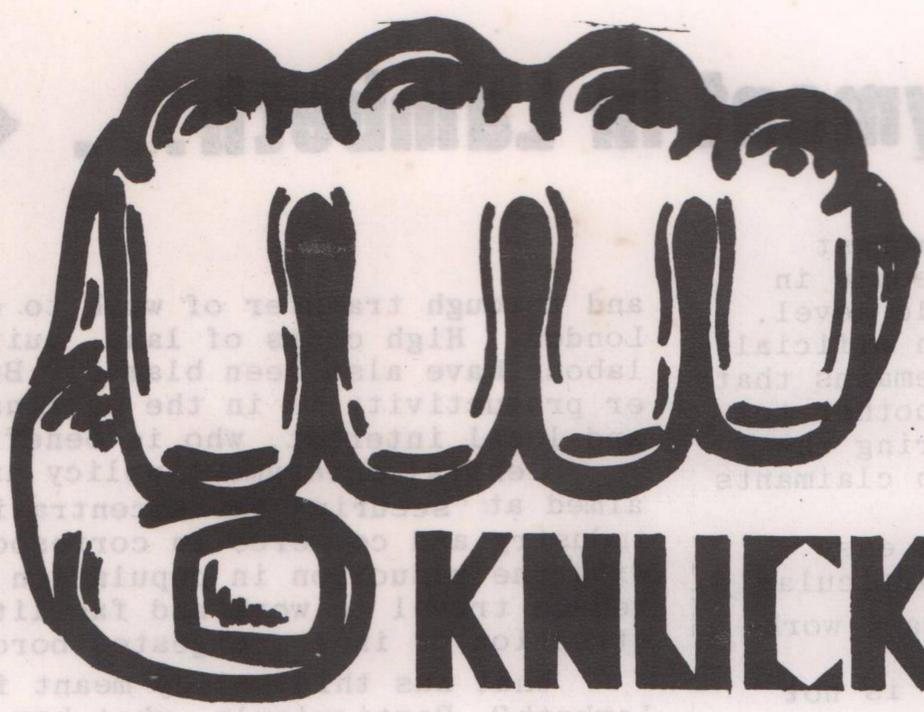


feb. march 1977



5p

# KNUCKLE



**TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED !**

... see page 4

# Youth Unemployment in Lambeth...



The level of unemployment amongst school leavers and other young people in Lambeth has reached an intolerable level. Despite the slight improvement in official unemployment figures, the fact remains that that many school leavers do not bother to register as unemployed. Considering the slander meted out by the media to claimants this is hardly surprising.

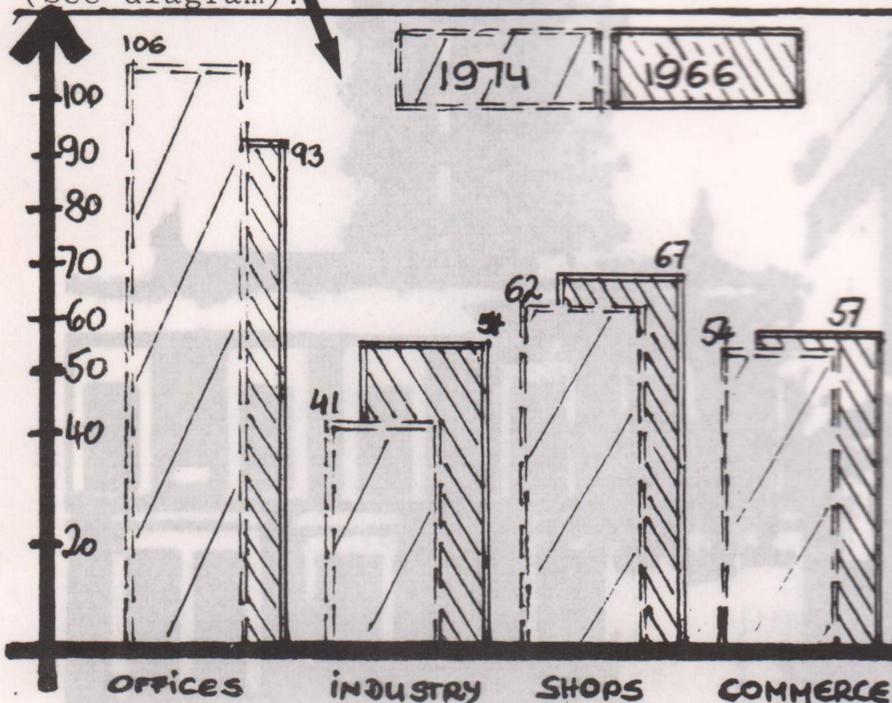
Moreover young people are an easy scapegoat for social problems, particularly for those seeking to divide ordinary working people and incite race hatred.

