£100 a quarter heating cost for pensioners in modern council flats

By Pat Healy
Social Services Correspondent

Families and pensioners on a London council estate have to spend between £100 and £200 in a winter quarter to heat their homes to the minimum standard needed for health. The electric ceiling heating would cost £166 a year for a one-bedroom flat heated during the evening only, and £472 to heat a three-bedroom maisonette all day.

These figures have been estimated by an independent consultant called in by Brent Community Law Centre to determine the "reasonable" costs of minimum heating of Church End, a modern council estate in the borough. He found, on conservative estimates including switched-off heating in every unoccupied room, that pensioners in one-bedroom flats needed to spend £100 in the heaviest winter quarter.

The size of initial bills was so high that most tenants have taken panic measures. Pensioners have stopped using their heating and go to bed in temperatures below freezing point. Families with young children keep one room only and rely mostly on kettles for hot water.

The consultant, who found that the consumption of electricity by pensioners was about half the level needed for minimum warmth, says in his report, released to *The Times* today, that the tenants' economy measures cause "extreme privation".

His study was carried out in January, when most tenants were heating one room only and one family had abandoned heating altogether. The result was that the unheated rooms were at temperatures little above those outside.

The consultant writes: "There can be little doubt that living or sleeping in unheated rooms will cause damage to health both from cold and from damp due to condensation. The matter is particularly sad in one-bedroom flats occupied by old people, where a gas oven with an open door is often used to heat the kitchen/dining/living room."

The report includes a copy of the first bill received by one couple, which came to £99.26. The husband is almost totally disabled and his doctor has certified that he needs temperatures above average to avoid the risk of hypothermia.

The couple live on supplementary benefit and an attendance allowance, and the London Electricity Board estimates that he needs to pay £8 a week to cover the consumption he needs. But they heat their one-bedroom flat with a two-bar electric fire.

The consultant's report blames poor insulation on the estate for the high consumption needed to provide enough warmth. The insulation standards met the prevailing regulations when the estate was built in the early 1970s, but are well below later standards for general heating needs and considerably below the Electricity Council's regulations for the type of heating used on the estate.

The consultant comments: "While the capital cost of the estate was almost parsimoniously planned, the end effect has been to spare no expense to the tenants".

The consultant was called in because the law centre was finding it difficult to persuade local social security officers that the tenants needed more help with their heating.

Some are receiving heating additions at standard rates of up to £1.40 a week. The law centre wants the estate to be recognized as having special heating needs and for similar arrangements to be made with the Supplementary Benefits Commission. Other council estates have achieved such aims because of the high heating costs involved.

Those arrangements would not, however, help most of the 730 tenants on the estate, who do not receive supplementary benefit and therefore do not qualify for heating additions.

The consultant's report says that to heat a family home to minimum standards would cost about £16 a week in the winter quarter, without taking into account standing charges, cooking by electricity, use of a refrigerator, washing machine or electric heating to dry clothes.

The report will be considered by the consultative council of Brent council and tenants on September 6. Mr Iain Roxburgh, chairman of Brent housing committee, says in a statement issued to coincide with the report that he will be pressing the Government to provide financial help to improve insulation on the estate.

"Brent no longer uses electrical heating systems in new buildings, but it is more than ever essential that everything possible should be done to cushion the effects of these rapidly rising costs hitting those who can least afford them", he said.

Callaghan claim of progress on recovery

By Our Political Editor

The Birmingham, Ladywood, by-election, the Prime Minister wrote yesterday, takes place at a time when the Labour candidate "can begin to point to the solid progress that is being made by the Government in Britain's recovery".

In his election message Mr Callaghan said the Government was overcoming the biggest bugbear, the rate of increase in price levels; the fever of inflation was past its peak.

He went on: "I confidently expect that the annual rate of inflation will continue to fall for many months to come. In addition interest rates are falling, to the benefit of everyone, and so are building society borrowing rates. All this is good, and on the economic front British industry is exporting more to other countries than ever before and the pound sterling is strong overseas."

