

MAY 1977

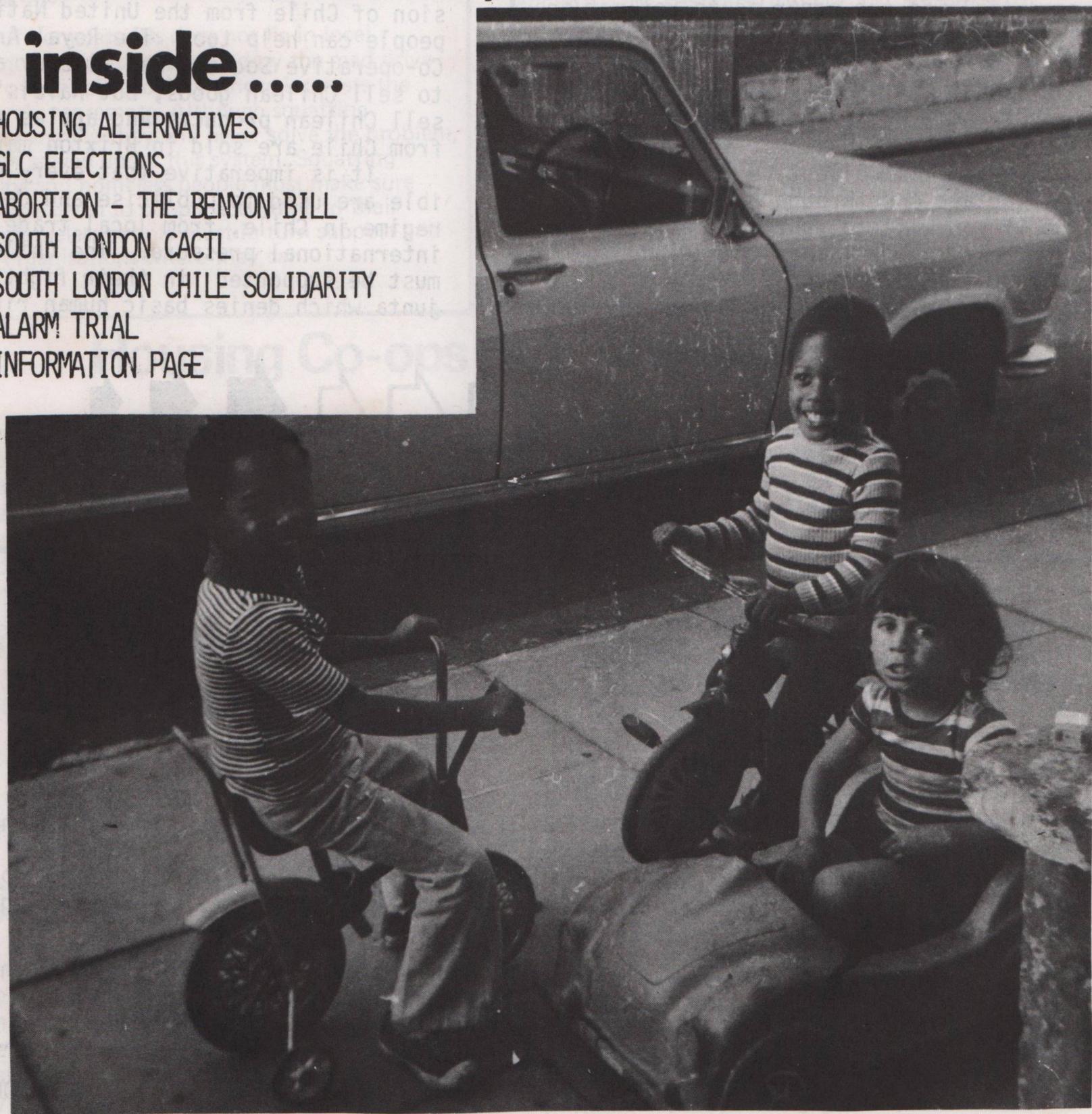
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KNUCKLE

