44

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WH SMITH

Recycled Paper Scrap Book

Oct. 1990 - July 1990
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36 PAGES

30

A victory for the Commons woman

WHAT a glorious and proud moment this week when the Labour Party conference voted in favour of 50 per cent representation of women MPs within ten years.

An idea ridiculed and abused for so long suddenly was accepted without a murmur.

Nor was it, I am pleased to say, a triumph for dungareed radical feminists.

Rather it was a well-deserved achievement for those women MPs, such as Clare Short and Harriet Harman, whose commonsense approach and continual campaigning for the women in women's issues has made them impossible to ignore.

They know that few women have a choice about whether they stay at home or go to work.

And Mrs Thatcher – and her new hairdo – going on American television this week to tell mothers to stay at home and bring up their children is no longer insulting but laughable and hopelessly outdated.

What, however, remains a serious problem is the uneven struggle for so many women trying to run a home and job in the face of low pay and almost non-existent nursery facilities. And rightly and within the new spirit of the Labour Party, Neil Kinnock in his speech to conference emphasised the need for more childcare.

Not just for the good of children.

Right

But also to give choice and liberty to parents.

Mr Kinnock, of course, must choose his words carefully and be wary of sexism.

I needn't.

It is mothers who most of all need the liberty and right to work.

Because the power of the purse strings cannot and should not be underestimated.

Show me a woman with skills that allow her to be financially independent and I'll show you a woman with self-esteem.

The Labour Party has now recognised the importance and value of the voice of women.

What a terrific victory for all those who fought the fight.

DAILY MIRROR
Holborn Circus, London EC1P 1DQ
ABC CIRC. 3,171,720
ISSUE DATE 4 OCT 1990

HARRIET HARMAN: Smart

GLENYS KINNOCK: TV appearances

TV's tidy eye on the girls

IT'S been suggested that Glenys Kinnock and Harriet Harman have had help smartening up their appearances for television.

I trust both of them are too sensible to be annoyed by this highly improbable suggestion.

In my experience dressing for the cameras is a skill you acquire over a period of time.

Mostly learning the hard way by getting it wrong first.

In a perfect world, for example, those women who favour minimum make up, casual clothes and a nice fly-away hairdo, would come over on television as soft, warm, genuine and friendly. Alas no. Minimum make up, casual clothes and a nice fly-away hairdo on television succeed only in making you look as if you've just got out of bed and are still very tired.

As I learnt to my cost a few years ago the first time I was invited on a Sunday night chatshow hosted by the immaculately coiffeured Miss Gloria Hunniford.

Like it or not, to pass muster on television you need to look larger than life and twice as tidy – i.e. over made up with a faultless hairdo glued down by spray plus an outfit as plain as it is possible to purchase.

The only snag is that those who catch sight of you in the flesh while you are prepared in this manner tend to get a shock.

DEPTFORD & PECKAM MERCURY
116 Deptford High Street, London SE8 4NX
CIRC. 4,621 WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 6 JUL 1990

Play it again, Joan!

AT the risk of boring your readers, I must again reply to Mr McGraw (Mercury July 19).

I must also repeat that I have taken up every single case of residents concerned with property rights re the rail link.

Clearly, Mr McGraw's complaints should be addressed to the Government — who currently determine British Rail's future — and not to me.

I am particularly astonished to be told that I was absent from protest meetings last year. I attended every one to which I was invited when able to leave the House of Commons. Since many of these meetings were reported in the press my attendance is a matter of public record.

Mr Mcgraw seems to suggest that the Labour Party's railways policy runs counter to the interest of my constituents. Nothing could be further from the truth. I and my neighbours Harriet Harman MP and Kate Hoey MP have significantly influenced our party's thinking on the rail link issue and that is why I expected the party's statement on Tuesday to meet with Mr Mcgraw's approval!

Joan Ruddock MP,
House of Commons,
London

Not for nothing did a devoted fan of Ms Joan Collins, on spotting her for the first time in real life the week before last, cry in horror:

"I can't believe it – she looks like a wig on a stick."

DAILY TELEGRAPH
181, Marsh Wall, London E14 9SR
ABC CIRC. 1,105,366
ISSUE DATE 5 OCT 1990

Farewell to the bullying bar-room manners. The fresh faces of Labour: MP Harriet Harman and prospective parliamentary candidate Tessa Jowell at Blackpool

How Labour is trying to paint an acceptable face

THE INDEPENDENT
40 City Road, London EC1 2DB
ABC CIRC. 405,423
ISSUE DATE 9 AUG 1990

Hospitals to close 2,370 beds to clear debts, Labour says

By Colin Brown
Political Correspondent

A LEAKED government document was proof of a new wave of bed closures to be implemented in the National Health Service before next April, the Labour Party alleged yesterday.

Robin Cook, its spokesman on health, refused to publish the document to protect his source, but Virginia Bottomley, the Minister of State for Health, did not deny the existence of the paper.

The document, submitted by the NHS management board to Kenneth Clarke, Secretary of State for Health, predicts that 2,370 beds will have to be closed in the four Thames health regions by next April and at least one teaching hospital may have to be closed.

However, the bed closures could go far wider than the Thames regions. The leak comes after the report in *The Independent* last week that Mr Clarke had ordered the health authorities to balance their books now to avoid the bed closures being blamed on the Government's changes to the NHS.

Mr Cook said that the closures were caused by Mr Clarke's insistence that the health authorities must not carry over any deficit next April, when the Government's changes to the NHS are introduced.

"This is a frank confession of fear of the reforms by the NHS managers, who are expected to make them work. They admit that behind the political gloss, the reality, for London, of Kenneth Clarke's reforms is a major destabilisation of its hospital service," he said.

The Labour spokesman produced the leaked document at a press conference to launch a national campaign against the Government's plans for allowing hospitals to 'opt out' of local health authority control.

He said that it showed the managers shared Labour's fears of a cycle of decline by hospitals with high costs. "To balance their books, the hospitals must close even more beds, but every contraction will increase the overheads of the remaining wards, making further contraction inevitable."

Mr Cook said that the closures were caused by Mr Clarke's insistence that the health authorities must not carry over any deficit next April, when the Government's changes to the NHS are introduced.

Mrs Bottomley insisted that the NHS was not a furniture warehouse and the number of beds in the NHS was not as important as the improvements in the health service which the Government was achieving.

each about the plans. Harriet Harman, his deputy and MP for Peckham, is carrying out a similar programme in the London area.

Labour's aim with the campaign is to mobilise public opinion against the Government over the changes, in the run-up to the general election. Mr Clarke is refusing to engage in the campaign, but ministers are concerned that it could do further damage to the Government.

Mr Clarke has insisted that Mr Cook's campaign is misleading patients because it implies, wrongly, that hospitals are opting out of the NHS.

But Mr Cook said that the hospitals would be completely independent, with boards of directors who would own the hospital, hire and fire staff, operate their own pay scales, would not recognise National Health Service trade unions, and would be free to raise money in the City. "It is our NHS; they are our hospitals; and it should be our choice whether they opt out," he added.

THE TIMES
1 Pennington Street, London E1
ABC CIRC. 428,547 ISSUE DATE 25 OCT 1990

Labour delegates intent on the debates at Blackpool yesterday: Tessa Jowell (left), Harriet Harman, MP, and Margaret Hodge

ELECTIONS

Taylor tipped for front bench

By Our Chief Political Correspondent

ANN Taylor, the Labour frontbench environment spokesman who surprisingly failed to get elected last year, is again being tipped by MPs on all wings of the party as the most likely newcomer to the shadow cabinet.

Campaigning for elections that could determine the membership of a Labour cabinet has begun quietly on the fringes of the conference this week.

MPs believe that the most likely area for change is among the four women members of the shadow cabinet.

Under a rule used for the first time last year, MPs have to cast votes for three women. Last year, Mrs Taylor may have suffered through being out in front as a favourite for so long. Several MPs have said privately they cast votes for other candidates believing that Mrs Taylor was safe.

With Harriet Harman, the health spokesman, also seen by MPs as a candidate for elevation, there are question-marks over three of the present women members, Joan Lestor, Ann Clywd and Jo Richardson, although some MPs believe that five or six women could be successful this year.

The position has been complicated by the decision of the soft left Tribune group not to run a slate this year after allegations that MPs were using membership of the mainstream leadership body as a route to promotion.

Under the rules of the parliamentary Labour party, a Labour prime minister's first cabinet is composed of the 18 elected members of the outgoing shadow cabinet. He has scope for no more than a small handful of his own appointments in that first cabinet. He does, however, appoint subsequent cabinets.

Labour MPs, therefore, are taking particular interest in this year's poll, for effectively they will be electing the new cabinet if the election comes in the next 12 months and the party is successful. There is speculation at Blackpool that the six shadow cabinet members who rebelled against Neil Kinnock in the national executive defence vote last Sunday might suffer reductions in their votes.

Michael Meacher, the shadow social security secretary, is felt to have strengthened his chances of re-election with a strong conference performance this week.

NURSING TIMES
4 Little Essex Street, London WC2R 3LF
CIRC. 91,273 WEEKLY ISSUE DATE 1 AUG 1990

NT NEWS

Harriet Harman, Labour health spokesperson, gave a message of support to health workers who staged a march through London last week in protest at the NHS Act

FINANCIAL TIMES
1 Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HL
ISSUE 3 OCT 1990

Making their presence felt, from left, Barbara Follet, Hilary Armstrong, Harriet Harman, Glenys Thornton and Margaret Prosser well to the fore in a party in which women are still under-represented

WOMEN

Quotas urged to bring equality in party

QUOTAS to increase the number of women in the Labour party Were overwhelmingly endorsed by conference for the first time since women gained representation in 1918.

Opening a debate on the representation of women, Ms Clare Short, MP for Birmingham Ladywood, said women in the Labour Party were determined to make changes that would benefit all women in Britain. "In order to achieve this we are also determined to ensure that women and men share power equally in the Labour Party," she said.

Where quotas had been introduced in parties in Europe and North America great progress had been made, leaving Britain with one of the worst records of numbers of women in parliament, said Ms Short.

Labour already has a quota system for the election of the shadow Cabinet whereby each MP is required to vote for at least three women. There are four women on the Labour front bench.

The proposed quota will ensure that 40 per cent of the national executive committeeare women. Earlier in the week the conference agreed that the party's selection of parliamentary candidates should be changed and thought given to new procedures to ensure that more women are elected.

"We are not calling for the dismissal of men from power, but for the promotion of women in the natural process of change," said Ms Short.

Speakers from the floor revealed the extent of women's current under-representation. While 52 per cent of the population were women, with 45 per cent of these working, only 6.6 per cent of MPs were female. In the Parliamentary Labour Party only one in 10 was a woman.

Ms Donna Brierly (Erith and Crayford) said women were "good for the party and great for the electorate". Establishing quotas, far from being anti-democratic, was an exciting and profoundly radical move which should change the composition of the party within 10 years, or three general elections.

Ms Anne Davis, NEC, said the resolution was a unifying approach which had drawn unanimous support from all levels of the party.

● A veteran party activist warned Labour not to make promises it could not keep.

Mrs Lizzie Sidebottom, who is 88, left the conference in no doubt of her feelings towards the prime minister. "Every time I think about Mrs Thatcher, my blood pressure rises," she said.

Mrs Sidebottom, of Stalybridge, a party member since she was 16 and a veteran of 17 general elections, wished the party well, but warned: "Don't throw it all away in making promises and commitments that you can't deliver."

She arrived from Tameside hospital – whose medical staff "deserve £1,000 a day' – to receive a long-service merit award.

BELLA
25-27 Camden Road, London NW1 9LL
CIRC. 1,400,000 WEEKLY ISSUE DATE 1 AUG 1990

The new GPs' contract, introduced last April, changed the way doctors are paid. GPs were paid a basic salary, plus an extra sum for each patient on their list. The contract reduced the basic sum and increased the amount paid per patient. So the more people they treat, the more they are paid.

The fear is that some GPs won't welcome time-consuming and costly patients on their lists. Doctors are paid extra for those needing more attention but aren't compensated for people with long-term illnesses like diabetes.

Shadow Health Minister Harriet Harman says the contracts will change the relationship between GP and patient.

"GPs will be tempted to get as many patients on their list as possible," she says.

"They'll be asking: is this patient a good business proposition, a healthy person who won't use the doctor too much, or a financial liability? If a doctor says you don't need treatment, how will you know whether it's for medical or financial reasons? These cases of patients being struck off GPs' lists are just the beginning. It's going to get much worse."

The Health Bill, due to become law next April, will bring the most radical changes. It's these changes, with their emphasis on competition and cost effectiveness, which doctors themselves claim threaten the whole idea of the NHS as a service for the benefit of all.

At present, doctors prescribe what treatment they think is necessary, leaving financial worries to the authorities. From next April, GPs choosing to run their own budgets will receive a fixed sum of money each year, deciding how to spend it and where to send patients for treatment.

The British Medical Association fears the changes could be disastrous.

THE GUARDIAN
119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER
ABC CIRC. 431,716 ISSUE DATE 29 OCT 1990

MPs' sickle cell group

Labour's health spokesman Harriet Harman will today launch an all-party parliamentary group on sickle cell anaemia, which mainly affects black people. The group aims to raise awareness of the disease and encourage NHS research funding.

DAILY TELEGRAPH
181, Marsh Wall, London E14 9SR
ABC CIRC. 1,105,366 ISSUE DATE 29 OCT 1990

Drive to defeat blood disease

By Our Health Services Staff

A drive to increase awareness of sickle cell anaemia, an inherited blood disease which occurs mainly in black people, is to be launched today by Miss Harriet Harman, Shadow Health Minister.

A group will be formed to encourage research into the condition and will press for screening of babies.

SUNDAY EXPRESS
245 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 9UX
ABC CIRC. 2,143,374
ISSUE DATE -7 OCT 1990

POWERFUL: Harriet Harman

LOYAL: Theresa Gorman

SUCCESS: Ann Widdecombe

FIGHTING: Joan Lestor

Passion flowers for the House

by Sally Staples and Gill Harley

PASSION is the key to why women are such good politicians — promotion comes second to commitment.

Given a choice between personal advancement and a policy unpopular with their bosses, they let their hearts rule their heads.

That is why, according to an Oxford academic, if the Mother of Parliaments were full of women politics would be transformed.

At last week's Labour Party conference in Blackpool, Neil Kinnock promised the Left would woo women before the next general election.

(And it should be recorded that three of the NEC members who voted against his about-turn on defence were *women.)*

This week, at the Tory Party conference, where the single-mindedness of the Prime Minister will be applauded, they will also boast about their plans for women and the family.

Dominated

Being flavour of the month is sweet — but what difference would it make if the House of Commons were dominated by the fair sex?

Andrew Adonis, a Fellow of Nuffield College and author of Parliament Today, argues that if women ran the political show, more money would be spent on health and social services.

"Women were often already involved in causes and campaigns before standing for Parliament and regard becoming an MP as a means of providing a platform for furthering their demands," he says.

"They don't expect to end up in some board room, so don't have as much to lose as a man, whose main aim is to get to Parliament first, then look for issues to support which will further their career."

Theresa Gorman (Conservative, Billericay) agrees. She is passionate about tax relief for working mothers, and hormone replacement therapy.

Scoffed at as a "new Right" fireball and nicknamed "St Theresa of the Menopause," Mrs Gorman shrugs off her one-issue woman label.

Criticism

As far as she is concerned, loyalty to a cause is more important than personal criticism.

She says: "The motto for those who want to advance their careers in Parliament is 'don't rock the boat.' But I don't see the point in being there unless you're going to try to change things."

Joan Lestor (Labour, Eccles) may be single-minded, but her interests and experience are wide-ranging — the Treasury, Foreign Office and children's welfare.

But one issue guaranteed to bring a passionate response from her is sex discrimination.

"We suffer all sorts of disadvantages. First of all, it costs money to be a Parliamentary candidate and women are still fighting for equal pay and opportunity," she says.

Like it or not, Ann Widdecombe (Conservative, Maidstone) is seen as a one-issue MP — abortion. That could be a measure of her success.

She campaigned so long and loud that many people who had stopped listening to David Alton suddenly began to sit up and take notice.

"As a woman you are always noticed, so it's an advantage — but I don't think women should bleat too much about the difficulties of getting elected," she says. "It can be a disservice to treat women as a special case."

Harriet Harman (Labour, Peckham) thinks the opposite. She constantly campaigns for more women on health authorities because she says they understand health issues better than men.

Ms Harman is also, it is often bitchily observed, passionate about one other issue — her own image. Dubbed the sexiest lady in the House, she used to wear floral skirts and pretty-maid tops until Labour decided to change the Party image. She was told drop the dolly bird and get power dressed.

The result, even her rivals admit, is pretty good.

Marion Roe (Conservative, Broxbourne), can compete without even trying. She is blonde, beautiful and holds one of the safest seats in the country — her majority is 22,995.

Among many interests, she is proud to champion the family. "The first part of my career was spent looking after my three children and I think it is natural for a woman to bring her experience of family background to bear on Parliamentary issues," she says.

In the interests of fairness male MP Nicholas Winterton (Conservative, Congleton) has the last word.

He says: "Probably the reason women become attached to one or two issues is because most of them have been wives and mothers and were committed to the home and family, which is a smaller sphere of influence. Men tend to get involved in a wider range of activities."

NEW STATESMAN & SOCIETY
Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, E2 8BA
CIRC. 34,270 WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE -5 OCT 1990

PUBLIC INTEREST

Family friends

Should women or children come first when the left thinks about the family's future?

Ann Oakley

What is the family? Does it even make sense to use the word to describe such stark differences in the way people live in the modern world? Does the state have the right to determine the shape of its citizens' private lives? What is a citizen? Are women citizens in the same sense as men? Whose responsibility are children, then?

Political parties, whether in power or not, have always needed to adopt a position on certain crucial "family" issues—contraception and abortion, health, child care and so on. Though governments have tended to manipulate these critical areas of human experience to fit their own agendas, the extent to which people have responded to such manipulation is a different matter. Cuban families in the 1970s, for example, were little affected by the arbitration of sex equality in housework built into the family code; Soviet women have shown an impressive disdain for their government's differential fertility policy; in the UK, women have moved into the paid workforce less because their country needed them than because it has increasingly taken two incomes to provide decently for children.

Such lessons of history are instructive, especially in judging the size of the leap from description to prescription that the term "policy" implies. History lessons are, however, surprisingly little drawn upon in a new report. *The Family Way* comes from the Institute for Public Policy Research, the newly formed think-tank headed by chairman Baroness Blackstone, which declares itself devoted to furthering the "public understanding of social, economic and political questions through research". The authors of this first report—Anna Coote, Harriet Harman and Patricia Hewitt —have unimpeachable Labourish credentials, but have brought to the topic less of a novel hard-hitting and clear-thinking analysis than might have been expected, and certainly less than is needed to establish the outlines of a family policy usefully different from the Thatcherite model we have all grown to know and love.

The Family Way argues that governments need family policies, that left-wing governments should have different family policies from right-wing ones, and that policy in Britain ought to be based on the following axioms: that families are social, not natural, phenomena; that what counts is how people actually *live* in families, not what kinds of moral judgments might be made of their living arrangements; that long-term social and economic change is an essential context for the understanding of family life; that policy must encourage rather than coerce; and that Britain needs to see itself as part of Europe and develop its social policies integrally with other countries.

The legal status both of marriage and remarriage is continuing its decline in popularity, with cohabitation becoming correspondingly more common. Fewer children will spend their lives with both biological parents in intact families, while the burden of caring for the elderly is likely to increase exponentially. Lone motherhood will dominate the policy scene, but this family type, functioning as it does as a proxy indicator for poverty, is inherently no more likely to blight the prospects of child or parent than any other model of poor household.

Families need 'strong self-reliant women' and men who take more emotional responsibility for their children

According to *The Family Way*, the focus of family policy should not primarily be the rights and responsibilities of men and women. Rather, the essence of a policy is the need to guarantee children a safe dependent upbringing. To this end, it is said that families need "strong self-reliant women" and men should develop more emotional responsibility for their children. But these moral prescriptions arise uneasily like a phoenix from the ashes of statistics which paint a picture of corrosive female dependency, dangerous male violence, and enduring material and domestic inequalities between the sexes.

One might certainly hope to transform this pock-marked terrain into something smoother and more comfortable—or turn the desert we inhabit into a world we can bear. But is there really any evidence that men want to change, or that children's interests aren't best served by strengthening women's position?

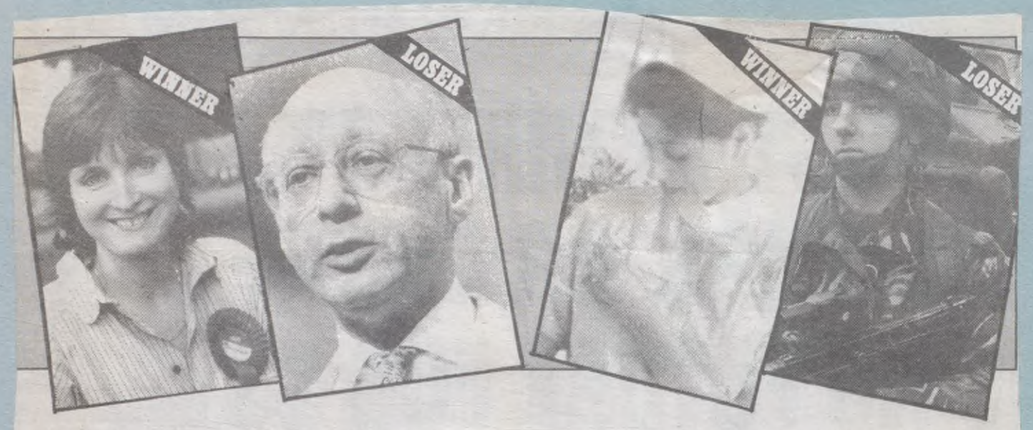
It's instructive to compare the political focus of *The Family Way* with the report of the European Commission on *Child Care and Equality of Opportunity*, which covers some of the same ground, but starts from the other end, tracing childcare policies back to the relative social positions of parents. This is a particularly salutary lesson, since the UK has one of the lowest rates of employment for mothers of under-fives, and one of the most minimal publicly funded childcare services in Europe.