The increase in unemployment is not due to an increase in population or to an influx of immigrants - black or white. Between 1971-76 the population of Lambeth has dropped from 306,000 to 290,000, whilst in the two years from 1974 to 1976 the level of black unemployment has risen by 400%.

Despite some increase in the size of the 16-25 age group, this has been more than offset by the decrease in the 25-60 age group. Yet there has still been a fall in the total employed work force.

Racist arguments, however disguised, offer no solution to this problem. There is certainly more work needing to be done in Lambeth than there are people to do it. The work involved in the material and social reconstruction cannot wait for the economic recession to end.

The present government's cuts are increasing hardship; social and environmental deterioration accelerate. Nor is this decline confined to social services. This May PYE Ltd., Lambeth closed down, to be followed by TANNON and ADLARDS. These closures are part of a trend. Between 1966-74 industrial, commercial and shop floor space usage in Lambeth declined; only office floor space usage increased (see diagram).



Changes in floor space usage in Lambeth, 1966-1974 (in 10,000 sq.m units)

Productive industries have suffered in Lambeth - either through obsolete plants and buildings, changing distribution patterns, closure and reduction of activity,

and through transfer of work to outside of London. High costs of land, buildings and labour have also been blamed. But if higher productivity is in the national and local interest, who is benefiting.

Central government policy has been aimed at "securing the decentralisation of industry and commerce in correspondence with the reduction in population so as to reduce travel to work and facilitate reconstruction of inner congested boroughs"

What has this policy meant for Lambeth? Particularly, what has it meant for local youth? The reduction of population has led to a more insidious neglect of the borough - vast areas have suddenly become derelict - which brings to mind the problems of inner urban areas in the USA. Far from meaning school leavers having less distance to travel to work, the present situation means they have to travel outside Lambeth to find a job.

70% of unemployed London school leavers live south of the river - 30% in Lambeth alone. Lambeth as a borough has 2% of the job vacancies.

Alternative schemes for job training, such as those organised by Melting Pot, have done something to help a very few school leavers. Manpower Services (a govt. agency) will offer grants to approved employment projects for school leavers, but the problem remains: under the present policy of the cuts, youth unemployment will get worse. Relevant courses in further education and similar institutions must be available to ALL unemployed youth.

KNUCKLE would like to hear about alternative employment projects and job training schemes for school leavers who have been unable to continue their education or find a job.

## RIGHT TO WORK

The South London unemployed, like their counterparts in Salford (as seen on T.V., 20th January, squandering their excessive dole money on meatballs and carrots) are sick and tired of the slanders about working people living in luxury on the dole. As supporters of the South London Right to Work Campaign, a number of them held a Five Day Campaign, aimed at dispelling these myths and gaining strength to fight redundancies in Lambeth, Southwark Wandsworth and Croydon during 24-28th January. Hospitals, schools and factories throughout the area were visited.

The Campaign unites individual unemployed with working Trade Union dele-

gates around a programme of opposition to all forms of redundancies and job loss, for a 35 hour week and the nationalisation of any company that cannot guarantee jobs.

# Journalists on Strike

"Personnel Management" is one of the magazines produced by Mercury House, a publishing house in Waterloo. They should read it. 20 journalists have been on official strike there since January 6th for better conditions of employment.

The journalists are incensed by management's attempts to divide them. A recent survey showed "13 glaring anomalies" in salary structure including as much as £800 a year difference between people doing identical jobs.