LAMBETH'S ALTERNATIVE PAPER

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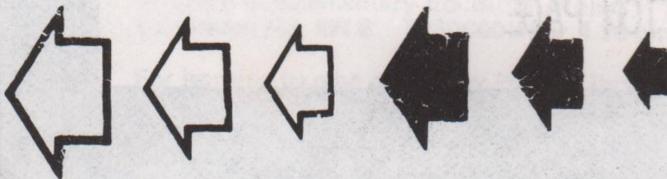
KNUCKLE aims to be a newspaper which can provide an alternative voice to the establishment press. Which can comment honestly on the forces which shape the places where we work and live. Which can expose some of the real problems that we face and publicise the activities of people who are trying to do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

KNUCKLE is beginning to get response from the community - news, articles and encouraging comments. These in themselves are essential if the paper is to reflect the local community accurately.

But KNUCKLE needs more commitment from people willing to edit and produce the paper. KNUCKLE has just lost two of its editorial collective - one through moving and one through deportation. So if you want to continue seeing a local community paper - then come along to the editorial meetings.

KNUCKLE MEETINGS

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



CHILE

Of the 277 refugees from repression in Chile who are presently in London, about 200 live in Lambeth. Living from day to day for this group is hard enough without the added burden of anguish and uncertainty for friends and relatives who remain behind in Chile to continue the struggle, where almost all political and cultural rights are denied.

The South London Chile Solidarity Committee was set up last year with the aim of co-ordinating local community support for the people of Chile fighting Pinochet's regime. It calls upon all Trade Unionists and other groups in South London to boycott all trade with Chile and demand the expulsion of Chile from the United Nations. Local people can help too. The Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society has already agreed not to sell Chilean goods, but Ravels' shoes still sell Chilean products and apples and onions from Chile are sold in Brixton market.

It is imperative that every means possible are used to publicise and denounce the regime in Chile, from local trade boycotts to international pressure. The Chilean people must be supported in their fight against a junta which denies basic human rights.

ALARM

Recently three members of the All Lambeth Anti-racist Movement (ALARM) were fined £15 following the confrontation between anti-facists and members of the National Front in Brixton on Nov. 13th. (See December Knuckle).

In the incident a National Front member Brockwell threw an anti-facist through a shop window. Brockwell was not arrested and has not been charged. Ferron, however, a member of the West Indian Defence Committee, was arrested simply on the word of two National Front members and charged with causing actual bodily harm. Ferron in fact only arrived after the fighting had ended.

The three anti-facists were found guilty in spite of the fact that the magistrate said he had "DOUBTS ABOUT THE CREDIBILITY OF THE POLICE EVIDENCE".

ALARM is calling for people to support the fight against racism and facism by:-

1. Condemning the judgement on the three anti-facists.
2. Calling for the prosecution of Brockwell.
3. Demanding that all charges against Ferron be dropped.

ALARM, c/o South Bank Poly Students Union
7 Rotary Street, London, SE1

NATIONAL CLAIMANTS UNION
CONFERENCE

BRIXTON CENTRE (Opp.
Town Hall)

7th-8th May

THE GLC ELECTIONS

to vote – or not to vote?

~ NO ~

Once again the circus is on the road. Roll up, roll up, it's the great GLC election show; with its cast of thousands - Labour, Tory, Liberal, assorted Trotskists, Communists and Marxists, various facsists and moremore more.....

But why do so few people vote? Because whoever wins we'll still be faced with urban devastation and decay. Because all the politicians are trying to run a social system which in crisis or not simply cannot benefit the mass of the people, but only the bosses and bureaucrats.

But simply not voting is not enough - because it still leaves power in the hands of those who do not and never can, represent our needs. We all know that we only get what we need when we act together, at work for better wages and conditions; as tenants against our landlords; or as squatters collectively defending our homes

Voting in the election booths we are isolated individuals - only changing the faces of the rulers. Whoever you vote for, the government gets in. By simply not voting, we let the power be taken from us.

We should ignore this charade. Recognise it doesn't matter who wins - and continue our struggles with more vigour. Only by acting together with those we work and live with can we make meaningful changes. Changes which will bring about a socialist way of life - where we all control the way we live. Where the free expression of one is guaranteed by the free expression of all.

We don't need the politicians and bosses - but they need us. So this election vote nobody, and concentrate on taking power.

