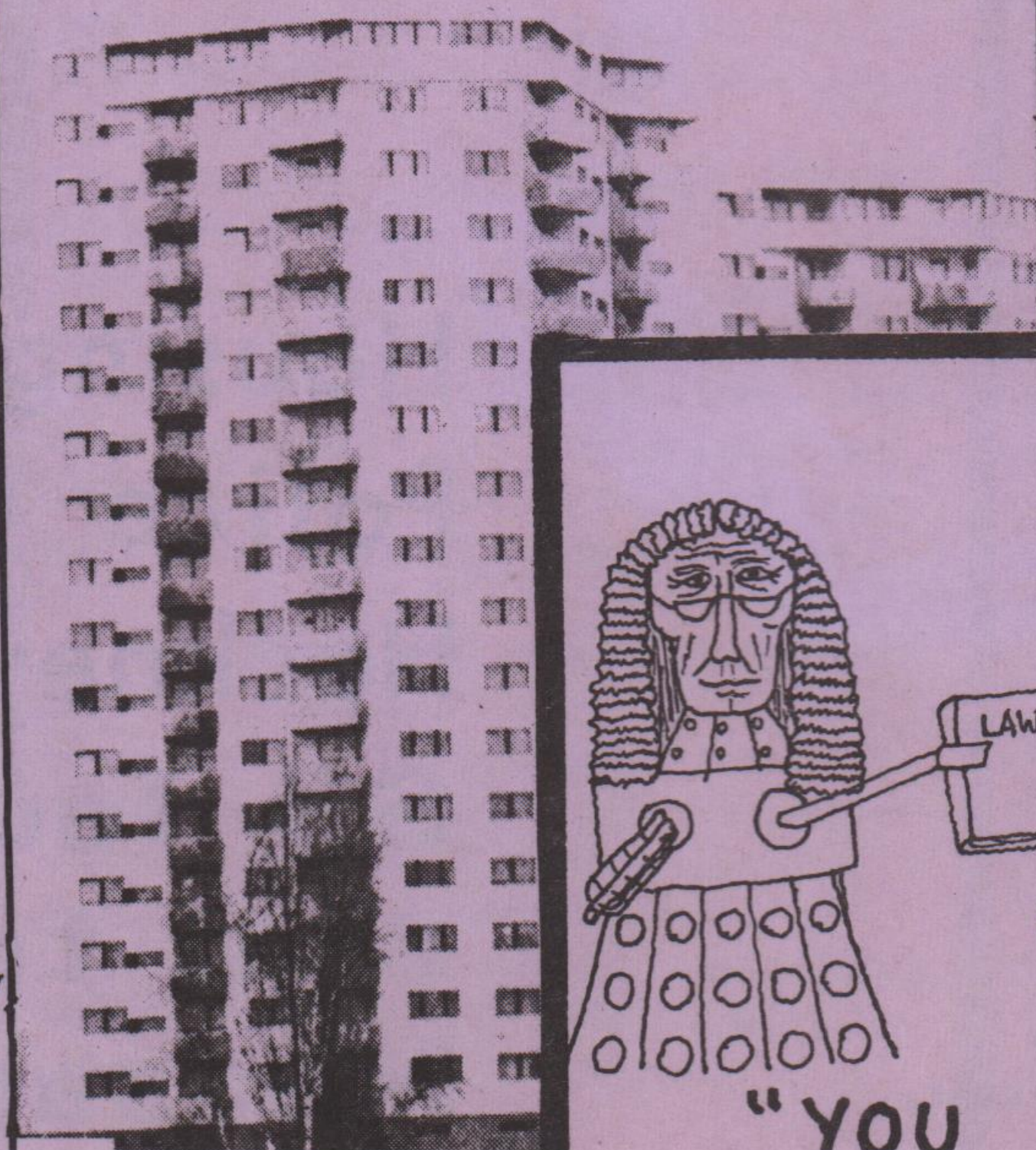
New Houses For Old?

Most of the tenants in the area have no idea what is going on. No one tells them. Hackney Borough Council tells us that there is no legal obligation to inform tenants, only people with "interest in the property", i.e., the landlords!

There's a tatty notice tied to a lamp-post here and there, but mostly the word has gone from mouth to mouth. Most people think that they are going to be rehoused in some cushy comfortable council house at a modest rent.

Hackney Council told us quite plainly that it is not its policy to rehouse anyone other than council tenants or tenants in unfurnished accommodation. What will happen to the many furnished tenants and owner occupiers, who Hackney Council will only rehouse in very exceptional circumstances?

Or say we'll refuse to budge and join up with our squatter friends in the area.



Colville Estate Tenants Association, Mr. Briggs, 2, Upwey House, Whitmore Rd. N7.
Beckers Community Association, Mr. S. Baker, The Beckers, Rectory Rd. N16
St. Mary's Social and Welfare Club, J. Pugh, 104, Weymouth Terrace, E2.
De-Beauvoir New Town Tenants Association, R. Dundridge, 18, St Helier St. De Beauvoir Rd. N1.
George Downing Tenants and Community Association, S. Keene, 44, Joseph Court, Amhurst Park, N16.
Milton Gardens Community Association, J. Harrison, 34, Chaucer Court, Howard Rd. N16.
Morland Estate Community Association, B. Glassock, 41, Mapledene Estate, Mapledene Rd. E8.
Summit Community Association, Cllr. A. Harrison, 91, Summit Estate, Portland Ave, N16.
Warwick Grove Community Association, Mrs. Bergman, 49, Moreton Close, E5.
Green Lanes Tenants Association, Mrs. P. Collier, 32, Chadworth House, Amwell Green, Green Lanes, N16
Hindle House Community Association, K. Silverlock, 24, Shacklewell Lane, E
Charles Square Tenants Association, W. East, 32, Touchard House, Chart St. N1.
Evering Road Community Association, Mrs. P. Lock, 168, Evering Rd, E5
Hawksley Ct. Community Association, W. Walker, 6 Galsworthy Terrace, Hawksley Ct, Albion Rd, N16.
Lea View Community Association, Mrs. F. Fruin, 53, Lea View House, Springfield, E5.
Nye Bevan Community Association, H. Clark, 138, Nye Bevan Estate, Glyn Rd. E5.
Mount Community Association, T. Brooker, 12, The Mount, Upper Clapton Road, E5.
Trelawney Community Association, R. West, 66, Trelawney Estate, Paragon Rd, E9.
Webb and Chardmore Community Assoc, A. Bennison, 9, Webb Estate, Clapton Common, E5.
Lordship Tenants Assoc, Mr. Beetle, 4, Lordship House, Lordship Rd, N16
Wenlock Tenants Assoc. Mr Tear, 34, Bletchley Ct, Wenlock St N1.
St. Johns Tenants Assoc. Miss M. Scott, 112, Buckland Ct. N1.
Trowbridge Est. Alf Toye, 42, Devre Point.

THE SLIPPERY SANDS OF HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS



Housing Associations were set up by the Government a few years ago as an attempt to do something about the housing situation. It was a situation that appealed mostly to the Tories, as Housing Associations were neither council housing which the Tories don't like, nor private housing - although they could be turned into private housing later on.

THE IDEA...

The idea was that the councils were too big to go around buying individual houses, so small housing associations would get grants from the local council or the GLC, buy houses, convert them into self contained flats and then let them at subsidised (*council*) rents to people in the area. Thus adding to the housing stock of the area.

This all sounds good, but what really happened?

A housing association goes along to a house, and they say they want to buy it. In most cases the house will be occupied by several families who might be furnished tenants in the house.

3 families in...6 out

In a large house there could be say six families living there. So the Housing Association says they'll buy it. The Estate Agent says the house is being sold with vacant possession and that the families have another flat to move to, which in most cases is a lie and so six families might be evicted.

double your money

Now what do those families do? They usually go along to a housing association and get on to the waiting list for 18 months or so for the chance of getting a flat, at probably double the rent that they were paying before. (*Council rents aren't cheap*).

The other thing is that although six families might have been displaced by the housing association buying the house, the chances are

that the house would only have been converted into say 3 flats, and so if anything *there is a loss of housing accommodation in the area.*

housing merry go round

And so there is a merry go round of people living in flats being chased out by the so-called well meaning housing associations. *And then going along to a housing association for the chance of a flat at something like double the rent they were paying before.*

Why do people set up housing associations? In a few cases, it was the so-called well meaning, middle class people who moved into the area. Probably displacing a few families on the way. They felt rather guilty about this and decided to try and do something for the housing in the area. And in a lot of cases have made it worse.

THE SECOND ACTEL STORY

The other type is the case of Mr. SANDS, the smooth talking boss of the Second Actel Housing Association.

You'll know their houses because when you see a "sold by R.B. James" board, the chances are, it will be yet another house for Second Actel and more money in the pocket for Mr. Sands.

Mr. Sands has made a lot of money in his brave attempt to help Hackney's housing problem. How does he do it?

Well, Sands is a surveyor and a few years ago it was difficult for building companies, etc. to borrow money. So they couldn't put up buildings and they didn't need surveyors and architects. Consequently, Sands wasn't making as much money as he felt he should be.

What did he do? He set up a housing association. Namely, the SECOND ACTEL. No trouble and clever old Mr. Sands realised that he could

easily get cheap loans from the GLC to buy houses and convert them into flats.

But Sands wasn't really interested in the houses or the flats. What he was interested in was the big fat fees.

When a housing association buys a place, they have to convert it into flats.

opportunity knocks

Sands' fee for the surveyor's work would be something like £500!

Now, Mr. Sands, because of his link up with R.B. James has no trouble buying 100 houses a year. He hasn't up till now had much trouble doing that. He is making a cool £50,000. Not bad going, eh!

On top of this he is probably getting grants from SHELTER to help him run his office and a maintenance allowance from the GLC to look after the houses.

shifty sands

How is he really getting his £50,000 a year or whatever sum it is? Someone has to pay for it. And the person who is paying is none other than the tenant of the housing association. Cos the rents are worked out on the basis of the total costs of the house, conversion plus fees and then some magic sum is done - and the housing association arrives at a rent.

So you see that the more he pays for a house - and in his rush to get as much money as possible he doesn't care how much he pays for a house - the higher his fees. And the higher will be the rent the tenant of the housing association will pay.