All those things, Mr Callaghan said, were being done while Labour was in a parliamentary minority. The government was successfully bringing Britain through the most difficult times faced in the past thirty years. It was preparing the way for a decade of opportunity, and a vote for Labour next Thursday would be a vote of confidence in Britain's future.

Immigrant appeal: The Confederation of Indian Organizations has sent out a call to immigrant voters in the by-election to break their traditional loyalty to the Labour Party and place their vote elsewhere in protest at the Government's immigration policy (a Staff Reporter writes).

The constituency has 14,000 immigrant voters and the confederation has issued a leaflet accusing Mr Callaghan's Administration of failing to implement party policy on immigration and allowing race relations to deteriorate.

The leaflet suggests that electors should consider voting Conservative or Liberal, demonstrating that voters no longer have faith in the Labour Government.

The 10 candidates are: John Sever (Lab), Quentin Davies (C), Kenneth Hardeman (L), Anthony Reed Herbert (Nat Front), George Matthews (Ind), Cyril Pearce (Ind), Kim Gordon (Socialist Workers), Peter Courtney (Reform Party), Rashbi Ahsan (Socialist Unity), William George Boakes (Air, Road, Public Safety, White Resident).

Election: A. B. Walden (Lab), 13,819; R. Lawn (C), 9,079; K. Hardeman (L), 3,088; Lab majority 4,739.

Total of 202 people charged after violent incidents during National Front march

By Robert Parker

The National Front march through Lewisham on Saturday resulted in what were generally agreed to be the most violent incidents seen in Britain for years.

There were 214 arrests and at least 111 people were injured, some seriously. The injuries were caused by flying bottles, bricks, dustbins, jagged chunks of wood, smoke bombs, tins and bags of small stones, and by hand-to-hand fighting.

Last night the police said that 202 people had been charged with offences, including assault, possession of offensive weapons and threatening behaviour. Twelve of those arrested were released without being charged.

55 policemen injured, six were still in hospital last night. Of 56 civilians hurt, four were still detained.

Many people had predicted violence, and tried to get the march banned. The worst violence occurred when left-wing groups of blacks and whites tried to stop the march. It was estimated that 4,000 police were present.

The National Front demonstrators numbered at most 1,000. Many of their opponents, numbering perhaps 3,000 to 4,000, had come from a peaceful march held in the morning by the All-Lewisham Campaign Against Racism and Fascism. Between 5,000 and 6,000 people took part in that march, which was headed by Mr Roger Cudsifi, the Mayor of Lewisham, and the Bishop of Southwark, Dr Mervyn Stockwood.

A call for confrontation with the National Front march had been made by the Socialist Workers' Party, and it became clear that careful preparations for that had been made.

The background to the All-Lewisham campaign's march has been a troubled one. The campaign was angry that a new route laid down by the police after the personal intervention of Mr David McNee, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, kept it out of Deptford, an area with a large black population, where the National Front march was allowed to go.

At the start of the campaign's march in the morning, south of Lewisham town centre, there were strong indications of trouble to come. The main speakers asked for a peaceful demonstration, but an SWP loudspeaker van urged people to go on to Deptford and stop the National Front.

The police stopped the march in Lewisham Way, half a mile from Lewisham town centre, and about a mile and a half from Clifton Rise, where the National Front members were due to assemble.

Left-wing groups had clearly foreseen the police action and began to marshal demonstrators from various side streets into Brookmill Road, which runs roughly parallel with Lewisham Way, so that they could make their way to New Cross Road and into Deptford.

The National Front assembled under police protection in Achilles Road, a side street off Clifton Rise. Between 12.30 and 3 pm, when the Front march set off, there were skirmishes between police and left-wing demonstrators, and dozens of arrests.