~ YES ~

Once again elections are on the horizon and socialists are faced with the problem of what, if anything, we should do in them.

Most working class people think we have a democratic system with its parliament, elections, etc. Traditionally they have voted for a Labour government and GLC. But the Labour GLC have broken their promises for better housing, transport, education, etc. In particular the present Labour Govt. has introduced the Social Contract which has cut our standard of living. The Labour GLC has implemented these cuts without a murmur.

But there is clearly a difference between the Labour and Tory parties. Labour, relying as it does on the support of the working class is not able to openly attack our interests in the way the Tories would, given the chance. For this reason we say vote Labour but don't be conned by any promises - continue and extend the fight back now.

In some areas socialists are standing. In these areas there is an opportunity to extend the struggles, especially since the working class are more keyed into political debates during elections.

Where a socialist is standing, especially if against a known right-wing labour candidate, we should vote for the socialist candidate - to indicate our desire to fight back.

We must use every opportunity to fight for our policies : voting is one of those opportunities.

SOUTH LONDON CACTL (Campaign Against Criminal Trespass Law)
CONFERENCE ON DIRECT ACTION

JUNE 12th South Bank Poly
Students Union

CACTL march. Photo
Morning Star



ABORTION

A DOCTOR'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE?



Need an abortion? Feeling lucky? Yes, you need to be lucky, since only 50% of women, locally and nationally, who feel they have the right to choose abortion, are being allowed to have it on the NHS.

The present Abortion Act (1967) makes abortion legal ONLY when 2 registered doctors (1 in an emergency) agree that it is medically or socially better for a woman to have an abortion than to continue with the pregnancy - "a doctor's right to choose".

The case in the press last summer, of a young Balham woman who was refused an NHS abortion as a 'borderline' case and later died following a back-street abortion, highlights the options of the remaining 50%.

Attempts in Parliament to further restrict women's eligibility for abortion, at present in the shape of William Benyon's Amendment Bill, which has just got through its second reading, must be defeated by mass public opposition.

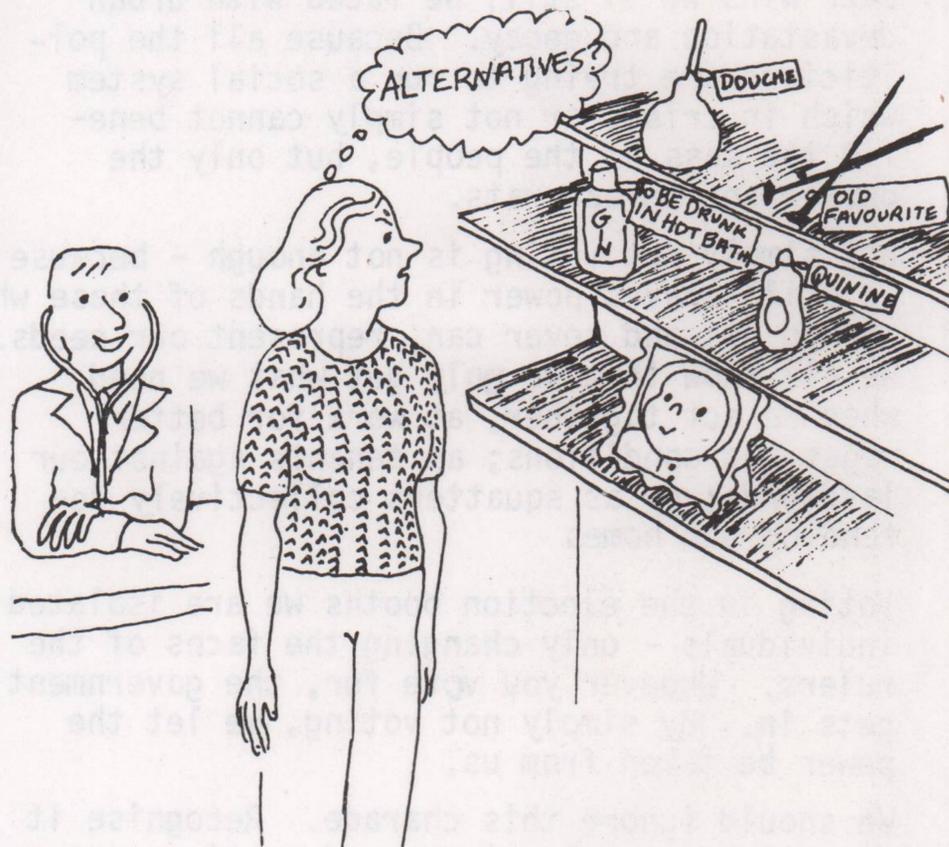
The present gross inadequacies of the NHS abortion facilities are very likely to worsen as a result of the £40M of cuts to health services over the next 2 years.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN SOUTH LONDON.....?