One of *The Family Way*'s themes is the closing gap between ideal and reality: as more people choose to live differently, the dominant Victorian middle-class ideal of breadwinner father and caring mother at home is said to be losing sway. But gender stereotypes are among the most resilient myths of our time. They are also culturally specific; class and ethnicity have known effects, even though one of the most notable absences from the report's references is of any systematic sociological study of the different class, ethnic and geographical meanings of the family in Britain today. Dare one suggest this as a research priority? Would the government (any government) think it important enough to fund an inquiry into how its citizens view this central, both crumbling and resilient, idea and institution of our time?

Historian Carl Degler wrote in his book *At Odds* that the history of the modern family is of an increasing tension with the requirements of women's liberation. Given the stable from which its authors come, *The Family Way* contains surprisingly little acknowledgement of this dilemma. Indeed, the report is not only shot through with double-think, but fronted with a rhetoric of "children's best interests" which would nestle more comfortably under the moral umbrella of Thatcherism.

For all that, this report may reach parts that might otherwise be unreachable. Its review of economic strategies for the family is strong, and it brings together in one efficiently composed text a shopping list of issues and a handy reference list. But with less idealism and more sustained, logical thought—more science and less politics—it could truly have built a bridge from research to policy, a hard enough task in the easiest times, but essential now if the welfare of all those who live in families is to be protected from the illiberal, self-interested excesses of late 20th-century capitalism.

TODAY
Allen House, 70 Vauxhall Bridge Road, SW1V 2RP
ABC CIRC. 601,871
ISSUE DATE 2 OCT 1990



HARMAN: Intelligence, looks and personality
KAUFMAN: Comes across as smarmy know-all

HEALTH SERVICE: Trump card in Harman's care
KUWAIT CRISIS: Challenge for party's team

ACES WHO CAN DEAL A WINNING DECK FOR KINNOCK

by DAVID SEYMOUR

THE sign on Neil Kinnock's luggage as he leaves Blackpool at the end of this week will boldly read: "Next stop, Downing Street".

He has good reason to feel confident. When he began his leadership of a farcically disorganised party seven years ago by falling into the sea at Brighton, only the most loyal fan would have dreamt that he could turn around Labour's fortunes as he has done.

Now, by displaying the same brutality in the smoke-filled committee rooms that he normally reserves for Indian restaurants, he has the policies and people that, he believes, can carry him into No 10.

Some are wise choices. Others would serve him better by running off the end of Blackpool pier. But who are winners and who are losers?

A definite plus is **John Smith**, who would hold the thankless post of Chancellor in a Kinnock government.

He presents exactly the required image, combining Scots bonhomie with tough Scots financial sense. The sort of uncle who gives his nephew a fiver and then insists it is spent on something sensible.

Mr Smith has even succeeded in wooing the City and industry. He is a definite **winner**.

His former sidekick in the Treasury team, **Gordon Brown**, is now trade spokesman. He earned that position by brilliant performances when he stood in as Shadow Chancellor after Mr Smith had a heart attack.

Over the past few months he has earned himself pole position as next party leader. A sure-fire **winner**.

The new No 2 in the Treasury team is **Margaret Beckett**, a Right-winger under Harold Wilson who became a Left-winger under Michael Foot and is now a Right-winger again.

SHE is still remembered for her vicious attack on Neil Kinnock for failing to vote for Tony Benn as deputy leader in 1981.

In a Labour government she would be responsible for holding down public spending. Some hope. **Loser.**

The Shadow Foreign Secretary, **Gerald Kaufman**, has done as much to improve Douglas Hurd's promotion chances as Saddam Hussein. He gives the impression of being a smarmy, smart-Alec know-all who would jump on any bandwagon. **Loser.**

Bryan Gould fell from grace after becoming Labour's golden boy at the last election. Now environment spokesman, his public relations skill could see him through. **Winner.**

A rival to Gordon Brown for the title of "Young leader in waiting" is **Tony Blair** who, as employment spokesman, would have the job in government of sorting out the unions. Their bosses would eat him for breakfast. **Loser.**

Another charmer but with a steelier backbone is **John Cunningham**, Shadow Leader of the House. One of the party's few spokesmen with government experience, he would be, just, a **winner**. If there were more Labour MPs like **John Prescott** the party would walk the next election. He is honest, blunt and a super-smart operator.

As transport spokesman he has run rings bigger than the M25 round his opposite number, Cecil Parkinson. A deserved **winner**.

Mr Kinnock is not so fortunate when it comes to his spokesmen on defence, **Martin O'Neill**, and Northern Ireland, **Kevin McNamara**.

NEITHER has instilled any confidence by his handling of these difficult portfolios. Both are definite losers.

Critics of **Robin Cook** say he doesn't have the looks to be popular.

But he has more political intelligence than any other Labour frontbencher. Absolute **winner**.

His No 2 in the health team, **Harriet Harman**, has intelligence, looks and personality. She is ideal for making the best of Labour's trump card, the health service. **Winner.**

Another **winner** is the roly-poly energy spokesman, **Frank Dobson**.

But Mr Kinnock is not so lucky with his social security shadow, unreformed Bennite **Michael Meacher** and his education spokesman, **Jack Straw** who behaves like a grumpy teacher. Both **losers**.

Which brings us to the deputy leader and Shadow Home Secretary, **Roy Hattersley**. Once the party's brightest hope, after years of Opposition and lunch he is a disillusioned has-been. The voters — and Mr Kinnock — know it. A big **loser**.

Finally, **Neil Kinnock**. The party should be grateful for what he has done. But there is no gratitude in politics and his image as a lightweight makes him a liability.

Labour would stand a far better chance without him. **Loser.**

TODAY
Allen House, 70 Vauxhall Bridge Road, SW1V 2RP
ABC CIRC. 601,871
ISSUE DATE - 2 OCT 1990

IMAGE MAKER BEHIND RED R

DESIGNER DELEGATES: Jean, left, and Rachel

OLD IMAGE: Harriet Harman's dowdy look

OLD IMAGE: Glenys before Folletting

NEW LOOK: Harriet wears City-style outfit

At the new-look Party they call it Folletting

by MARGARET MORRISON

WHEN Harriet Harman first became an MP, she had a drab hairstyle, wore prissy blouses and woolly waistcoats.

But she's swapped all that for a smart, sophisticated style with the emphasis on gloss and glamour.

Harriet, 40, is one of a number of Labour women to be given the Barbara Follett treatment.

They are power-dressing like never before and it's all down to image consultant Barbara, wife of millionaire author Ken Follett.

"If Labour women want to succeed they must look like they mean business," said Barbara. "You no longer have to wear a boiler suit and sensible shoes to prove that you are a Socialist or a feminist."

BARBARA: New images

All of those women wanting to be noticed have had a consulation with Barbara and re-appeared smart and sophisticated in their colourful designer gear.

"Most of the front bench have been to her," said trade union researcher Rachel Brooks. "She's advised them all on what colours to wear, choice of make-up, self presentation generally.

"If you look round the delegates it's easy to spot who's been 'Folletted' — they're the ones wearing the red lipstick."

It certainly worked with Harriet — she was voted the sexiest MP in the House of Commons last year.

And for first day debates at this year's conference, she was told to dress brightly and chose a sizzling pink designer jacket and black skirt.

Suitably inspired, Rachel invested £50 in Barbara's advice. "She told me to grow out my perm and to wear make-up during the day.

"She worked out which colours suited me best by holding different scarves against my face. Now I always dress smartly and it's given me a lot of confidence. It's a good feeling now that Labour women have the freedom to dress up and look good."

Jean Black, of the Labour Women's Network said: "When Barbara did a colour analysis on me, she told me I suited spring and winter colours.

Attractive

"She gave me some ideas of colours and changed my choice of make-up. I know that sometimes men are listening to me, and considering my views, simply because they want to be seen with an attractive woman.

"But I believe in using everything you've got to achieve your goal so it doesn't bother me." The aim of female comrades in the Network is to introduce a sex quota to ensure that at least 40 per cent of Labour delegates, councillors, candidates and MPs are women.

With Barbara Follett as one of the founder members, power dressing is one of their weapons in the fight for power.

The new look seems to be welcomed by their male colleagues too.

"To be honest the way some Labour women used to dress made them a bit of a joke," said a transport union leader Ken Reid. They didn't do themselves any favours by trying to be unfeminine.

"Now that women are dressing attractively and conventionally they will attract more ordinary women into the party. It's definitely a change for the better."

Barbara is obviously backed by husband Ken, 40, who has devoted a great deal of his time and wealth to raising cash and support for Labour.

It was her who transformed him from a sleeping socialist into a Jeffrey Archer-like campaigner.

COSMOPOLITAN
72 Broadwick Street, London W1V 2BP
CIRC. 391,533 MONTHLY ISSUE DATE OCT 1990

continued

news report

The House of Commons has 43 women, 604 men. So what are the aims of female MPs? What have they achieved for women in general? Are "women's issues" just seen as "people's issues"? **By Hilary Burden.**

are women MPs on our side?

Ten years ago 100 women's organisations in Britain, representing two million members, came together under the title "Women's Action". They agreed on eight points of direct concern to the majority of women which they felt demanded parliamentary action during the Eighties (see box). Last year, a half of *one* of these points—individual taxation for everyone—achieved statutory success. As for the other seven and a half, we're still waiting on parliamentary action. This is a somewhat discouraging sign for the launch of the National Alliance of Women's Organisations (NAWO) "Ten points for a New Decade", due to be launched this month.

Why are women still waiting? Why, when we are constantly told how much we're needed both in public life and in the private sector, when all the major parties are busily competing for our votes, and when women have won spectacular by-election victories, have more of these basic demands not been met?

Part of the answer has always been that to empower women in general, many more women are needed in parliament. All the parties agree on this; in fact, it's surprising how often confrontational politics can develop into a milk-and-honey truce where women's issues are involved. Even the *Report on Women at the Top*, published early this year by the Hansard Society Commission, which was chaired by Lady Elspeth Howe, declared, "The present proportion of women MPs is wholly unacceptable in a modern democracy."

Lady Howe, who is the wife of the Deputy Prime Minister, later described the report to *Cosmopolitan* as "Frankly, just one more drip on the stone of what is happening and what needs to be done".

So what *is* being done? A headline in an issue of the *300 Group News* speaks volumes: *Women MPs: 42 elected, 258 still to go*. (The 300 Group has been campaigning for 300 women MPs in the House for 10 years.) Since then, of course, Sylvia Heal, Labour MP for Mid-Staffordshire, celebrated an historic by-election victory to make it 43. But in the last general election, 609 men took their suit-polished seats. Despite policies to favour the selection of more women within the Labour Party, the Liberal Democrats and formerly the SDP, (the Conservatives do not support positive action), the number of British women in national politics has hardly increased since women got the vote more than 70 years ago.

Forty three women MPs out of 650 seats is an utterly appalling and pathetic proportion in anyone's language—even Margaret Thatcher's: "When I first took up my seat 30 years ago, there were 25 women MPs," she wrote to the 300 Group. "Today there are 42. Progress is being made but at a slow pace. We want lots more women coming forward, lots more chosen."

This sounds somewhat disingenuous, coming from a Prime Minister who has only ever chosen one woman to join her Cabinet. Mrs Thatcher is often quoted as saying, "A woman's work is never done." So long as it's one woman doing the work. It's a point that Joan Smith makes in her book *Misogynies* (Faber & Faber, £3.99): "Mrs Thatcher's success is built on other women's failure, and she has a vested interest in keeping them in their place."

But it's worth noting that since the publication of the Hansard Society's report, Mrs Thatcher has increased by five the number of working women peers in "another place", the House of Lords, bringing the total now to 72—a number far greater than women have ever been able to achieve in the Commons. Of those women who do add considerable colour to the sombre green benches and grey suits of the House of Commons, what have they achieved for women? Is it merely the "screaming in my ear" Edward Heath spoke of in exasperation, when he was shrilly challenged in the House by Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman? Or is the UN's declaration that the Nineties will be "the women's decade" set to become a reality?

When it comes to identifying what they personally have achieved for women in general (as opposed to those in their constituencies) few female MPs can answer

PHOTOGRAPHS BY UNIVERSAL PICTORIAL PRESS, LABOUR PARTY AND CONSERVATIVE CENTRAL OFFICE

continued

What women wanted in 1980 ● *index-linked child benefits* ● *flexible working hours* ● *crèches, after-school and holiday care* ● *equal pay for work of equal value, and individual taxation* ● *same retirement age for men and women* ● *equal educational opportunities for girls and boys* ● *representative groups of women on housing, town planning and environmental committees* ● *maternity, gynaecological and family planning services that meet the real needs of women*

First row (left to right): Teresa Gorman, Kate Hoey, Margaret Thatcher, Diane Abbott, Betty Boothroyd, Joan Walley.

Second row (left to right): Edwina Currie, Joan Ruddock, Lynda Chalker, Marion Roe, Ann Clwyd, Dame Janet Fookes.

What women want in 1990 *(based on an agenda due to be launched this month)* ● *recognition of women's true role in the economy* ● *environmental policies to allow for women's needs* ● *education and training* ● *increased support for families and for carers* ● *preventive health care* ● *equal representation of women in public life* ● *co-operation among women internationally* ● *undistorted images of women in media* ● *women to be protected against violence, both in society and at home* ● *independent access for women to housing*

the question. Even Clare Short, one of the most vociferous and outspoken MPs on women's issues, finds it tough. "That's the problem with this job," she told me. "You go on and on, working your guts out, and you can never measure the effect there was of you being there."

It's Lady Howe's view that women MPs are in no way doing enough "from within" to speed up the process of change. "It should be everybody's responsibility," she says, "but I think the women probably could do a little bit more."

To compile this report I contacted all 43 women MPs and asked them to detail their work on women's issues. Most were willing to talk, though 11 failed to reply, and one referred me to the House of Commons library. Many had very little time—one scheduled me in between dropping her children off at school and catching the train for the House. Another managed to spare 10 minutes on the phone on a Sunday afternoon before her two small children demanded her attention. Overall, I detected a sense of caution, a feeling that fighting too hard on women's issues can write you out of the mainstream of politics. At the same time, there seemed to be a new consensus emerging, a recognition that women's issues are no longer soft options, and that some of the power to change the economy, transport and nuclear weaponry, for example, is now in women's hands.

The Labour Party is addressing this shift of atmosphere by putting its case for a Ministry of Women (24 countries already have women's ministries or departments, according to the opposition spokesperson on women, Jo Richardson). The Conservative Party Chairman, Kenneth Baker, ▶

WHAT THEY'VE DONE

We contacted all female MPs to find out what they had already done or would like to do for women.

CONSERVATIVE

Virginia Bottomley. No reply.
Lynda Chalker. Founder trustee of 300 Group.
Edwina Currie. No reply.
Dame Peggy Fenner. No reply.
Dame Janet Fookes. Supporter of independent taxation.
Teresa Gorman. Fought for tax relief for working women.
Maureen Hicks. "I don't specifically deal with women's issues."
Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman. No reply.
Dame Jill Knight. "A woman who enters the House merely to look after women's interests will not truly represent her constituency."
Emma Nicholson. Wants equal pay for work of equal value.
Elizabeth Peacock. "Women's issues are *family* issues."
Marion Roe. Introduced a bill to outlaw female circumcision.
Angela Rumbold. Co-chair of women's National Commission and chair of ministerial committee on women.
Gillian Shephard. No reply.
Margaret Thatcher. Too busy to reply.
Ann Widdecombe. Legislation affecting the unborn child.
Ann Winterton. "It's an insult to suggest that women ought to represent women's issues because men cannot."

LABOUR

Diane Abbott. "Feminist perspective."
Hilary Armstrong. Pushing for adequate childcare facilities.
Margaret Beckett. "I don't deal specifically with women's issues."
Betty Boothroyd. "My interests are imposed on me by my constituency."
Ann Clwyd. "Consult the library."
Gwyneth Dunwoody. Fighting to protect part-time workers. ▶

news report

women MPs

◄ maintains this would be "the biggest nonsense of all. It would be harmful and patronising," he says, "because its premise is that women must need special help if they are to succeed."

This party view is echoed by many Conservative women MPs who refuse specifically to target women's issues, "because all issues are women's issues". Maureen Hicks, for example, deals with them only when they arise. "I think there's a lot of talk about women's issues. I haven't actually seen what it is we [the government] haven't done that they [Labour] say we should be doing. I think many of the Labour women are feminist-type women who want to go out and bang the drum for women. I'm saying I want to bang the drum for people."

On the other hand, Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury Margaret Beckett would prefer not to speak to *Cosmo* on women's issues because, as her assistant told me, "Women politicians are targeted endlessly for details of more specific things relating to women. Mrs Beckett has never really had the opportunity to deal with these. Her commitments lie elsewhere."

Nevertheless, both parties are conscious of the image of their women members—Labour more so than the Conservatives. During the recent debate on embryology research, on witnessing the consolidated approach by the Labour women, Tory Edwina Currie apparently tried to initiate regular dinner parties to encourage a sense of unity among her own female colleagues. Consent was not unanimous, and the parties never got off the ground.

A lot of women MPs, however, such as Independent Social Democrat Rosie Barnes, believe they have a responsibility to take up women's issues. "There aren't enough women's voices representing the daily issues of women's lives," she says. And Harriet Harman, the Shadow health spokesperson, describes herself as "a feminist who wants to represent women's views in parliament, because so often it is only the male view that is heard".

The Scottish National Party's Margaret Ewing has even more of a battle—in Scotland only three out of the 72 MPs are women. "It is very frustrating how little we've actually achieved," says Ewing. "You increasingly seem to have to rely on the European Community to bring forward and enforce issues of equality, and that's probably because the European Parliament is much more equally represented."

Women MPs have had little success in improving the House of Commons in terms of working hours and conditions, or the provision of child care. Thousands of people work there, yet there is no shop that caters for basic needs. Women's loos, where it took nearly a year to install tampon machines, are in short supply. There is no provision for children.

One could argue that until the House gets its own house in order, the world without will have little encouragement to change. As Jo Richardson suggests, "We won't get a proper reflection of the population of women in parliament until we actually cope with some of the problems of what I call working-class women—less well-off women, who haven't got the money for nannies. Unless we provide facilities for them to have time to take part in politics, they won't get into parliament."

Teresa Gorman, Clare Short and Joan Walley have all made efforts to change working conditions in the House of Commons. After a visit by the Labour women MPs to Sir Geoffrey Howe, in his capacity as Leader of the House, a feasibility study is now examining the childcare needs of people who work in parliament.

It's curious that men haven't taken up the cause in the past, considering that many of them have families too—a situation that frustrates many women MPs, including Joan Walley. "This is what makes me so angry about all these senior cabinet ministers who resign, ostensibly to spend more time with their families," she says. "If their real intention was to address ways in which the needs of parliament and the needs of a family can be balanced, they'd put their energies into reforming how the place works, rather than leaving ►

WHAT THEY'VE DONE

Maria Fyfe. No reply.

Llin Golding. Wants rape victims to give court evidence by video link.

Mildred Gordon. Wants women's unpaid work to be included in GNP.

Harriet Harman. Supports changes to patterns of employment, health care.

Sylvia Heal. Wants training for women returning to work.

Kate Hoey. No reply.

Joan Lestor. Spokesperson on children, her major interest.

Alice Mahon. Tried to give home workers employee status.

Marjorie Mowlam. Feels women's issues of the Sixties still need to be tackled.

Dawn Primarolo. No reply.

Joyce Quin. Concerned that the 1992 European market should not be "on the backs of women's cheap labour".

Jo Richardson. Wants women "strong enough to set their own agenda".

Joan Ruddock. No reply.

Clare Short. Introduced Page Three Bill as part of a campaign against pornography.

Ann Taylor. No reply.

Joan Walley. Supports health labelling on tampons.

Audrey Wise. No reply.

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT

Ray Michie. Fought for better conditions for midwives.

INDEPENDENT SOCIAL DEMOCRAT

Rosie Barnes. Pushing for better housing, and protection of NHS.

SNP

Margaret Ewing. Fighting against dumping of nuclear waste in Caithness.

Top, left to right: Ray Michie, Harriet Harman, Margaret Beckett. Left, from far left: Rosie Barnes, Emma Nicholson, Angela Rumbold.

women MPs

◄ Cabinet office to take a post in industry—which is equally time consuming."

While the government refuses to separate women's issues from any other issue, it has introduced some measures in recognition of the changing role of women.

But some observers feel these changes reflect an attempt to regain the considerable number of female votes lost in the last general election, rather than a deeper concern for women. I asked the Prime Minister to detail what she had succeeded in doing for women, but she was too busy to talk to me. The government did, however, set up a Home Office ministerial committee on women's issues four years ago. It meets three times a year, with Angela Rumbold as the chair.

The first issue that the committee decided to tackle was how to get more women into public office. Angela Rumbold says a directory of women will in future be sent to all ministers.

"Ministers tend to take advice when positions come up," she says, "and that advice comes through on a traditional, old-boy network. We needed a directory that we could refer to to balance that." It's still too early to know if the directory has won either approval or results. Meanwhile, the Conservative Central Office has been on the recruiting warpath for public appointments. *Calling all party women . . . your country needs you*, proclaimed a headline in *Conservative Newsline* recently.

Top: Maureen Hicks. Above: Mildred Gordon.

Other issues that the committee has tackled, says Rumbold, are domestic violence, women's health, independent taxation and childcare facilities.

According to Jo Richardson, the ministerial committee's influence has been negligible. "Some small things have been gained for women, but more has been lost, particularly for less well-off women," she says. "Who picks up the tab when local authorities can't afford to provide community care, or respite care for the disabled or elderly, when hospitals close or have waiting lists that are too long? Women. This restricts our freedom of movement and our ability to take a job. Margaret Thatcher has not been good news for women."

