



LOW PAID WORKERS

WE SUPPORT YOU

Huge piles of stinking, smouldering rubbish, murderous ice-sheeted roads and pavements, no local burials - these are the most acute problems caused by Southwark Council's refusal to negotiate on their manual workers' claim for £60 a week. The Borough's dustmen, road-gritters and gravediggers have been on strike for four weeks, spearheading the fight for a living wage for all Council manual workers.

The unions involved, the National Union of Public Employees, the General and Municipal Workers' Union and the Transport and General, have exempted key humanitarian services from the action. Meals on Wheels drivers and Home Helps still do their rounds, and private contractors are permitted to collect refuse from local hospitals.

The manual workers feel bitter about the savage media campaign being waged against them. Mark Sanders, Area Officer for N.U.P.E., points out that "All we are asking for is two-thirds of the average national wage, and the press call us greedy. Some of my members take home less than £40 a week, but no-one gives a damn about them



until they protest". In national talks, a paltry 9% has been offered. Mark Sanders says he will be unhappy with any offer which is not in double figures. Southwark Council has made no move to end the dispute, unlike Camden where the ruling

Labour Group has agreed to meet the manual workers' claim. Despite a promise from the Council early in the strike to issue a statement supporting the low pay demands, none has appeared. Southwark's Industrial Relations Emergency Committee meets frequently in secret session but has made no approach to the Unions to reach a settlement. So long-suffering Southwark residents may for some time yet have to put up with putrid heaps of rubbish and roads and pavements which are unsafe to venture on.

It could get worse unless the Council agrees to talk. According to the unions, the men are "absolutely solid and determined" and are being supported with money raised from a levy of their non-striking colleagues. Mark Sanders warns that "there will be escalation unless some moves are made very shortly". He will not say exactly what the unions have in mind, but they may direct their industrial action more forcefully against Southwark Councillors. Perhaps the Councillors should take a look at what has happened in Tower Hamlets and think again. Across the river the Council's operations have ground to a halt because of strike action, with the Town Hall closed down. Is this what Southwark Council want? We doubt if local residents do.

CUT CO-OP CHOPPED

There has recently been a move to close our local Co-op supermarket and butchers in the Cut. The Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society Head Office has stated that the two branches in the Cut have been losing money heavily over the last three years, because there are not enough people in Waterloo.

Local residents have noticed a deterioration in the service and facilities there in this period, and suggest that the loss of population isn't the only reason for loss of trade.

Many of our local senior citizens have supported both Cut shops for many years, and still do. We say to the R.A.C.S. Head Office that trade with both residents and commuters would improve if they either:

1. Improved and expanded the supermarket over the butcher's shop; or
2. Improved and expanded the supermarket into the rebuilt David Greig's in Waterloo Road; or
3. Improved and expanded the supermarket into the new premises in the King's Reach complex on Stamford Street, where they already have a R.A.C.S. travel agency.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE SIX, col. 4)

SATURDAY MORNING IN THE CUT, in the days when hats cost 2/6d and the shops flourished: 1895

Bankside Inquiry

DON'T FORGET that the Bankside Public Inquiry begins on March 13th at Southwark Town Hall. Many local people are writing in to the Inquiry, some are appearing to speak and others will be just going along to listen.

It is hoped that we can get one of the sessions held at the Borough Community Centre, Southwark Bridge Road, so that local residents can go along in the evening to hear the arguments and support the community's case for housing.

Housing v. offices

The Inquiry is about whether or not there should be a family housing development on Bankside overlooking St Paul's. Southwark have objected to the proposal and have put forward their own ideas for - yes, you've guessed - offices and a Globe Theatre.

Everyone is welcome at the Inquiry at Peckham Town Hall, Peckham Road, SE5 beginning on Tuesday March 13th at 10.30. The Inquiry is likely to last at least a week 10am to 5pm. Phone NSCDG on 928 8165 for more details.



FASCISTS GO WRONG WAY

On Monday 12 February, a coachload of National Front supporters arrived at South Bank Poly, hoping to disrupt a meeting being held there. Thanks to some quick thinking on the part of Polytechnic staff, the NF were sent off in the wrong direction, and trouble was avoided.



This incident was a good example of the continuing need for local people to be aware of NF activities in our area. Such episodes are happening all the time, but often go unreported in the press.