Mr Hugh O'Neill, the managing director, has tried to whip up feeling against the strikers by calling their demands "politically motivated under the influence of Lenin and Trotsky", but they are determined they will not resume work until an agreement is "signed and sealed"

## Mercury House



# Another White Elephant & Castle

Lambeth Council couldn't have been very pleased with the reception they got on Tuesday night, February 1st, when they presented their proposals for a new shopping centre in Brixton at a public meeting in the Town Hall. The major and most controversial part of their plans is to knock down the area between Coldharbour Lane and Rushcroft Road to replace existing housing and small shops with premises for large stores, offices and car parks.

Sceptical residents and traders asked how much the scheme would cost? Who would rent the new shops? Where and WHEN would the people at present in the area be rehoused? What would happen to the market and small traders when rents were forced up and trade, already on the decline, had to be shared around even more?

### FAITH



Mr. Hollenby, Chief planning officer, summed up the Council's response to these vital questions when he said "We can never guarantee that the scheme will be a success. You will just have to rely on faith and the skill of the Council!" (Personally I'd rather rely on the common sense of the people of Lambeth, who know an expensive shiny white elephant when they see one).

More embarrassing still were comments on the lack of true consultation in drawing up the plans. The major decision that our money should be spent on a shopping centre, rather than say house renovation, had been made before the meeting. No alternative scheme was presented.

### ALL LAMBETH ANTI RACIALIST MOVEMENT



#### ALARM PUBLIC MEETING

on Monday 21st February at Brixton Centre, 2 St. Matthews Rd., SW2, featuring the Broadside Mobile Workers Theatre in: "DIVIDE AND RULE BRITAINIA" and invited speakers...

#### ALARM CONFERENCE

on March 12th from 1.30-5.30 p.m. at Stockwell Hall, Stockwell Park Estate...

#### ALARM PICKET

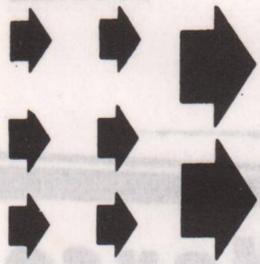
On Feb. 18th at Camberwell Magistrates Court 10.00a.m. To protest about the obstruction charges brought against John Helps, Elizabeth Harris and Norman Maclean on Nov. 13th. See last issue of Knuckle.

### NO VOTE TAKEN



The chairman avoided discussion of these issues and seized gratefully upon questions about car parking and childrens crossings, but most people there had seen the truth. This was not consultation but a con-trick! The meeting ended, appropriately enough, with the chairman refusing to take a vote on the plans, though called to do so many times. They want to know what we think, friends, but only if we agree with them!





# Criminal

## What it is

Most of us spend 100% of our time on other people's property. Even if you own your own house you spend most of your time on other people's land.

Trespassing is simply the act of being on somebody else's property and refusing to move when the owner asks you to. To allow trespass which has been only a civil matter like libel and slander, for over 600 years, to become a crime, like robbery or assault, would make it much easier for the large scale property owners to protect their control over our lives. With the full weight of the law and the heavy hand of the police at last openly on their side, all the owners of property, be they landlords, employers or local councils, would be able to deny the rights and ignore the demands of the propertyless even more than happens already.

### 'THEFT' TO BORROW SOAP

The important thing to realize about the Criminal Trespass Bill is that it is not what the media and the hysterically campaigning property owners would have us believe - it is not directed only, or even mainly, at the threat posed to all 'right minded' and 'civilised' citizens by the 'unwashed', 'commie hordes' of the squatting movement - it is, in fact, directed at reducing the civil rights of everyone who owns no property. It could effectively prevent all forms of protest or direct action on all but common land. It could

put a stop not only to squatting but also to the occupation of public buildings, colleges, or factories, to picketing, to work-ins and many other expressions of dissent from or complaint about the behaviour of property owners.