As elsewhere in the country, being lucky enough to get that NHS abortion, besides depending on your doctor's choice, also depends on where you live.

In 1974 only 197 NHS terminations were carried out in the Guy's Health District compared to 388 in St. Thomas' Health District and 949 in the King's Health District. In Balham it has always been virtually impossible to obtain an NHS abortion - 16 in 1975. These figures do not reflect variations of need, but primarily differing medical and political attitudes to abortion.

The Consultant at St. James; Balham, Mr. Flood, is vehemently anti-abortion, while Professor Taylor the Chief Gynaecologist at St. Thomas will recommend no abortions on social grounds. Women in Streatham usually have to resort to the private sector, William Shelton an anti-abortionist being M.P. for that area.



In neighbouring Wandsworth, of the 700 NHS abortions carried out in 1975, 450 were at the South London Hospital, which is now closing. Although a proposal to open an out-patient clinic at St. George's has been accepted in principle, this may well depend on economic cuts.

Out-patient clinics exist only at Lewisham, King's and Kingston Hospitals, but all of these will only treat patients resident in their Health Districts. Referral is by doctors only.

South West London National Abortion Campaign is part of a national campaign for "A Woman's Right to Choose". If you are disturbed about these issues and want to help the campaign, or if you have any information you think should be made public, contact the National Abortion Campaign (NAC) at 11 Hubert Grove, SW9.

Tel: 274 6912

and support the MASS NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION on SATURDAY 14TH MAY.

nurseries for lambeth?

MORE NURSERIES IN LAMBETH

Demand for more places

Everyone knows there aren't enough full time places for under fives' in Lambeth. A survey done by Lambeth social services department in May 1975 showed an average of 250 enquiries every week, and admitted that even this was an underestimation! Many mothers do not even bother to enquire about a nursery place because they have heard that the waiting lists are too long to be worth while applying. Playgroups aren't open long enough to cover hours of work, even in a part time job, and nursery classes close down outside school terms, so are no good for parents who go to work either. Even Lambeth council know there is a need for more nursery places, but what are they planning to do about it?

▷▷ nac action

FOR MORE INFORMATION

MAY 7th 10.30am: Street meeting at Balham Stn.

MAY 11th 7.30pm: PUBLIC MEETING, Clapham Manor Baths - PIRATE VENNY THEATRE GROUP in "BOUNCING BACKWARD WITH BENYON" plus two speakers. SW London NAC.

LOCAL ACTION

PICKET at Tom Cox's surgery on May 6th (Anti-abortion Tooting MP)

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

MAY 14th - Rally 1.30pm at Belvedere Rd. - near Waterloo Station.

WHAT DOES THE BENYON BILL MEAN?

1. MORE DELAYS - not all doctors could give their consent.- Doctors would find it easier to say they have a moral objection and refuse to help.
2. AND NO ABORTIONS AFTER 20 WEEKS.
3. POLICE COULD INSPECT MEDICAL RECORDS RELATING TO ABORTIONS PERFORMED.

If you think you may be pregnant:

Go to your doctor or Family Planning Clinic for a pregnancy test and possible consultation afterwards OR if this is not satisfactory - or possible, contact:
Union Place Pregnancy Testing, SW9
Tel: 735 6123 for appointment.

Walworth Brook Centre, SE17
Tel: 703 9660 or 703 7880 for appointment.

CUTS!