Smoke bombs and missiles were thrown and many people emerged from the crowd with bleeding faces. At that point ammonia spray was used against policemen.

The National Front march, surrounded by cordons of police and spearheaded by 25 policemen on horses, set off at 3 pm. A large banner proclaimed: "Stop the muggers: 80 per cent of the muggers are black, 85 per cent of the victims are white." As soon as the march entered New Cross Road vicious battles erupted.

A hail of missiles hit police officers, National Front marchers and left-wing demonstrators. A huge crowd of demonstrators had assembled across the road to try to stop the march eastwards towards Deptford Broadway. The mounted police cleared a path through that.

At one point the Front demonstrators were forced on to a pavement; and for a time demonstrators succeeded in cutting the march in two.

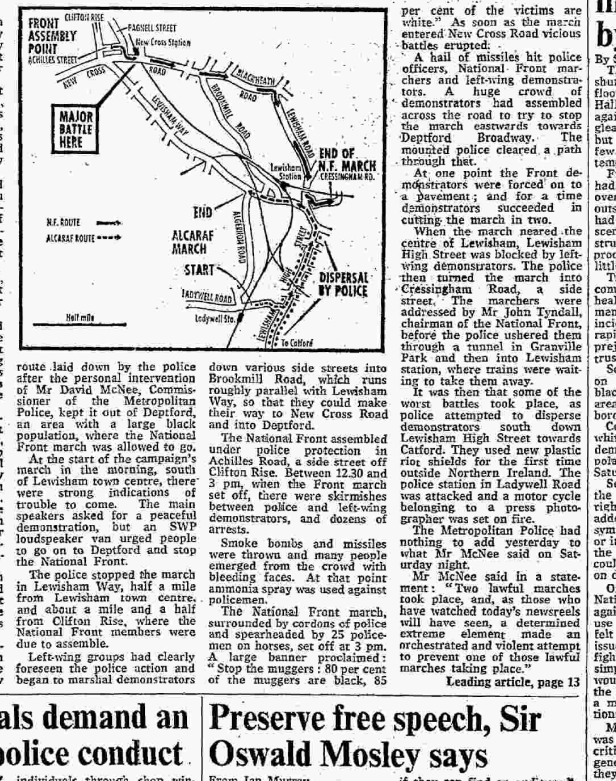
When the march neared the centre of Lewisham, Lewisham High Street was blocked by left-wing demonstrators. The police then turned the march into Cressingham Road, a side street. The marchers were addressed by Mr John Tyndall, chairman of the National Front, before the police ushered them through a tunnel in Granville Park and then into Lewisham station, where trains were waiting to take them away.

It was then that some of the worst battles took place, as police attempted to disperse demonstrators south down Lewisham High Street towards Catford. They used new plastic riot shields for the first time outside Northern Ireland. The police station in Ladywell Road was attacked and a motor cycle belonging to a press photographer was set on fire.

The Metropolitan Police had nothing to add yesterday to what Mr McNee said on Saturday night.

Mr McNee said in a statement: "Two lawful marches took place, and, as those who have watched today's newsreels will have seen, a determined extreme element made an orchestrated and violent attempt to prevent one of those lawful marches taking place."

Leading article, page 13



Distrust in Lewisham intensified by riots

By Stewart Tendler

The impromptu wooden shutters still covered the ground floor windows of Deptford Town Hall yesterday and slogans against the National Front gleamed along Lewisham Way, but otherwise Lewisham showed few external signs of Saturday's tempest.

Four shops in the High Street had smashed windows boarded over and a pile of debris lay outside another. But workmen had quickly cleaned up the scenes of the riots and the struggles, leaving the steady procession of motorist sightseers little to gawp at.

The internal injuries to the community may take longer to heal, judging by local comments yesterday. Details of incidents, real or imagined, have rapidly circulated to confirm prejudices and intensify distrust.