ELLO, ELLO, ELLO



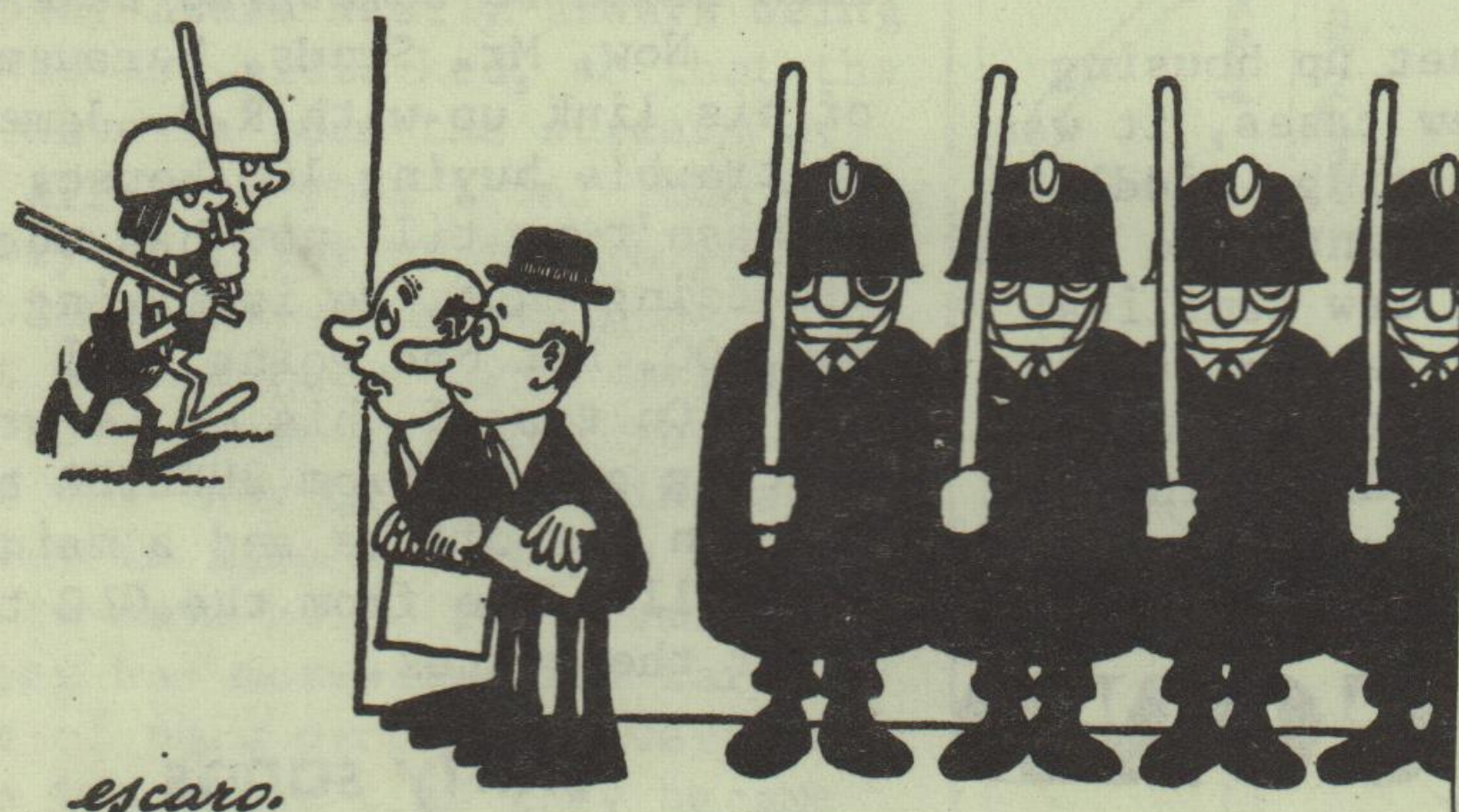
COMPLAINTS

The great British police force is not exactly famed for the brilliance of its crime detection. They freely admit that they can't find enough "criminals" and then say what's needed is more boots, more bullets and more "law and order".

As the police are too stupid to solve crimes they have to create them to prove how useful they are to the community, by dealing with them. Take a look at the court reports in the Hackney Gazette and you'll find that a large number of the crimes are ones such as assaulting the police, insulting behaviour, breach of the peace, etc. That is, the crimes would not have existed if the piggies had not shoved their snouts in.

the case of the russian fag end

The reason why the police create so many crimes is not because they are mindless fascist thugs; as they keep saying they are only human like the rest of us. From the top downwards there is an official policy of creating crimes. The chief sitting in Scotland Yard is no Sherlock Holmes. He can't work out who started the breach of the peace in Amhurst Road by the Russian fag end left in PC Plod's right nostril. He's got to have good crime detection figures though or he won't get his promotion, so the kind of crime the police start are great for the official reports. There's no problem finding out who did it. PC Plod merely says in court, "I was proceeding along Amhurst Road in the course of my duty and when I stopped the accused to question him he shoved a cigarette end up my right nostril....." The magistrate finds him guilty and there's a crime solved.



escaro.

'Clubs and helmets now; I don't know where these youths pick up such habits'.

The poor old copper on the beat has his problems; if he doesn't arrest lots of criminals he stays on the beat and won't get those cushy office jobs with lots of money, or worse - did you read about the village copper who got sacked because he didn't arrest enough people?

If you go out on the streets tonight

Its a boring life in the Metropolitan Police force, only relieved by the occasional bit of agro. When a copper's on night duty, he likes to make an arrest or two, because then he goes back to the station, fills in a few forms, then has the rest of the night off because he's got to be in court in the morning. So if you wander about at night, especially if you are long-haired or black, watch you don't obstruct the highway or "behave in a manner like to occasion a breach of the peace".

... You better go in disguise

WHO POLICES THE POLICE

With such methods of crime prevention its not surprising that lots of people have complaints against the old bill. It gets a bit boring complaining to your friends about them and they probably know what bastards they are anyway. So the authorities have devised an official complaints procedure. The ones who investigate complaints against the police are, of course, the police.

Till recently, when some of the more obvious Mafia type structure of the police force has been re-organised, the method of complaining was as follows: you go to the local cop shop and say you have a complaint to make. The copper on duty usually tells you to fuck off. If you don't do so, eventually they'll take your name and address and say you'll be hearing from them. What happens then is that Scotland Yard appoints a senior detective to investigate. He's supposed to be from another division, but often he'll be a drinking partner from the same station.

One day two men in blue shirts and big boots will call to your house. They'll question you in great detail about the incidents, making copious notes which they'll ask you to sign. Before you do so, read them. They are very unlikely to be exactly the words that came from your mouth, so make them change them.

The investigating officers are likely to appear very reasonable and polite. Not at all like the nasty pigs who beat you up or planted you. Its all part of the public relations job. Now comes the catch. There are 3 courses of action, the police can take. They can dismiss the complaint completely as trivial or malicious - very likely. If they decided there are some grounds for the complaint they can institute police disciplinary procedures - the person who complained is not, of course, told what the discipline is.



PASSING THE BUCK TO THE DPP

If the complaint is serious the evidence is referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions. That is, they pass the buck. A complaint that is not completely thrown out is usually passed to the D.P.P. There the evidence is supposed to be considered and the coppers taken to court if there are reasonable grounds.

As a complaint is usually your word against the police, you won't need three guesses to know who they'll believe and how many coppers are prosecuted. Complaints are passed to the D.P.P. when the investigators see there are grounds to the complaint, but don't want to do anything about it. Once its gone there, "its out of the police hands". No disciplinary action can then be taken. When the D.P.P. throws out the complaint it does not mean they have decided the pigs are innocent. It just means that the D.P.P. has decided that a conviction is not very likely in court. Its never very likely.

As there are so many complaints these days, a special complaints department has been set up at Scotland Yard. (Did you know that half the police force spends its time investigating the other half?) So don't bother with the local cop shop. Send your complaints to the Chief of the Metropolitan Police by recorded delivery and keep a copy.



When you have a complaint against the police its a good idea to get the buggers straight to court. Take out a private prosecution. Its quite easy and doesn't cost anything. Work out first what you are going to charge them with. There's a free legal advice centre at Centerprise every Thursday evening. Then go to Old Street Court before ten thirty any day. You have to go before the magistrate and ask for a summons against the policeman, saying what crime you accuse him of. Give his number if you've got it. The magistrate might try and put you off, but be insistent and you'll get the summons against the policeman to appear in court some time later.

Get your evidence sorted out beforehand - there's a a good little pamphlet, 'Up against the Law', available via Gutter Press with some useful advice. Don't expect anything like justice from the court. The magistrate will be on the side of the police. But the most effective form of complaint is publicity.

The police complaints system is carefully secret. They like to give the idea that they spend their time helping old ladies across the road and don't like the truth of their activities publicised. If you have any interesting stories about the local boys in blue, why not publicise them in the Hackney Gutter Press. Perhaps a pig of the month contest can be run.

First entry: PC N399 from Kings Cross. He hangs around Shoreditch. Watch him. He's nasty.

Special Patrol Group in Street - Fight

A couple of months ago five people, all members of Claimants' Unions, were arrested following a street fight in Grosvenor Avenue, Stoke Newington, involving members of Scotland Yard's riot trained Special Patrol Group. Three police, in a large transit van, pulled up as three people left number 29.

They began to question the driver, Chris Ratcliffe, as to who the owner was, was he insured, had he got a license, etc, etc. Chris went into 29 to fetch the owner who came out with the relevant documents, and assured the police that Chris was in legitimate possession of the vehicle. Within half an hour there had been a fight, a raid on the house and five people arrested - Chris Broad, Sue Finch, Brian Reeve, Brenda Vincent and Chris Ratcliffe.

ASSAULT ON THE POLICE

When it came to court the police alleged that fighting started when Brenda, one of the passengers in the car, got out, swore at them, shouted abuse at them and pissed on the street in front of them. She was charged with behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace and using obscene language; the rest with assaulting the police.

The police claimed that people came out from the house to help Brenda after they grabbed her. Then Brenda escaped and so they summoned help.

The first to be arrested was Chris Broad. Then between twenty and thirty police searched the house, arrested Sue Finch and smashed up some the furniture. Brenda was arrested at the end of the street. Chris Ratcliffe and Brian Reeve were arrested half an hour later on their way to get a solicitor.

NO LAWYERS-SELFDEFENCE

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All pleaded not guilty and defended themselves. At the first hearing the 3 men were tried and at the second hearing on May 17th, the two women were tried. PC Sinclair alleged that he had grabbed Chris Ratcliffe After he had been kicked and punched by someone behind him. The magistrate at North London Court, Stoke Newington ruled that Sinclair's evidence could not be relied upon, when Chris made a successful application that there was no case to answer.