Angela Rumbold is quick to accept that very little has changed in favour of women. "I know it sounds silly, but ►

women MPs

◄ we can't achieve things overnight that are going to be pretty revolutionary. The House of Commons has been this way for centuries. It's only in the last 50 or 60 years that women have made any impact at all. The trick is to do it without antagonising people, because if you're too aggressive or too abrasive, men will put up the barriers and make it three times more difficult. That's the one thing that might actually actively prevent the next generation of women getting on."

Clare Short, Shadow Spokesperson on Social Security, agrees. "It's slow because we're talking about monumental change," she says. "Women are extremely badly paid; they do much more work, desperately lack income, freedom, power . . . It isn't surprising that we, 6 per cent in the House of Commons, have been unable to fix it in 10 years."

Meanwhile, it's we who are caught in the real world, with barriers to equality. The government believes that society is to blame, and therefore society is responsible for change. As Tory MP Emma Nicholson explains, "There's nothing to stop the Cabinet having more women, it's culture. We may have to use parliament as a last resort, but it's certainly very much better if society is enlightened of its own volition and not by the dedicated attempts of a few to push new rules down their throats."

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Conservative Central Office, 32 Smith Square, SW1P 3HH (071-222 9000).

Green Party, 10 Station Parade, SW12 9AZ (081-673 0045).

Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, SE17 1JT (071-703 0833).

Liberal Democrats, 4 Cowley Street, SW1P 3NB (071-222 7999).

NAWO, 279-281 Whitechapel Road, E1 1BY (071-247 7052).

Scottish National Party, 6 North Charlotte Street, Edinburgh EH2 4JH (031-226 3661).

300 Group, 9 Poland Street, W1V 3DG (071-600 2390).

In the light of this attitude, we all must surely look at our own role in getting women's demands on the social and political agenda and in positively influencing the decision-making process. Economic and social changes will happen much faster if many more women begin to come forward. The government, men and some women MPs, though they all want our votes, are not going to do it all for us. It's up to us to have the strength of our convictions and lobby our MPs on the issues affecting us that we want tackled.

In ten years, will NAWO's action plan have succeeded? Director Jane Grant says, "We certainly intend to be a powerful force to make sure we don't have to keep grinding on about the same old things."

THE GUARDIAN
119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER
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Medical claims bill gets reading

Nikki Knewstub

A BILL to provide no-fault compensation for medical injuries introduced by the shadow health minister, Harriet Harman, was given a first reading in the Commons yesterday.

People suffering a "medical mishap" during treatment by the National Health Service would receive compensation without having to prove negligence. Settlement would be made by a board within three months of a claim.

Ms Harman said yesterday the aim was to end the "unwelcome lottery" in which a very few people won large sums, and most got nothing. "Even those who win compensation have to wait for up to eight years."

To show possible applications, she cited haemophiliacs suffering from the HIV virus following NHS transfusions. Victims would receive compensation without the need to apportion blame.

The Health Secretary, Kenneth Clarke, under pressure on both sides of the House over the HIV cases, took the unusual step of replying to the bill, although it stands no chance of being passed.

In a statement, Mr Clarke said that no-fault compensation looked attractive but would be of little help to the HIV cases.

Other countries had found that the sums paid out were often very small. If the bill intended a no-fault scheme as an alternative to court claims, then lengthy litigation would continue. If it excluded them, patients with genuine cases of negligence would be deprived of pursuing large sums.

YORKSHIRE POST
Wellington Street, Leeds LS1 1RF
CIRC. 93,148 MORNING
ISSUE DATE 26 OCT 1990

Labour call to end haemophiliac wrangles

'No fault law' plea in AIDS infection row

By CHARLES HYMAS, Political Staff

PROPOSALS to prevent a repeat of the legal wrangle over the infection of haemophiliacs with AIDS were laid before Parliament yesterday by the Labour Party.

Labour's health spokesman, Ms Harriet Harman, introduced a backbench Bill which would set up a "no fault" compensation scheme for the victims of medical accidents.

Under her proposals people such as the 1,200 haemophiliacs infected with the AIDS virus by contaminated blood would not have to go to court to prove negligence before being eligible for compensation.

She said: "We strongly believe the time has come to get rid of the current unfair lottery that adds insult to injury for the people who have been the victims of medical accidents."

But the Health Secretary, Mr Kenneth Clarke, said the plans for a "no fault" compensation scheme posed serious problems and was not the ideal solution.

It would also be of little help to the haemophiliacs as such schemes often only paid out small sums of money.

In New Zealand, "no fault" scheme payments had amounted to only £14,500 per person, less that the money paid out by the Government to British haemophiliacs.

Of the 1,200 infected in Britain, some 210 have so far developed AIDS and 150 have died. More than 960 are taking legal action against the Government which insists the victims must prove negligence in the courts.

Ms Harman's Bill, which received its first reading yesterday, mirrors "no fault" schemes in Sweden and New Zealand and is backed by the British Medical Association.

She said many victims of medical accidents were denied compensation as they could not afford expensive and lengthy court battles to prove negligence.

Only a few people succeeded in winning compensation. The sums were often big but the court wrangles took years.

Ms Harman said "no fault" compensation would ensure the money was more fairly distributed.

There would be a compensation board to adjudicate claims. The BMA estimated four out of 10 would fail.

Ms Harman's Bill is unlikely to become law without Government support.

THE TIMES
1 Pennington Street, London E1
ABC CIRC. 428,547
ISSUE DATE 19 OCT 1990

ELECTIONS

Labour post won by Foster

By RICHARD FORD
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

DEREK Foster was comfortably re-elected as Labour's chief whip last night when he secured a 81-vote victory in a ballot of members of the parliamentary party.

[illegible], MP for Bishop Auckland and the party's chief whip since 1985, received 141 votes, with 60 going to his challenger, Peter Snape, MP for West Bromwich East.

In a separate ballot, Stan Orme was re-elected chairman of the parliamentary party. Mr Orme was re-elected by 117 votes to 83 for Dennis Skinner. The size of Mr Skinner's vote was a reflection of the good impression he made on MPs during his chairmanship of the party in 1988-9.

Nominations also closed last night for the election of 18 members of the shadow cabinet. Among those seeking to win a place in the shadow cabinet are Ann Taylor, an environment spokesman, who was runner-up last year, and Martin O'Neill, the shadow defence secretary.

All members of the present shadow cabinet are seeking re-election and among the 45 candidates nominated are Tony Benn, David Blunkett, the party's local government spokesman, Harriet Harman, the health spokesman, George Robertson, a foreign affairs spokesman, Chris Smith, a Treasury spokesman, and Kevin McNamara, shadow Northern Ireland secretary.

Mrs Taylor is being tipped by all wings of the party as the likely newcomer. Under a rule used for the first time last year, MPs have to cast votes for three women and the position of three of the present women members, Joan Lestor, Ann Clywd and Jo Richardson, is in doubt.

TIME OUT
Tower House, Southampton Street, London WC2 7HD
CIRC 88,814 WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 17 OCT 1990

FRIDAY 19

Time To Know Day — the second anniversary of the government's broadcasting ban is marked by a day of action organised by Time To Know, an anti-censorship group protesting against state interference in broadcasting and the press. A demonstration leaves the BBC, Portland Place, W1 at 12noon and passes Channel 4 and ITN, ending at the Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Rd, W1 at 1pm for a free rally led by Fred Emery of Panorama. Speakers include Paul Foot, Duncan Campbell, Harriet Harman MP and Scarlett McGwire from the NUJ. Comedy provided by Steven Wells. The NFT has a free showing of two banned films on Ireland at 3pm, 'Sixteen Dead' and 'To Die for Ireland', followed by a discussion with Liz Curtis, film-maker Cahal McCaughlin and David Miller. A fundraising cabaret at 8pm at the ICA features Skint Video, Brenda Gilhooly, Mark Steel, Mark Hurst (aka Miwurdz), John Moloney, Steve Coogan, Bob Boyton and Owen O'Neill. Tickets £10, concs available. For further details contact TTK on 071 278 7916. See also Sidelines.

THE TIMES
1 Pennington Street, London E1
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ISSUE DATE 26 OCT 1990

'No fault' cash for victims rejected

Labour proposals for "no-fault" compensation for victims of medical accidents were rejected by the government yesterday.

Harriet Harman, an opposition health spokesman, said the proposals, published in a bill presented to Parliament, would end the cruel lottery under which a few people were awarded large sums after proving negligence but most got nothing.

Kenneth Clarke, the health secretary, said that, although no-fault schemes could look attractive, they posed serious problems.

THE OBSERVER
Chelsea Bridge House, Queenstown Road SW8 4NN
ABC CIRC. 716,596749,644
ISSUE DATE 14 OCT 1990

Results negative

Harriet Harman sees the pace slacken in the drive against cervical cancer.

ALL IS not well with our screening programmes. A report published this week by the Nuffield Provincial Hospital Trust says that, while screening does not work for all diseases, it's right for cervical cancer. Early signs can be detected, and treatment can prevent development of the disease which kills 2,000 women annually.

Two years ago, the Government belatedly set up a cervical cancer screening programme. It should ensure that every woman between the ages of 20 and 64 has a cervical smear every five years (every three years is the medical preference). But, after the initial flurry, the Government lost interest in establishing comprehensive screening. Of course, it is not sensible to screen some women more regularly than necessary, and fail to test others.

To encourage GPs to screen all their women patients, the GPs' contracts now set targets. A GP who screens 80 per cent of women patients receives a bonus of £2,280 (£760 for 50 per cent; no bonus for fewer than 50 per cent). To reach targets, GPs now carry out more smear tests. But many, according to the Department of Health, are 'side-stepping the call and recall system'. If there is no liaison, some women will have more regular smears, but others will fail to be recalled at all and will therefore be at risk.

The sudden increase in the number of smear tests has also exacerbated another serious problem — the delay in returning results to women. Prompt return puts a woman's mind at rest, or allows her to be referred for treatment quickly. Failure to be prompt meant that one woman was four months pregnant when she was told she had the early stages of cancer. She could either have the baby or the treatment. She had the baby, but risked her health.

The Government says results should be returned within one month. But 10 out of 14 regional health authorities have reported that some of their districts fail to meet the deadline.

North-East Thames, which had the worst results with 60 per cent taking longer than a month, says the acute shortage of laboratory staff contributes to the problem. All regions report difficulty in recruiting lab staff.

A screening system can work. It requires the Government to reduce the screening interval to three years, liaison with GPs so the call and recall system functions, and investment in better pay, flexible hours and child-care to attract staff to labs.

Screening means cancer can be dealt with by less radical and invasive forms of treatment. In letting the cervical cancer programme flounder, the Government is not only taking a gamble with women's lives, it's also undermining public support for a major development in preventive health care.

Harriet Harman, MP, is shadow Minister for Health.

DAILY TELEGRAPH
181, Marsh Wall, London E14 9SR
ABC CIRC. 1,105,366
ISSUE DATE 23 OCT 1990

Making the old feel at home

Putting an elderly relative into care can be a shot-gun affair carried out at short notice. Angela Neustatter discusses what to check and the questions to ask

THE horrifying story of 74-year-old Mrs Norah Down, who died emaciated, severely dehydrated and covered in bedsores as a patient at a private home, summons up the guilt so many of us feel about not choosing, or being unable, to look after our ageing relatives. It makes real the worst fears we have about putting the elderly into care.

There are plenty of residential and nursing homes run by local authorities, charities and also privately which maintain high standards of care and compassion. The question is, when looking, how do you decide which these are?

It is a pressing question as more and more elderly people live longer. And, today, where both partners often work, money may be tight and houses are built for nuclear families, the possibility of taking in and taking on responsibility for an elderly relative who may be around for many years becomes difficult if not impossible.

Frequently, choosing a home is a shot-gun affair that must be carried out at short notice and there is the worry of not really knowing what to look for, what to check and whether the concern and kindness shown are genuine. Mrs Julia Ross recalls: "We chose a home in quite a hurry for my elderly father, who had become infirm and couldn't stay in his own house any longer. The matron said lots of rather impressive things, the place looked clean and it seemed efficiently run.

"But every time I went to visit, my father was on his own in a corner and he seemed to get quieter and quieter and I realised that he was rarely spoken to. So we moved him to a more rough and ready place but where the matron was very clear that staff should spend time with the old people, that they should be made to feel they were liked and belonged. He was much happier there."

Recognising the need for guidance, Age Concern and Help the Aged have produced information on the kinds of homes available. It includes what to look for; the laws safeguarding standards of care and amenities; and the costs and financial help that may be available. Harriet Harman, MP, has also produced a concise booklet, A Guide to Choosing an Old People's Home, to go with Thames Television's health series The Treatment.

Homes are run by local authorities, charities, private companies or individuals. Local authority places are in short supply and are usually offered to people on low incomes who are living in their area. For a place in these homes it is necessary to apply to the local social services office and, if one is offered, it will probably have to be taken up at very short notice. Charities may restrict places to people of a particular religion or who have had a certain profession, but it is worth checking out.

PRIVATE homes must cover their costs and will usually be run as profit-making businesses, although the fees vary enormously. Residential homes are for people who can no longer manage on their own at home, but do not require skilled nursing. They are supposed to provide the kind of attention one would expect from a caring relative and are the responsibility of the local authority. Nursing homes must be managed by a qualified doctor or nurse and staffed by qualified nurses; they are for those who need constant attention and medical care and come under the local health authority.

Judging whether a home will be suitable is a personal business that depends on the individual — a home that is paradise to one person might be intolerable to another. And it is conventional wisdom that the matron of a home is all-important in creating the right atmosphere.

Pat Young's book has a checklist that includes: the ratio of trained staff to residents; whether the home allows residents to stay if they become very frail and what the conditions are under which their stay may be terminated; any extra charges; whether there is a balanced and varied menu; whether there is a clearly established complaints' procedure.

Registration is vital. A residential home with more than four people must have it and a nursing home with more than one resident must be registered and inspected regularly. With the urgent need for places and the growth in the private sector to meet demand, there is scope for the dishonest to avoid fulfilling this requirement. In 1985 legislation was passed to tighten up the situation, but Harman insists that vigilance is necessary. She says that it is important to ensure that the registration certificate is prominently displayed or to check with the appropriate authority. It is acceptable to ask for a trial period of perhaps a month before deciding finally whether a home is suitable.

The decision to put elderly relatives into a home will never be easy. But, in truth, a good many elderly people live contentedly in homes, making friends, keeping links with their family without feeling a burden, and knowing they are cared for by people who have chosen to do so.

□ *Age Concern, Bernard Sunley House, 60 Pitcairn Road, Mitcham, Surrey. Help the Aged, St James's Walk, London EC1. Counsel and Care for the Elderly, a charity that provides information on finding a home: Twyman House, 16 Bonny Street, London NW1. GRACE (Gould's Residential Advisory Centre for the Elderly), PO Box 71, Cobham, Surrey.*

TODAY
Allen House, 70 Vauxhall Bridge Road, SW1V 2RP
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SIX WOMEN IN NEIL'S CABINET

AT LEAST six women will become Cabinet ministers under a Labour Government.

Labour MPs yesterday voted to make the top jobs available if the Party wins the next General Election.

Guaranteed a senior position is Shadow Treasury Chief Secretary Margaret Beckett, 47, who leapt from 17th place to third in the shadow cabinet elections.

Also in line for a key job is Green spokeswoman Anne Taylor, 43, who was elected for the first time.

She replaces Joan Lester, 58, spokeswoman on children, who still has a good chance of being included in Neil Kinnock's top team as first runner-up. Ann Clwyd, 53, overseas development spokeswoman, and Jo Richardson, 67, shadow minister on women's issues, were both safely re-elected.

Rising stars Harriet Harman, 40, and Clare Short, 44, were also runners-up for the 18 places among the 45 candidates.

Because a full Cabinet is usually made up of about 22 ministers, they are likely to be included.

Shadow Chancellor John Smith topped the poll, which saw Robin Cook, Miss Richardson, Bryan Gould and John Prescott all demoted after defying Mr Kinnock over defence at the party conference.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH
181 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SR
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ISSUE DATE 21 OCT 1990

Cash deal may end Aids in blood row

by David Wastell
Political Correspondent

A SECRET deal to provide compensation for the 1,215 haemophiliacs infected with the Aids virus is being discussed by the Government in an attempt to head off a growing political storm.

Ministers have authorised negotiations with lawyers representing the victims of contaminated blood-clotting products to seek a way out of the lengthy court action which threatens to embarrass the Government in the run-up to the General Election.

Despite the continued tough line taken by Mr Clarke, the Health Secretary, against an out-of-court settlement of the case, there is growing speculation that in private the Department of Health is considering a one-off cash payment to resolve the claim.

Talks between lawyers acting for the department and the victims began last week and sources close to the Haemophilia Society, which is co-ordinating the action, said last night that there was a "strong probability" that a deal was imminent.

The move came as the Government prepared to face fresh pressure to reform the system of compensation for victims of medical accidents.

A move by Miss Harriet Harman, Labour health spokesman, to create a "no-fault" compensation scheme is expected to attract cross-party support. She will publish a Bill on Thursday which would allow patients whose doctors had made a mistake to claim compensation without first being required to prove negligence in their treatment.

Although the Bill cannot proceed beyond its first parliamentary reading, it will be offered to MPs who win the ballot for Private Members Bills to be introduced in the next session of Parliament.

Miss Harman is certain that one of them will pick it up. Her hand will be strengthened by the outcry over the protracted dispute with the haemophiliac Aids victims.

The expectation is that, to settle the dispute, Mr Clarke will agree a substantial new donation to the Macfarlane Trust, set up to help the victims, provided that their court action is dropped.

The Government has already paid £34 million into the trust, equivalent to £28,000 for each victim, but the Haemophilia Society is pressing for at least a further £75 million.

Last week in the House of Commons Mrs Thatcher said the Government needed to know the legal position "before any further payment is considered".

Around 150 of the haemophiliac Aids victims have died from the disease and there are fears that many more will do so before the completion of the court action, which is scheduled to begin next March. Most of the individual victims are receiving legal aid for their claim, so an offer which the Haemophilia Society judged reasonable would result in the rapid collapse of the court case.

A settlement would relieve many Tory backbenchers who have backed the haemophiliac Aids victims. Last night Mr John Marshall, Conservative MP for Hendon South, who has campaigned for a settlement, welcomed signs of a deal.

"The haemophiliacs who are dying want peace of mind," he said. "They want to know that their relatives will not have a life of penury after they are gone. Posthumous justice will not give them peace of mind."

The British Medical Association and other health groups have backed Miss Harman's call for no-fault compensation, which they say would spare patients the agony of pursuing legal cases which can take years to conclude and save millions of pounds in legal fees.

At present £7 of every £10 awarded by the courts to victims of negligence is spent on the lawyers involved. Miss Harman argues that £9 of every £10 spent on her scheme — similar to that operated in New Zealand and other countries — would go to the victims, with £1 spent on administration.

● Compensation for victims of medical mishaps should be provided without the need to prove fault, a senior judge said yesterday, *writes Terence Shaw, Legal Correspondent.*

Lord Griffiths, a Lord of Appeal in the House of Lords, told solicitors at the Law Society's conference in Glasgow that a no-fault compensation scheme was his preferred option for dealing with the problem of medical negligence actions which were escalating and causing serious concern, damaging doctor-patient relationships.

THE TIMES
1 Pennington Street, London E1
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Is the game up for 'excellent' Major?

POL Pot and Polly Peck were only two of the dangerous world forces targeted yesterday by angry MPs. Saddam Hussein and Derbyshire county council were cited, too: dreadful regimes with which Her Majesty's government has to contend. It was a day to mention the unmentionable.

There were limits, of course. Nobody dared mention Mr Heath and Mr Lawson was mentioned only by implication. Worse, the PM's mention of John Major must give his admirers cause for alarm.

"I have," she told Mr Kinnock, "a most *excellent* chancellor."

We blanched. What was it she said about Mr Lawson, just before the kill? "Unassailable," wasn't it. Worried friends of Mr Major wondered whether to be excellent was more or less safe than to be unassailable.

"Where is he?" came the shout, from Labour.

"Unassailable!" — a mocking voice from the same quarter.

In her chancellor's absence, Mrs Thatcher scornfully dismissed sneers from Mr Kinnock about her backsliding from Madrid over ERM. They duelled to what would have been an honourable draw had the PM not paused for breath at an unlucky moment. The time, she was explaining, had been right for ERM. We remembered the time: teatime on Friday October 5, when the Labour front bench were on the road back from Blackpool and unavailable for comment, and the Conservative Party were bracing for a dismal conference in Bournemouth.

". . . So we took advantage of an *excellent* opportunity . . ." — and she paused. The hilarity which entered and overwhelmed that pause smothered the rest of her sentence, which was something to do with the money supply figures.

She shrugged this off, as so much else yesterday. A question from Max Madden (Lab, Bradford W) about the "mass murderer" Pol Pot had the rabble shouting "come on, Pol" at Mrs Thatcher — but to her seeming unconcern.

Then Bernie Grant (Lab, Tottenham) appeared to accuse her of acquiescence in a Polly Peck-led Turkish invasion of Northern Cyprus. Mr Grant's interventions are always intensely felt and much was said in anger about orange groves and somebody called Nadir, but it was unclear where it all led. To Mr Grant's party's door, Mrs Thatcher suggested, as they had been in power at the time. How this will go down in the moussaka parlours of Tottenham is anybody's guess, but Cypriots there can be assured that their MP was doing his best.

The prime minister became agitated only once: over the plight of hostages in Iraq.

"We really must deal with this man," she snapped. Apparently she did not mean Ted Heath. All in all, it was a subdued PM's questions.

By contrast — at Health Questions — we saw the new-look, punchy-political Mrs Virginia Bottomley. Out go the ribbons and bows and shy smiles of this junior minister. In comes a lady wrestler, power-dressed in black, armed with appalling facts about Labour policy and rehearsed in the vocabulary of political insult.