The meeting at the Poly was part of an 'Anti-Racist Week of Action', and the main speakers were Ted Knight (Leader, Lambeth Council) and Peter Hain (of the Anti-Nazi League).

Peter Hain described the ANL's activities over the past 18 months, both in trying to make more people aware of the issues involved and in trying to reduce the numbers of electors who vote for the NF. He warned us of the NF's intention to put forward a large number of candidates in

the forthcoming General Election. He called for people of North Southwark and North Lambeth to be prepared to take a stand against such people, and to work for racial harmony not conflict.

Ted Knight reminded us that in times of economic crisis, some people prefer to blame others, such as minority groups, rather than admit that the Government's economic policies are wrong. The NF then take advantage of such feelings and use them to provoke harassment of black people. Ted Knight called for people to carry on fighting on basic issues which affect all of us, whatever our colour: better housing, more jobs, fewer cuts in services.

Other events in the Week of Action included films, theatre groups and concerts, and ended with an Open Meeting led by speakers from local Anti-Racist groups.

Hospital cuts

DANGER TO HEALTH SERVICES in local hospitals and clinics has brought together trades councils and hospital unions in the Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Area Health Authority. The unions are determined to give the fullest publicity to the cuts that are threatened. Their campaign will begin with action to prevent the planned closure of St Giles Hospital in Camberwell. Leaflets are to be circulated to all local hospitals and a lobby of the Area Health Authority will take place.

The Health Authority is facing huge cuts ordered by David Ennals, the Health Minister. Many people are finding the queues for operations intolerable even now. A joint campaign linking workers in the health service and community organisations is essential.



12 Meymott Street, SE1.
tel: 928-1643

SE1 NEEDS YOU!

The only way a community paper can do its job properly is by hearing news and views from its readers, about what is important and interesting to them. So keep those letters and articles coming in!

For people who'd like a chat as well, the SE1 OFFICE WILL BE OPEN EVERY THURSDAY FROM 10am To 3pm, FROM MARCH 1st ONWARDS. Don't keep your opinions to yourself - come and share them!

And of course, SE1 is always looking for people to help produce the paper. You could come to our meetings and help decide what goes into each issue. Or why not spend an hour or two helping to put the paper together?

Dates to watch this month:-
Meetings: 12 and 19 March 7.30pm
Paste-up: 24 and 25 March 11am.

Perhaps you would rather help by distributing the paper (sale or return) to your friends and neighbours.

Whatever you do, don't just sit there - come and join in the fun!

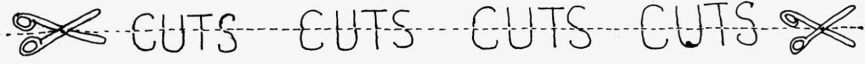
Support Your Local Shop

OPEN UNTIL 8pm Monday - Friday
7pm Saturday
1pm Sunday

- * Fresh milk daily
- * Frozen foods
- * All groceries and provisions

- * Wines, spirits & beers
- * Newspapers
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MORE CUTS IN PUBLIC SERVICES

Cuts in Fire Brigade

DOCKHEAD FIREMEN ARE GOING TO HAVE A HARD TIME providing adequate cover in case of fire from April 1st thanks to cuts by the London Fire Brigade. Instead of having three fire appliances they will have only one to cover any fire or incident on Dockhead's fire ground in Bermondsey.

The firemen have written to local people calling for support in their campaign to keep the station going. In the letter they say "The fact of the matter is that you actual front line attendance will be cut by two thirds. We strongly advise you to protest at the highest level open to you. Because fire means death, injury and damage to property we greatly care about this.... We cannot stress enough how vitally important this issue is."

The biggest danger of the Fire Brigade's policy is that if two fires happen at the same time Dockhead will only be able to attend one and the other fire would have to be dealt with by another station much further away. And if they are also involved in a fire on their own ground?

The address of the Fire Brigade is London Fire Brigade, 8 Albert Embankment, SE1.
Tel: 735 3811.

THREE MORE EXAMPLES OF CUTS IN VITAL SERVICES ARE FACING SE1 RESIDENTS THIS MONTH. WILL YOUR FLAT BE LEFT TO BURN DOWN? WILL YOU BE REFUSED FINANCIAL SUPPORT IN A TIME OF CRISIS? WILL YOUR VIEWS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD BE IGNORED?

Cuts in Social Security Benefits

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY (DHSS) is taking steps now to reduce your rights. The time will come, if it hasn't already, when you will need financial support because of unemployment, illness or old age. The kind of help you need may not be available unless you take steps now to protect your rights.