Some said they had been told on good authority that many black youths had come into the area from neighbouring boroughs to swell the numbers.

Comments like that among the white population show that the demonstration helped further to polarize feeling. The events of Saturday added to the prejudice.

Several people thought that the National Front had every right to march, although they added that they were not in sympathy with the organization or its aims. Some suggested that the Front and its opponents could have held their marches on different days.

One local member of the National Front said he was against such marches and their use to create confrontation. He felt the march had blurred the issue, which was a question of fighting street crime and not simply a matter of race. He would have been preferable for the National Front to have held a meeting under secure conditions and kept off the streets.

Many people said the violence was predictable, but few whites criticized the police. It seems generally to have been felt that they were caught in the middle, and older people praised their tough response.

In a public house in Lewisham High Street, on the walls of which stones and bricks rattled on Saturday, customers railed against the counter-demonstrators.

Both white and black people castigated the mob violence, given the prejudices they may have roused, the counter-demonstrators have probably furthered racial disharmony.

Local people believe the problems of their essentially peaceful community have been exploited, and they will have to pick up the pieces.

Young Liberals demand an inquiry into police conduct

The National League of Young Liberals yesterday accused members of the National Front of besieging trains between Lewisham and Charing Cross after the march and counter-demonstration.

They said that members of the National Front were waiting at St John's station for trains carrying counter-demonstrators away from Lewisham. They tried to open carriage doors and pushed a railway sleeper through a window.

The league accused the police of charging groups of people dispersing after the counter-demonstration and of hurling individuals through shop windows in Lewisham High Street. The Young Liberals called for a public inquiry into the conduct and strategy of the police and pledged their support for further counter-demonstrations against the National Front.

British Rail said that St John's station was closed for an hour late on Saturday afternoon and that the police had been called, because the single woman official on duty was frightened by what was happening there. She told the police on their arrival that a train had left the station with a broken window.

Preserve free speech, Sir Oswald Mosley says

From Ian Murray
Paris, Aug 14

"This has often happened before", Sir Oswald Mosley said today at his home at Essonne, near Paris. "Mobs are imported to stop a demonstration and the result is that the streets are closed to the public.

"It seems to me important that that should not happen, but free speech must be preserved. The reason it is not preserved is that the town halls have been closed down to meetings since Labour took control. Any town hall should be open to anyone to have a meeting provided they pay the fee and if they can find an audience."

Sir Oswald said it was the duty of the police to maintain order. "I was accused in the past of running my own private army, but when my meetings got so large that halls would not accommodate them and I took to the streets, it was the only way to keep order.

"The public halls should be opened, otherwise the only way to put a case before the public is to take it into the streets. Such mob demonstrations should not be allowed, and picketing should not be allowed, if we are to preserve free speech."

Reasons behind creation and break-up of the huge environment department

By Peter Hennessy

The thinking that lay behind the creation of the Department of the Environment nearly seven years ago by merging the ministries of housing and local government, transport and public building and works is publicly closed today with the publication of an internal Whitehall document by Mr Paul Draper, the department's former director of manpower resources.

The wealth of detailed planning behind the merger provides a stark contrast to Mr Callaghan's sudden decision last September to dismantle the department. The Prime Minister's intention to recreate a separate Department of Transport was conveyed to Mr Shore, Secretary of State for the Environment, and his senior officials only just before a public announcement was made.

Mr Draper's study discloses several possible combinations that were considered in 1969-70 by a team of senior civil servants commissioned by Sir Harold Wilson. The plan they recommended, of a unitary conglomerate department under a single Cabinet minister, was accepted by Sir Harold and implemented by Mr Heath after the 1970 elections.

A looser, federal structure was also considered, with the Secretary of State given responsibility for overall land use planning and with several second-rank ministers under him, each with his own clear statutory duties. In addition, thought was given to taking responsibility for civil aviation and shipping from the Department of Trade.