Prompted by Edwina Currie (C, Derbyshire S) and stung by Harry Barnes (Lab, Derbys NE), Mrs Bottomley let fly at the irresponsibility and "resort to gimmicks" of Derbyshire county council. Then Labour's spokesman, Harriet Harman, was unwise enough to complain about hospital resources and attract the notice of the fearsome Mrs B.

Virginia let fly. It was "rich for the hon lady to talk like that". From the Bottomley corner came a hail of missiles — kidney machines, statistics on perinatal mortality and coronary artery bypass grafts.

By now, Harriet's nostrils were flared for battle. It was like a barroom brawl between Julie Andrews and Felicity Kendall. I crept out.

And back, to watch the swearing-in of the winner of the Bootle by-election. Middle-aged, chubby, greying and balding and dressed in a grey suit, red striped tie and pastel polyester-cotton shirt, Eddie O'Hara is one of Neil Kinnock's New Men.

MATTHEW PARRIS

YORKSHIRE POST
Wellington Street, Leeds LS1 1RF
CIRC. 93,148 MORNING
ISSUE DATE 26 OCT 1990

Prescription for change

ROBERT TAYLOR, Medical Correspondent, looks at Labour's plans to aid victims of medical mishaps

TRADITIONALLY, no fault compensation for the victims of medical accidents has not been regarded by MPs as an issue on which to stake your political reputation.

Over the years it has been widely discussed and many have considered it a worthy cause, but it is difficult legislation to frame, virtually impossible to cost and an unlikely vote winner.

But times are changing. More doctors and health authorities are being sued by patients, defensive medicine is creeping across the Atlantic, and compensation is being forced onto the political agenda by the cases of haemophiliacs infected with the AIDS virus through contaminated blood.

With that proving such a public relations disaster for the Government, what better time for Labour to at last bring no fault compensation out of the smoke filled rooms?

The Bill put before the House of Commons yesterday by the Opposition health spokeswoman, Harriet Harman, stands no chance of success, but it is a statement of intent that similar proposals will be included in the party's general election manifesto.

At a stroke it has enabled Labour to stake a claim for the moral high ground. If the scheme was already in place, it says, the haemophiliacs would be paid without argument.

"At the moment the system is a lottery. Even if people do manage to get through the legal processe there is no guarantee they will win their case," said Ms Liz Winn, a Labour researcher who has helped draw up the Bill.

"And the cost is astronomical. One study has estimated that by 1996 medical litigation will be costing £3bn a year."

Patients currently wishing to claim compensation must be able to prove negligence in the civil courts. It is often a long, complicated and expensive business and if no fault is found there is no payout, irrespective of how serious the injury.

Under no fault compensation blame ceases to be an issue. An award is made so long as it can be established that an accident has occurred.

Labour predicts there would be twice as many claims under such a system and is drawing up a payment formula taking in factors such as loss of earnings, quality of life and life expectancy. The scheme would be administered by a new Compensation for Medical Injury Board.

Supporters claim no fault compensation, which generally results in smaller settlements than those awarded by the courts, will be no more expensive to run than the present system once the saving in legal fees is taken into account.

But in reality it is a very difficult policy to cost. For example, how many people are currently put off submitting a claim by the prospect of a lengthy court case? How many are simply ineligible because responsibility for the misfortune cannot be laid at anyone's door?

Labour's health spokeswoman, Harriet Harman

Also, with the threat of litigation removed, will doctors be more willing to admit their mistakes to patients, so increasing the number of potential claimants?

The Bill is receiving unequivocal support from the British Medical Association, which has been campaigning on the issue for several years.

Spokeswoman, Linda Cuthbertson, said: "The present system of fighting cases through the courts is stressful for both the doctor and the patient. Doctors are now more aware of the risk of litigation and the establishment of a scheme like this would reassure them."

Mr David Bolt, who leads the BMA's committee on no fault compensation, denies that it would lead to a free for all, estimating that about 40 per cent of claimants would be excluded.

"You would not receive money just because you went into hospital to have your appendix out and left with a sore toe. It is designed for people who have suffered significant injury," he said.

But elsewhere there is more caution. The organisation, Action for Victims of Medical Accidents, is giving the Bill a lukewarm reception, describing it as "sketchy".

Director, Arnold Simanowitz, said: "While I welcome any political party taking the issue seriously, this Bill doesn't say anything about the major problem of discovering why accidents happen and making sure they do not occur again.

"In our experience over eight years and 10,000 people, many more people simply want to know why things happen and to stop them happening to anyone else, than want compensation.

"These proposals allow some issues to continue to be swept under the carpet, the patients can be bought off. A doctor will simply say yes, a mistake has been made, pay the patient, and no-one will look to see why it has occurred in the first place."

The AVMA is drawing up its own wide-ranging plans which it hopes to present to the Government shortly.

Central to these is the establishment of a single, independent NHS inspectorate to investigate all accidents, look into complaints and disciplinary breaches, and have a say in compensation payments. Only when this is in place would a no fault compensation scheme be appropriate, says Mr Simanowitz.

Internationally, no fault schemes are gaining favour. Sweden and New Zealand already have them and Florida is considering introducing such a system for obstetric and gynaecology cases in an attempt to stem the ever growing tide of litigation. In many American states, doctors are now so afraid of being sued that the majority of babies are delivered by caeserian section to reduce the risk of complications.

Despite these trends the British Government is sticking firmly by its line that compensation is a matter for the courts.

"Our view is that the basis for seeking compensation for injuries incurred as a result of medical negligence should continue to be through litigation," said a Department of Health spokesman.

"The worry with no fault compensation is that it removes the accountability of doctors for their actions. It is also very difficult to define the limits of such a scheme without creating inequalities."

WESTERN DAILY PRESS
Temple Way, Old Market, Bristol BS99 7HD
CIRC. 75,264 MORNING
ISSUE DATE 5 OCT 1990

Labour pledges tonic for 'ailing' health service

LABOUR yesterday pledged a Kinnock government would restore Britain's "run-down and neglected" health service, including a clear-out of businessmen and bureaucrats.

And the party conference in Blackpool was reassured that the poll tax would disappear within 12 months under Labour, to be replaced by "fair rates for a fair Britain".

The delegates were already aware of most of what Shadow Health Secretary Robin Cook and Shadow Local Government Minister David Blunkett had to tell them.

But they were cheered at what they saw as firm commitments which, they were assured, a Labour government would implement to repair the Tory "ravages" of the NHS.

Mr Cook told them: "The Tories have had ten years in which to run down the NHS and it will take time to put it right."

He said, to cheers: "The first thing I and Harriet Harman (Shadow Health Minister) are going to ask health authorities to do is to take back into the local NHS any hospital that has opted out."

To rebuild the NHS as a public service "we could start by clearing out the latest crop of businessmen with whom Kehneth Clarke has just stuffed his new health authorities.

"I have no doubt that they are all good at their job. But running a health service is not their job. I do not regard the next Labour government as bound by these appointments.

"We will replace them with people who represent their local community, who live in their local community and who use the NHS."

Meanwhile, Mr Blunkett launched a strong attack on the poll tax.

Delegates cheered when he said: "Poll tax will bring defeat to the Government and victory to us."

He said: Its immorality and injustice are seen as unacceptable.

To replace the poll tax Labour would introduce "funding which reflects our values and principles".

Despite his attack on the charge, he warned delegates: "Non-payment is not and should not be the issue for us.

THE TIMES
1 Pennington Street, London E1
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ISSUE DATE 22 OCT 1990

Law Lord calls for no-fault medical compensation plan

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE government is facing renewed pressure to compensate victims of medical accidents without the need for them to prove fault in the courts.

At the weekend, Lord Griffiths, a Lord of Appeal in the House of Lords, called for a no-fault compensation scheme for victims of medical mishaps. He told solicitors at the Law Society's conference in Glasgow that different kinds of no-fault schemes were now operating in New Zealand, Sweden and Finland.

He said that no-fault compensation would mean lower levels of compensation. "But I believe that is a price the public would be prepared to pay for the certainty of recovery rather than the lottery of litigation."

Lord Griffiths's call coincides with a move by Harriet Harman, Labour health spokeswoman, to publish a bill next week for a no-fault compensation scheme, which is expected to attract all-party support.

Both initiatives come as the government is under pressure to reach an out-of-court settlement to compensate 1,200 haemophiliacs infected with the Aids virus. Speculation grew over the weekend that ministers had instructed their lawyers to negotiate with lawyers acting for the victims of the contaminated blood products to end what is certain to be a lengthy, costly and embarrassing court dispute.

Lord Griffiths said he was concerned about the harm soaring claims for medical negligence might do to the practice of medicine. It could push the profession "into defensive medicine techniques" and damage the patient-doctor relationship. There was also the "appalling trauma inflicted on the doctor and patient when they were required to go through the litigation process".

☐ Children of divorced parents are likely to receive higher maintenance payments under government plans to reform the way in which such awards are calculated, the Law Society said at the weekend.

The proposals, to be published in a white paper this month, could also undermine any attempt by couples at a "clean break", the society said, because, in low and middle income families, the paying parent faced with the higher costs might be less willing to forgo entirely a share in the matrimonial home. Some families might also face greater poverty as they might lose benefits as maintenance increased.

The government intends to replace the present discretionary system with a formula for calculating maintenance payments. The awards will be made by a new child support agency.

☐ Thousands of tenants could lose the right to claim compensation for damp, infestation and other housing problems. The Law Society says that, because of government muddle, that right will be lost under the environmental protection bill unless action is taken by the Lords tomorrow.

At present, council tenants can use magistrates' courts to get up to £2,000 compensation for distress caused by condensation, infestation and "cold-bridging dampness". If the bill goes through in its present form, however, the society says that awards in such cases will be cut to a fraction of their present level.

DEPTFORD & PECKAM MERCURY
116 Deptford High Street, London SE8 4NX
CIRC. 5,012 WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 21 JUN 1990

Showered with scrap

DEPTFORD MP Harriet Harman was showered with recycled paper when she attended an opening at the South London Children's Scrap Scheme.

More than 150 teachers, playleaders and youth workers also joined the fun at the scrap scheme's new premises at The Spike, a former hostel for the homeless, in Consort Road, Peckham.

The children's scrap scheme is a registered charity collecting industrial waste materials supplied by 200 London companies.

They are sorted and stored before being redistributed to more than 700 local member groups including schools from all over South London.

Membership is open to schools and community groups and the management committee can be contacted on 071 277 5953.

DAILY TELEGRAPH
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ABC CIRC. 1,105,366
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Law lord calls for medical negligence award scheme

By Terence Shaw
Legal Correspondent

A SCHEME for compensating victims of medical mishaps was urged at the weekend by Lord Griffiths.

Addressing the Law Society's conference in Glasgow, he said a no-fault compensation scheme was his preferred option for dealing with medical negligence actions.

Under a no-fault scheme, claimants would no longer have to prove negligence before being able to recover compensation. While the damages would probably be lower than what might be expected in a successful claim under the present system, it would reduce the trauma of protracted litigation and save millions of pounds in legal fees.

Such a scheme has the backing of the British Medical Association, and a Bill to promote its introduction is to be published this week by Miss Harriet Harman, Labour's health spokesman.

Lord Griffiths said the growth of medical negligence claims risked harming the practice of medicine by pushing the profession into defensive medicine and damaging doctor-patient relationships.

He was also concerned about the "appalling trauma" inflicted upon doctor and patient when they were required to go through the litigation process.

Lord Griffiths, a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary since 1985, doubted the wisdom of retaining the option of a common law claim for negligence.

If that option still existed and the prizes were much greater, all the problems of the potential damage to the doctor-patient relationship and all the risks of defensive medicine would continue.

The introduction of strict liability for consumer products already went some way towards enabling recovery for damage caused by defective drugs, although this was still subject to the drug company pleading the "development risk" defence.

But he hoped that when this optional defence was reviewed under Community law within the next 10 years, it would cease to be an option.

In another session of the conference, Sir David Napley, a former president of the Law Society, called for the setting up of a Court of Last Resort to investigate and put right alleged miscarriages of justice.

While the present Court of Appeal was well equipped to deal with questions of law arising out of trials, the inflexibility of the law and procedure which governed it made it "singularly ill-equipped" to handle injustice, said Sir David.

Some form of Court of Last Resort would have to come sooner or later, he said. It should be a mixed tribunal of lawyers and specially skilled laymen, and have an investigation force independent of the police who carried out the original investigation.

THE INDEPENDENT
40 City Road, London EC1 2DB
ABC CIRC. 405,423
ISSUE DATE 22 OCT 1990

Settlement likely for Aids haemophiliacs

By Celia Hall
Medical Editor

SIGNS are growing that the Government will agree to an out-of-court settlement before Christmas for haemophiliacs who caught the Aids virus from contaminated National Health Service blood.

The Government faces mounting pressure from Conservative back-benchers and a move by Labour's health spokesman, Harriet Harman, to press for a "no fault" compensation scheme for the patients.

A sum of £50m is being suggested, substantially less than the £75m that the Haemophilia Society says is a minimum.

Any discussions, however, with lawyers representing the 1,200 affected haemophiliacs and their families who are claiming compensation, and any subsequent agreement, is likely to be over the form of a new *ex gratia* payment.

This would avoid, in name, paying compensation that the Department of Health fears would encourage a flood of suits from patients following incidents where no fault or negligence could be proved.

Last week Margaret Thatcher said the Government needed legal clarity before any further payment could be made.

Mark Mildred, of Pannone Napier, one of the solicitors representing the haemophiliacs, said yesterday that he had had no direct discussions about a settlement with government lawyers.

Michael Latham, the Tory MP for Rutland and Melton, said: "The Government will have to change its mind about this because they will not be able to carry their own troops.

"It will be forced to back down by its own supporters, because it is a simple moral issue." If the Government acted early, he said, the haemophiliacs with Aids or HIV would benefit before some died. The Government would also still get some political credit for its action, rather than appearing to have been forced into it.

Ministers were questioned on the issue twice by their own back-benchers last week, and Labour is understood to be considering raising the issue when it next gets an opposition day debate in the Commons, after the Queen's Speech.

David Watters, secretary of the Haemophilia Society, said that the machinery to make new payments already existed in the MacFarlane Trust, established to handle £34m the Government has paid to infected haemophiliacs. They have received £20,000 each to help with the costs of the illnesses, but that is less than a court would be likely to award if it found in their favour. Another £10m is invested by the trust to help families with special needs.

Mr Watters said the society would resist any new money being tied to special needs. "If new payments are to be made then it must be up to individuals to decide how to spend the money," he said.

■ Plasma infusions rich in Aids antibodies given to 10 patients at different stages of Aids infection appear to have cleared the virus from their blood.

Patients with Aids and Aids Related Complex (ARC) were given monthly infusions containing high levels of Aids-specific antibodies collected from people with HIV infection. After 17 months, five of the six Aids patients had died but those with ARC remained well, with no new symptoms. The infusions maintained their levels of protective antibodies against the virus.

Dr Abraham Karpas, writing in *Proceedings of the American National Academy of Sciences*, said the treatment might delay the onset of full-blown Aids if started early.

THE GUARDIAN
119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER
ABC CIRC. 431,716
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£30m Aids blood settlement likely

Clare Dyer
Legal Correspondent

HOPES are growing of a deal to compensate the 1,216 haemophiliacs infected with the Aids virus by contaminated blood products, although they are likely to have to settle for substantially less than they think their case is worth.

Despite the Government's previous hard-line stance on litigation, Department of Health lawyers have opened negotiations with victims' solicitors in an attempt to end the political row over the haemophiliacs' plight. A Whitehall source said the total sum offered would probably be in the region of £30 million, rather than the £80 to £90 million victims' solicitors asked for in a letter to the Treasury Solicitor last month.

The reduced sum is likely because of legal aid rules and problems in pinning legal liability on the department.

Legal aid is usually withdrawn if lawyers recommend that a settlement is acceptable, and the haemophiliacs' less than 50-50 chance of success in court would be a large factor in the decision to accept or reject an offer.

Any settlement offered is expected to be for a global sum to be paid into the Macfarlane Trust, rather than individual compensation. It would go into the non-charitable arm of the trust, which has already received a £24 million ex gratia payment from the department. The Government has also given £10 million to the charitable branch of the trust, to relieve need.

A donation to the trust would increase the value of the compensation, since payments from the trust, unlike ordinary out-of-court settlements, do not affect social security entitlement.

David Watters, general secretary of the Haemophilia Society, which has not been involved in the negotiations, said a payment into the trust would make "eminent good sense." He added: "We want to see an offer that will enable the solicitors to recommend acceptance. My impression is that £30 million may not be enough to do that."

The case has renewed calls for a system of no-fault compensation for medical accidents, under which claimants would not have to prove negligence.

Proving that the Government was negligent over the importation of infected blood products has proved a substantial stumbling block for the haemophiliacs.

Harriet Harman, Labour's health spokesman, will publish a private member's bill next week, expected to attract cross-party support, to set up a no-fault compensation scheme.

Lord Griffiths, a Law Lord, threw his weight behind the move at the weekend, when he made a strong plea for such a scheme at the Law Society's conference in Glasgow.

HEALTH SERVICE JOURNAL
4 Little Essex Street, London WC2R 3LF
CIRC. 10,919 WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 28 JUN 1990

SHADOW HEALTH minister Harriet Harman last week condemned the 'large variation' in abortion services between regional health authorities. She cited House of Commons figures showing 82 per cent of abortions were performed in National Health Service premises in Northern region but only 15 per cent in West Midlands.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH
181 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SR
ABC CIRC. 648,317
ISSUE DATE 14 OCT 1990

Beleaguered, but the family can survive

MARY KENNY

ANYONE who is concerned with family policy, and what role the state should play in the support of families, should read *The Family Way*, a study produced by the broadly Left-wing Institute for Public Policy Research, and written by three Labour women, Anna Coote, Harriet Harman and Patricia Hewitt.

It is thoughtful and intelligent, though much of its data is depressing: in the future more people will never marry; more people will cohabit instead of marrying; more children will be born outside of marriage; there will be more divorces; fewer people will remarry; more children will live with lone parents; more children will live with a step-parent; there will be more elderly people living alone and more elderly people living in the care of relatives. We are, in short, moving ever more towards a more lonely and individualistic way of life.

It may not be a welcome thought to the authors, but I agree with a great deal of what they write, and with many of their prescriptions. In considering family policy, they emphasise, we must insist that children come first and public policy must put the interests of children first. This is a responsible turnaround from the 1960-ish notion that we must all do our own thing and that our personal happiness and fulfillment must come first; but then, all three authors are mothers and write with a sense of maternal concern. Men must be drawn into involvement with their children, not through coercion, but through "encouragement" and social policy.

This is a helpful change of note from the feminist belief that women's choices have nothing whatsoever to do with men, and men can just go hang. Children have a *right* to be dependent, the authors affirm. This is some way from Shulamith Firestone's agenda, back in the 1970s, that every individual is "autonomous" and the ultimate feminist liberation is to have children conceived in laboratories (which, indeed, has come to pass) and raised by agencies which would distance them from familial dependency. Families, says the document, are a good thing, and interdependence is a healthy human aspect of caring. Families, they say, need "strong, self-reliant women" — the basis of all traditional soap-opera.

The authors, however, have a very odd view of where "the Right" stands on family policy, characterising "the Right" as patriarchal, Victorian and rigidly conformist in its view of the ideal family being composed of male breadwinner, female home-maker and two exquisitely planned children.

Historically, and in contemporary terms, "the Right" is as divided about the family as it is possible to be. You have those yuppies who care nothing for family life and see it as an inhibitor of personal wealth; a choice between a baby and a Porsche awards scant status to the baby. Indeed, a successful career woman wrote to the *Guardian* not long ago to point out that she had chosen to buy a yacht rather than to have a baby. As a taxpayer, she d not expect anyone else to subsidi her sailing hobby and saw no reas why, therefore, she should subsidi someone else's choice of having family.

You also have on "the Right" family-minded folk who abhor the way capitalism seems to militate against family life through high interest rates and mortgage problems. There is, on "the Right", a sizeable group of respectably minded folk who deplore the rise in single parenthood, claiming that girls have babies in order to get council houses; but there is also, on "the Right", the anti-abortion movement which actively helps young women to continue their pregnancies and frequently now works with the social services in getting young mums housed (in some cases, pro-life volunteers even hide single pregnant Asian women from the wrath of their families).

Historically, patriarchy was as characteristic of "the Left" as of "the Right": you could scarcely find a more male-chauvinist, patriarchal movement than that of the old-style trade unions and *The Road to Wigan Pier* revealed the masculine-dominated world of working-class life. On the other hand, the Suffragette movement was largely upper class, and politically to "the Right" — Mrs Pankhurst dropped women's issues for patriotic values as soon as the 1914-18 War began. Both "Left" and "Right" contain traditions of patriarchy and matriarchy, and it is erroneous to see concern for the family exclusively belonging to either. Coote *et al* describe the Right as championing the family as a bulwark against collectivism: but G.K. Chesterton's view of the family, as the best school of collectivism and co-operative thinking, also comes from "the Right", as it were.

No: concern for the family fits neither into a Left-wing nor a Right-wing construct; the tensions are much more between individualism and social duty, freedom and commitment, dependency and "autonomy". The outlook for the family seems frail, yet the appearance of publications like *The Family Way* shows there is much more common ground and common will to keep the family in business.

FORGET the argument over political balance on television: the real battle going on behind the scenes is about "ageism". Should beautiful-looking creatures of thirtysomething — like Jeremy Paxman and Francine Stock — be given visual precedence over ageing wrinklies whom it would be ungallant to name? It seems to me that, for presenters, the answer is yes. Paxman looks like a Roman god and you cannot take your eyes off him. The old can be wise, knowledgeable, experienced and even funny but the looks are with the thirtysomethings.

The eternal exception is Joan Collins, who seems as skittishly thirtysomething as ever in the hugely enjoyable London production of *Private Lives*. See her and believe it.

● *The Family Way*, IPPR: 18 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6LB, £10.