### SMOKESCREEN

The idea that the Bill is designed mainly to put a stop to squatting is just a smoke-screen. The threat that squatting presents to most of us is non-existent - Those really threatened by squatting - the property owners - are trying to foster this threat onto us. For example - the Home Office has admitted (21 June 76) that the incidence of people moving into houses whilst their owners are merely away, e.g. on holiday, is extremely low. Sir Robert Mark, Police Commissioner said (June 75) that the police already have the power to act in such cases - it is for example an act of theft to use someone's soap without their permission, or an act of damage to leave footprints on someone's floor.

The Bill which contains the Criminal Trespass proposals will be introduced in the Commons in the next couple of months. It is supported by the Government, despite the fact that the idea was originally hatched by the Tories in order to protect the property owners from the action of organised resistance to their dictates. It will therefore eventually become law unless we can bring a great deal of pressure to bear on the whole Labour movement to fight against it.

## how peaceful protes - the crimina

WE OCCUPIED  
THE FACTORY TO  
SAVE OUR JOBS.  
YOU MEAN THIS  
COULD BE A  
CRIME ???



WE S  
AN EMP  
FOR A  
WOMEN  
YOU M  
COULD  
CR

## Who it will hurt

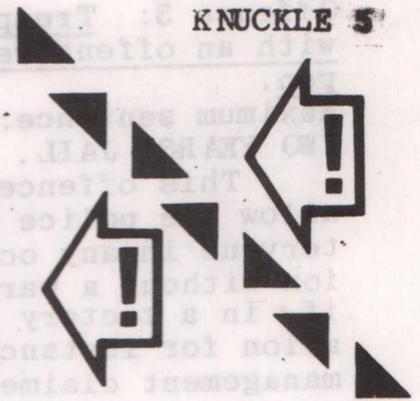
A few examples of direct action in our area which the Bill would threaten with CRIMINAL PROSECUTION:

### WOMEN

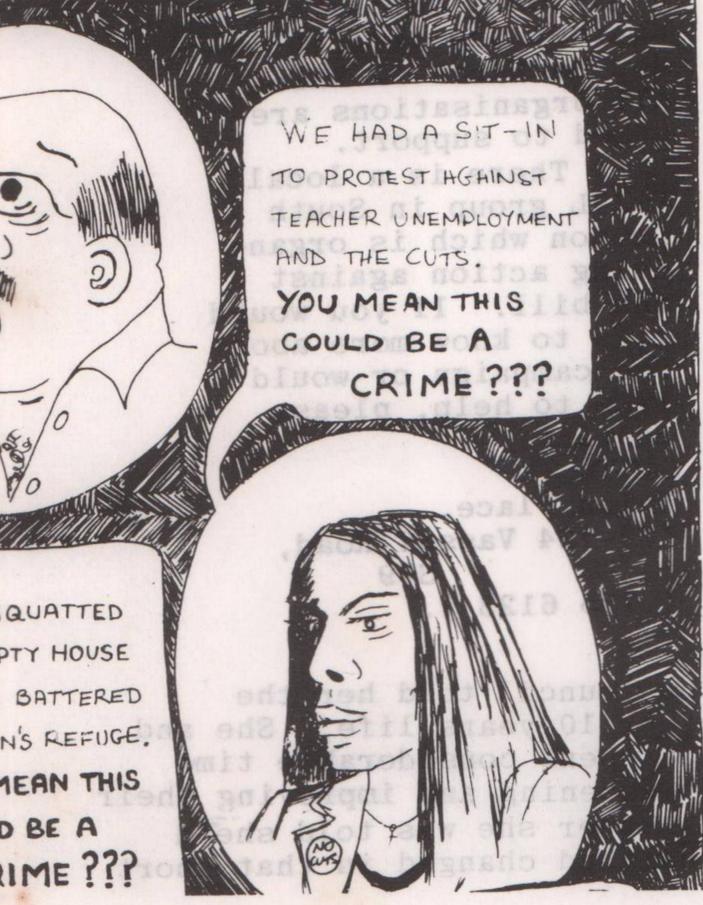
The Women's Aid Centre in Lambeth, which provides a place of refuge and support for women who are beaten up or terrified by their menfolk ('battered wives') was set up through women squatting an empty house after the council had refused to provide a suitable building from the hundreds of empty houses in the borough.