But Magistrate Hopkins obviously couldn't go completely against the police, and gave Brian Reeve and Chris Broad suspended prison sentences. This, in spite of the fact that five people testified that Brian Reeve was not even at the scene.

At the second hearing, Sue with the assistance of her McKenzie advisor - a friend who helps you in the dock when you don't want or can't get a lawyer - was acquitted of assault. She explained that she was inside the house all the time, looking after her kid.

Brenda was acquitted of the first charge against her when the magistrate ruled that it was unlikely that she could have occasioned a breach of the peace in a side street at midnight. She was convicted of using obscene language and remanded on bail for probation reports, when she told the magistrate that she couldn't pay the fine or costs, because she was a £10 a week claimant with four kids.

The five were arrested as our protectors of law and order were patrolling the street at the time they like best. When there's no one around to watch too closely what they're up to.

THREE CHARGES THROWN OUT

Similar incidents happen every night. The difference here was that the accused fought back. They didn't passively plead guilty and beg tamely for forgiveness. They pleaded not guilty and defended themselves. Of the six charges, 3 were thrown out.

HACKNEY GAZETTE LIBEL

The Hackney Gazette reported mainly the police side of this incident. Failing to give prominence to what is a rare occasion in Hackney courts. The police were not believed and half the charges were thrown out. Moreover, their headline contained something with absolutely no foundation and that never came up at either trial - "Incidents near Angry Brigade HQ". The people involved consider such a headline as a malicious libel by our favourite local paper. At the time of going to press they are taking legal advice.



The Special Patrol Group are a specially trained force within the police who operate from Scotland Yard. They've nothing to do with the local police. You can recognize them by the letters 'C O' on their shoulders. They make a speciality of cruising around harassing people- searching kids in the street for no reason, stopping vehicles and searching them, and so on.

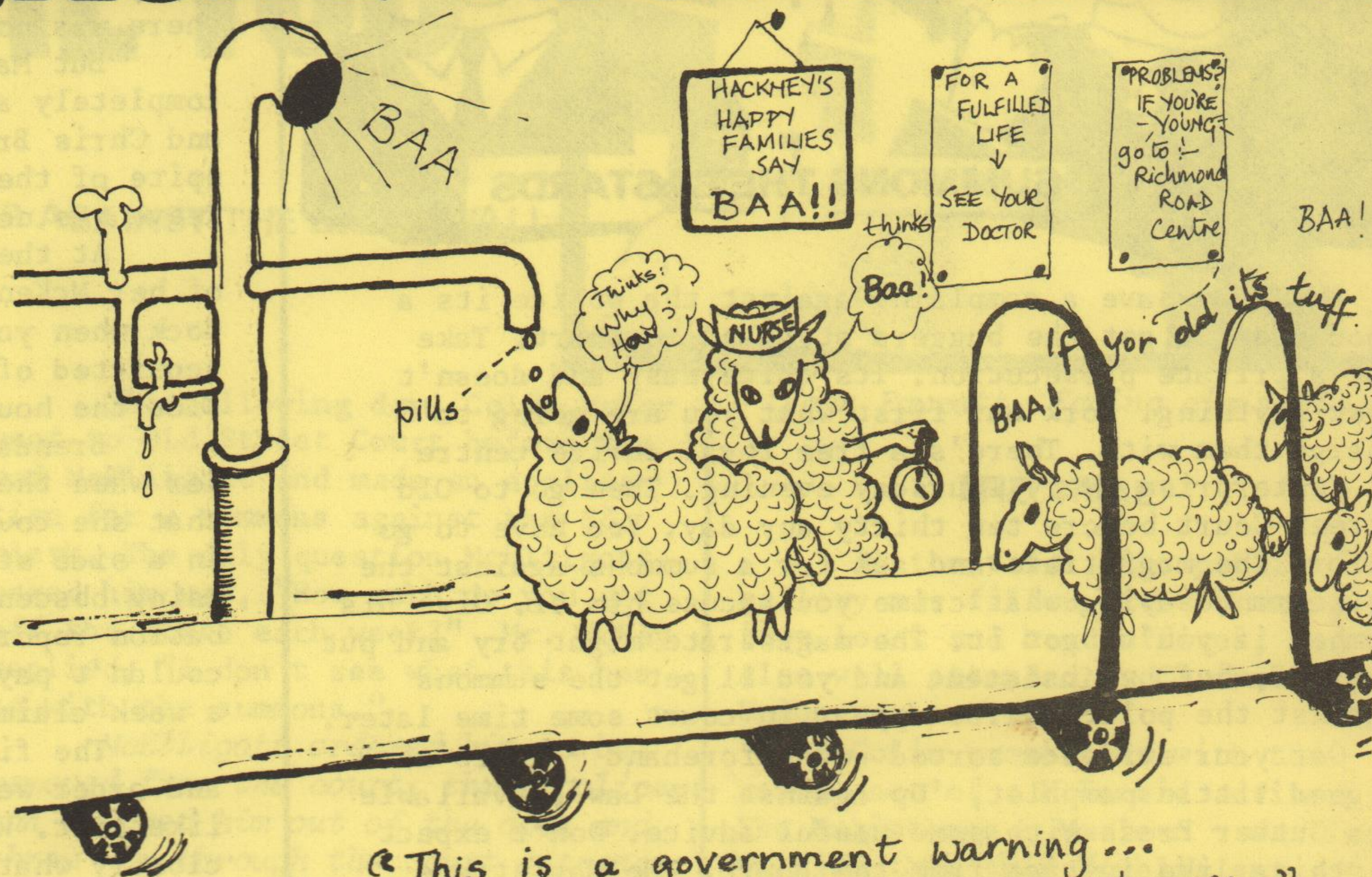
Often people who haven't broken the law are so provoked by the Special Patrol Group's arrogant and insulting behaviour that they answer back and end up arrested for 'assaulting the police' or similar charges.

Any examples of harassment by the Special Patrol Group should be reported to the Gutter Press.

From March this year these facilities were made 'free'. You no longer have to pay not to have children.

If you are married and want a child you are not warned about the Hackney maternity hospitals. There is no time for discussion about the reasons for having a child, the emotional pressures of pregnancy and motherhood, the financial strain or the lack of play space and day nurseries in Hackney. If you are unmarried you are not supposed to want a child, let alone have one and yet whether married or unmarried having an abortion is made very difficult and expensive.

SEXUAL PLANNING SEXUAL NIGHTMARES



Q This is a government warning...
thinking can damage your health."
Do you feel you've been treated

Do you feel you've been treated like a bag of naughty ovaries?

Don't feel embarrassed to ask questions.

Don't take "I haven't got time"
for an answer.

JUMP OFF THE CONVEYOR BELT!

THE PLANNING CLINICS SCREW US UP

I first went to Brook Street Clinic for advice on contraception. I knew I could not take the pill because of a previous thrombosis in my leg and had decided to use the cap.

"I can't see what the problem is- you're obviously not co-operating." And I was conscious of other women being kept waiting outside.

During the week of practice that followed I talked to a friend of mine who had had a bad experience at another clinic and she thought I ought to go to the family Planning Clinic in Lower Clapton Road, which I did although the doctor at Brook Street had said the Family Planning Clinics were like factories.

I still do not feel safe about using the cap which I think is partly due to the impersonal approach of both clinics.

Having just moved to Hackney and knowing nothing about local family planning clinics I looked up "Family Planning" in the telephone directory and there I found: North London Family Planning.
61 Malborough Road
Archway.

A friendly elderly doctor gave me very brief instructions about the cap which I had no difficulty in following.

I was not advised to practice for a week as in family planning clinics generally, but was given the cap and told to come back if I had any problems. I had forgotten how to use it by the next day - and had to ask a friend. But I did use it and exactly one month later discovered I was pregnant.

After having an abortion, (not available on the N.H.S. in Hackney) I went to Lower Clapton Road Clinic and started to take the pill. I was given no information about the side effects or reasons for them. The doctor admitted that the effects of the pill were unpredictable and warned me that there were risks in taking it.

When I returned for a check up I found I had gained 5lbs and was told to "stop eating sweet things"! No one explained that gain in weight is due to fluids

collecting in your body and that taking the pill has the effect of making you permanently pregnant.

The first time I went to the clinic the doctor was quite reasonable; still this was just a check-up and I was given a different sized cap.

I had to return a fortnight later. The cap was too big. The doctor conceded this point but became very obviously irritated when I said I had changed my mind and had decided to take the pill. Her reaction was:

"Why don't you make up your mind?"
I replied that I had been trying to find out about the pill and asked her if she could tell me what effect it had on the chemical workings of my body. She told me to go downstairs to be informed.

A nurse gave me a yellow card with directions of how to take the pill. I asked her if she could give me any information about the effects of the pill.

"Well you know what it does don't you?" she said. I looked a bit confused because of course I did - it stops you getting pregnant. But how does it do this, and what does it do to your body?

"It stops ovulation" she said.

OH ALRIGHT! I'LL FIND OUT FOR MYSELF.

HACKNEY HOSPITAL HORRORS

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7



FOR INFORMATION
ABOUT MEETINGS
AND ACTIVITIES
CONTACT
HACKNEY HOSPITAL
GROUP
VIA CENTERPRISE.

"I CAN'T SEE WHAT THEY ALL COMPLAIN ABOUT!"

Survivors Union

A group of us came together because we were angry about the conditions we found while in the maternity units of the local hospitals. We spoke to other women in Hackney and found that many had had similar experiences. Although some thought the hospitals were alright it often turned out that they just didn't expect any thing better.

Blood, Sweat and Fears

We found cases of specific medical incompetence. Joss was in pain throughout her pregnancy, but at the ante-natal clinic she was only told "The baby is alright."

While she was in labour she was asked "What have you been given for your infection?" An infection which might have killed the baby had been diagnosed months before but never treated. Mary had the afterbirth left inside her and had to be operated on a few days later to remove it.

But apart from these specific cases we were angry about the attitude of the doctors towards us.

It was like being on a production line.

The whole thing was nothing to do with us, if we asked what was happening we were told to "Shut up and push."

No information is ever given to us...

If you go to 'mothercraft' you are given such advice as "Get your husband to buy you a washing machine, the laundrette is too dirty for a baby's washing."