The philosophy that underlay the new department, with its Secretary of State as the dual role of "developer and guardian", balancing the need for new roads and housing against the requirements of conservation, is described in detail. The difficulties of running such a huge concern at the political and administrative level are discussed.

Senior officials grouped themselves into a management board to reconcile the competing claims of development and conservation and to provide early warning of difficult issues. Ministers adopted a collegiate approach, although the difficulties at junior ministerial level with a spread of overlapping responsibilities were made clear.

The unsatisfactory profusion of junior ministers serving under Mr Shore is thought to have been one of the reasons for the present Prime Minister's decision to break up the department.

Although Mr Draper's study is written in dry, administrator's prose it furnishes much useful material for Whitehall watchers. The work of businessmen drafted into government by Mr Heath to improve the efficiency of Whitehall is touched on with the creation of a Property Services Agency as a replacement for the Ministry of Public Building and Works.

The exhortatory, energetic style of Mr Peter Walker, Conservative MP for Worcester, and the environment department's first Secretary of State, is conveyed to the reader.

The zeal with which Sir Ian Bancroft, the department's first director general of organization and establishments (now its permanent secretary and the likely successor to Sir Douglas Allen as head of the Home Civil Service), sought to forge a common identity among civil servants of widely different backgrounds is also apparent from the study.

Mr Draper's document was written in 1973. Before its dismemberment, the Department of the Environment was generally regarded in Whitehall as the most successful of the conglomerate ministries.

Creation of the DOE, by Paul Draper, Civil Service Studies 4 (Stationery Office, £5).

'Financial Times' peace formula fails

By Tim Jones
Labour Reporter

The *Financial Times*, which has suffered the loss of a million and a half copies, is not published again today. A peace formula devised by a joint committee of the Newspaper Publishers Association and the National Graphical Association proved unacceptable to union members in the *Financial Times* chapel (office branch) yesterday and publication was again prevented.

The dispute, which has the official backing of the union, is about the dismissal of 46 printers for taking what the management regarded as unauthorized nights off.

NGA officials say the disputed practice had been in operation for more than two years. It was introduced by management with a Saturday print, but apparently without the knowledge of senior management, at a time when there was insufficient work for every printer because of the economic crisis.

Hopes that the newspaper would be published today rose on Friday when it was announced that both sides had agreed to formal negotiations on the disputed issues of manning and hours of work. It was understood that under that agreement deductions of money for days taken off as well as money already deducted would be paid into a joint management/union bank account, pending an eventual agreement.

Union officials, however, say that the money deducted should be reimbursed immediately. They will then be prepared to accept the decision of the appeals committee.

Darlington dispute: In the closed shop dispute involving Darlington-based newspapers of the Westminster Press Group the national executive committee of the National Union of Journalists is to be asked to give official approval to industrial action by journalists on other provincial newspapers owned by the group.

Family faces eviction in dispute over drive

From Our Correspondent
Nottingham

A family is facing possible eviction from its council home in Nottinghamshire because of a dispute over a concrete drive.

Bolsover District Council is to meet tomorrow to decide what action to take after Mr Trevor Elliott, aged 39, who lives in the house in Dale Close, Langworth, with his wife Kathleen and their four children, refused to allow a neighbour to use the 60ft drive, for which Mr Elliott pays rent.

The neighbour, the previous tenant of Mr Elliott's house, is Mr Reginald Gay, who made an agreement 10 years ago that he should be allowed to use the drive. The council says the agreement must still stand.

Mr Elliott moved in at Christmas and now blocks the drive with his car to stop Mr Gay using it.

Mr Terry Robinson, the council's chief housing officer, said: "The council has the power to evict and it may have to come to that."