The Women's Aid Centre in the former

# Trespass



It could become a crime  
to trespass law.



## JOB

1972/3 Briant Colour works in Southwark was occupied by the employees and a work in took place to prevent the factory from being closed down.

1975 Decca TV factory in Battersea was occupied by 70 women workers whose jobs were being taken away.

## UNEMPLOYED WORKERS

The DHSS (Social Security) office in Brixton was occupied by claimants in protest against the way claimants were being treated and against the inefficiency of the management.

## EDUCATION

1975 Colleges of Education all over South London were occupied in protest against the proposed reduction in teacher training and the decline in educational standards.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Battersea Park Action group occupied Battersea Fun Fair to prevent it being turned into a high cost 'Disneyland'.

## HOMES

1971 Southwark Council Chamber was occupied by the Southwark Family Squatting Association to draw attention to the large number of empty homes in the borough at a time of increasing homelessness.

1974 Greenwich Council Chamber was similarly squatted to force the councillors to fulfill their legal responsibilities to the homeless in their borough.

1975/76 Houses in Villa Road and St. Agnes Place occupied by squatters in an attempt to get the council to talk sense about its plans to knock down homes while thousands are without a roof.

offences would give the police the right to intervene in any occupation of any kind, peaceable or otherwise WITHOUT A WARRANT. Anyone then found taking part in an occupation could then face arrest and imprisonment for up to 2 years:

Offence 1: Using or threatening violence to secure entry into premises where another is present, opposing your entry.

Maximum sentence: TWO YEARS JAIL

No violence need occur for this offence to be committed. Just outnumbering the opposition, as every occupation will, whether at work, at college or in the community, is a threat of violence.

What's more, if any security guard or caretaker rang the police and claimed they had been 'threatened', the police could raid any occupation and make arrests.

Offence 2: Adverse occupation of residential property

Maximum sentence: SIX MONTHS JAIL.

This is the offence which has been used as a smokescreen for the other four. It's ostensibly aimed at preventing the 'squattling' of already occupied homes, which happens rarely, if at all, as the Home Office has admitted in Parliament (June 21st '76). Under this offence, landlords who could claim to use a property occasionally as a residence (by putting a few sticks of furniture in, for example) would be allowed with the help of employees and friends, to take any action - including violence - to evict squatters and ex-licensees without going through the courts.

**How it will hurt** ←

The 'Conspiracy and Criminal Reform Bill' is the child of a law commission report which was first published in March last year. The report was first commissioned by the last Tory government in '72.

Section 2 of the bill proposes to create 5 new crimes involving the act of trespass. The new

## 6 KNUCKLE

### Offence 3: Trespassing with an offensive weapon.

Maximum sentence:  
**TWO YEARS' JAIL.**

This offence would allow the police to intervene in any occupation without a warrant, if, in a factory occupation for instance, the management claimed that someone had used something as an offensive weapon. In law an offensive weapon can be almost anything: tools, coins, shoes, bread knives. The TUC general council have opposed this offence - but only 'on paper'.

### Offence 4: Trespassing on embassy premises.

Maximum sentence:  
**ONE YEARS' JAIL.**

This offence explicitly makes completely peaceful occupations of embassies - like the Iranian students' occupation of their embassy in '75 - a criminal offence.

### Offence 5: Resisting or obstructing a bailiff or sheriff.

Maximum sentence:  
**SIX MONTHS' JAIL**

Anyone occupying their workplace, home, college etc. could be immediately arrested if they obstructed, even passively, the court officers sent in by the owner to evict them. Pickets protecting the building would also face arrest. The TUC have opposed this offence - but done nothing about it.

## What you can do ...

The Campaign against the Criminal Trespass Bill (CACTL), is fighting the bill. It is a broad based group of trade unionists, tenants, students and squatters and it is supported by many trade unions, com-

munity groups, Labour Party branches and Trade Councils.

CACTL is urging everyone who opposes the bill to discuss it in their Trade Union, Labour Party, tenants' association etc.

Pass a motion opposing the bill and send copies to MPs, Trades Councils, CACTL etc. Affiliate to CACTL (Student Unions £10, others £5).