Lambeth had plans to build 6 extra nurseries, which would have provided about 360 more places. But because of cutbacks in government money all these new nurseries have been 'postponed indefinitely'! There are going to be some increases, but these are to be paid for out of cuts elsewhere. For example in Brixton the old St John's nursery, in St John's Crescent is to be run by Doctor Barnardo's and Lambeth is to sponsor 32 of the places; there are to be 12 full time places in Loughborc' Park playgroup building, and in Norwood on the new Central Hill estate, Lambeth is to sponsor 10 places in the new Dr Barnardo's centre. BUT, the money for these increases come from a decrease of 18 full time places in Chestnut day nursery in Norwood, and a cut of 19 sponsored places on the NNEB training course for nursery courses in Brixton College! Besides this Lambeth has completely scrapped its plans to build a new nursery on Central Hill of 60 places, and proposals to run St Johns as a council nursery with a linked childminder scheme, providing in all 47 full time places! Worse still, sponsored places are being run down in many private day nurseries, equipment grants are not being increased to keep up with rising prices, and day nurseries are being pressurised to take on more kids without any increase of staff to go with them.

What this all adds up to is that Lambeth is doing nothing about the need for more full time places for under 5's except put more pressure on the facilities that exist already. This is unfair to the Kids and parents as well as to the nursery staff.

Lambeth Under 5's Campaign

Is organising a campaign against cutbacks in day care places for under 5's. We aim to involve all people in the area who want and need better nursery facilities, including parents, under 5's workers, members of womens groups, trade unions, labourParty groups etc.

We think that every woman should have a right to full time day care for her children, and are against any cutbacks or rundown in under 5's facilities. We are also supporting the fight against cutbacks in social services, health and education which are being voted in by Lambeth council under the govt. spending cutbacks. All of them will make more work for women in the home, and a worse standard of living for us all, men, women and children.

If you'd like more information about the campaign, contact Margaret Page at 13 Malfort Rd, SE5 or at Cowley House Advice Centre, 103 Cowley Road.



HOUSING

LAMBETH SELF HELP HOUSING ASSOCIATION — the answer to homelessness?

In 1971 a group of homeless families moved into empty houses and organised rent collections in order to rehabilitate more houses. This direct action resulted in the founding of a Council recognised Housing Association, The Lambeth Self Help Housing Association (LSHHA). The Council agreed to provide the Association with short-life houses.

Until mid '75 the LSHHA was self-funding, but due to the bad conditions of the houses they were offered they made 2 demands of the council.