Rail chief's pay warning

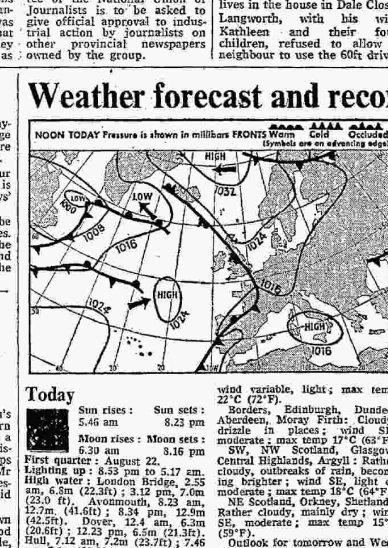
Mr Peter Parker, the chairman of the British Railways Board, said yesterday that excessive pay awards in the industry would "break the bank". He said he was anxious about the way pay negotiations would develop in the coming months, but regarded railwaymen as "responsible people".

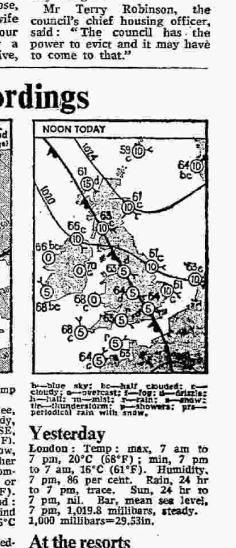
Mr Parker, questioned on the Tyne-Tees television programme, *Face the Press*, said decisions such as that taken by the National Union of Railwaymen to claim a 63 per cent wage increase next year were "mathematical calculations".

He added: "I believe our trade union leaders know it is not wise to break the railways' bank".

Mr Parker said it would be a "difficult winter" for fares. British Rail was watching the development of inflation and would decide at the end of the year.

Weather forecast and recordings





Today

Sun rises: 5.46 am — Sun sets: 8.23 pm
Moon rises: 6.30 am — Moon sets: 8.16 pm

First quarter: August 22.
Lighting up: 8.53 pm to 5.17 am.
High water: London Bridge, 2.55 am, 6.8m (22.3ft); 3.12 pm, 7.0m (23.0 ft). Avonmouth, 8.23 am, 12.7m. (41.6ft); 8.34 pm, 12.9m (42.5ft). Dover, 12.4 am, 6.3m (20.6ft); 12.23 pm, 6.5m (21.3ft). Hull, 7.12 am, 7.2m (23.7ft); 7.46 pm, 7.1m (23.3ft). Liverpool, 12.8 am, 9.0m (29.6ft); 12.29 pm, 9.0m (29.5ft).

Pressure is high to the N, but a slow moving and weakening trough of low pressure lies across Britain.

Forecasts for 6 am to midnight:

London, SE, central S, NW, central N England, Midlands, Lake District, Isle of Man. Rather cloudy, rain or drizzle in places, becoming brighter; wind SE, light or moderate; max temp 20°C (68°F).

E, NE England, East Anglia: Cloudy, occasional rain or drizzle; wind SE, moderate; max temp 18°C (64°F).

SW England, Wales, N Ireland, Channel Islands: Sunny intervals developing, scattered showers; wind variable, light; max temp 22°C (72°F).

Borders, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth: Cloudy, drizzle in places; wind SE, moderate; max temp 17°C (63°F).

SW, NW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll: Rather cloudy, outbreaks of rain, becoming brighter; wind SE, light or moderate; max temp 18°C (64°F).

NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: Rather cloudy, mainly dry; wind SE, moderate; max temp 15°C (59°F).

Outlook for tomorrow and Wednesday: Rather cloudy with rain at times, mainly in S; sunny intervals, especially in NW; temp near normal, but rather cool near E coast.

Sea passages: S North Sea: Wind E to NE, light or moderate; sea slight.

Strait of Dover, English Channel (E), St George's Channel, Irish Sea: Wind variable, light; sea smooth.