DAILY TELEGRAPH
181, Marsh Wall, London E14 9SR
ABC CIRC. 1,105,366
ISSUE DATE 17 OCT 1990

Leading lady, fighting frit

By Quentin Letts

LADIES' Day. Not only was there Prime Minister's Questions, but also Health Questions, which attracted several contributions from the female members. The Health Secretary, Mr Clarke, sensing the mood of the House, allowed his Minister of State, Mrs Virginia Bottomley, to take most of the questions.

Mrs Bottomley is an uncertain performer at the Despatch Box. Losing the place in her notes, she laughed nervously and glanced at the Speaker as a young flautist, knocking over her music stand in the lower school concert, might look at her music teacher.

She favoured detail over impact, ignoring the current fad for soundbites. "We are making rather slow progress," complained the Speaker. Mrs Bottomley giggled.

A contrast was provided by Mrs Edwina Currie (C, Derbyshire South) who, until her ill-chosen egg remarks, was herself a health minister. With a sure touch, Mrs Currie lambasted Derbyshire County Council's record on health spending. Dame Jill Knight (C, Edgbaston) noted that some National Health patients wanted to pay extra for better food or a single room. Miss Kate Hoey (Lab, Vauxhall) sought to catch the Speaker's eye but was outcharmed by Miss Harriet Harman (Lab, Peckham).

> Mr Kinnock tried the tactic of slipping into the enemy's native tongue

The men rallied briefly with Mr Andrew Mitchell (C, Gedling), who spoke touchingly of the front bench team's "eloquent testimony to this Government's commitment to the National Health Service" — for which blatant Brownie point-scoring he was derided.

Mr Teddy Taylor (C, Southend East) asked the junior minister, Mr Stephen Dorrell, if he planned to visit Southend, not for its bracing airs, but to view its hospital. But Mr Dorrell had no such immediate plans.

The Father of the House, Sir Bernard Braine (C, Castle Point), shot to his feet with the vigour of a more youthful parliamentarian. It was not ministerial hospital inspections that were needed. "We want some action!" thundered Sir Bernard, to cheers.

"Action is coming!" said Mr Dorrell, returning Sir Bernard's volley. This pleased Sir Bernard, but Patrick Cormack (C, Staffordshire South), speaking for haemophiliacs, retorted: "If the Government does believe in action, not words, then we are not satisfied with the action so far."

Diverting as such matters were, the attraction for which the House and the galleries had by now filled was Mrs Thatcher. Mr Neil Kinnock asked her what had made her "completely cave in" over the Madrid conditions on entering the exchange rate mechanism of the European monetary system. Mrs Thatcher explained that so many of the conditions had been met that the Government "had taken advantage of the excellent opportunity . . ." Opposition members, suspecting that the Prime Minister was about to say that ERM entry had been timed to trump the final day of their party conference in Blackpool, brayed uproariously.

But Mrs Thatcher, her jawbone twitching with rage, had not finished her sentence. She continued: ". . . the excellent opportunity of monetary conditions coming within their limits to end all the speculation."

Mr Kinnock tried the different tactic of slipping into the enemy's native tongue — as used in old war films by Nazi interrogators, who catch out the British airman by greeting him in English. The Opposition leader criticised Mrs Thatcher for not agreeing to speak at next Tuesday's ERM debate, and deduced she was "just plain frit". This, as all Lincolnshire Yellowbellies will know, is north-east Midlands slang for "frightened", and first used in Westminster by Mrs Thatcher to describe Mr Michael Foot when he was Labour leader. No fritter, Mrs Thatcher. She snarled back at Mr Kinnock: "I shall be here answering questions every Tuesday and Thursday and I hope one day you may know how to ask a good one."

If only Mr Bernie Grant (Lab, Tottenham), possessed such skills. He claimed to spot a "two-faced attitude" by the Government over invasions, citing Turkey's rape of Cyprus. The Prime Minister patiently gave Mr Grant a history lesson, reminding him that reponsibility for Britain's response to that invasion had rested with his own party.

A more sombre note was then struck by Sir James Spicer (C, Dorset W), who described to a stilled House the dreadful fate of the brother-in-law of the Kuwaiti ambassador, who was tortured and murdered in front of his family by Iraqi soldiers.

As Mrs Thatcher sat down, Mr Michael Meacher (Lab, Oldham West) made a melodramatic point of order, claiming to have found pre-arranged question and answers for the previous day's Social Security Questions. If genuine, these could represent a breach of House rules, and Mr Meacher crowed with delight as Mrs Thatcher promptly left the Chamber.

"Allow me to deal with this," said the Speaker, verbally elbowing his way through the throng. Such goings-on, he said, were "a discourtesy to members". Mr Anthony Beaumont-Dark (C, Selly Oak) announced that he was used to such "bogus and hypocritical points of order". Mr Speaker: "I hope this is not one of them."

After the signing-in of Mr Eddie O'Hara, the new Labour member for Knowsley South, who had to borrow a pen from a clerk, Mrs Dawn Primarolo (Lab, Bristol South) retrieved the female initiative and embarked on a Ten Minute Bill for a statutory minimum wage. It seemed a good moment to leave.

MORNING STAR
74 Luke Street, London EC2A 4PY
CIRC. 28,339
ISSUE DATE 25 OCT 1990

DAMAGING PROPOSALS: Labour health spokeswoman Harriet Harman was joined in condemning the opt-out application yesterday by (l to r) NUPE official Andy Stopher and Jonathan Dutton from NALGO. *PIC: Alex Apperley*

NHS opt-out plans under fire

LOCAL health unions yesterday attacked plans to take medical provision in a South London borough out of health authority control, **writes our industrial reporter.**

An application by a management team to set up a self-governing trust for Guy's, Lewisham and Mental Illness Services under the government's controversial NHS reforms is damned, in a health union document published yesterday as a "frivolous waste of time and public money."

The detailed response to management's proposals was compiled by the district joint staff consultative committee, representing a workforce which has voted against opting out in two ballots.

The staff claims that the plans would damage the provision of health care for local people, undermine the workforce's prospects and commercialise health service provision.

A fundamental criticism is that the opted-out service would lack any local accountability.

"As it stands, the trust's commitment to the community reads more like a monopolistic provider wishing to retain and exploit a captive market," the document states.

The staff questions the financial projections used in the management's feasibility study and warns that "self-governing will be the first step to privatisation."

Peckham Labour MP Harriet Harman said that the staff document highlighted the "vagueness and lack of clarity" of the management's proposals.

"There is certainly insufficient detail to allow the regional health authority to recommend that the trust be allowed to proceed."

GLASGOW HERALD
195 Albion Street, Glasgow G1 1QP
ABC CIRC 124,725 MORNING
ISSUE DATE 22 JUN 1990

Move on early abortions rejected

THE Opposition failed in the Commons yesterday in a bid to make it easier for women to have early abortions.

Shadow Health Minister Ms Harriet Harman said this would avoid many late terminations.

However, her attempt to make abortion at the request of a woman legal up to the end of the twelfth week of pregnancy was rejected by 264 to 159, a Government majority of 105, during detailed report stage debate on the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill.

Critics of such a plan insist it would mean abortion on demand.

The legislation, which has led to bitter controversy across party lines, permits experiments on human embryos up to 14 days old, and reduces the time limit on abortions in nearly all cases to 24 weeks from the existing 28.

Anti-abortionists were preparing to make a last-ditch attempt to throw out the 24-week limit.

Ms Harman said a fifth of women who have abortions had to wait eight weeks or more from the initial doctor's referral to the operation, doctors found.

"It is inexcusable to make a woman wait eight weeks or more and have an abortion after 20 weeks when she could have had it before the 12th week," she said.

Miss Ann Widdicombe (Maidstone — Con.) strongly opposed the move to allow abortions on demand up to 12 weeks, saying it devalued the life of the unborn children.

Health Minister Mrs Virginia Bottomlehe said the Government remained "formally neutral" on an Opposition amendment to set up a public register of doctors who had conscientious objections to performing abortions, although it anticipated quite a few administrative difficulties.

However, the move move was defeated by 282 to 115, a majority of 167.

HEALTH SERVICE JOURNAL
4 Little Essex Street, London WC2R 3LF
CIRC. 10,919 WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 21 JUN 1990

Survey confirms lab staff crisis

LABORATORY STAFF are deserting NHS hospitals in droves because of low pay, leaving behind a struggling service, a survey reveals.

The survey released this week by Labour health spokesperson Harriet Harman found that all regions were experiencing problems recruiting and retaining medical laboratory scientific officers (MLSOs) and medical technical officers.

All districts in Wessex, 90 per cent of those in West Midlands and 89 per cent in North East Thames reported problems in the survey which had a 49 per cent response rate.

Islington health authority in north London had the highest staff turnover of MLSOs at 38 per cent — or 76 per cent since January 1988.

Islington director of personnel Chris Bulford said: 'It is a significant problem and we are losing staff mainly to private labs which have opened recently, because in terms of the levels of pay, we are at a distinct disadvantage.'

Referring to the current pay negotiations, Mr Bulford said he hoped a figure to overcome the problem would be agreed but added that the career structure may also need to be overhauled.

John Chowcat, national officer of MSF, the trade union representing MLSOs and medical technical officers, said there was no doubt that low pay resulted in staff loss.

'The majority of MLSOs enjoy the work but the pay levels drive them out,' he said.

THE MAIL ON SUNDAY
Northcliffe House, London EC4Y 0JA
ABC CIRC. 1M,930,367
ISSUE DATE 14 OCT 1990

Cut our hours, say MPs

Threat to families starts bid to end night sittings

Kinnock loyalists target Labour's leading ladies

By ADRIAN LITHGOW
Political Correspondent

MPs are to demand a shorter working day.

The move would end night after night of debates into the small hours.

The proposal is backed by the Father of the House, Sir Bernard Braine.

It comes after the deaths of five members in their early forties and fifties this year and mounting concern that unsocial hours are taking too heavy a toll on MPs, their families and their marriages.

The move would also encourage more women to enter Parliament.

Shadow health spokeswoman Harriet Harman will lobby members on both sides of the House for support next week.

Careers

The aim is to demand a debate at business questions next Thursday.

Miss Harman said unsocial hours discouraged women from seeking parliamentary careers. There are now just 43 women out of a total of 650 MPs.

Sir Bernard, Tory MP for Castle Point, and the most senior backbencher in the Commons, said: 'I welcome this and will support it.

'I think we should have a shorter summer recess and a longer term so we don't have to sit night after night.

'The system is now an impediment to women coming into Parliament. And fathers want to be with their wives and families.'

BACKING: Sir Bernard

LABOUR'S top women face the axe from Neil Kinnock's Shadow Cabinet.

Backbenchers voting next week have been unimpressed by the Parliamentary performances of Joan Lestor, Ann Clwyd, Margaret Beckett and Jo Richardson — and the last two are targeted by Kinnock loyalists for voting against the leadership over defence cuts last month.

For the same reason male front benchers Bryan Gould, Robin Cook and David Blunkett will come under fire at next Wednesday's poll.

The Labour Party now guarantees three women places in the top 18 names from which the Shadow Cabinet is usually picked. Of the present four, insiders expect two to go and only one to be replaced by another woman.

Mr Kinnock could overrule the vote with personal appointments, but that would arouse MPs' wrath.

'Three women who had to decide: Do I keep my baby?

A NEW row is looming over a woman's right to abortion.

Abortion law reform is on the agenda in the House of Lords this month. A fierce debate is expected.

The Duke of Norfolk is to lead a final attempt to restrict a provision in the new law permitting abortion up to the time of birth if the mother's life is in danger or the baby severely handicapped.

He has written to 200 peers seeking support when the bill returns to the Lords in the current session, which begins tomorrow.

The termination of pregnancy has been dogged by controversy ever since it became legal in 1967.

But the law allowing abortions up to 28 weeks of pregnancy remained unchanged until the amendment to the Human Embryo and Fertilisation Bill which is currently going through Parliament.

In April MPs voted to cut the time limit from 28 to 24 weeks but to allow abortions up to birth if the baby was severely handicapped or the mother's life in danger.

In 1988 only 22 of the 183,798 abortions took place after 24 weeks and in 18 cases tests had revealed major abnormalities in the foetus.

The MPs' decision now has to be approved by the Lords before becoming law next month. But whatever the law states, the real issue is an intensely personal and tragic dilemma for the parents involved whose hopes of a perfect healthy baby have been dashed.

We spoke to two women whose babies were revealed to be carrying abnormalities but who chose opposite courses of action. And we also talked to a married couple who faced a different decision — what to do with an unwanted pregnancy of a healthy baby when they couldn't face keeping it but didn't believe in abortion.

These couples were featured in *Same Difference* on Channel 4 last night.

HARRIET HARMAN
Pro choice

ANN WIDDECOMBE
Anti new laws

DAILY MIRROR
Holborn Circus, London EC1P 1DQ
ABC CIRC. 3,171,720
ISSUE DATE 17 OCT 1990

TRIBUNE
308 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8DY
WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 12 OCT 1990

Who cares about the family?

THE family is clearly destined to be a major issue at the next election.

Opinion polling has confirmed to party managers what feminists have known for years. When you ask a man to talk about politics, he talks about *his* standard of living, *his* future prospects, the standing of *his* country in the world.

But when you talk to women about politics they talk about the standard of living of their *family*, the future for their children, and how world changes might affect their *family*.

The agenda of political issues is very much the same for men and women, although different issues appear in a different order of priorities. But what is clear is that, to talk directly to women, a party must have a confident message about the family.

The needs of the labour market have also had a part to play in turning the spotlight on the role of women at home and work. The drop in the number of school-leavers has resulted in employers looking for more women to work. If current trends continue, there will be more women than men at work not long after the turn of the century.

'If current trends continue there will be more women than men at work not long after the turn of the century'

Various policies have been paraded as family-friendly, or criticised as being threatening to the family. But what the Left has lacked is a coherent approach to family policy, an understanding about what a family policy should aim to achieve and a set of guidelines to help meet those goals.

Once we get the approach right, it should be a simpler matter to get the right politics, as well as lend credibility to our criticisms of the Government's attempt to be the "party of the family".

Family policy should go with the grain of change, not against it. The changes in family life, with more children being born outside marriage, more children living with parents who are not married and more marriages ending in divorce, have been happening over the last two decades.

The pace of change, which has been happening not just in this country but across Europe, shows no sign of slackening. No government in this country is likely to succeed in telling people how to lead their personal lives, nor should it try.

The Tory Party has emphasised the 'traditional' family. HARRIET HARMAN argues that this has limited its ability to protect people from poverty.

It is profoundly wrong for this Government to stand on the sidelines, wringing its hands and wishing that all these changes would go away and we could return to the good old days. The Government cannot turn the clock back. And it means that it loses the chance of making a sensible analysis of the effect of the changes and to shape policies which minimise the painful consequences of change.

The key focus of family policy should be on children. If children are able to grow up free from emotional insecurity and material deprivation they are more likely to become, in their turn, dependable adults able to care for their own children.

Family policy must be flexible enough to recognise that families now come in all shapes and sizes. The effect of the Government constantly saying that the traditional family is the right way to live does not, of itself, provide any support to people in those families. But that approach damages the 2,400,000 children who do not live in traditional families. The message to them is very clear. "There is something wrong with your family, there must be something wrong with you."

What matters about family life is what is actually happening, rather than the label that is attached. The Right's emphasis on the "traditional" family of married parents living with their children limits their ability to respond to problems of abuse in families. Family life is a process, not an institution.

Policies which protect children should draw on the evidence of what is likely to harm children. Children are harmed by poverty. They are more vulnerable to emotional harm if they lose contact with the non-custodial parent (usually the father) after marriage breakdown.

The mother's ability to work is the best protection against children slipping into poverty. This is the case within marriage, but it is even more so after marriage breakdown or for single parents. Benefit levels and maintenance payments are important, but the mother's work as a pathway out of poverty is crucial.

'Some Ministers encourage mothers back to work, others warn that their children will become hooligans'

Childcare, training opportunities and flexible patterns of employment are essential.

Research has recently shown that, ten years after marriage breakdown, half of all fathers have no contact with their children. But is that so surprising when traditional expectations of a father's role all but exclude him from family life?

Patterns of employment which dictate a father's absence from home 40 hours or more a week are an obstacle to fathers sharing in the care of children. Paternity leave, time off work to care for sick children and more flexible patterns of employment are necessary to enable fathers to do more than just "bring home the bacon."

The current joint trade union campaign for a shorter working week is not just an employment issue, but a vital part of family policy. With shorter hours and more flexible employment we should see an end to the traditional distinction between part-time work and full-time work.

A dogmatic emphasis on the mother's caring role undermines her breadwinning role. A dogmatic emphasis on the father's earning power undervalues his caring role. A breaking down of the traditional division of labour in the family will benefit children, whatever the shape or the size of the family.

The Government is in hopeless confusion over the family. While some Ministers encourage mothers back to work, others warn that the children of working mothers will become hooligans. The Prime Minister intoned against the dangers of creches shortly after her Government lifted the tax on workplace nurseries.

Our coherent appraoch to the family will not only help us win the election, but will provide us with guidelines for tax, employment, industrial and social policy when we are in government.

● *Harriet Harman is Labour MP for Peckham and front bench spokeswoman on health. She is co-author with Anna Coote and Patricia Hewitt of* The Family Way: A New Approach to Policy-making *(£10 from the Institute of Public Policy Research, 18 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6JB).*

THE GUARDIAN
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Bradford contenders in quest for authenticity

Michael Morris

TWO born-and-bred Bradfordites both claiming local allegiance on national issues, are slugging it out as the main candidates in Bradford North, the most marginal of recent byelection seats.

On the left, but centre left, is Labour's Terry Rooney. On the centre right is the Conservative, Joy Atkin.

The byelection follows the death of Pat Wall, the Militant Labour MP. Mr Rooney suggested yesterday that a lot had happened since Mr Wall obtained a majority of only 1,633 in 1987. He meant that the state of the Government would make it easy for him.

Sporting a Yorkshire white rose, Ms Atkin yesterday launched her campaign by having Eric Pickles, the Conservative ex-leader of Bradford city council, at her side, rather than a minister.

Out and about in his "Rooneymobile", the Labour candidate claimed support against the poll tax. As his name indicates, Mr Rooney's family had Irish origins but he is genuine Bradford born and raised.

As well as living in Bradford, where he is a welfare rights adviser, Mr Rooney is a Kinnockite member of the "sensible left".

The thrust of his campaign is the community charge. "The agenda has been set for us," he commented. "We are getting positive support on the doorstep for our declared policy of abolishing poll tax." He thought he detected Tory defeatism: "The truth is that they can never win here."

Muslim voters, some 6,000 out of a 60,000 electorate, could hold the key to a Labour defeat. But even Mr Pickles, as ex-council leader, said the majority Muslim vote is Labour, though the Tories pick up more than elsewhere.

Joy Atkin, aged 43, teaches in Oxfordshire. Her thrust: Tory policies, including education and the community charge, are better than Labour's.

Until leaving home at 18 she lived in the constituency, and says she wants to return. She is from a family that in the past produced a suffragist and a Labour Lord Mayor."I am a hard-working girl, who got here through grafting. I am not one of those who just slid into politics — I started when I was 13."

The Atkin and Rooney styles are not unalike. Mr Rooney listens patiently on doorsteps. In return, he was described by Eric Poynton, a gardener, as "a nice man", while a tenants' leader, David Mallinson, said there was solid support.

Ms Atkin also uses her hands to good effect, holding on to those of the elderly people she visited yesterday, in a feminine, caring way. With the aid of a party worker's Polaroid, she then gave out instant pictures of these encounters.

The Liberal Democrat, David Ward, is a 37-year-old lecturer. He believes his party's Eastbourne victory will help. "The Tories don't stand a chance because of the state of the economy."

Daud Musa Pidcock, the Islamic Party candidate, a convert born in Sheffield, is trying to win votes by suggesting an Islamic finance system with interest-free credit. Mike Knott, aged 44, is standing for the Green Party.

Polling is on November 8.

THE LISTENER
199 Old Marylebone Road, London NW1 5QS
CIRC. 25,664 WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 11 OCT 1990

As we are told *ad nauseam* by Mrs Thatcher and others, we live in a market economy; if so, then the price of Miss Harriet Harman's performance on breakfast television can safely be left to the forces of competition. George Best will always be worth more than even George Brown was. The press was quick to pick up the story of the price put upon the service of *la belle* Harriet, and several of us were telephoned at home by busy hacks. The rules are surely these: if a backbench MP is interviewed on a matter he or she has raised in the House, or on a matter of constituency interest, there can be no fee; if, on the other hand, I am asked by Radio 4's *Today* to appear on a Saturday morning with Labour MP Austin Mitchell and the president of the Liberal Democrats in order to make fun of politics and politicians, then I charge £60. I have become an entertainer without an Equity card.

Were I to be invited to appear on *Any Questions?*, which would mean travelling all day to a remote town in East Devon, dinner with a bishop, and 40 minutes of chat, I would be paid a fee (£150?) without having to ask for it. Ministers of the Crown and their Shadows, great men who moisten the front benches of the House of Commons, should appear for nowt. I see no reason why anyone, licence-payer or consumer, should pay for five minutes or more of elaborate mendacity. Ministers use broadcasting every bit as much as it uses them.

CITY LIMITS
8-15 Aylesbury Street, London EC1R 0LR
CIRC. 17,829 WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 26 JUL 1990

NEWS **HARRIET HARMAN, LABOUR'S SHADOW HEALTH MINISTER** has obtained new figures revealing that WOMEN ARE STILL WAITING TOO LONG FOR CERVICAL SMEAR TEST RESULTS. Thirty three districts fail to meet the maximum time limit of one month for returning tests. Hounslow and Spelthorne are the worst districts – women wait an average of 13.5 weeks for test results. Merton and Sutton get the best deal: they wait five weeks.

THE GUARDIAN
119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER
ABC CIRC. 431,716
ISSUE DATE 24 JUL 1990

Schools pay decision 'a shallow trick'

Martin Linton

THE Education Secretary **John MacGregor** yesterday announced plans for local pay negotiations for teachers, and was immediately accused of merely moving teacher shortages around the country.