The Supplementary Benefits system isn't working, but instead of improving the situation the DHSS has thought up some ways of making it worse. Their ideas have been published in a report called "Social Assistance". Some examples of the effects of these recommendations would be: fewer grants for basic essentials like fuel and clothing, less money for the short term unemployed, and no money for school-leavers.

To make matters worse, the local offices are suffering from severe staff shortages due to low pay and poor working conditions, as well as inefficient

recruitment policies. This means that the meagre benefits and services that do exist are available only after long delays or not at all. This has put unnecessary stress on both DHSS workers and claimants alike.

Civil servants, claimants and workers have come together to form a campaign to fight these cuts. The civil servants will be on strike over their low pay and poor working conditions on Feb 23rd. Members of the campaign will be handing out leaflets before the strike to help publicise the reasons for the dissatisfaction of DHSS workers and claimants.

There will also be a picket on March 26th at Alexander Fleming House (Elephant and Castle) to protest against the recommendations of the "Social Assistance" review. You can take a stand to protect your rights by supporting this picket. For more information contact the Lambeth Law Centre, tel: 733 4245.

Cuts in NSCDG Grant

TIME IS RUNNING OUT FOR THE NORTH SOUTHWARK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP with their grant due to expire on March 31st.

Southwark Council have so far refused to extend their grant because the NSCDG has in the past been too critical of Council policy.

The Southwark Council for Voluntary Service has asked for a deputation to be heard by the Policy and Resources Committee but this has been refused. So has a deputation to the full Council meeting on February 28th. The Council says that the NSCDG is "not on the agenda" and therefore a deputation cannot be received.

There is a real danger that time will run out without any decision having been taken in which case the current Council policy will prevail - that the grant will not be renewed after March 31st. How can the Council be forced to consider renewing the grant? It seems only by someone putting down a motion to the full Council meeting on Feb 28th so that they have to discuss and vote on the grant in public.

£100,000 SECRET FUND

SOUTHWARK COUNCIL'S SO CALLED "INDUSTRY FUND" which looked like turning into a poor man's merchant bank has, as well as being a "blush" fund for businesses too embarrassed to go to a proper bank, now turned into a "slush" fund. This will be for businessmen who aren't embarrassed at being told how good Southwark is as long as they get a good lunch out of it.

At the last Planning and Development Committee on 7th Feb it was agreed to spend up to £100,000 employing a public relations consultant to "sell" Southwark. This astonishing move has more to do with the fact that the sub-committee demanding the move has two councillors who are consultants than any serious attempt to bring back industry to Southwark.

The two consultants, Councillors Davies and Potter, assured the committee that this was the modern trend in management. The Chairman of the Committee, Ron Watts, went even further with the alarming idea that councillors were not able to lobby MPs and civil servants in the same way that public relations firms were.

There have been several moves lately, most recently by Southwark Trades Council, to open up the workings of the Industry Fund. SE1 would have thought that if £100,000 can be spent on telling the world about Southwark then a little attention could also be given to telling residents what is going on with this hitherto secret fund.

Industrial Improvement

TWO INDUSTRIAL IMPROVEMENT AREAS have been declared by Southwark Council in North Southwark - around Bermondsey St and Union Street. Resources amounting to £1.5 million have been earmarked by the Council for these 50 acre improvement areas for loans and grants to improve commercial and industrial buildings, buying land and improving the environment. The power to declare Industrial and Commercial Improvement Area was made available in the Inner Urban Areas Act 1978.

Lambeth Seeks Local Opinions

IN AN ATTEMPT TO INVOLVE THE PUBLIC in how Lambeth Council provides services to the public, Lambeth has started a system of public consultation based on local wards to encourage people to say what they like and dislike. A series of meetings with local groups and public meetings are being held in each ward where you can comment on Lambeth's services or lack of them and raise issues which need dealing with.