It is no wonder women get post natal depression. In Hackney Hospital there is one hour's visiting a day, so you can't even talk to your friends. The food is cold and disgusting, there are not enough baths. You may be victimised because you are not married or because you do not want to breast feed. You are given sleeping pills at night, then woken up to feed or clothe the baby.

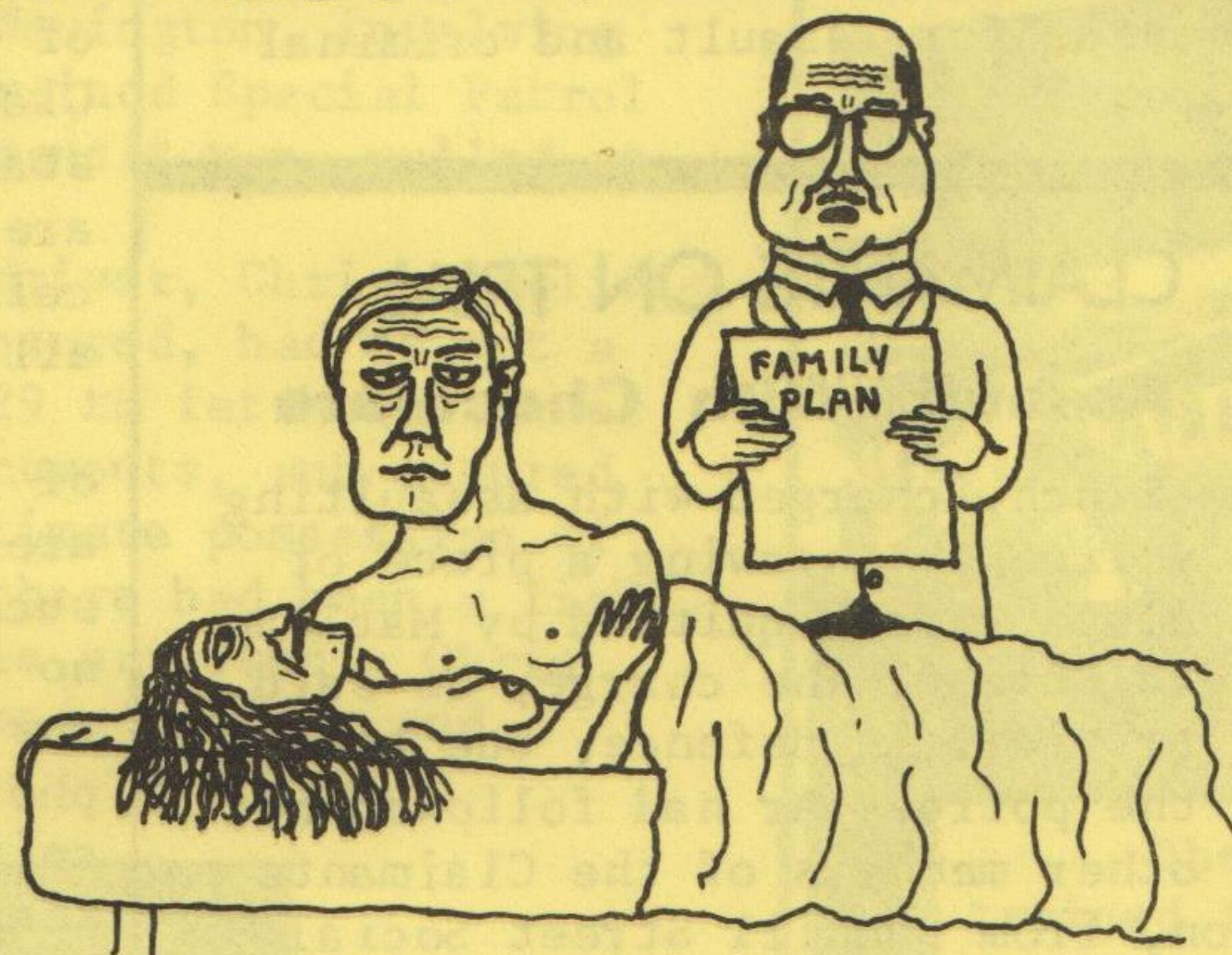
If you complain you may well suffer for it and anyway there is no point in complaining to the nurses who are in as bad a position themselves, underpaid and overworked, many students used as cheap labour.

Our Lives In Our Hands

The responsibility is in the hands of the Management Board, a group of people chosen without any reference to us who use the hospitals.

We have been collecting signatures for a petition making specific demands for the improvements like a playroom for kids in the Ante-natal Clinic and longer visiting hours. We will soon take this to the Management Board with statements about specific cases of cruelty and criminal negligence. Maybe they will listen to us and make some improvements, but we will never have the hospitals and clinics we want until we control them OURSELVES!

OUR COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE FAMILY PLANNING CLINICS



"WAIT A MINUTE! I'M NOT SURE YOU CAN DO THAT."

- (7) It's like a doctor's waiting room, so we play "patient" and our sexuality is a disease which doctor's prescription will cure. THIS IS DEATH: YOU ARE YOUR BODY.
- (8) Even as dispensaries the Family Planning Clinics are not efficient. No information is available about how the pill works.
- (9) The attitude to contraception inside and outside clinics denies your sexuality, as if there is nothing positive in the physical relationship between a man and a woman unless they are prepared to have children.

Lower Clapton Road Mon. Wed. Thurs. 6.30 - 8p.m.
6 Lower Clapton Road Tel. 985 2316

Richmond Road Centre Thurs. 9.30 - 11.30 a.m.

136 Richmond Road
Tel. 254 6374

6.30 - 8 p.m. especially for young unmarried people.
Tues. a.m. by appointment

Shoreditch Health Centre

Tuesday 5 - 6.30 p.m. Thurs. p.m. (IUD session)

Barton House Centre Thurs. 5.30 - 7 p.m.

241 Albion Road, NI6

Tel. 254 4704

Somerford Grove Health Centre Wed 6 - 8 p.m. Friday p.m. IUD session.
Tel 249 2071

- (1) The clinics are not open long enough.
- (2) They are only open twice a week.
- (3) They are overcrowded because they are open for such a short time.
- (4) This means we have to wait on average two hours to see a doctor for two minutes.
- (5) Because there are only two doctors to see a very large number of women in two hours there is no time for any discussion about methods of contraception, sexual anxieties, domestic situation, the decision to have a baby or not to have one.
- (6) They are intimidating places. Details of our personal history are taken in front of a crowded waiting room. This wouldn't matter if there was any human contact between the women, but the institutional atmosphere can make this embarrassing and means we associate contraception with feeling guilty and frightened.

SS FOUND GUILTY - AND ABOUT TIME TOO



As reported in *Hackney Gutter Press* No. 1, on Thursday, February 17th, the staff of the notorious Lower Clapton Social Security office provoked a riot where claimants showed their anger by smashing up the barricaded cubicles. It was soon after this event that 3 Claimants Union members were selected by the Social Security(SS) staff to be arrested and charged under the Criminal Damages Act 1971 - maximum penalty is 10 years!

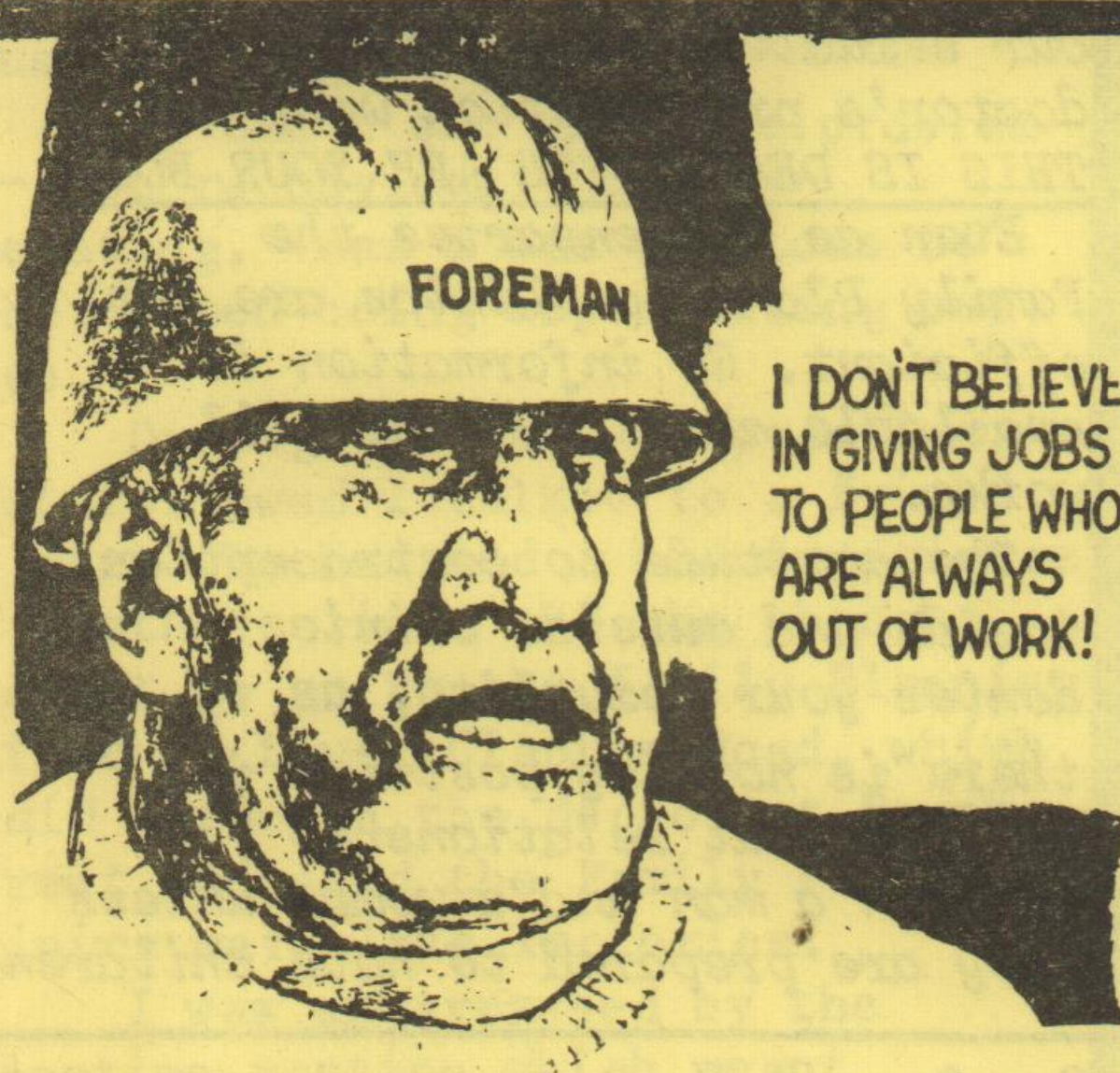
The three later elected to be tried by jury rather than appear before the mad police magistrate McElligott.