Saturday

London: Temp: max, 7 am to 7 pm, 21°C (70°F); min, 7 pm to 7 am, 14°C (57°F). Humidity, 7 pm, 72 per cent. Rain, 24 hr to 7 pm, 0.01in. Sun, 24 hr to 7 pm, 1.6 hr. Bar, mean sea level, 7 pm, 1,017.2 millibars, steady.

Yesterday

London: Temp: max, 7 am to 7 pm, 20°C (68°F); min, 7 pm to 7 am, 15°C (61°F). Humidity, 7 pm, 86 per cent. Rain, 24 hr to 7 pm, trace. Sun, 24 hr to 7 pm, nil. Bar, mean sea level, 7 pm, 1,019.8 millibars, steady. 1,000 millibars=29.53in.

At the resorts

24 hours to 6 pm, August 14

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F
E COAST				
Scarborough	—		16	61
Bridlington	—		16	61
Cleethorpes	1.5	—	19	66
Mablethorpe	—	—	19	66
Hunstanton	.9	—	19	66
S COAST				
Hastings	—	.09	19	66
Eastbourne	—	.12	19	66
Brighton	—	.04	19	66
Bognor	0.2	.06	17	63
Southsea	—	.16	18	64
Sandown	.2	.08	19	66
Bournemouth	.9	.05	19	66
Swanage	—	.20	20	68
Torquay	5.4	—	20	68
Penzance	4.8	—	20	68
W COAST				
Morecambe	—	—	20	68
Blackpool	—	.16	19	66
Southport	.7	.20	19	66
Ilfracombe	2.7	.02	23	73
Tenby	—	.50	19	66

Max C, Max F, Rain in: Cloudy, Cloudy, Rain pm, Cloudy, Cloudy, Cloudy, Sun intervals, Cloudy, Rain pm, Rain pm, Rain pm, Rain pm

Overseas selling prices

Austria, Sch 18; Belgium, Bfr 28; Canaries, Pes 85; Denmark, Dkr 4.00; France, Fr 3.00; Germany, DM 2.50; (inc TVA); Germany, Dmk 2.20; Greece, Dr 40; Italy, Lire 350; Luxembourg, Lfr 28; Malta, 20c; Norway, Nkr 3.50; Spain, Pes 85; Sweden, Skr 3.50; Portugal, Esc 22.50; Switzerland, Sfr 2.50; Turkey, TL 10; Yugos, Din 20.

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Extra allowances for handicapped children urged

By a Staff Reporter

Large additional allowances for families caring for handicapped children are proposed in a pamphlet published today by the Disability Alliance, a confederation of charities.

The pamphlet, based on a survey of families in the North and the Midlands, proposes a general allowance based on the severity of a child's handicap, instead of the special expenses for disability that are now granted.

It explains the costs of coping with disabled children that are imposed on families. Mothers are unable to work and fathers may be forced to take less well paid jobs near home, so as to look after their children.

The pamphlet concludes: "The birth of a handicapped child is itself a sufficient catastrophe without financial strain. . . . Probably all of us would be glad to share the burden financially at least."

Disabled children—meeting the costs by Sally Baldwin (Disability Alliance, 95 Portland Place, London, W1, 50p).

Boy savaged by dog recovering

A boy aged eight was recovering in hospital last night after an Alsatian dog attack in a scrap yard at Ciceley Lane, Blackburn, on Saturday.

Francis John Pickering, who attended a special school, could not read warning notices.

Unnoticed anniversary marks Army's eighth year in Northern Ireland

From Christopher Walker
Belfast

Amid the emotive anniversaries that make August such a difficult month in Northern Ireland, the one with the greatest significance for British taxpayers passed yesterday with scarcely a mention. According to one Army officer, the only recognition it received was "the occasional wistful sigh".

August 14 marked the eighth anniversary of British troops being first called in to assist the police. It was a day made more poignant by the fact that when soldiers were first sent on to Londonderry's Bogside streets after 48 hours of rioting, a Whitehall spokesman predicted that they would be back in barracks within a week.