It was "an attempt by the minister to appease his critics on the right, and a cheap dodge to avoid his responsibility for the teacher shortage", said Labour's education spokesman, **Jack Straw**.

It was a "shallow and damaging trick" that would not provide an extra penny for the system or guarantee an extra teacher for the classroom.

The Liberal Democrat education spokesman **Matthew Taylor** said the system would provoke a "wage war" by rich and attractive local authorities against poor and less attractive ones.

MPs for two East End of London constituencies, with the highest teacher shortages in the country, warned it would hurt rather than help their boroughs by providing no extra resources for them to offer recruits.

Peter Shore (Lab. Bethnal Green & Stepney), where the shortage is more than 10 per cent, asked how he planned to stop "what could easily degenerate into a competitive scramble for scarce teaching resources"?

Diane Abbott (Lab. Hackney North), with a shortage of 12.5 per cent, said it was a nonsense and a cruel fraud to allow councils to pay teachers more if he was not prepared to fund them.

Harriet Harman (Lab. Peckham) said the worst teacher shortages were in the poorest areas, which were going to be least able to opt out and pay their teachers more.

Mr MacGregor said poor local authorities were already given grants based on higher assumed spending per pupil, and Hackney only had recruitment problems because it spent money in other areas.

The allowance per primary pupil was already 70 per cent higher in Hackney than in Somerset, and the new system was geared more to allowing education authorities and opted-out schools to deal with subject shortages.

Several Tory backbenchers congratulated him, especially on his decision not to return to the Burnham Committee system, which the Government abolished in 1987. The new system — a bill will be ready next session — will be based on "free negotiations between employers and teachers under an independent chairman".

There will be no pre-set limit on the pay rise, but the Government will set a total external financing limit on what the local authorities are allowed to borrow.

The talks will have a time limit, and if no agreement is reached within the limit the Education Secretary will have power to refer it for settlement to an independent board, similar to the existing Interim Advisory Committee. It would be given a "clear and specific remit" by the Government. If ministers were unhappy with a recommendation, they would have power to refer it back to the negotiators.

The first settlement under the system would be in April 1992, and in the meantime the Government would ask the Interim Advisory Committee to recommend one final pay deal for next April.

Mr Straw told him his proposal was already opposed by the Interim Advisory Committee on the grounds that it would "merely move shortages around", and was opposed by the Tory-led Association of County Councils.

SOUTH LONDON PRESS
2-6 Leigham Court Road, London SW16 2pd
TWICE WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 12 OCT 1990

GIVE ESTATES THE HAT CASH

by TARNE SINCLAIR

ESTATES should still receive Government cash for improvements, despite snubbing its Housing Action Trusts, an MP claims.

Peckham MP Harriet Harman is now calling for a meeting with housing minister Michael Spicer to discuss future funding of the Gloucester Grove and North Peckham estates.

The move comes after tenants on both estates overwhelmingly rejected plans for a Government-sponsored Housing Action Trust, which would have meant Whitehall giving more than £100 million for improvements.

Instead, tenants voted to stick with Southwark Council, which has promised to spend £10 million on both estates.

● Harriet Harman

Plea after 'No vote'

If the Government scheme had been approved, the estates' management would have left Southwark and been transferred to a HAT board, comprising tenants, councillors and housing experts.

A Department of the Environment spokesman stressed the £100 million pledged by the Government was only available if the tenants had voted 'yes.'

Otherwise, the council would 'have to apply for cash through the normal channels.'

But Ms. Harman said, "The Government must now make that money available to carry out improvements.

"I have asked for a meeting with the housing minister to find out what his plans are to make resources available for those estates."

And the Labour MP added, "No-one is happy with the conditions of the estates.

"Southwark must not be complacent and interpret this as a vote of confidence.

"The tenants are giving the council a last chance to sort out the estates."

Southwark plans to spend £8 million on the second phase of the North Peckham project by removing some walkways, giving people ground-floor access to their homes, providing green space, improving lighting and making the estate safer.

As part of a borough-wide campaign, it plans to improve its rubbish collection and repairs on both estates.

It has earmarked the Gloucester Grove for safety improvements and better lighting.

Sandy Cameron of the North Peckham Estate said, "We now want the council to fulfil its promises of better cleanliness, better estate management with more tenant participation and a better repairs service."

Mr. Spicer was unavailable for comment.

Newsagent
London
ISSUE DATE 27 JUL 1990

Labour cig hike plan

The price of cigarettes will soar and tobacco advertising and sponsorship banned if Labour wins the next election. Harriet Harman, shadow health minister, told the House of Commons a Labour Government would up the price of tobacco and end subsidies for the manufacture of tobacco products. The party's aim is to cut the number of smokers from 32 to 20 per cent of the population by the year 2000.

SOUTH LONDON PRESS
2-6 Leighan Court Road, London SW16 2pd
TWICE WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 17 JUL 1990

Parents take legal action on lessons

EDUCATION chiefs are refusing to sign a pledge guaranteeing they will abide by the law and provide lessons for primary school children.

Parents are now threatening to take Southwark Council to court.

They are furious their children were sent home day after day from Crawford Primary School, in Crawford Road, Camberwell.

The Crawford Parents' Action Group hired solicitors to demand written pledges from Southwark's education director Gordon Mott and education committee chairman, Cllr. John McTernan.

The solicitors warned the council it was breaking the law in failing to educate 60 children due to a teacher shortage.

A council spokeswoman said, "The situation would not be helped by signing the undertaking.

"We are aware of our legal obligations and we are working hard to discharge them.

"But teacher shortage is a national problem over which we have very little control."

She said permanent teachers were being recruited at Crawford to prevent the problem arising next term.

The row erupted two weeks ago when Crawford's Class Seven — without a teacher for seven weeks — was told not to bother turning up again until September.

A temporary teacher was taken on after parents occupied the school.

Crawford parents meet education minister Alan Howarth and Peckham Labour MP Harriet Harman on Thursday to discuss the problem.

● *SLP* July 3

● Ms. Harman

THE SUNDAY CORRESPONDENT
21, Clerkenwell Close, London EC1R 0AA
CIRC. 362,000 ISSUE [illegible] 1990

The new boy network

Graduates of the Sixties universities have worked their way to the top to challenge the Oxbridge set. **Fran Abrams reports**

DOUBTERS who believe the words Oxford or Cambridge on a CV no longer open doors should look no further than the current Cabinet. Of Margaret Thatcher's closest colleagues, 11 are Cambridge graduates, six went to Oxford and three to other universities. Only John Wakeham, the Energy Secretary, and John Major, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, are not graduates. Mrs Thatcher studied chemistry at Somerville College, Oxford. The Labour Shadow Cabinet, by contrast, contains five Oxford graduates, 17 from other universities and none at all from Cambridge.

Not one graduate of the seven new campus universities which opened in the mid-Sixties – East Anglia, Essex, Kent, Lancaster, Sussex, Warwick and York – is in the Cabinet or Shadow Cabinet.

However, all this may change within the next few years. The generation of pioneering undergraduates who turned their backs on a traditional university education to sample life on windy, half-built campuses are now forging ahead with their careers.

Two have already reached junior minister status: Tony Baldry, who read law at Sussex between 1969 and 1972, is Under-Secretary of State for Energy, and Virginia Bottomley, who read sociology at Essex between 1966 and 1969, is Minister of State for Health.

In the Labour ranks, Harriet Harman, front bench spokeswoman on health and social security, was an early graduate of York, as was Tony Banks, MP for Newham North West. Kim Howells, elected MP for Pontypridd in 1989, did a PhD on the Welsh miners at Warwick.

So what will happen to the old boy network if Oxford and Cambridge begin to loosen their grip on the upper echelons of society?

Peter Mills, who graduated in politics from Warwick in 1976 and who is now responsible for more than 2,000 employees worldwide in his role as personnel director of BIS Banking Systems, admits to favouring non-Oxbridge graduates. "Students from Oxford and Cambridge do have social skills and confidence, and can do business with heavyweights without being fazed. But many of them don't have the hunger to get into a job and push themselves ahead aggressively. If we go to those universities to recruit we might take on eight or 10 people out of 150 applicants," he said.

'We have taken a fresh, new look at the map of knowledge'

Already, eminent alumni of the new universities have found themselves rubbing shoulders once again with their old undergraduate chums.

Virginia Bottomley must occasionally meet Brian Hanrahan, the BBC broadcaster who read government at Essex during the same three years that she was there. If she continues her political career, she might well bump into Dr Oscar Arias, president of Costa Rica, or Peter Jocelyn, Chief Constable of Warwickshire, both of whom were contemporaries of Hanrahan's on the government course.

East Anglia is the only new university to boast not one but two members of the cast of *The Archers*. Tim Bentinck, who plays David Archer, read art, history and music between 1972 and 1975, just missing David Vann – Inspector Barry – who read English and American studies between 1969 and 1972. Jonathan Powell, the controller of BBC1, was a contemporary of Vann's on the same course, and Jenny Abramski, director of news and current affairs for Radio Four, graduated in the same subject in 1968.

Meanwhile, back on campus academics are welcoming back the old boys and girls for silver jubilee celebrations, and a conference is planned for this autumn to take stock of the first 25 years.

Ray Pahl, a professor of sociology at Kent who left a job at Cambridge University in 1965 to become a founding member of staff, is organiser of the event.

"We haven't achieved everything we set out to do but we have taken a fresh, new look at the map of knowledge and given a chance of success to some very able people, particularly women," he said.

GLASGOW HERALD
195 Albion Street, Glasgow G1 1QP
ABC CIRC 124,725 MORNING ISSUE DATE 21 JUN 199

'Wrecking' amendment on embryos Bill defeated

AN ATTEMPT to change the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill — attacked as a "wrecking" move against the measure — was defeated yesterday in the Commons by a majority of 38.

The amendment was proposed, with cross-party support, by Labour's Mr Frank Field, at the start of two days of debate on the report stage of the Bill.

The measure brings in controls following scientific developments in the field of human fertilisation — but controversy centres on two areas:

● Abortion, including the decision taken during the committee stage of the Bill to cut the time limit from 28 weeks to 24, and:

● Whether scientific research on embryos up to 14 days after fertilisation should be allowed.

Mr Field (Birkenhead) unsuccessfully called for embryos to be used only for the treatment of patients, as in infertility treatment, and not for research purposes. His amendment was rejected by 246 to 208.

He said that allowing embryos to be created for research purposes could lead to the creation of "embryo farms."

Health Minister of State Mrs Virginia Bottomley said she understood amendments tabled by pro-life MPs had respected the clearly expressed will of the House to allow embryo research.

However, some areas of research could not be permitted if the amendment was passed, she said, including that on contraception vaccines, fertilisation, and chromosome disorders.

Another sponsor of the amendment, the Father of the House, Sir Bernard Braine (Castle Point — Con.), said the amendment would not stop infertility treatment.

"It will stop the creation of human embryos purely and solely for research. To allow this is totally unacceptable to many in this House and in the country."

Opposition spokesman Ms Harriet Harman earlier attacked Mr Field's move as a a "wrecking amendment" which, she claimed, would put an end to all embryo research.

She said claims that "embryo farms" could be created by allowing embryos to be created for research were "scare-mongering".

There was overwhelming support from scientists involved in embryo research for the Bill in its present form. They believed the amendment would create a terrible restriction, she said.

Replying to the debate, Mrs Bottomley dismissed what she called an "alarmist myth" that mothers were likely to be paid for their embryos, and said the Bill would forbid such payment without authorisation of the licensing authority.

FREETHINKER
702 Holloway Road, London N19 3NL
MONTHLY ISSUE DATE June 1990

False Economy Hits Family Planning

"The family planning services that are so important to prevent unwanted pregnancies are being axed throughout the country," declared Labour's Shadow Health Minister, Harriet Harman, when she introduced a report being submitted to the Secretary of State for Health.

"Unless the Government steps in now, the cash crisis will spell the destruction of family planning clinics," she added.

"With an estimated 200,000 unplanned and regretted pregnancies every year, we need to improve family planning services."

Expenditure on family planning services is being reduced in every region of England, Scotland and Wales. Based on information compiled by the Family Planning Association, the report shows the extent of damage being inflicted on clinics, training programmes and counselling services. In some areas plans to cut all family planning work have been frustrated only by local campaigns. Rural clinics are usually the first to be hit by expenditure cuts, restricting access to family planning services even further.

Examples of family planning expenditure cuts include Gravesend 50 per cent, Cheltenham 55 per cent, Mid Essex 48 per cent, Cambridge 42 per cent and Chichester 50 per cent. Although family planning is a vital preventive health care service for women, cash-starved local authorities, anxious to keep hospitals and wards open, are picking on family planning as a 'soft option' for Government imposed cuts. Attempts are being made, usually without success, to shift the work to GPs.

Specialist youth centres which aim to reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies among teenagers are seriously affected. Hampstead Health Authority has reduced by £5,000 its support for the London Youth Advisory Centre. The youth sessions at Southampton have been discontinued. Health Authority expenditure cuts have also hit Brook Advisory Centres in London and Bristol.

The report urges the Government to allocate adequate funds to enable every Health Authority to provide a comprehensive family planning service.

SUNDAY MIRROR
Holborn Circus, London EC1P 1DQ
ABC CIRC. 2,778,935 ISSUE DATE 21 OCT 1990

Disunited we stand

PEOPLE POLITICS & POWER

By ALASTAIR CAMPBELL

DISUNITY IS STRENGTH! It's hardly the stuff of conventional political slogans.

But after the Eastbourne by-election, it's clear the Tories are in desperate trouble.

So desperate measures are called for.

And the fissures in the Tory party are now so fundamental, and so numerous, that it's perhaps time for them to make a virtue out of reality.

"So we're divided - so what?" That kind of thing.

Labour used to do it by boasting they were a "broad church." That was in the days before the church narrowed.

Ritual

It's the Disunity is Strength principle that lies behind the annual ritual of the public spending round. There isn't a greater source of disunity and friction between ministers in the entire political calendar.

Look at how it's done. The Treasury think of a number, double it, add a few, take a few away, and decide that's what's available for next year's Departmental budgets.

Secretaries of State then put in their bids to Treasury Chief Secretary Norman Lamont, asking, in the manner of union leaders, for more than is feasible.

The creeps cave in to Mr Lamont's growls. The more macho tough it out for a while, create a little furore and get a little more. Then they cave in.

In the whole process, there are winners and losers, a few cuts and bruises, but, if I may adopt a rather Thatcherite tone, the job gets done.

Yet through the whole process, ministers go through this pathetic pretence that all is well between them, in the name of a collective responsibility we know not to exist (at least not at Cabinet ministers' dinner tables.)

The main reason we get so worked up about their divisions is not because they're there, but because the people involved claim that they're not.

Normal

We *know* Mrs Thatcher and Howe are divided on Europe. Ditto Thatcher and Hurd, Major and Hurd, Major and Howe.

We know Thatcher and Education Secretary John MacGregor disagree on education. It's only because they pretend not to that we keep writing about it.

It is perfectly normal for politicians to have disagreements with each other, and the public is grown up enough to live with that.

After all, Mrs Thatcher, in the past eleven years, has regularly been at odds with her Chancellors, her Foreign and Home Secretaries, whoever they have been, and often at the same time.

The discord may have played its part in screwing up the country, but she has won three General Elections.

I suggest the *Disunity* campaign if she wants to have any chance of winning a fourth. As Saatchis and Saatchis might say, Unity Isn't Working.

A victory in defeat

DISAPPOINTED though Tory MPs are at the sensational Eastbourne by-election result, there is one consolation.

Richard Hickmet, one of the most odious men in Parliament when he was here as MP for Glanford and Scunthorpe, won't be rejoining them.

Not now, not ever, I imagine, after his disastrous campaign.

Crazy .. but true

A TORY MP, who for obvious reasons must be nameless, asked me to launch a "Maggie Is Bonkers" campaign. "There's plenty of evidence, and you could get a few doctors to back it all up," he said, excitedly.

I sent him packing, of course. Since then, as you will have seen from the bulletins (TV not medical), she has attacked Neil Kinnock as a "crypto Communist".

This suggests my backbencher's idea may have more merit than I first thought.

SUNDAY TIMES
1 Pennington Street, London E1
ABC CIRC. 1,272,591 ISSUE DATE 21 OCT 1990

The short, sad life of Colin,

by Margarette Driscoll and John Davison

COLIN SMITH got a bike for Christmas last year. In their hearts, his parents knew he would never ride it. By the beginning of December they knew that their seven-year-old son was dying.

Their instincts were right. On January 13, Colin died of Aids. He had suffered months of debilitating illness, scores of painful hospital tests and he was constantly drugged. When he died he weighed 16lb.

Colin was a haemophiliac, born with a condition requiring frequent injections of Factor VIII, the clotting substance missing from his own blood. He was diagnosed and given his first injection of Factor VIII at 10 months old. When he was two, his parents, Janet and Colin, were told a blood test showed he was infected with HIV, the Aids virus.

Like more than 1,200 others, Colin had been infected with the virus by contaminated batches of the treatment that was supposed to save his life. So far, 210 of the victims have developed Aids and 150 have died.

Now, 962 of the victims and their families are caught in a frustrating and bitter legal battle with the government. In spite of intense political and public pressure, the government has insisted that the victims must prove negligence in the courts. Many will not live to see the outcome of the case, which is due to begin next March and last at least six months.

The Smiths are continuing to fight the battle on their son's behalf. "My son was poisoned. The government keep saying it was not their fault. But if it was not their fault then whose fault was it?" asked Colin.

A survey of Conservative backbenchers, carried out by The Sunday Times, shows mounting unease at the government's unwillingness to compromise. A majority of 64% said they were concerned at the government's handling of the issue; 9% were unsure and 27% said they were happy with the way the government was dealing with the problem. A majority, 54%, also said that the government should settle out of court.

"The NHS is, by definition, for the people," said Tony Speller, MP for North Devon. "If there are accidents it has a responsibility to them. When an awful thing like this happens you cannot expect individuals to support themselves." Sir William Shelton, MP for Streatham, said that the issue had done the government a great deal of harm.

As parliament resumed last week, the government faced an embarrassing barrage of questions. On Tuesday, Margaret Thatcher appeared to rule out the possibility of a settlement. Yesterday, however, sources said that the government might be reconsidering its position.

Although the health department has steadfastly refused to pay "no fault" compensation, the Ministry of Defence is considering a similar scheme for nuclear submarine workers who developed cancer. David Watters, general secretary of the Haemophilia Society, said: "It is yet another example of muddled thinking that one department is talking about an out-of-court settlement under certain circumstances while another denies that consideration should even be given to such a course of action."

On Thursday Harriet Harman, Labour's shadow health minister, will introduce a no-fault compensation bill in parliament.

The Smiths started their legal action so that their son would have some security when he grew up. "We still had some hope then," said Janet. The couple, from Newport, South Wales, have endured not only the agony of watching their youngest son die, but the horrible reality of living with the stigma of Aids. When neighbours at their previous home found out about his illness they began to receive poison-pen letters and abusive phone calls.

One morning Colin senior found the words "Aids death" chiselled into the front door. Later "Aids" was scratched on his car and daubed over the house walls. "I could not believe that people could be so cruel," said Janet. "Even after Colin died, the street-cleaner was the only person outside our close friends and family to say, 'I'm very sorry about your son'."

For fear of the same thing, Geoff, the father of a haemophiliac in the north of England, has hidden behind anonymity. His son, Tommy, 9, has started to show symptoms of Aids and is deteriorating fast. He tells friends that Tommy has leukaemia. "Somehow that is an acceptable disease. But it means the pressure is incredible. Not only do you have to live knowing that your child is going to die but you have to constantly watch what you say and who you say it to.

"You have to look your friends, even your own children, in the eye and lie to them. The only possible thing I can do for my son is to buy smiles. I want him to have toys, holidays, whatever he wants so he can live as fully as possible in the time left.

"Money will not save my son but it would help me to provide whatever I can for him while he is here to appreciate it."

The Sunday Times questioned 79 Conservative backbenchers, chosen to represent a cross-section of political opinion within the party.

Additional reporting by Ian Birrell, Alexandra Frean, Jasper Gerard-Sharp and Grace Bradberry

SUNDAY TIMES CAMPAIGN

THE FORGOTTEN VICTIMS

Simon Townsley

Whose fault was it? The burning question still goes unanswered for Colin and Janet Smith

DAILY TELEGRAPH
181, Marsh Wall, London E14 9SR
ABC CIRC. 1,105,366 ISSUE DATE 21 JUL 1990

Call for cigarette advertising ban

Mr Roger Sims (C, Chislehurst) criticised "cosy chats" between the Health Department and the tobacco industry over restricting cigarette advertising when he introduced a Commons debate yesterday on the value of preventive medicine.

He was especially critical of tobacco promotion through sports sponsorship. Sir George Young (C, Acton), said it was sad that sport was as addicted to tobacco as many smokers. Calls for an advertising ban were supported by Miss Harriet Harman, an Opposition health spokesman.

THE TIMES
1 Pennington Street, London E1
ABC CIRC. 428,547 ISSUE DATE 30 JUL 1990

Birthdays today

Mr Peter Bogdanovich, film director, writer and actor, 51; Miss Teresa Cahill, opera singer, 46; Sir Edmund Compton, civil servant, 84; Mr Meredith Davies, former principal, Trinity College of Music, 68; Miss Frances de la Tour, actress, 46;

Mr Justice Ewbank, 65; Mr D.H. Fraser, artist, 61; the Earl of Glasgow, 51; Lord Grantley, 67; Miss Harriet Harman, MP, 40; Mr Richard Johnson, actor, 63;

Lord Killanin, 76; Miss Wyn Knowles, former editor, BBC, *Woman's Hour*, 67; Lord McCarthy, 65; Professor L.W. Martin, vice-chancellor, Newcastle University, 62; Professor C. Northcote Parkinson, historian, 81; Mr Peter Plouviez, general secretary, British Actors' Equity Association, 59; Sir Richard Powell, civil servant, 81; Mrs Anne Ridler, author, 78; Lord Justice Russell, 64; Sir Kerry St Johnston, former chairman, P & O Containers, 59; Sir Clive Sinclair, chairman, Sinclair Research, 50; Mr Stan Stennett, actor, 63; Mr Daley Thompson, athlete, 32; Dame Marjorie Williamson, former principal, Royal Holloway College, 77.

lonely as a leper

Young Colin, dead at seven years: 'To watch him suffer for someone else's mistake was appalling'

CHEMIST & DRUGGIST
Sovereign Way, Tonbridge Wells, Kent TN9 1RW
CIRC. 16,237 WEEKLY ISSUE DATE 28 JUL 1990

Pharmacy Healthcare gets Commons support

The contribution made by pharmacists to promoting good health by making information on healthcare issues freely available, has been praised by Conservative MP Roger Sims.