Among the incidents which provoked the 80-100 claimants present were the closure of the Social Security office for no apparent reason and a physical attack on a claimant by an SS clerk!

WHAT IT WAS ALL ABOUT

Colin McKay, a member of *Hackney Claimants' Union*, was attempting to take a photograph when he was punched in the face and his camera smashed beyond repair.

When the police arrived to arrest the 3 claimants, Mr. McKay informed them that the first criminal damage had been committed by an SS clerk smashing his camera. The police, only too keen to arrest the 3 claimants merely at the indication of the SS staff, were not so keen to do anything about the assault on Mr. McKay. The police ignored the protests of the many people who saw the attack by the SS clerk, and dragged away the 3 claimants who were kept in custody for 19 hours.



The Mad McElligott

Bail conditions requiring three claimants union members, to sign every day at Hackney Police Station, and imposed by the Mad McElligott of Old Street, were lifted following an application at the Crown Court. The three are awaiting trial by jury accused of smashing down cubicles at Lower Clapton Social Security Office.

UP AGAINST THE LEGAL WALL

The following day, Colin McKay went to Old Street Court before the mad McElligott and made an application for a summons against the SS clerk. The only question McElligott asked him was, "How much do you get off the State each week?" Mr. McKay replied, "I don't see what this has to do with the summons."

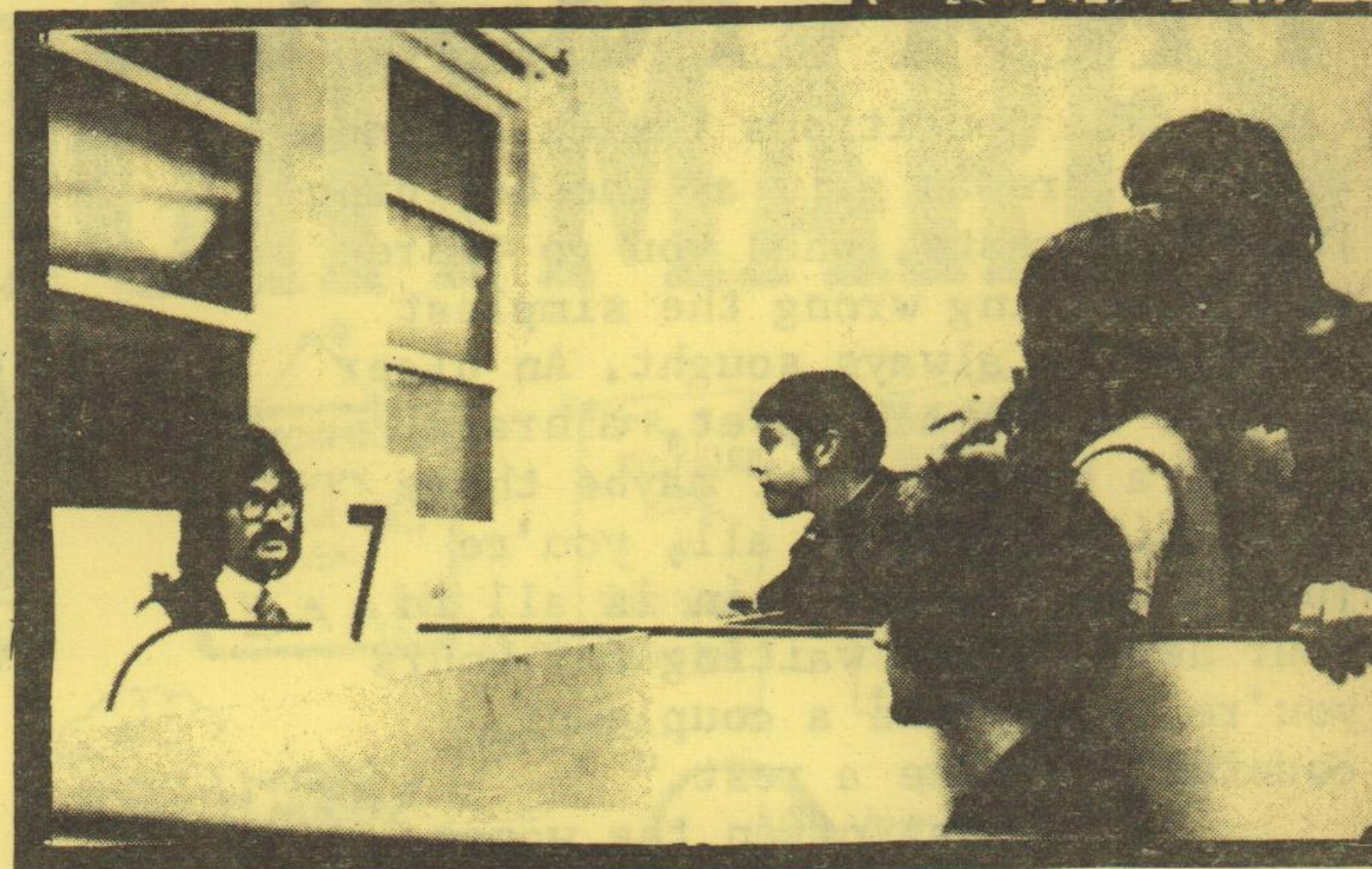
McElligott ordered him to be removed from the court, three policemen dragged him out of the dock and threw him through the court entrance.

He was eventually allowed back in, but the summons was not allowed because he did not have the clerk's name.

He spent the next two weeks calling at the SS office almost every day asking for this information. Each time they refused to give it. The Regional Controller of the SS told him, "It's none of my business what the local office is doing about the matter."

The police also refused to give him the clerk's name and Colin was ejected from the police station when he asked them what they were doing about the incident.

After a fortnight, he managed to break through the conspiracy of silence and lies of the police and SS, and found out the clerk's name - John Fawcett. Colin took out summonses for assault and criminal damage.



John Fawcett, facing claimants.

THE TRIAL

At the trial, the public gallery was filled with SS managers from local and head offices, and also well attended by Claimants' Union members.

Colin prosecuted with the assistance of a McKenzie advisor. The Magistrate - Maclean - was forced to find that this "public servant carrying out his difficult job did overstep the mark" though after "great provocation and mindless agitation." John Fawcett, one of the gang of SS clerks operating at Lower Clapton, was found GUILTY OF ASSAULTING A CLAIMANT.

THE SS ARE GUILTY

The SS are all GUILTY of gang-ing together to keep thousands of Hackney people from having enough money.

Old Street Court, who prefer to work *with* the SS and not against them, reluctantly ordered Fawcett to pay three pounds costs and conditionally discharged him.

Every day claimants are criminally treated by the SS. They are lied to, abused and their money stolen from them. If they show any signs of protest they end up in the courts. Claimants are finding that if they stand by each other in *unions* they are not only able to get their so-called rights, but also hit back in all sorts of ways.

For a change, it was a member of the SS found guilty, as they all are. Maclean was not very happy with such a situation. Although there were no allegations that Colin had done anything beyond trying to take a photograph the magistrate as a last spiteful gesture bound him over to keep the peace for 12 months for £50.

This seems to have been an attempt by magistrate Maclean to discourage people from taking private prosecutions against those who usually prosecute. *Colin McKay is not accepting Maclean's crap and is appealing to the Crown Court.*

CLAIMANTS ON TRIAL

Assault With Chocolate

Sue Finch, charged with assaulting the police by throwing a piece of chocolate, was acquitted by Maclean of Old Street. The charge, he said, was trivial. In defence, Sue told how the police car had followed her and other members of the Claimants Union, from Bonhill Street Social Security Office. The car went the wrong way down one way streets and the police shouted insults at them, persistently trying to provoke them. Complaints have been made against the three police officers and it is rumoured that they have been suspended from duty, pending the inquiry.

Lambeth Walk

The four Claimants Union members, awaiting trial, following a demonstration at Bonhill Street Social Security appeared at Lambeth Court on May 11th and had the case adjourned until July. They explained that

witnesses, who were on Social Security could not afford to travel to Lambeth and asked for it to be transferred to a court in Hackney. The application was rejected by the JUSTICE of the peace.

COLLAR YOUR LANDLORD

TAKE HIM TO THE RENT TRIBUNAL

Watch it

ANY ATTEMPT BY THE LAND LORD TO EVICT YOU BY FORCE IS ILLEGAL. Phone the police? They won't do anything so depend on your friends for support

AT KENSINGTON, SW5. s/c 2 bedrooms, lounge, kitchen bath, wc, Suit 3-4 sharing, 25 gns p.w. 730 0052