CACTL is organising a national demonstration against the bill in London on March 12 which all organisations are urged to support.

There is a local CACTL group in South London which is organising action against the bill. If you would like to know more about the campaign or would like to help, please contact:

CACTL  
Union Place,  
122-124 Vassal Road,  
SW9  
( 735 6123 ).



St. Agnes Place making International news. A Polish television crew at work.

## not only St. Agnes Place

The recent events in St. Agnes Place have been well covered in the national press. It's important not to lose sight, however, of the Council's real motives. Mrs. Doreen Charlton, a resident in the road for 22 years, threw some light on this in a radio interview.

In 1974 the Council told her the houses had another 10 years life. She and her husband then spent considerable time and money on brightening and improving their home. 3 Months later she was told she'd have to go. What had changed in that short time?

The Council had suddenly realised there were some squatters in the street. So the houses from 10 years life suddenly became unliveable in - with the help of the Council wreckers!!

**HYSTERICAL SQUATTER-BASHING WILL ONLY MAKE MORE PEOPLE HOMELESS. DECENT HOMES FOR EVERYONE.**

## ...but also Heath Road

The Heath Road area of Clapham has also been receiving attention from Lambeth planners.

On Monday 17th January 10 Council wreckers and 2 "housing" officials came to gut 35 Pitcairn St., which was being vacated by tenants of some 60 years standing. Before the gutters could get into the house, the front doorstep and small yard were occupied by 15-20 local squatters, supported by representatives from a local community organisation and Lambeth Community Law Centre. Before long, there were 25 police in the street, including members of the SPG.

### KNOCKED UNCONSCIOUS

Council official Sage insisted that the house was "uninhabitable" and that the gutting must go ahead. On his orders, the police waded in. One bystander attempted to take pictures of the operation and was

# ART FOR WHOSE SAKE?

KNICKLE 7

## The National Theatre & Lambeth

On 25th October, the day sterling had its worst day since devaluation, the Queen officially opened a new piece of prestigious concrete at the South Bank Arts complex. We don't doubt the necessity for art in our lives, but faced with bad housing, poverty and unemployment in this area do we need this National Theatre and do we need it now? Is it relevant to OUR needs?

The National Theatre (NT) is in Lambeth. Lambeth has 17,000 on its housing waiting list. Unemployment in Brixton and Camberwell runs at 7%, second only to the East End.

The NT cost £9m. It covers half a million square feet, 10 times bigger than the Old Vic which it replaces, but has on only twice the capacity. Its upkeep will cost £1m a year with a further £750,000 a year for repairs.

### NEGLECTED QUESTIONS

At this time of crises unemployment



and 'cuts', the NT represents a fantastic landmark of central and local government ignorance of people and their needs.

Despite 25 years of planning, pages in the national press about its architect, seat design and cups and saucers, the central questions have been neglected. Who is the NT for, who will consume this culture factory?

### IRRELEVANT CONCRETE JUNGLE

Factories and shops are shutting in Lambeth. Faced with no jobs and no houses people are moving out. The Department of the Environment admits 4 million people in England live below the poverty line and the 3 poorest areas are in Birmingham, Liverpool and LAMBETH.

The NT is irrelevant to our area and the people who live here. It will bring tower blocks of hotels and fancy shops for rich tourists, when the priorities must be decent homes and employment, shops and play areas. Instead we get a concrete jungle for cultural snobs and highbrows to spend a "delightful evening".

### ALTERNATIVES?

Why hasn't the "alternative theatre" been encouraged? Why does the Arts Council let the National Youth Theatre decline losing 60% of its employees? Why aren't local theatre groups, street theatre and womens theatre encouraged? Why is there no theatre for children in the whole country?

Because government planning is always in the hands of a small number of people at the top. The 7% of the population who own the 84% of the wealth of the country.