Opening a health debate in the Commons last week he called on the Government to encourage more pharmacists to participate in such schemes.

During the debate Ms Harriet Harman, Labour's Shadow Health Minister, pressed for Government action to require hospital authorities to enforce the regulations designed to prevent baby food manufacturers providing free samples for nursing mothers.

She underlined the advantages of breast feeding and said Bounty boxes containing baby lotions, Vaseline and other products also included "stacks of commercial advertising material for artificial milk".

■ Mrs Virginia Bottomley, the Health Minister, has encouraged district health authorities, family health service authorities and GPs to be "active partners" in the provision of community care.

She defended the Government's decision to delay until April 1993 the full implementation of the new arrangements for improving community care and rejected a charge by Mr Robin Cook, the shadow health secretary, that the revised timetable amounted to a "shameful" failure by the Government to meet the needs of geriatric and other patients.

■ The Commons Social Services Committee has recommended that, as circumstances permit, the boundaries of health authorities and local authorities in England should be aligned, and the functions and boundaries of FHSAs and DHAs brought together. The Committee stated "co-terminosity alone will not make community care work but it would certainly help".

THE INDEPENDENT
40 City Road, London EC1 2DB
ABC CIRC. 405,423 ISSUE DATE 21 JUL 1990

Call for vote on tobacco adverts ban

A FREE VOTE on banning tobacco advertising was demanded yesterday by Sir George Young, the former health minister who was rumoured to have been moved from the Department of Health because of his campaigns against tobacco companies.

Sir George (C, Ealing Acton) also urged the House of Commons authorities to stop the sale of cigarettes bearing the portcullis of the Palace of Westminster from the Commons souvenir shop.

His call for the Government to abolish its voluntary agreement on tobacco advertising was supported strongly by Harriet Harman, the Labour spokeswoman on health. But Virginia Bottomley, the Minister of State for Health, refused to be drawn.

During the Commons debate on health and fitness initiated by Roger Sims (C, Chislehurst), Sir George said: "I find it sad that sport is now addicted to tobacco in the say way as many smokers are. We have to do more to find alternative sponsors. "I very much hope in the next session there will be a Bill and we will have a free vote on whether we can phase out advertising of tobacco save at the point of sale."

Mr Sims condemned the way he said the Department of Health had "cosy chats" with the tobacco industry to reach a compromise on advertising restrictions.

"The fact is, the department is party to a negotiated agreement about how sales are to be promoted of a product which we know to be deadly in its effect," he said. "I would like to see a complete ban on the advertising and promotion of tobacco, especially that associated with sport, which seems to me particularly cynical."

Mr Sims, a vice-chairman of the Tory backbench health committee, said the annual cost to the NHS of smoking-related diseases was £500m and an estimated 110,000 people died prematurely each year through smoking.

Harriet Harman said the health risks of smoking were now well known and there was a need for "clear unambiguous policies to cut down smoking and therefore to prevent this ill health".

BEST
Portland House, Stag Place, London SW1E 5BJ
CIRC. 885,687 WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 18 OCT 1990

Why aren't there more women in government?

Britain may have had a female Prime Minister for 11 years, but she is still surrounded by grey suited males. In fact, there are only 43 women in Parliament, compared with 607 men

When Lynda Chalker, now Minister at the Foreign Office, first became an MP, it didn't take her long to realise she was very much a New Girl. "In my first week I mistakenly walked through a door marked 'Members only'," she says. "It turned out to be a euphemism for the gents' loo!"

This sorry tale highlights two facts: that there are very few women MPs in what is, ironically, nicknamed the Mother of Parliaments, and that the few there are find they are not welcomed or catered for in the institution which many liken to a boys' public school. The truth is that although women in Britain make up 52% of the electorate, they comprise only 6.5% of the legislature. Of the 650 MPs in Parliament, only 43 are women. Twenty-three of these hold Labour seats, 17 are Conservative, one is Liberal Democrat, one SDP and one represents the Scottish Nationalist Party. And of the 50 MPs in Scotland, only three are women; in Wales there is only one.

So why are we so badly represented in Parliament? Jo Richardson, Labour MP for Barking, East London, since 1974, and Shadow Minister for Women, says: "That there are so few women in positions of power and influence is a reflection on the lack of women in positions of power in the rest of society – industry, banking and so on.

'This place is run like a long-stay mental institution'

"The majority of women with very capable talents have very few opportunities to exploit those talents and get training. Their responsibilities for their families are doubled when they have a paid job. All that doesn't leave enough time for them to become involved in local political party life, which you need to do before becoming a parliamentary candidate."

Further up the political ladder, much of the business of the House of Commons is done in the evenings when many women are needed at home. Although 30 of the present 43 women MPs are married, most of them have either grown-up children or none at all, while others, such as Edwina Currie, Conservative MP for Derby South, have children at boarding school during the week.

Harriet Harman, the Labour MP for Peckham, South London, admits she is lucky enough to have a nanny and to live near enough to the House of Commons to be able to see her three young children in the morning and at teatime.

But, she says, "The hours are utterly tiresome and unnecessary. They stop you from sharing the ordinary life experiences of most of the people in the outside world. Sometimes I tell other women just to go home and ignore what the whips are saying. It's the only way to stay sane, because this place is run on the lines of a long-stay mental institution. The doors are open, but they don't like you using them."

Considering the hours that an MP is expected to be in the House, you would think a few comforts would be provided to make life a bit easier. But, while there is a men's barber in the House, there is no women's hairdresser. Teresa Gorman, the Conservative MP for Billericay, is campaigning for one, and she and Clare Short (Labour, Birmingham Ladywood) are vociferously pressing for a shop to be opened.

But, worse than being ignored in this way, is the sex discrimination which women Members encounter. Joan Ruddock, Labour MP for Deptford, has referred to the excess of "macho and boyish behaviour" and "the hooligan element on the terraces". She says, "There are times when very personal remarks are made about women. For example, during a debate on defence, I asked what the official line on strip-searching was as some women at the Greenham Common airbase camp had been strip-searched – and some Tory said he wouldn't mind stripping *me*. And obnoxious comments are passed about a woman's breasts or legs, which aren't loud enough to be picked up by the TV microphones, but that the woman may hear.

'Women think being an MP is harder than it is'

"It happens on both sides of the House – ours as well as the Tories'," says Joan. "But it is just a minority of people who do it."

Unpleasant though treatment like this is, women are inured to it. But Harriet Harman was shocked by the behaviour of her political opponents when she was campaigning for her seat at Peckham. At the time, she was pregnant with her first child, and the Liberals canvassing in the area told people they shouldn't vote for a pregnant woman – this was a tactic which severely angered both Liberal and Labour supporters.

Yet all of this pales into insignificance when it comes to the real problem faced by would-be women MPs: getting selected as a candidate in the first place. Here, not just sexism but also ageism is rife. Until very recently, the Conservative Party constituencies, apparently, were interested only in people who would stay MPs and serve the area for 30 years – so that excluded young women with family-rearing years ahead of them and those who had already raised children but had passed the age barrier.

"The tendency is to select the type of candidate who has won there before," explains Professor Elizabeth Vallance of the Department of Political Studies at Queen Mary College, London. "And that, typically, is a middle-aged, middle-class white man with a wife and two children."

Those women who do get as far as a selection meeting are often asked questions by the male selectors which are almost comical in their irrelevance. Teresa Gorman remembers one committee chairman who told her: "We liked your speech. But tell me, why did you wear high heels?"

'If I'd put my real age I'd never have been selected'

Joan Ruddock says: "Men are confident about winning. It comes down to a different cultural pattern among the sexes. Women need encouragement."

Edwina Currie agrees that women aren't competitive enough, adding: "Women tend to think that being an MP is harder than it is. They should realise that if they've brought up a family and been involved in voluntary work, they have a wider range of experience than someone who's just been in business during their working life."

Men don't have to endure the same age prejudice, either, says Joan Ruddock. "A woman of 45 is seen as being 'an older woman'. However, a man of 45 is still thought to be in his prime," she explains.

"There's the famous case of Teresa Gorman, who put her age back 10 years from 55 to 45 – and she looks younger than she is, so she could get away with it – who has said, 'If I had put my real age, I'd never have been selected'."

Ten years ago, Lesley Abdela, then a research worker in the House of Commons, set up the 300 Group with the aim of getting 300 women Members into Parliament by the end of the century. An all-party organisation, it also works to encourage women to seek and hold public office and provides regular training in all the skills essential in public life.

Mrs Thatcher was guest of honour at a recent 300 Group lunch. In her address, she said: "There is an enormous reserve of wisdom and ability on which to draw. Let's have 300 women Members of Parliament to do just that."

And on this Tory and Labour women seem to agree. Jo Richardson says, "Women would bring a different flavour and thought process to the legislation we put through. Our laws operate for men and women, not just men, and so should reflect everyone's lives." ■ **Ruth Ling**

JOHN TYLER

Boys' club

Although this picture of Mrs Thatcher and her Cabinet dates from May 1989, it could have been taken at almost any time during the past 11 years – Mrs Thatcher surrounds herself with men, having had only one woman Cabinet minister, Baroness Young, and then only for a short time.

To encourage more women to try to enter Parliament, perhaps she should set an example by bringing more women into her Cabinet. After all, she herself admitted once at a private lunch that "all men are little boys and have to be treated as such – that goes for my Cabinet, too."

But Jo Richardson, who, like seven other Labour women MPs, is single, is concerned that women are held back by family ties which do not constrain a male MP. She says: "Being an MP is very much a full-time job. The House is not a welcoming place for us women. The hours we do – and we put them in, very conscientiously – are very long."

HULTON

How far have women come?

In Britain, women over 30 won the vote in 1918, but this was not extended to those over 21 until 1928. But other countries around the world have a much better record. Women in the Isle of Man have had the vote since 1881. Some other early examples of voting equality for women include New Zealand (1893), different states of Australia (1896-1909) and parts of the USA (1868-1918). The first Cabinet post held by a woman was in Poland in 1918 – the same year that women there got the vote. Female suffrage didn't reach Greece until 1952, but it took only four years for the country to get its first woman Cabinet minister. Although Britain's first female MP, Nancy Astor, took her seat in the House of Commons as far back as 1919, very little progress has been made since then in terms of women Members achieving high office. There have only ever been eight woman Cabinet ministers. The first, Margaret Bondfield (Labour) was the Minister for Labour from 1929 to 1931. One of the best known is Barbara Castle, who served in two Labour governments, in charge of Overseas Development, Transport and Employment (1964-70) and Social Services (1974-77). Mrs Thatcher was Secretary of State for Education and Science from 1970 to 1974. As Prime Minister, she has appointed only one woman to her Cabinet, Baroness Young, who served for under two years.

What is the future for women in Parliament?

'If women on selection committees can't see themselves as an MP, they won't choose one'
Lynda Chalker (48), Conservative MP for Wallasey

'Women are humbler than men, not so confident about our ability. We need encouragement'
Joan Ruddock (46), Labour MP for Deptford

'I intend to promote the image of older women as interesting and effective communicators'
Teresa Gorman (59), Conservative MP for Billericay

'I'm sceptical about cross-party co-operation. Tories compete rather than work together'
Diane Abbott (37), Labour MP for Hackney

SUNDAY MIRROR
Holborn Circus, London EC1P 1DQ
ABC CIRC. 2,778,935
ISSUE DATE 21 OCT 1990

MUMS PAY SUCH

The battle to give women cash help with child care must go on

BRITAIN has more working mums today than at any time since the end of World War Two.

By NAOMI MARKS and JACKIE KEMP

This year the Chancellor finally extended them a helping hand.

In his first Budget, Tory Minister John Major rewarded the campaign – spearheaded by The Sunday Mirror – to get workplace nursery tax abolished.

Before the Budget working mums paid tax on any creche subsidy provided by their boss.

With the average place in a creche costing £90 a week, most bosses paid two-thirds of the cost, or an average of £60.

But this subsidy used to be counted as extra income for the working mum, and the taxman took his cut.

For most women this amounted to an extra £414 a year on their tax bill. Today nobody pays tax on the benefit.

The second boost in the Budget came when married women won the right to independent taxation.

Now the fight must go on for more financial incentives for the millions of women who work and have school age children. And it must not matter whether they are single parents or married.

More firms are beginning to support our continuing campaign for better and more child care facilities in the workplace.

Child care vouchers are available, operated by Luncheon Vouchers. They are not tax free, but are exempt from national insurance. As we keep pointing out: Government support for child care increases the number of working mothers.

THEY in turn pay income tax and national insurance.

This reduces the overall cost of child care.

Labour MP Harriet Harman hopes to take Britain off the bottom of the European nursery education league. She has just co-produced a policy document called The Family Way which urges nursery education for every three and four-year-old whose parent wants it. Some 2.5 million children are likely to qualify. The cost is likely to be £1 billion spread over a number of years.

Harman, a working mum with three children aged seven, five and three, is severely critical of present facilities.

As Shadow Health Minister she will be at the centre of policy making for a Labour Government. She wants to see improved after-school hours facilities as well as nursery education

Nursery fun – but Britain lags behind Europe

Maggie's different world . .

COMPROMISE has been the only way TV presenter Maggie Philbin has coped with being a mum and career woman.

"Like every working mother I want the best of both worlds," says 35-year-old Maggie.

But she admits her TV career has had to play second fiddle since the birth of daughter Rose, two, even though she counts herself lucky in being able to afford good child care.

Although she still works regularly on television, she has given up Tomorrow's World.

Still, work for Maggie takes up an average of two to three days a week and can end up doing seven consecutive days while filming.

Option

Despite coping without outside help for Rose's first year, Maggie now has a part-time nanny. She pays £150 for a flexible four-day week.

Maggie says: "It was the only option. I couldn't have coped with a child minder because my work is completely erratic and for continuity we felt we needed somebody to act as a second mum."

Maggie is a firm believer in more Government help for working mums and has seen examples of good state child care while filming round the world.

HEALTH SERVICE JOURNAL
4 Little Essex Street, London WC2R 3LF
CIRC. 10,919 WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 26 JUL 1990

MPs and Lords were handed special parliamentary packets of condoms this week by Llin Golding MP (left), BMA council member Dr Sam Everington and Harriet Harman MP, as part of a campaign to persuade the government to allow GPs to provide sheaths free to their patients

MORNING STAR
74 Luke Street, London EC2A 4PY
CIRC. 28,339
ISSUE DATE 21 JUL 1990

Labour pledges to ban smoking ads

LABOUR MP Harriet Harman said yesterday that the next Labour government would ban tobacco advertising and sponsorship at sporting events.

The announcement followed a Tory backbencher's call for a similar ban on tobacco advertising to be introduced.

Ms Harman said the health risks of smoking were now well known and that there was a need for unambiguous "clear policies to cut down smoking and therefore to prevent this ill health."

She added: "It is estimated that some 110,000 deaths each year in Britain are attributable to tobacco products. This is the equivalent of one million years of life lost each year."

She said that a target should be set by the government to reduce the number of smokers from the present 32 per cent of the population to 20 per cent.

"What we really need is actually to abolish advertising for tobacco and tobacco products.

"We know that smoking kills. Why do we still allow these ads? We ought to have a total ban on tobacco advertising and sponsorship."

Roger Sims MP for Chislehurst condemned the way he said the Department of Health had "cosy chats" with the tobacco industry to reach a compromise on advertising restrictions instead of banning advertising.

For the Opposition, **Harriet Harman** said that Labour was committed to a total ban on all cigarette advertising and sponsorship.

She also called for a 20 per cent cut in alcohol consumption by the year 2000. "Even quite small levels of alcohol consumption can be damaging to people's health," she said.

Opening a debate on promoting good health, **Roger Sims** (Chislehurst, C) said: "I would like to see a complete ban on the advertising and promotion of tobacco, especially that associated with sport, which seems to me particularly cynical."

Smoking was the largest cause of illness and premature death. Each year 110,000 died before their time through smoking-related disease and illness. Although there had been a decline in the number of smokers, a third of the population still smoked and it was worrying how many young people, particularly girls, took up the habit.

While the government spent just £5 million a year trying to dissuade people from smoking, the tobacco companies spent £100 million a year trying to encourage them.

Sir George Young (Ealing, Acton, C) joined in the criticism. "I find it sad that sport is now addicted to tobacco in the same way as many smokers are," he said. He questioned whether the Commons should continue to sell cigarettes carrying its crest.

Alexander Carlile (Montgomery, Lib Dem) said that MPs were not particularly well-qualified to teach the nation what it should be doing about its state of health. There could be few jobs which were as unhealthy as being an MP.

"Too much hot air and too many free meals are hardly a recipe for a healthy life," he said.

Virginia Bottomley, the health minister, said that diseases where personal responsibility could play a part, like heart disease and strokes, were the new challenge.

Smoking killed more than 100,000 people every year, costing the National Health Service £500 million as well as untold personal misery. If cigarettes were introduced now there was little doubt they would be banned. Although the habit was now too deeply established for that, new products could be, and had been, prohibited.

The effects of passive smoking were now generally accepted and she would be suggesting to the health education authority that it draws up guidance on passive smoking for general distribution.

Smoking should be reduced with proper control over advertising. Needless deaths should be avoided at all costs.

THE TIMES
1 Pennington Street, London E1
ABC CIRC. 420,547
ISSUE DATE 21 JUL 1990

Curb on tobacco sponsors sought

A BAN on sports sponsorship by cigarette companies was called for in the Commons yesterday by MPs from both sides. The health department was accused of having "cosy chats" with the tobacco industry to reach a compromise on advertising restrictions instead of banning advertising.

For the Opposition, **Harriet Harman** said that Labour was committed to a total ban on all cigarette advertising and sponsorship.

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THE INDEPENDENT
40 City Road, London EC1 2DB
ABC CIRC. 405,423
ISSUE DATE 30 JUL 1990

Birthdays

Mr Paul Anka, composer and singer, 49; Mr Peter Bogdanovich, film director, 51; Mr Peter Bottomley MP, 46; Miss Kate Bush, singer and songwriter, 32; Miss Teresa Cahill, opera singer, 46; Sir Edmund Compton, former Ombudsman, 84; Mr Meredith Davies, conductor, 68; Miss Frances de la Tour, actress, 46; Sir Anthony Ewbank, High Court judge, 65; Mr Donald Fraser, artist, 61; The Earl of Glasgow, television producer and director, 51; Professor Ian Alistair Gordon, Emeritus Professor of English Language and Literature, 82; Lord Grantley, 67; Miss Harriet Harman MP, 40; Mr Richard Johnson, actor and producer, 63; Lord Killanin, author, film producer and Olympics honorary Life President, 76; Miss Wyn Knowles, former editor, BBC Woman's Hour, 67; Lord McCarthy, industrial relations consultant, 65; Professor Laurence Martin, Vice-Chancellor, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 62; Professor Anthony Mellows, Professor of the Law of Property, King's College, London, 54; Professor Cyril Northcote Parkinson, inventor of "Parkinson's Law", 81; Mr Peter Plouviez, General Secretary, Equity, 59; Sir Richard Powell, former senior civil servant, 81; Mrs Anne Ridler, author, 78; Sir Patrick Russell, a Lord of Appeal, 64; Sir Kerry St Johnston, chairman, P & O Containers, 59; Sir Clive Sinclair, Chairman, Sinclair Research Ltd, 50; Mr Stan Stennett, actor, 63; Mr Daley Thompson, athlete, 32; Sir Mathew Thorpe, High Court judge, 52; Mr Christopher Warren-Green, violinist, 35; Dame Marjorie Williamson, former principal, Royal Holloway College, 77.

SOUTH LONDON PRESS
2-6 Leigham Court Road, London SW16 2pd
TWICE WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 13 JUL 1990

Here is the news

JOURNALIST Anna Ford was broadcasting the news on Saturday — but not on the telly!

Miss Ford (right) is a patron of Exploring Parenthood, a parents' counselling organisation, which held its annual conference at the weekend at Brixton's 336 Conference Centre, Brixton Road. Parents and Exploring Parenthood members were able to bring their youngsters along — and leave them in the creche — while listening to Peckham MP, Harriet Harman (left) tackle 'The Place of Families in the 1990's.'

SOUTH LONDON PRESS
2-6 Leigham Court Road, London SW16 2pd
TWICE WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 6 JUL 1990

THE TIMES
1 Pennington Street, London E1
ABC CIRC. 428,547
ISSUE DATE 1 AUG 1990

CRUEL AND HEARTLESS

• Dulwich Hospital — Its services could be massacred by £6 million package of cuts.

Cuts will hit old and the disabled

HEALTH bosses have been accused of massacring services after pushing through a devastating £6 million's worth of cuts behind closed doors.

By TARNE SINCLAIR

The cuts will effect children, the elderly, the disabled, women and babies.

In a confidential report, leaked to the *South London Press*, Camberwell Health Authority approve the cuts which will mean the loss of 100 beds, widespread closures at Dulwich Hospital in East Dulwich Grove and the loss of a children's ward at King's College Hospital.

The cuts, to be implemented within the next two years, were pushed through without consultation at a health authority meeting on Wednesday afternoon.