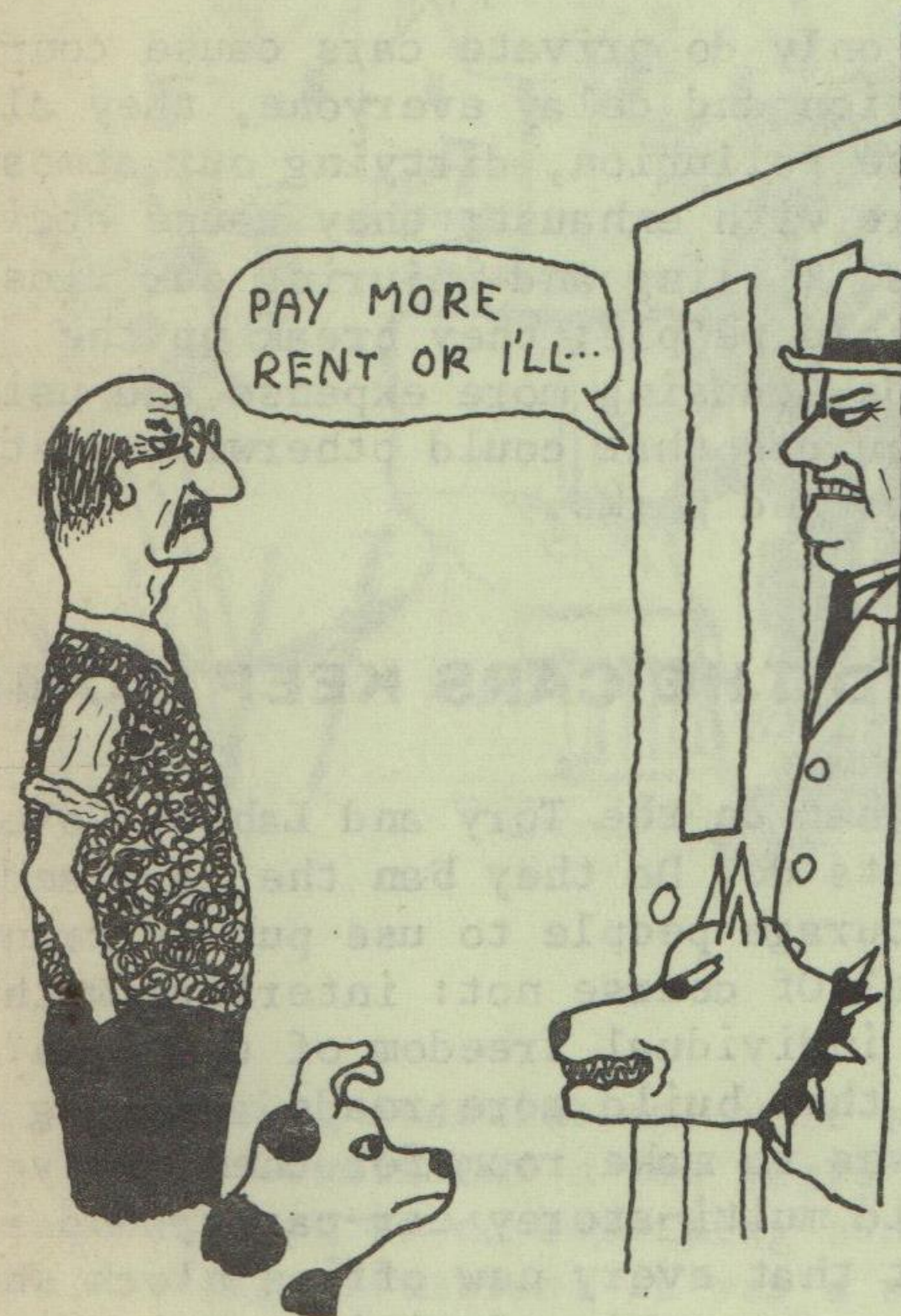
N 16 lux. s/c furn. flat. Suit 4 £23 p.w. 254 3738

EVENING STANDARD

FIVE POINTS THAT CAN LOSE YOUR CASE

- Arrears in rent
- EVIDENCE of damage to property, LETTERS of complaint from other tenants and breaking terms of agreement signed at the beginning of the tenancy.
- Evidence of subletting
- If the same names are not on the rent book as are on the form
- If you have signed a contract for a tenancy of three months or less, the Rent Tribunal cannot give you another six months security.

- The wording of the form can put you off, but don't let it grind you down. If you are unsure get some advice.
- The Rent Tribunal will write to tell you and your landlord the day and the time that they are coming to look at your home. Usually this is in the morning and the hearing is in the afternoon.
- They will be judging what sort of tenants you are by the state of your home, windows, etc. There are usually three men who will measure the rooms, ask questions and check all the items on the landlords inventory are still there. They send you this before they come so that you can check up.
- In the afternoon, you and anybody you wish to be with you go along to the Rent Tribunal itself, where the rent will be decided. The landlord may or may not be there. You may be questioned by the Rent Tribunal or the landlord, and you may question the landlord. If you feel uncertain about what happens you can always go along to hear someone else's case before your case comes up; the hearing is always in public.



Hackney is one of the most densely populated areas in London. It is also one of the poorest; and as in all areas there is a large proportion of privately rented property.

You would think that as Hackney is so difficult to get to from the City Centre, having no tube that the rents would be lower than in other districts.

But no...landlords are now frequently asking the same rents as in Camden, Islington and even Kensington!

These rents go unchallenged because of the high population and the difficulty of qualifying for council flats.

GO TO THE RENT TRIBUNAL AND GET YOUR RENT REDUCED. WE DID.

Even by the conservative standards of the Rent Tribunal Hackney rents are often too high. So if you apply to it you get a good chance of having your rent reduced.

How to do it

- You can apply at any time to East London Rent Tribunal, 7, Elthorne Road, Archway, N.19

Write for a form or collect it. Take a 253 to Holloway Road and walk or get a bus in the direction of Archway. Or ask the Citizen's Advice Bureau, Mare Street for a form.

Our landlord gave us a notice to quit as soon as he heard from the Rent Tribunal that we were applying to have our rent reduced.

He did come along to the hearing and made a few pathetic attempts to blacken our characters which were derided by the tribunal.

The fact that he had given us notice to quit put him at a great disadvantage and could have gained him nothing since, as we already knew, it carried no legal weight.

Our flat consisted of three rooms, kitchen and bathroom, for which we paid £16 a week. The deposit came to £84, plus another £16 illegal agent's fees

We took the agent to the Rent Tribunal. He knew he didn't have a leg to stand on and was so apprehensive that he did not appear at the hearing.

Our rent was reduced to £9, and we were given six month's security of tenure.

Some Tips

The Rent Tribunal is not the Social Security. They are a court of law not of morality. They are interested in you as a tenant, though in our experience they can be prejudiced against students.

Its best to be quiet and unaggressive.

They will give you security of tenure (ie, you can't be kicked out) for six months, but at the end of that time you have to reapply for another six months. They do not normally give more than 18 months security.

If the landlord gives you notice to quit when he finds out you have applied to the Rent Tribunal, tell them immediately. It will go against him at the hearing. Even if they don't give you security the landlord still has to get a court order to get you out, which can take up to six months.

ORANGE DISCS

Disabled people can get an orange disc from the council.

This disc would give them the right to park their cars, or the cars of anybody driving them free of charge for as long as they like in all legal parking spaces.

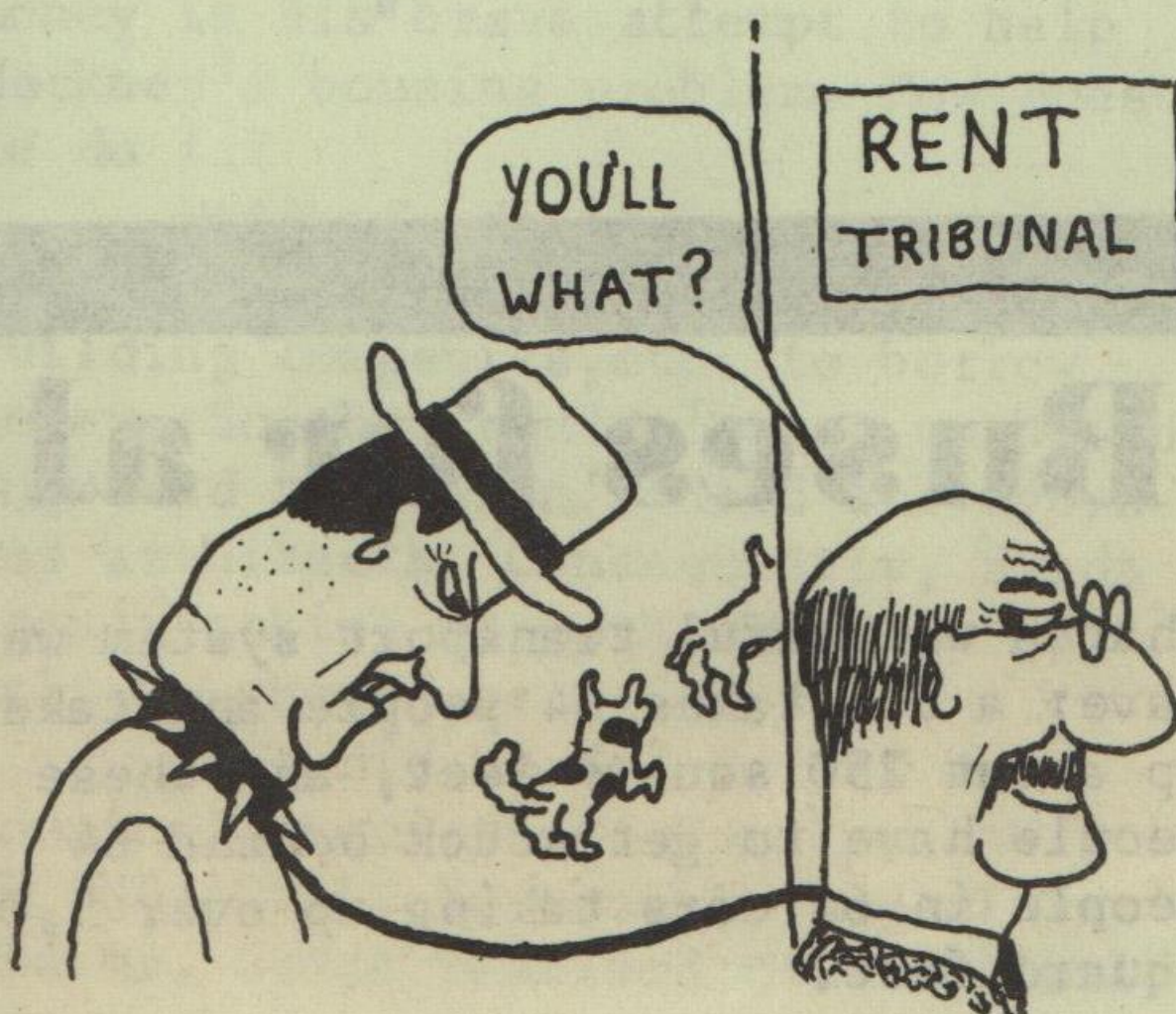
This scheme has been in operation throughout the country - with the exception of Kensington, Chelsea, and Islington - since December, 1971.

All disabled people are entitled to the orange badges, which are issued by county and county borough authorities and by borough councils in London.

All applications should be made direct to these authorities.

If you are disabled, or know of somebody who is, then apply for one at once. It could save you lots of money in parking fees.

STOKE NEWINGTON 8



CARS KILL BUSES

It costs about ten times as much to the community for someone to go by car as to go by bus, but fares are such that it usually costs him less to go by car (if he's one of the lucky ones who has one). As a result bus services get worse, so more people take to their cars, and the situation goes from bad to worse.