Meanwhile the NT not only gives pleasure to the rich, it can be exported too. Iran has already asked for a copy of the NT in its own capital. Maybe the Chilean junta will be next!!

grabbed by the police heavies and knocked unconscious. Four police, with truncheons drawn, chased a man across the rooves, shouting to each other to "push him off". He was forced to jump and subsequently needed hospital attention. One Council wrecker deliberately smashed the front window of an adjoining, inhabited house with his pick-axe and then turned on the people who rushed in to try and stop him. The police didn't seem to think that this warranted their attention.

### 8 ARRESTS

Eight people were arrested and charged with offences ranging from obstruction and threatening behaviour to criminal damage and assault on the police. The house was then systematically wrecked, but not to the extent that it is permanently unuseable.

It is now in the process of being renovated in the belief that houses are there for people, not rats, to live in.

### CONTINUED DESTRUCTION OF HOMES

The following day, some 40 police - all of them from the Special Patrol Group - cordoned off 48 Robertson Street to allow the gutters a free hand to wreak destruction. Nothing could be done to stop the wrecking of this recently erected prefab.

There will continue to be determined opposition to the senseless, needless wrecking of viable housing stock. If the Council wishes to avoid confrontation, it must change its policies, not attempt to implement them by relying on massive police support.

# CRAFT CO-OP OPENS



Against a background of massive unemployment a new venture, Aguire, a craft cooperative has opened at 3 Leeson Road, off Railton Road, Brixton. The cooperative seeks to harness both trained and untrained local talent for hand-made articles.

Aguire provides a shop where people can put their work up for sale. Upstairs are two workshops, one equipped with knitting and sewing machines and the other for fabric design, dying and printing. Many people who use the shop will find it more convenient to work from home, but the workshops are there for those who wish to use them.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

To avoid the danger of being only for those trained in craft, Aguirre wants anyone in the community to put articles for sale in the shop or to use the workshops. Already many local housewives, old people, unemployed school leavers and school children are getting involved. One of the cooperative, Chris, emphasised this point: "Those who 'knit by the tele' perhaps a scarf or hat in their spare time, often produce goods as good, if not better, than people with a diploma in textile design. The difficulty is convincing them that other people appreciate their work".

But the cooperative is also concerned with the development of craft techniques



and design. It is a place where weavers, knitters, designers etc. can meet work together, swap ideas. There will also be courses for those who wish to learn.

## PRODUCER'S CONTROL

Any article produced remains the property of the maker until the moment of sale. He or she therefore has complete control over all aspects of the product like price, design and display. By operating on a cooperative basis the profits are returned directly to the maker, after an allowance of 30% for the running of the premises (rent, heat, equipment, publicity etc.)

The most important thing about Aguirre is a determination to retain control over the fruits of own labour.

If you make articles by hand and would like to put them in the shop, or would like to use the workshops, then pop round to 3 Leeson Road, or ring Chris or Bill on 274 6601



## RENTS UP



At a Council meeting on Jan.26th. Lambeth tenants heard the news that an across-the-board rent rise will take effect from April 4th. The average increase will be 65p but as many as 9,000 tenants may have to face the maximum rise of £1.

Councillors at the meeting made it clear that the average rise would have been only 60p if it were not that the Council had to allow for a substantial number of houses being empty, awaiting re-let or demolition.

There are more than 17,000 people on Lambeth's housing list and nearly 200 families in the borough who are in emergency accomodation. It seems highly probable that many of these unfortunates would be glad of even short-life homes.

They are not, of course, very likely to get them. But it is not only the homeless who have to pay for the ineptitude and lack of common sense at Lambeth's Housing Department.

KNUCKLE aims to be a newspaper which can provide an alternative voice to the establishment press. Which can comment honestly on the forces which shape the places where we live and work. Which can expose some of the real problems that we face and publicise the activities of people who are trying to do something constructive about them.

KNUCKLE needs people to send in news, stories and information, to help with production and to help sell it. The paper cannot reflect its local community accurately unless that community responds actively to its existence.

### KNUCKLE MEETINGS

THE EDITORIAL COLLECTIVE MEETS EVERY MONDAY NIGHT AT 7pm, AT UNION PLACE, 122 VASSALL RD., SW9.

Published by the Knuckle collective. Printed by South Bank Polytechnic S.U.