1. Rehousing of families in the LSHHA in council homes after 2 years or two squats.

2. That the council give the LSHHA £10,000 a year towards the cost of repair of the houses.

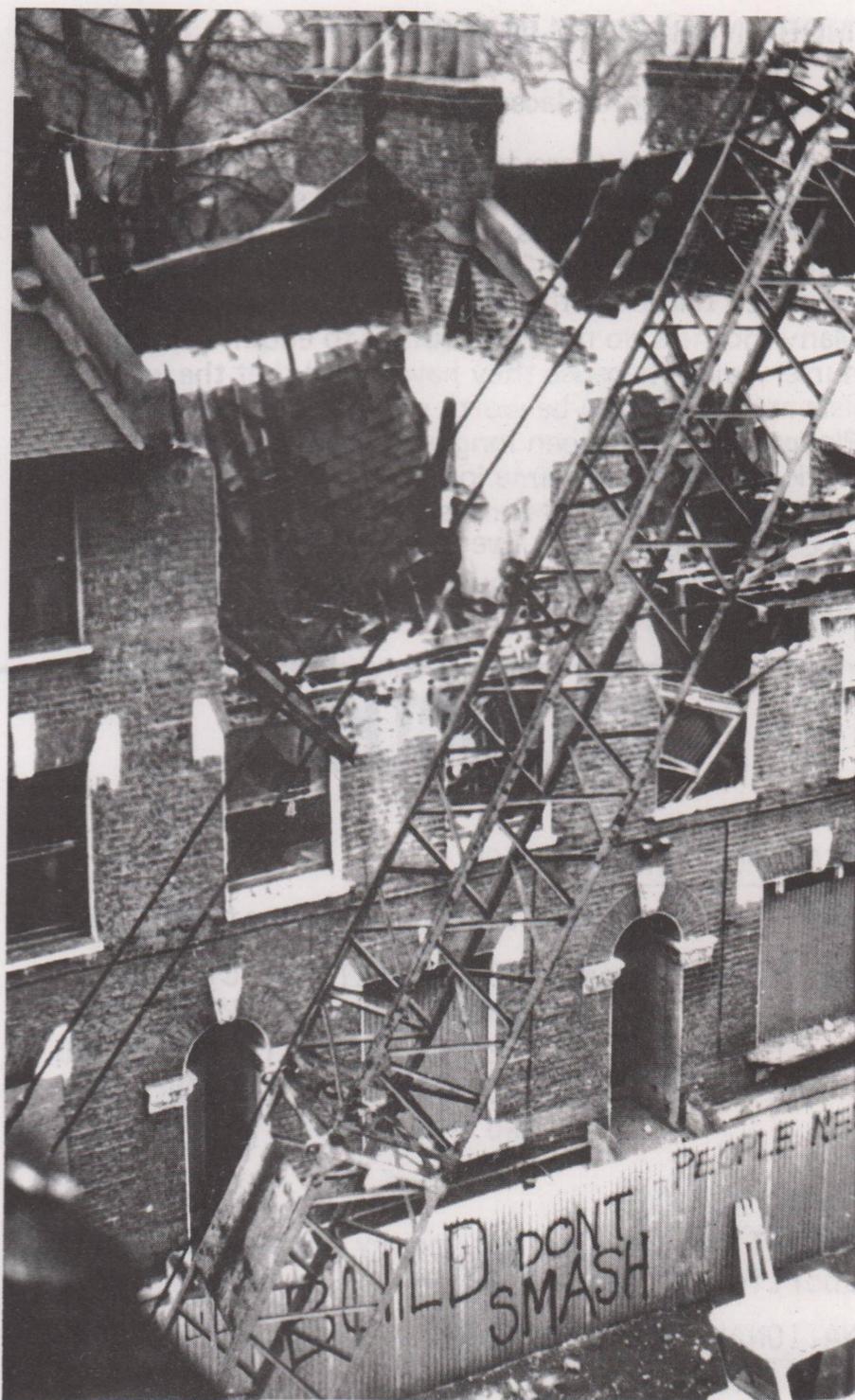
The council agreed to no.1 but classed them as homeless, meaning that they would be offered only a choice out of three houses. In one instance, an old aged pensioner had to accept a 2 room, 4th floor flat, without a bath.

The Building Coop

The 2nd demand has not been fully met. The LSHHA is not eligible for a grant from the Department of Environment as it is not registered with the Housing Corporation. Therefore the LSHHA set up its own separate building group called the Building Coop which gets money from a different housing association called Solon.

St Agnes Place

The LSHHA cooperates with squatting groups and cooperatives, and took part in the campaign to save St Agnes Place, including presenting a motion to the council. The Building Coop proposed to repair the buildings in St Agnes Place at no cost to the council, if they could be occupied until the council has an approved plan and the necessary funds. True to form the council twice rejected this even though even though they have no plans for the street for some time. However, due to campaigning by the left and squatters it will receive a hearing at the next committee meeting. However, only 10 or 12 houses are habitable due to the councils' legalised vandalism.



LAMBETH'S HOUSING POLICY.....

50 Years Ago

"BRIXTON FREE PRESS"

APRIL 1927

Less than two years ago the "Free Press" published a series of pictures of wooden houses in Lambeth which had come under the condemning ban of the slum reformers of the London County Council. These houses were condemned, not because they were in any way unfit for habitation, but because they were made of wood, and had had the impudence to withstand all the elements of destruction for a hundred years or more. They were made of wood and that was enough to justify the death sentence.

Before the judgement could be executed, housing experts of the County Council returned from their world tour, undertaken in search of alternatives to brick and concrete houses with a violent leaning leaning in favour of houses of wood. Now, not only are the Council to build wooden houses at Becontree on their own account, but these ancient condemned houses in Lambeth are brought forward as models of comfort, convenience and longevity. It is a wonderful world and we have wonderful officials whose vagaries are rather more wonderful than ourselves.

ALTERNATIVES..

WHO SQUATS?