Not only do private cars cause congestion and delay everyone, they also cause pollution, dirtying our atmosphere with exhaust; they cause accidents, killing and injuring our kids and old people; they break up the roads, causing more expense and using resources that could otherwise go to homes and parks.

AND THE CARS KEEP COMING

So what do the Tory and Labour Governments do? Do they ban the cars and encourage people to use public transport? Of course not: interfere with the individual freedom of the rich? No: they build more roads, pulling down houses to make room for them; they build multi-storey car-parks, and insist that every new office block should have car parking facilities, just to ensure that more and more cars will keep coming into Central London.

They put up bus and train fares more and more, so that more and more people will decide its cheaper to come by car (because they didn't have to pay for the roads, as public transport users do.)

They also put up freight charges on the rail so that more companies will send their goods by road, and cause more congestion, pollution, danger and demand for new roads instead of homes.

FREE TRANSPORT DAY?

Hackney Citizens Rights Group wants to do something about this. First, surveys, petitions, pressure on the G.L.C. (which now runs L.T.) - and then direct action: declare a free transport day!

Come and help us plan at Centerprise, 7.30pm on Tuesday, 6th June.

Michael Ellman

GUTTER
LETTERS

Dear Gutter Press

People of Hackney, this paper that you are reading is not a rival of the Hackney Gazette, it is in fact a real newspaper and does not intend to be either a crime sheet or a situations forever vacant type centralised paper, but will take news and problems that need airing from the whole of the borough and will not concern itself with page filling rubbish like making Mare Street into the Coronation Street of Hackney.

The things that annoy us should not be adjusted and referred to other departments than the one we complain to - surely if a person who is employed by us to look after our welfare and well-being and then hides behind fake authority and assumes a superior attitude, is really no better than a criminal who instead of taking your possessions that you have slaved for, takes instead, your patience, your pride, and sometimes your sanity and then tells you that your case will be dealt with at a future date (1984 maybe).

Small things like the swings and play areas nearly always being chained and padlocked, so that the kids have to roam the streets or dive all over your front room while you try to relax or read a paper. You blame your kids and others for a bit of damage or aggravation that they have caused, rather than think about why they are not being able to play in area's that you have paid to have built for them. Hackney has more than its fair share of paid problem solvers and maybe its about time they became a bit more active.

If you have any news or genuine problems that you want Hackney Newspapers Social Services or Town Halls to know about, this newspaper is here for your benefit as you will probably find out, because its these people who will have to read it to find out whats really happening in their area's of work, and maybe, by using this paper as a method of communicating with their human qualities our problems may get attended to with a bit more enthusiasm and ease. So play ball games stay off the grass and keep yourself happy.

Spike

Dear Gutter Press,

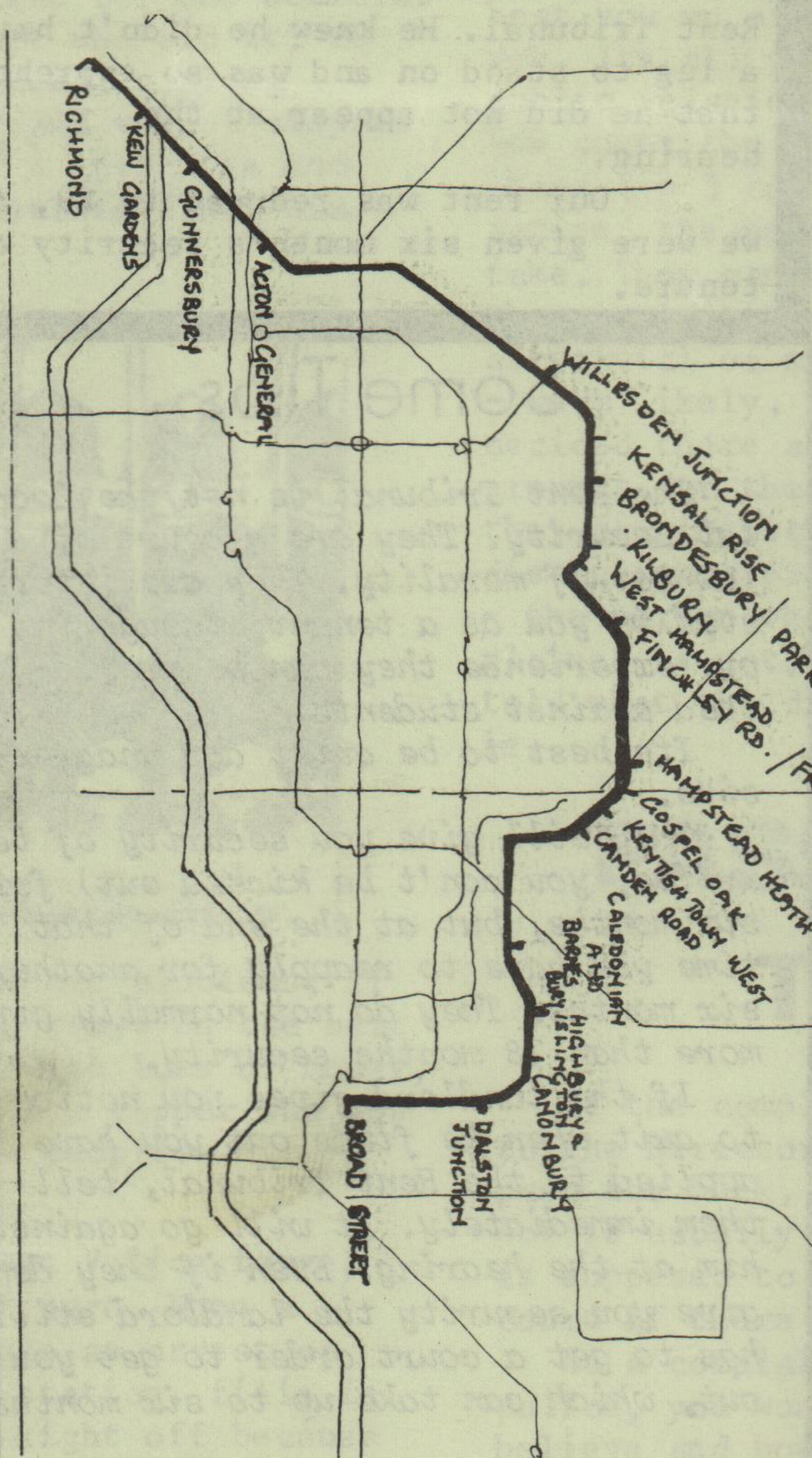
Congratulations on your first issue: its just what's needed in Hackney.

The article on the North London Line is very good, but missed out one important point. The line is under used, because people don't know it exists - and why? Because London Transport, despite many requests, adamantly refuse to show it on the Tube map (because it belongs to a nasty rival organisation, British Rail!)

So why don't we make some transparent stickers to plaster all over LT tube maps showing the route of the line?

Sorry I couldn't get to your meeting, but here's an article on Free Transport, as promised. Good Luck!

Michael Ellman,
Arlington Avenue,
Shoreditch, N1.



Buses for all

What a wonderful transport system we have: a bus takes 64 people and takes up about 250 square feet, and these 64 people have to get stuck behind 64 people in 64 cars taking up over 5,000 square feet!

send your letters to
GUTTER
PRESS

CUTTER ADS

CLAIMANTS' UNIONS

HACKNEY CLAIMANTS' UNION

meets Wednesdays at 12.30pm at Centerprise, 34, Dalston Lane, E8. The office is open at that address between two and five on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Tel: 254.9787 The weekly meeting is open to all claimants.

EAST LONDON CLAIMANTS UNION

Dame Colet House, Ben Johnson Road, Stepney, E1. Tel: 790.3867 SPITALFIELDS AND WHITECHAPEL CU 48, Hanbury Street, E1. Tel: 247.2689.

TOTTENHAM CLAIMANTS UNION

71, Broad Lane, N8

Tel: 808.8126

HOMERTON AND SOUTH HACKNEY CU

Kingsmead Community Centre, E9

THE HACKNEY CLAIMANTS' UNION, HAVE STARTED UP A SWOP SHOP. THIS IS SO THAT PEOPLE WHO ARE CLAIMANTS CAN BRING IN CLOTHES AND MATERIAL THAT THEY NO LONGER WEAR OR USE -AND TAKE WHAT THEY NEED.

IT IS OPEN EVERY WEDNESDAY FROM 11PM UNTIL 12.30PM at 4, ABERSHAM ROAD, E8. COME ALONG AND HELP YOURSELF.



Activist Advice Centres

Childrens' Rights, Box 70, 55, Stewart Grove, SW3
Gay Liberation Front, legal group, 3, Caledonian Rd. N1
Womens Liberation Workshop, legal study group, 22, Great Windmill St. W1 437.6118

Legal Activists

Advise, 313, Upper Street, N1 226.9365
BIT, (information) 141, Westbourne Pk Rd. W1. 229. 8219
Release, 1, Elgin Avenue, Wp 289. 1123

HACKNEY CITIZENS RIGHTS - free aid and advice on Thursday evenings between 6.30 and 7.30 - financial, legal, housing, social security at 34, Dalston Lane. 254.1620

South Hackney Post, available at Centerprise or c/o Toc H Hackney, Prideaux House, 9a, Church Cresc. E9.

Non-profit Bookshops

Agitprop, 248, Bethnal Green Road, E2
Centerprise, 34, Dalston Lane, E8
Grassroots, 54, Wrightman Rd. N7

Prisoners Groups

Prisoners' Union, 18, Ashbrook Road, N19. 272.0029
Women in Holloway, 18, Ashbrook Rd, N19. 272.0029
Radical Alternatives to Prison, 104, Newgate Street, EC1. 600.4793

Defence Groups

Stephen McCarthy Defence Group, c/o, 50, Courtney Court, Drayton Park, N5
Stoke Newington 8 Defence Group, c/o, Box 359, 240, Camden High St. NW1.
Tony Sinaris Defence Group, c/o, Black Liberation Front, 54, Wrightman Road, N7
Anti-Internment League, 139, Holland Rd., W14.
Liason Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, c/o, J. Hiles, 1, Teynton Terrace, N17.

The Brixton strikes

Any man over the age of 21 living in Hackney, and remanded in custody will almost certainly be sent to Brixton Prison. Many of us have friends or relatives awaiting trial in Brixton. The following is a leaflet written by its inmates during recent demonstrations at the prison.