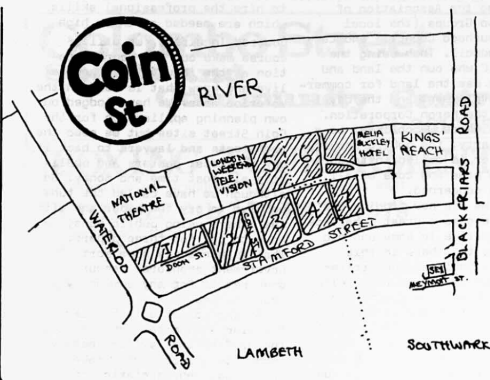
In the local ward, Bishop's Ward, a meeting was held with the Association of Waterloo Groups in January when local councillors and council officials came to hear what local groups had to say. Some of the issues raised included: rubbish on the streets, cleaning of Lower Marsh, Mire Road open space, bus shelters, the programme of demolition of Campbell Buildings, the future of the allotment site in The Cut, the loss of shops in Waterloo.

Two public meetings for Bishop's Ward are to be held in the Spring and leaflets will be delivered to every household setting out some of the local issues and inviting people to attend the meetings.

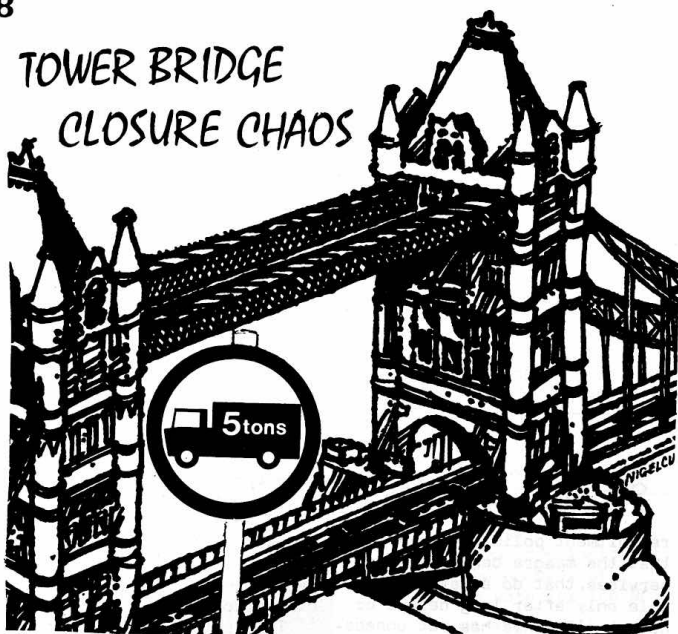
This is probably the most ambitious public consultation programme by a local authority to involve people in making sure that it is doing its job. To be really effective though Lambeth will have to not only repeat this exercise regularly but also reorganise the structure of the Council so it can take account of local opinion more effectively than the present highly centralised structure.

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RYE EXPRESS IS LOOKING FOR A PRINTER (Some experience needed in operating a Litho machine). £70 FOR AN AVERAGE 45-HOUR WEEK. COMMUNITY AND POLITICAL PRINTING ONLY. RYE EXPRESS IS ORGANISED AS A COLLECTIVE. LOCATED IN PECKHAM. PHONE 693 - 4398 FOR DETAILS.



TOWER BRIDGE CLOSURE CHAOS



JUGGERNAUTS are streaming through the back streets of the Borough and Bermondsey as they never have before. The reason is the closure of Tower Bridge from January 28th to vehicles of over 5 tons. This restriction is permanent. Lorries heading through SE1 are now using London Bridge or Southwark Bridge taking Lower Thames Street. For residents of Tower Bridge Road there has been some reduction in heavy traffic but other areas are getting alarmed. The GLC decided not to erect signs telling lorry drivers of alternative routes. Consequently, drivers have had to find their own way. The Bridge is structurally weak.

CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

RESIDENTS FROM NORTH SOUTHWARK, PECKHAM AND DULWICH have joined a Borough-wide Campaign against Southwark's £70 million Peckham Palace New Town Hall scheme. They are pressing ahead with the campaign in spite of Peter Shore's decision not to call a public inquiry over the issue.

A committee is to be set up to co-ordinate the activities of community groups, tenants associations, trade union bodies and political parties in opposition to the town hall plan. The idea is to bring together representatives from these different areas, into an active group which would plan future developments in the campaign.