People usually squat because of high rents or lack of decent accomadation. Squatters also want to save houses as the recent case of St Agnes Place showed. Sometimes, however, articulate single peole find themselves playing aleading role in squatting groups and organisations. This is inevitable if they have more practical prestige practical expertise and more time to spend in improving their houses. This only serves to increase the dependance of homeless families on others. The homeless families are once again forced into a position of dependance — albeit a more sympathetic and flexible one.

The cause of homelessness does not lie in local council or government, it is caused by the mad drive for profits of capitalist society whose interests the council merely represents. Although squatting movements can help they will never solve the problem, nor can it be solved under this system. Squatting organisations and homeless people must make sure that homes are given to people according to their needs, and homeless people must in turn support and help these organisations where they can.

uniform homes, on badly-planned and jerry-built estates. Their lives are controlled by unyielding and unapproachable bureaucracies which are completely unresponsive to individual needs.

DO-IT-YOURSELF

Are there any alternatives? Some people now believe that they have found that alternative in the principle of co-operative housing.

A co-op is a body whose organisation may be summarised as follows:-

1. Membership is voluntary and open to all who can make use of its services and are willing to accept the responsibility of membership.
2. Co-ops are democratic - one man one vote.
3. Any capital invested receives only a strictly limited rate of interest if any.
4. Any earned surplus is used to further develop the co-op, to provide services for its members, or is distributed equally.

Housing co-ops provide a democratic way for tenants to collectively and directly control their own housing. It provides a framework for a self governing community based on mutual help rather than private gain or public bureaucracy

Housing Co-ops: An Alternative?

The housing situation in this country has been in a state of 'crisis' for us as long as anyone can remember. Traditionally, there have been three ways of obtaining a house - through the private landlord; through personal ownership; and through the local authority. That these three ways have proved inadequate is self-evident, yet the interest shown in any alternative is very small indeed.

(management accounts for a significant part of local authority housing budgets). And forming a housing co-op is not an impossible ideal, many are already functioning up and down the country.

DIRECTORY

THREE CHOICES?

The poor quality, unpleasantness and expense of housing provided by the private landlord is well-known. In any case the number of private flats has been steadily decreasing since the turn of the century because it has become more difficult for landlords to make large profits.

The second sector of housing - the owner-occupier sector - is by far the largest of the three, accounting for 50% of all homes. Its advantages are well known, but of course you either have to be well off or cripple your finances with high interest rates to the moneylenders.

The 3rd sector, the so-called 'public' sector, in the hands of the local authorities, is supposed to provide good housing at reasonable cost to those who cannot find housing elsewhere. In practice only those in desperate need are even considered for Council housing, and the housing is often of a very low standard. People are isolated in cramped,

It was with the aim of making information about housing co-ops more readily available that a conference of housing co-ops in April last year drew up a directory of info. on setting up a housing co-op. It is obtainable by sending a large (12 3/4 x 9") stamped (11p) self-addressed envelope to Andy Dunning at 79c Balfour St. SE17.

Social Workers Hold Day Of Action

Social Workers in south london lobbied a meeting of Lambeth's social services committee on April 6th after a day of strike action on pay demands.

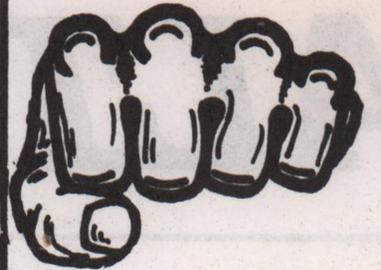
National Association of Local Government Officers (NALGO) members were on the streets distributing leaflets which said: In 1971 the council job-evaluated its staff. The results indicated that social workers should be paid higher wages ... nothing has happened about the pay of social wotkers in spite of lengthy negotiations.

They point out that a 10% shortage of staff is due to the low pay level.



HELP!!! INFORMATION!!!

Lambeth is well served with help agencies of various kinds, both 'official' and organised by local groups. This list includes both under the following headings: General, Housing/Squatting, Legal, Social Security, Consumer, Women, Contraceptives, Reading/Supplementary Education, Pressure Group Groups/Political.