MESSAGE FROM BRIXTON

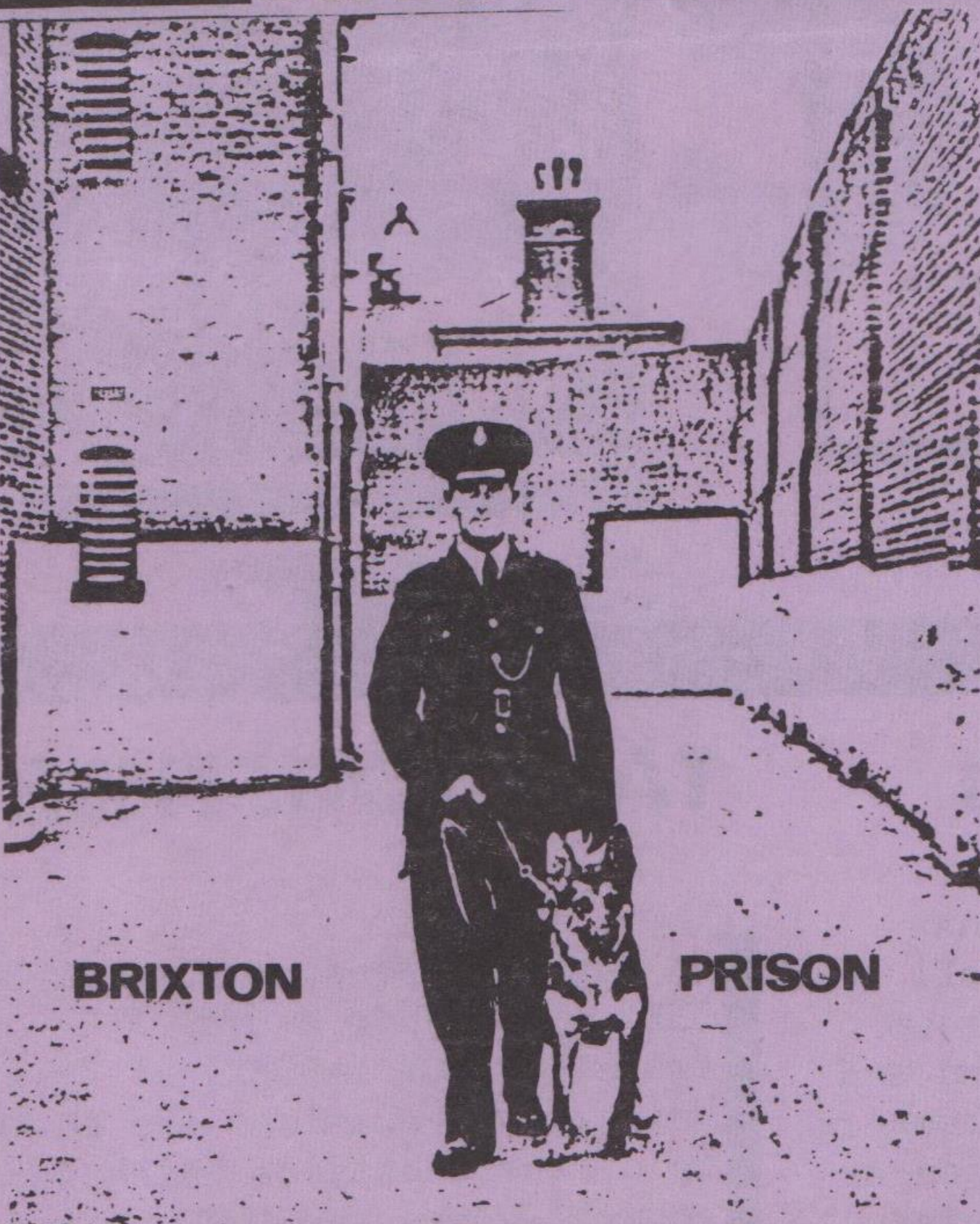
"Brixton Prison exists to provide the courts with guilty pleas and convictions. Men are denied bail by magistrates who will do whatever the police tell them to do. They thrown into Brixton, supposedly to be kept in one place to make sure they turn up at the trial.

"However, Brixton prison does much much more than merely make sure that men don't jump bail. It makes sure that by the time they get to trial, they have suffered up to a year of isolation and dehumanisation and are that much easier to convict.

PRISON WITHOUT TRIAL

"The men in Brixton, none of them convicted of any crime, are locked in their cells, twenty three hours a day, not allowed to listen to a radio or see TV. They can't even see each other except for an hour each day (if it isn't raining).

"There are fifty cells to a landing, on a average week there is at least 70 men to each section. We're allotted 2 toilets to a landing. If this was a factory this would not be allowed by law. Fed shoddy tenth rate so-called food, not allowed to move around or have any distractions other than a cell wall, its easy to get dispirited, to feel beaten, which is what men are sent to Brixton for.



BRIXTON

PRISON

NO WARMTH, NO TOUCHING

"Even the one time when the tedium and oppression should momentarily disappear, when friends, wives, relations come to visit, gets totally taken over by the prison. The prison allows no warmth, no touching, you can't even hear each other properly through the pane of glass that they put between you and someone you love. And yet for five days a week the open visit room is shut up and not used.

As soon as they started to fight back they started to WIN. They are now allowed a radio in their cells, and have minor concessions on extended visits.

"The men in Brixton are pissed off being pushed around, penned up like cattle, fed like pigs, pissed off with not being allowed even the smallest human contact with their friends and families. And they're doing something about it. There have been three sit downs this week in the exercise yard, men have taken their meals and then thrown them back where they came from, its better not to eat at all than eat that crap. The Governor is in a cold sweat. *The men of Brixton are demanding.*

DEMANDS

- 1) Open visits - 2 a month - parity with Pentonville
- 2) Improved food.
- 3) That personal radios be allowed in the prison, as they are in Holloway.
- 4) Cell doors be left open during the daytime.
- 5) That general conditions be improved - eg, there are 7 razors for 300 men in F wing.

We should be allowed to see witnesses on solicitors' visits, that we should have hot water when we need it, not when they decide to turn it on.

HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

Phone up the governor, Mr. Ogier at 674.5676. Phone your MP. Phone him again. Get in touch with the Prisoners' Union - 18, Ashbrooke Road, Archway on Thursdays at 7.30

"The remand system is there to make people plead guilty. They lock us up and isolate innocent human beings to try and defeat them long before they get anywhere near a court.

WHO KILLED STEPHEN McCARTHY?

STEPHEN McCARTHY's DEATH
.....
(THE SYSTEM)
.....

Arrested with violence, that's the law

Battered and bleeding on a police cell floor

Begging for help at Death's door

But that's the system, nothing more.

Happy house, full of children,

Laughter, shouting, never quiet.

Not much money, but love for everyone

And happiness that shines like the Sun.

Suddenly! A cold hard cell.

Empty! No comfort, just pain.

Eyes full of hatred, that stare now and again

Then loneliness, darkness and more pain.

Time stands still, but the hurt goes on.

Blackness everywhere, peace at last.

Don't wake up. What for?

You're better off dead, that's what they want.

Questions asked, but nobody answers

Nobody cares, what does it matter?

Who cares?

Stephen was nineteen, but now he's dead.

DAVINA PARKINSON, 13
Islington.

10p: available from Centerprise, Agitprop and the McCarthy Committee, 50, Courtney Court, Holloway, N.7

The following is from the introduction to the book:

"Since Stephen's death his family, their friends and supporters have kept up a virtually non-stop campaign to have the circumstances of his arrest and death made public.

We believe that Stephen was assaulted and brutalised during his 'arrest'; that the negligent medical treatment he received in Wormwood Scrubs and Dover Borstal caused him to die when his life would otherwise have been saved; and these facts are known to several people in authority,

who have suppressed the truth in order to protect the credibility of the crumbling and corrupt institutions of law enforcement. We also believe that Stephen's is by no means an isolated case.

This booklet has been produced with the help of a very large number of people who believe that justice now amounts to less than a hollow slogan on the roof of the Old Bailey and that we must immediately demand real justice if what happened to Stephen McCarthy, David Oluwale, Anreas Savva, Gordon Gaynor, James Hanratty, the Metro Youth Club, Jake Prescott, the Oz editors, the Mangrove Nine, the Parkhurst 'rioters' and many more is to be stopped."

ARRESTS AND INQUIRIES FOLLOW MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF IRISH BOY



A CHANCE TO

The Hackney branch of the Workers Education Association has only recently been formed. At all the meetings so far it has been agreed that the courses should be begun and organised by interested local members. The Housing Finance Bill was seen as so important that the first course of the W.E.A. is to be concerned with it.

It is more important to the daily lives of our people than even the great issue of the Common Market'

Julian Amery. Nov 15, 1971.

We are beginning a series of study groups, projects, courses, conferences on housing and Hackney with a six week course on a revolutionary housing bill. Its effects will be far more drastic than the raising of council house rents. All

tenants are going to suffer. Course begins Wednesday, May 31st at 7:30p.m. venue to be fixed.

May 31st: Housing policies today: Shortage and muddle. The need for reform. What are the alternatives ?

TALK TOGETHER

June 7th: Housing Finance Bill 1972 - How fair a deal ?

Professor ROY PARKER, of Bristol University, examines the shake-up of the subsidies which pay for council homes and the attitude towards council tenants and council rents which lies behind the bill; and exposes the rent rebate myth.

June 14th: How the bill affects private tenants.

Inflationary pressures of freeing private landlords. Controlled tenants face rents four times those they pay now - and for unimproved homes. Disregard of furnished tenants. The rent allowance scheme.

June 21st: How the bill affects council tenants.

How the new 'fair' rents are assessed and phased. Lack of security and rights. The rent rebate scheme. The Government's Housing Commissioner and how he can replace the council. The bill's effects on housing association tenants.

ABOUT THE BILL

June 28th: Long term implications of the bill: failings of the means tested state.

The 'poverty trap'. The expulsion of the poor and not-so-poor from new council homes and improving areas. Consequences for families of means-test rulings on hunting rich tenants, etc. General discussion of issues which the bill raises.

July 5th: Strategies for fighting the bill: should Hackney implement or not.

Rent strikes as a tactic. Use of the bill's own machinery. We hope this will be an open forum and council spokesmen, GLC rent strikers' local tenants' leaders, etc, will all be invited.

PLEASE ENROL NOW. IT HELPS US TO KNOW IF YOU ARE COMING. NAMES AND ADDRESSES TO Stuart Weir, c/o Centerprise, 34, Dalston Lane, E8 phone 254. 1620.