Official figures released to *The Times* last night demonstrate how differently the Northern Ireland campaign has turned out, ensuring among other things that the British Army is now one of the most experienced in the world in counter-insurgency tactics.

That experience of fighting terrorism has had many repercussions, including the development of counter-terrorist intelligence gathering techniques, the introduction of new weapons such as the plastic bullet, and the development of a wide range of undercover activities.

Over the eight years the number of regular British soldiers killed in Ulster is 271, with a further 3,025 classified as either wounded or injured. That means that they must have been in hospital for at least four days. Sixteen of those dead were members of the Army's bomb disposal squad.

Behind the statistics the tragedy for the families of the men involved remains depressingly familiar. The first British soldier killed in the province, Gunner Robert Curtis, who was shot by the IRA on February 6, 1971, was only 20 years old. The most recent Army casualty, Marine Neil Bewley, killed by a single bullet as he patrolled the republican Turf Lodge estate last Friday, was aged 19.

Perhaps the most revealing of all the figures covering the Army's involvement with what it calls "an internal security problem" relate to costs. According to Ministry of Defence statistics, the estimated cost for military operations in the province has risen from £1.5m in 1969-70, to £65m for 1976-77.

The continuing ferocity of Provisional IRA violence has ensured that in recent years many ordinary soldiers have spent more of their lives in Belfast than anywhere else. Already two units, the 1st Battalion, The Black Watch, and the 42nd Commando, Royal Marines, have each served seven emergency four-month tours.

The departure at the weekend of the 1,000 extra troops used to reinforce security for the jubilee visit has left the number of soldiers stationed in Ulster at 14,000. The figure has remained fairly static in recent years, except for the "loyalist" strikes of 1974 and this year.

Until the decision to call in the troops was made in 1969 only a garrison of 3,000 soldiers was based in Northern Ireland. Over the past eight years the peak of military involvement was reached during Operation Motorman in 1972, when the total reached 21,688.

In addition to the regular troops killed, 76 members of the locally recruited Ulster Defence Regiment have lost their lives. Taking both sets of figures together, of those killed 27 were officers, 59 warrant officers and senior NCOs, and the other 261 held the rank of corporal or below.

Although the Army has often been blamed for employing unnecessarily harsh tactics, and has been guilty of several "dirty tricks", it has built up a formidable record of success against terrorists fighting on ground often described as the best terrain for guerrilla warfare in Europe.

Over the eight-year period the Army has recovered 902,154 rounds of ammunition and 257,489lb of explosives. Army experts have during the same time, often at great personal risk, defused 2,828 bombs.

Other finds made by British troops have included 297 machine-guns, 2,667 rifles, 2,962 pistols, 881 shotguns, 18 rocket launchers (mostly Russian made), 57 rockets, 427 mortar tubes, and 441 mortar shells.

Army in Ulster, page 5

'First steps to devolution' call in province

By David Wood
Political Editor

In the wake of the Queen's visit last week to Northern Ireland, the Government hoped to make a clear start to present for discussion a programme for steps to devolve government, Mr Airey Neave, opposition spokesman on Northern Ireland, said in Oxfordshire on Saturday.

He said the visit had shown the world the loyalty and good will of most ordinary people, Roman Catholic and Protestant, and "emphasized that Ulster was part of the United Kingdom which we will not abandon". It had also exposed the total insignificance of British left-wing politicians, "who want us to cast aside our duty and leave the province to its fate".

Mr Mason, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, must ensure that 1978 was remembered by historians as the year in which the tide turned at last in Northern Ireland. His first duty was to prepare a plan for constitutional change.

Mr Neave declared: "Surely it cannot be the intention of the Government to allow the negotiations it has been conducting with Ulster politicians since May to run into the sands. Further experiments always need to be tried. The Government must seize the hour."

Mr Neave said responsibility for advancing a political solution rested on the Government.

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