Among the tasks facing the new group will be:

- * ensuring that there is a full public enquiry over the compulsory purchase orders which will be needed before the Council is in control of the whole of the proposed site for the new building
- * finding ways of preventing the Council from strengthening its position by demolishing those properties which it already owns on the site
- * putting pressure on Southwark MPs to take action over the issue

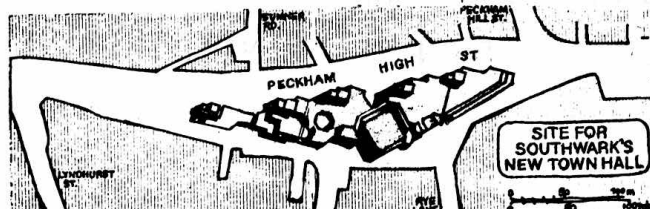
* drawing into the campaign all the organisations opposed to the scheme, through leaflets, posters and by sending speakers to address meetings of tenants associations, trade union branches, political groups, etc, to win their active support

* building up the pressure on Labour councillors to reverse the decision to go ahead with the Town Hall plan.

The Peckham Labour Party has already called on individual wards not to re-select, for the next council elections, any of the councillors who ignored the Party's request that there should be more consultation on the plan before a decision was made.

And it will shortly consider two motions calling for the reinstatement of the 11 'rebel' councillors who were thrown out of the Labour Group for opposing the plan.

Meanwhile, the Southwark branch of NUPE, the Council manual workers union, has called on everyone in the borough to write to Reg Underhill, the national organiser of the Labour Party, at Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1, to support the appeal by the 11 'rebels' against their ejection from the Labour Group.



ANTI-RACISTS CHARGED

Warning the public about the nature of the National Front has landed 2 Southwark anti-racists in trouble with the law.

Rod Robertson - Chairperson of Southwark Campaign Against Racism and Fascism (SCARF) - and Steve Radford - ex-Secretary of SCARF - are being prosecuted for distributing anti-National Front leaflets during last year's Local Government elections, without having charged the cost of the leaflets against the election expenses of any of the candidates in the election.

The charges are being brought under the Representation of the People Act 1949, which limits how much candidates and their agents can spend, and requires them to declare their expenses. The Act was designed to stop people buying their way into office.

At a general SCARF meeting shortly after the prosecutions were made known, feelings ran high. One speaker called the prosecutions 'political' - they follow a complaint made to the police by an NF candidate, and the decision to prosecute was made not by the police but by



the Director of Public Prosecutions, who had the discretion not to proceed.

The meeting unanimously decided that it supported the distribution of the leaflets, & stood behind the two members being prosecuted. It was clear that they were not acting in a personal capacity, but as part of the work of the Campaign.

The issue of the prosecutions has also been taken up by the Peckham and Dulwich Labour Parties, which have pledged their support 'financial and otherwise'.

One member of the SCARF Executive Committee told SE1:

"I am shocked that the Director of Public Prosecutions has used his discretionary powers to prosecute in this case. What consideration of public policy could outweigh the importance of showing the NF for what it is - a bunch of thinly disguised Nazis.

"The NF openly provokes racial hatred and violence, both of which are crimes: how then can it be a crime to expose them?"

(See also 'South Bank PoLy' article on page 6.)

SEI PROBE BAD COMPANY

IF A LOCAL AUTHORITY CAN BE JUDGED BY THE COMPANY IT KEEPS, then all is not well with Southwark. On February 13th the Council's Planning Committee agreed an application from Suntown Developments to build a new 120,000sq. ft. office block on the site of the burned-out New Hibernia Wharf, Montague Close (next to Southwark Cathedral). Approval was given despite the fact that the police are still investigating the cause of the blaze which swept through the old warehouse in late November and have definitely proved arson.

Suntown Developments is a subsidiary company of Bernard Sunley Investment Trust who bought the New Hibernia Wharf from Hays Wharf Ltd in 1977. With the purchase Sunley's also acquired planning permission to rehabilitate the warehouse as offices. The Council insisted on rehabilitation because the warehouse is part of a Conservation Area, but Sunley's

wanted to demolish and rebuild because they said they couldn't get the money for rehabilitating the warehouse.

Before the Council had a chance to consider an application to demolish and rebuild, an arsonist had set fire to the warehouse leaving the Council with no alternative but to agree to demolition. Now wasn't that handy? SE1 understands that, what's more, the New Hibernia Wharf was insured for £1 million. So if the insurers pay up, Sunley stands to gain a cool million from the loss of a building they didn't want anyway.

This, incidentally, is not the first dealing which Southwark Council has had with the Bernard Sunley Investment Trust, who are both developers and contractors of 11 new factories in Sandgate St, Peckham which will be leased back to the Council. In other words the New Hibernia Wharf episode represents not so much a chance acquaintance as a developing relationship.