1. GENERAL ADVICE

Especially problems related to Government and Local Authority Depts:

a) CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

NORTH LAMBETH CAB
323 Kennington Road,
SE 11 735-9551

STREATHAM CAB,
384 Streatham High Road,
SW 16 769-1055/8462

b) Lambeth Information Service

Call at Town Hall, or ring 274-7722, provides information on all council services.

c) BRIXTON NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Community House, 1 Mayall Road, SE 24 274-5731/4121

d) BRIXTON ADVICE CENTRE

167 Railton Road, SE 24 733-4674

e) Blackfriars Settlement

44 Nelson Square, ES 1 928-9521

f) Help '71

95 Acre Lane, SW 2 274-3339
Community help, children, mothers etc.

g) Centre '70 Community Association

138 Christchurch Road, SW 2, 674-6671
Advice, playgroup, mothers, OAPs

h) Clapham Town Community Project

39 Old Town, Clapham, SW 4 720-4359
Advice, legal, children
Community Shop at 45 North Street, SW 4 720-8731

i) Consortium

Cambridge House, 131 Camberwell Road, SE 5 701-2209

j) Kings Acre Neighbourhood Council,

124a Lyham Road SW2

k) South Lambeth Neighbourhood Council

Surrey Hall, Binfield Road, SW 4

l) North Lambeth Neighbourhood Council 735-2393/5286

3. LEGAL

Lambeth Community Law Centre,
506 Brixton Road, SW 9 733 4345 (24 hours)

Melting Pot

77 Atlantic Rd, SW 9 733 4268

4. SOCIAL SECURITY

Camberwell & Kennington Claimants Union
122 Vassall Rd SW 9. 735 6123

5. CONSUMER

Lambeth Consumer Advice Centre,
13 Electric Avenue, SW 9 274 7467

W WOMEN'S PROBLEMS

Womens Advice Centre
207 Railton Road, SE 24 733 8663

For Womens Aid ring 737 1441 ext 40

7. Contraceptives

Brockwell Family Planning Clinic
47 Tulse Hill, SW 2 674 5110

Walworht Brook Centre, SE 17 703 9660 or 703 7880

Clapham Clinic, South London Hospital,
South Side Clapham Common, SW 4 673 2024

8. READING,SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATION

Gresham Supplementary Education Project
1 Gresham Rd, SW 9 7330690(after 4.30 pm)

For learning to read call at any Public Library, or at

Brixton College, 56 Brixton Hill, SW 2 737 1166



INFO PAGE



m) Stockwell and Vauxhall Neighbourhood Council
Tate Library, South Lambeth Road, SW 8

n) Waterloo Action Centre
14 Baylis Road, SE1 1UG 261-1404

o) Streatham Legal Advice Centre
Church Building, Riggindale Lane, SW 16 769-0200

p) Friendship House
Springfield Hall, 200 Wandsworth Road, SW 8

q) BNCA
1 Mayall Road, SE 24 274-4121

r) Planning Advice Centre
164 Clapham Park Road, SW 4 720-1911

s) Lambeth Gingerbread
c/o Barbara Budgeon 582-1805

2. HOUSING/SQUATTING

a) Lambeth Housing Advice Centre,
3 Town Hall Parade, Brixton Hill, SW 2 274-7722 Ext 481

b) Call here first, and if no luck call at:
Union Place Community Centre, 122 Vassall Rd, SW 9 735-6123

b) If the problem relates to Squatting, contact:
Family Squatters Office, 305 Brixton Road, SW 9 274 8848

9. PRESSURE GROUPS/POLITICAL

Complaints about racial discrimination:
Community Relations Council, 441 Brixton Rd, SW 9 274 7722 ext 210

South London Anti-Apartheid
Geoff Holmes, 196 Avesburg Avenue, SW 2

Campaign Against a Criminal Trespass Law
6 Bowden St, SE 11 289 3877

South London group meets every Sunday 4.00pm
Union Place, 122 Vassall Rd, SW 9 735 6123
Contact Steve Barran 928 1643 or at Union Place

South London Right to Work Campaign
21 Mayall Road, SE 24 582 3486

10. FOOD

Omega Shops - cheap veg and whole food
54 Atlantic Road, SW2
& 59 Brixton Rd, SW9