Health watchdogs have warned the cuts will put women and babies at risk, will cause more suffering for the elderly, a massive increase in the number of people waiting for hip replacements and a loss of doctors.

Altogether eight wards are to close affecting general surgery, orthopeadic surgery, paediatrics, haematology, diabetes and sight disorders.

Dulwich North, which has six old people wards, an HIV wing, two orthopeadic wards and two wards for the mentally ill, will be shut with services being transferred to King's College Hospital in Denmark Hill and Dulwich South.

Dulwich's labour wards will also be axed which means the 1,300 births that take place there per year will be transferred to King's.

While essential services are cut the report also reveals that health bosses have struck a deal with the Irish government to take Irish liver patients at its top 33-bed liver unit.

The report says that the children's ward at King's is to be closed and its beds earmarked for paediatric liver services.

The report says: "It is proposed that the ward should be moth-balled as it is felt a number of possible developments will attract their own fundings in the near future."

Malcolm Alexander from Camberwell CHC said, "It's a massacre of local services. They are closing down services for people in Lambeth, Southwark and Camberwell and yet they want to provide them for people who can pay from other districts."

Camberwell Health Authority say the cuts were approved in order to tackle the authority's serious financial problems.

• As we went to press, south London MPs Harriet Harman, Simon Hughes and John Fraser were mounting an attack on the cuts at a House of Commons meeting with health authority chairman Sir Derek Boorman.

Speech therapy

From Sir Sigmund Sternberg and others

Sir, You report (July 24) that Sir Geoffrey Howe urges a bigger role for the elderly in society and that Sally Greengross of Age Concern relates the discrimination they suffer in employment, health care and income.

Elderly people feature significantly among the 2.3 million people in the UK who suffer speech impairment. Every year 30,000 adults lose their power of speech through strokes or head injury alone. In this country at least one child in every primary class cannot communicate effectively.

The majority of these people look to speech therapists as the professionals best qualified to help, yet the average waiting list for treatment is 200 people. The Department of Health's own recent study shows this service to be provided on a variable and ad hoc basis. It recommends a major review of the situation.

We draw attention to a statement of these facts issued by Vocal (Voluntary Organisations Communication and Language) which represents all major charities in the UK whose members suffer some degree of speech problem. It urges the Government to take the lead now in ensuring resources for such a review.

Yours faithfully,
SIGMUND STERNBERG
(President, Vocal),
JACK ASHLEY,
CAMPBELL of CROY,
DAVID ENNALS,
HARRIET HARMAN,
RANDOLPH QUIRK,
BERNARD WEATHERILL,
Star House,
Grafton Road, NW5.
July 24.

TRIBUNE
308 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8DY
WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 27 JUL 1990

RIGHTS

BY JEFF LOVITT

Labour: chasing fathers won't end family poverty

LABOUR'S employment spokesman, Tony Blair, has called upon the Government to back "a new European directive under the Social Charter to prevent women from being dismissed just because they are pregnant".

Responding to Margaret Thatcher's proposal last week to create a Child Support Agency to collect maintenance payments from absent fathers, Mr Blair said that "Britain must not be the only country in Europe seeking to block the directive's proposal that working mothers have the right not to be dismissed because of their pregnancy, irrespective of their length of employment or the fact that they work part-time."

Mr Blair also published the contents of a report from the European Commission in Brussels, which points to the low level of employment rights enjoyed by women in Britain. According to the report, *Employment in Europe 1990*, the United Kingdom has the second worst record in the EC, for care provisions for children aged between three and five.

Britain also has the worst compensation arrangements for maternity leave, and some of the biggest barriers to maternity leave entitlement, including a two-year qualifying period. Maternity leave in the EC averages 16 weeks, but the shortest duration of pay exists in the UK, where 90 per cent of earnings is received for only six weeks, followed by 12 weeks at a flat rate.

Two out of three British workers are excluded from maternity leave entitlement, because they work part-time. Women now comprise 38 per cent of the workforce in the European Community, but a disproportionately high number of women work part time. Although part-time employment accounted for only 13 per cent of EC employment in 1988, it accounted for 28 per cent of women's employment.

The Commission's report also points out that, while nine of the 12 EC member states have set up forms of parental leave, the UK has no provisions at all.

Declaring last week that "parenthood is for life", Mrs Thatcher announced that a White Paper in the autumn will ensure that absent fathers pay maintenance for their children.

The new Child Support Agency will have powers to trace absent fathers through national insurance numbers, produce a formula for assessing maintenance, take enforcement orders to court, and help to collect the money. It will be open to all lone parents, not only those dependent on benefits.

The formula will be based on income support rates which are uprated annually, implying a target maintenance of £50 per week for a lone parent and a young child, compared with current average maintenance payments for a single child of £18 per week. The formula will take account of the lone mother's income from work, and whether the absent parent has other children to care for.

There are 1,200,000 lone parents in Britain, of whom two-thirds rely on social security benefits. Joan Lestor, Labour's spokeswoman for children, commented that "chasing fathers does not alleviate poverty." She added: "Family poverty is not confined to lone parents, and many women may be reluctant to name the fathers of their children. Many families living in poverty are in bed and breakfast accommodation or homeless."

Harriet Harman, Labour's spokeswoman on health, said: "It's a struggle to combine work and motherhood, and Mrs Thatcher fails to mention those who are looking after an elderly or disabled relative. She talks about balancing home and work, but has blocked the EC directive. Meanwhile her Government is cutting family planning clinics."

MORNING STAR
74 Luke Street, London EC2A 4PY
CIRC. 28,339
8 SEP 1990
ISSUE DATE

HAT'S OFF: Labour MP Harriet Harman demonstrates her advice to south London tenants, to say a firm 'No' to a HAT for their estates. PIC: Janey Hulme

Tenants urged to 'stamp on HAT'

by LUCIE HYNDLEY

TENANTS on two south London council estates were yesterday urged to "stamp on" government plans to impose a Housing Action Trust on their homes.

Southwark councillors and local Labour MP Harriet Harman converged on the North Peckham estate to urge tenants to vote No in a two-week postal ballot which starts on Monday.

Under the plans a government-appointed trust would take over maintenance and redevelopment of the North Peckham and nearby Gloucester Grove estates for five to ten years after which they would be sold either to private landlords or to the council – at full market price.

Yesterday council leader Sally Keeble told tenants that "the only way to preserve affordable homes for the majority of people in this area is to vote No to a HAT and stay with the council."

Labour MP Harriet Harman warned residents not to be fooled by the Tory promises of massive investment and improvements.

"It is sheer political expediency which makes them suddenly offer you pots of gold – but it is fool's gold," she said.

Some tenants supporting the HAT plan turned up yesterday determined to give the council a tough message.

"We live on this estate and we've fought for decent conditions here," said one, "but what we need now is not more promises from you but proper management."

Star comment: p2

DAILY TELEGRAPH
181, Marsh Wall, London E14 9SR
ABC CIRC. 1,105,366
8 SEP 1990
ISSUE DATE

Tenants put trust in estates strategy

By John Grigsby, Local Government Correspondent

TENANTS' leaders on one of Britain's most run-down estates yesterday rejected pleas from the Labour-controlled council and backed the introduction of one of the Government's controversial new Housing Action Trusts to improve their homes.

The move, by the North Peckham Tenants' Association, in Southwark, south London, encouraged Mr Patten, Environment Secretary, and Mr Michael Spicer, Housing Minister, to hope that they may soon be able to launch the first of the schemes.

Tenants in Sunderland overwhelmingly voted against a trust and the Government has dropped proposals for four other areas. But a postal ballot will start on Monday to seek the views of more than 2,500 families on the North Peckham and Gloucester Grove estates. If they vote in favour, the Government will agree to spend more than £100 million on the estate. The trust will take over the two estates from the council.

When the work is finished, in an estimated five to eight years, the tenants will vote whether they want the homes to be taken over by a tenants' co-operative, a housing association, the council or even a private landlord.

Yesterday a press conference called by Sally Keeble, leader of Southwark council, and Harriet Harman, Labour MP for Peckham, urging residents to oppose the HAT was interrupted by angry tenants.

Mrs Marcia Williams, chairman of the North Peckham Tenants' Association, said the scheme would not have been imposed if the council had maintained the estate properly.

Miss Keeble argued that the tenants had no guarantee that the Government would keep its promises. She warned that the flats could eventually be sold to young professionals anxious to live near the City.

Department of the Environment officials say that the tenants' groups have negotiated major concessions.

Rents would be kept to 80 per cent of the Southwark average until the properties were improved. When work is complete, rents would be no higher than those charged by the council for similar homes.

The Government is committed to providing Southwark with the money to buy back the properties if tenants want to return to its management.

SOUTH LONDON PRESS
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TWICE WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 20 JUL 1990

TEACHERS' CRISIS

Kids could be sent home next term

HUNDREDS of children could miss education next term because of a teacher shortage in south London.

Pupils went on holiday this week without knowing if there will be a teacher for them in September.

Head teachers warned they will be forced to send classes home unless local authorities tackle a severe staffing crisis.

Lambeth Teachers Association secretary Dick North said, "We are facing the appalling prospect of hundreds of children being turned away from school next September.

"They will be cheated out of an education and their parents will be put to great inconvenience."

According to official figures there are 445 vacancies in Southwark, Wandsworth, Greenwich and Lewisham.

Official figures for Lambeth were unavailable at press time but Mr. North estimated over 60 empty posts in the borough.

The problem arose as councils were unable to recruit replacements for teachers leaving at the end of the summer term.

Parents of pupils at Fenstanton Junior School in Tulse Hill were warned in a letter from head teacher Linda Collins that their children could be turned away next term.

She said, "It's an appalling situation — it really sticks in my throat."

Kennington's Lillian Baylis secondary school is short of 12 teachers out of 39.

And a recent survey by Peckham Labour MP Harriet Harman found that six schools in her consituency were regularly turning children away.

Mr. North blamed poor pay coupled with high living costs in London, extra burdens imposed by the Government's compulsory assessment and lessons plan, and chaos in the wake of ILEA's break-up.

Problem

A Southwark Council spokeswoman said the borough was doing all in its power to tackle the problem, claiming its teachers were among the highest paid in the country.

Spokesmen for Southwark, Wandsworth, Lewisham and Greenwich said many of the vacancies could be covered by supply teachers and the vacancy rate would fall substantially by September.

by TERRY MESSENGER

SOUTH LONDON PRESS
2-6 Leighan Court Road, London SW16 2pd
TWICE WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 14 AUG 1990

MP'S ALERT ON HOSPITALS

Bed closure fears

AN MP is calling on the Government to guarantee its NHS reforms will not lead to bed and hospital closures.

Bermondsey MP Simon Hughes' call followed the leak of a secret NHS memo to the Labour Party.

The memo, from the NHS management executive, predicted London hospitals face 'major destabilisation' as a result of the Government's health service reforms.

The document fears at least one London teaching hospital will be forced to close and hospital managers will have to close 2,370 beds in the Thames region by April next year.

Mr. Hughes said, "People in Guy's Hospital, Southwark, are rushing down the road to becoming self-governing in the belief that the Government will protect them.

"But unless we can be assured that people will have as good a chance as getting a bed in future, as they do now, and that the service will go up and waiting lists down, then this is not the road to go along."

Mr. Hughes added he would be bringing up the issue in Parliament and he would also write to the Government to ask for assurances that no more beds would be closed as a result of the reforms.

Under the reforms, hospitals would be allowed to leave control of the district health authority and sell their services back to the authority, GPs and private patients.

A consultation document about St. Thomas' Hospital, Waterloo, becoming self-governing has already been issued and another document for Guy's Hospital, Southwark, is due to be released.

● Peckham MP Harriet Harman will be visiting areas throughout the Thames region this summer to hear patient groups, consultants, hospital workers and people's views on the reforms.

by ALLISON GRIFFITHS

THE SUNDAY CORRESPONDENT
21, Clerkenwell Close, London EC1R 0AA
WEEKLY
ISSUE DATE 22 JUL 1990

Edwina do the birdie dance

HOWARD JACOBSON ON TELEVISION

women jurors were agreed that there were worse things Jackie could do to earn a couple of hundred quid. Funny how holy a body isn't, when it's yours.

Good for the girls. Good for the programme. But just hope you never have to be tried by jury.

It was a girly week. BBC1 came up with *The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd*, a new American import with an air of intelligent and daring modernity (Days and *Nights*, notice), and no studio laughter. We're there when Molly wakes up, slides out of bed in a satin nightshirt – "She owns bottoms," says her mother's voice over, "why doesn't she wear them?" – reads her poems to the elevator man who happens to be a literary critic, goes to work in real estate, shows an apartment to an Indian gentleman who wonders whether she would think him rude if he asked to rub his face in her hair (and will soon, mark my words, be speaking of essences), and returns home at the end of a busy but unfulfilling day to reflect on being 33, alone, and still unable to tell a good man from a bad. *Rhoda*, in other words, out of *Roseanne* and *Cheers*. Only nosier, more personal, more thirtysomethingish. A mode we have never mastered, or been sure we want to master, for the reason, I suppose, that we do not have a right to personal happiness enshrined in our constitution.

Antonia and Jane (BBC2) had a go at something similar, but was faced, because it was a single play and not a series, with the difficulty of endearing us to two girls, with long histories, in quick time. Maybe you had to be in the mood; maybe you can have too much of girls and their birdies some weeks, but the solution to this problem – goofy flashbacks and cameos of klutziness – seemed too cute, too Woody, too just-out-of-university-bright, to endear anyone to anyone.

The sex was the best of it. It looks fun – let's not be coy about this, it *is* fun – being bound naked to a bed and thrashed every time you fail to identify a line from Shakeapeare – especially if, as *Antonia and Jane* did not suggest, you know the line but pretend you don't. Guessing the flavour of jam a complete stranger is rubbing into your skin *is* a better way of spending your day than jury service. But even here the writing failed to obey the first law of comedy, which is implicitness. The films where we'd seen all this erotic romping were named, novels were invoked, the works of other writers buzzed around the script like the wrong men around Molly Dodd.

I was not meant to like this play. Had its makers intended to enlist my support they would have thought twice about giving the name Howard to a character whom everybody agrees is a complete shit. Antonia and Jane both suffer from the delusion that messages are being flashed to them from TV screens. So do critics.

GLASGOW HERALD
195 Albion Street, Glasgow G1 1QP
ABC CIRC 124,725 MORNINGS
ISSUE DATE 1 SEP 1990

Bluebottle and Ed

WHAT price a woman's honour in the week scientists discovered the gene that makes a man run and Mrs Thatcher extended the long arm of government to bring him back again?

Verdict, Channel 4's new let's-talk-about-it programme, based on the concept of the jury, got in early with an answer. Two hundred pounds were on the table. So should she or shouldn't she? – that was the dilemma the 12 good men and true were gathered to discuss; the object of their deliberations being Jackie, a one-woman domestic devastation zone, whose only alternative to the depredations of a loan shark seemed to be a discreet – and, she hoped, discrete – act of prostitution. Or, as one jurywoman who wore a funny hat and employed a Bluebottle voice put it, "Selling her birdie for mernie."

Bluebottle and her 11 co-jurists had been chosen, the programme notes assured us, "from a variety of backgrounds", which is code for, not from politics or showbusiness and therefore not very famous. There was a time when the not very famous were invariably more worth listening to than their opposites; but as a consequence of television, the gap between them has been narrowing. Midweek, *Newsnight* (BBC2) hauled in Lord Joseph, who these days always looks as though he is about to cry; Edwina Currie, who these days always looks as though she is about to laugh, or cluck, since in her semi-retirement she has begun to resemble those she once maligned; and Harriet Harman, who these days always seems to be wearing Mrs Thatcher's earrings. The pretext for this get-together was The Family, and my pretext for alluding to it is Mrs Currie's conversational manners. An interrupter on a grand scale herself, she only has to hear Harriet Harman preparing the first syllable of an interjection and she is up on her roost, feathers flying, protesting, "May I . . .".

Preposterousness of this kind was once the preserve of people whose backgrounds were the reverse of various; but we have seen too much of them, and now we are all doing it. "Can I just finish?" "If you'll allow me . . ." "What I'm saying is . . . OK?" This universal touchiness, this belief in one's God-given right to continue, took up too much of *Verdict*. You have to live with others not wanting to hear you say more than one word on a subject, especially when that subject is as serious as selling your birdie for mernie.

A company director with a very English accent but a very far-flung name saw serious moral drawbacks indeed in Jackie's proposed solution to her problem. There is a loss of individuality, he explained, whenever a woman is penetrated. "Each time a woman gives herself to another man she loses an essence of her personality or soul." Since this is something only a man ever says, it remains a considerable mystery how he knows. One of the jurywomen came at what we may call the essence argument from another direction. "Bullshit!" she said, after giving it some thought.

If I can just finish, OK, said a financial consultant whom no one was interrupting, what I'm trying to say is that at the end of the day, right, a man can get away with these things, but when a girl does it she is called a slut – I'm not saying that's right or wrong, right.

The slut argument, which strictly speaking is the essence argument minus the orientalism, found favour with the majority of men. No, they said, Jackie should not defile her birdie. Bluebottle excepted, the women jurors were agreed that there were worse things Jackie could do to earn a couple of hundred quid. Funny how holy a body isn't, when it's yours.

Good for the girls. Good for the programme. But just hope you never have to be tried by jury.

It was a girly week. BBC1 came up with *The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd*, a new American import with an air of intelligent and daring modernity (Days and *Nights*, notice), and no studio laughter. We're there when Molly wakes up, slides out of bed in a satin nightshirt – "She owns bottoms," says her mother's voice over, "why doesn't she wear them?" – reads her poems to the elevator man who happens to be a literary critic, goes to work in real estate, shows an apartment to an Indian gentleman who wonders whether she would think him rude if he asked to rub his face in her hair (and will soon, mark my words, be speaking of essences), and returns home at the end of a busy but unfulfilling day to reflect on being 33, alone, and still unable to tell a good man from a bad. *Rhoda*, in other words, out of *Roseanne* and *Cheers*. Only nosier, more personal, more thirtysomethingish. A mode we have never mastered, or been sure we want to master, for the reason, I suppose, that we do not have a right to personal happiness enshrined in our constitution.

Antonia and Jane (BBC2) had a go at something similar, but was faced, because it was a single play and not a series, with the difficulty of endearing us to two girls, with long histories, in quick time. Maybe you had to be in the mood; maybe you can have too much of girls and their birdies some weeks, but the solution to this problem – goofy flashbacks and cameos of klutziness – seemed too cute, too Woody, too just-out-of-university-bright, to endear anyone to anyone.

The sex was the best of it. It looks fun – let's not be coy about this, it *is* fun – being bound naked to a bed and thrashed every time you fail to identify a line from Shakeapeare – especially if, as *Antonia and Jane* did not suggest, you know the line but pretend you don't. Guessing the flavour of jam a complete stranger is rubbing into your skin *is* a better way of spending your day than jury service. But even here the writing failed to obey the first law of comedy, which is implicitness. The films where we'd seen all this erotic romping were named, novels were invoked, the works of other writers buzzed around the script like the wrong men around Molly Dodd.

I was not meant to like this play. Had its makers intended to enlist my support they would have thought twice about giving the name Howard to a character whom everybody agrees is a complete shit. Antonia and Jane both suffer from the delusion that messages are being flashed to them from TV screens. So do critics.

Checks planned on homes for aged

THE Government is to plug a legal loophole which allows thousands of old people's homes to operate without checks on those running them. Health Minister Virginia Bottomley announced yesterday.

At present, care homes with less than four residents do not have to register with local councils and are not subject to inspections.

The Department of Health estimates that there are at least 2000 such homes. It has been claimed that some are run by people found unfit to run larger homes.

"Vulnerable people in homes are entitled to protection whatever the size of the home," said Mrs Bottomley. "We do not intend to risk spoiling the homely atmosphere these small establishments can provide by applying detailed rules in a bureaucratic way.

"But local authorities must satisfy themselves that a person applying for registration to run a small home is a fit person. In addition, authorities will have the power to visit a home if they believe it necessary."

The change was welcomed by Labour health spokeswoman Harriet Harman, who said: "We, together with Nalgo, Age Concern, and the Association of Directors of Social Services, have been pressing for this for three years. This is a great victory for our long-running campaign."

Ms Harman said she would now withdraw her own Safeguards for Residents in Private Care Homes Bill, which contained similar proposals to those announced by Mrs Bottomley.

Ms Harman urged the Government, when it made the change, to introduce regulations covering private home-help companies. "There are a growing number and they are completely unregulated," she said. "The Government has here an opportunity to nip the problem in the bud."

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What makes a wife feel bound to assume her husband's name? **Liz Hodgkinson** argues for individuality

Why women shouldn't lose their names

A QUICK look down the births columns of any newspaper will reveal that the vast majority of women still change their name to their husband's — and also that the children almost always take his name instead of hers.

Why? Why, after three decades of the current feminist movement and years and years of consciousness-raising, is this still a near-universal custom? After all, there is little that so forcefully underlines the reality of the patriarchal society as women taking their husbands' names when they marry, especially when it so rarely happens the other way around.

In the old days, there were good — or at least understandable — reasons for changing your name. When a woman's sole status came from being married, Mrs John Smith would always seem more important than Miss Jane Smith. The older you became, the less status there was in remaining a Miss.

Moreover, if you had children, you would want everybody to know they were the products of a marital union, otherwise great stigma and shame would attach both to them and to you.

The ultimate status of all, though, in the old days, came from marrying "well" — making a match that brought you money or a title. At a time when most careers and professions were denied to women, what else could we hope for?

Now, however, every single one of the reasons for changing your name has gone. Very many years have elapsed since we could become the men we wanted to marry. There is no longer any increased status in being a Mrs — the very opposite, in fact.

Women who are happy to be known as "Mrs" are rather pitied these days, for feeling they have to gain their identity from public admittance of being manacled to a man. And the once all too real stigma attached to illegitimacy has now completely gone, both in law and in fact. There are so many second marriages and step families these days that to have a couple of children in a family with a different surname has become completely commonplace.

Not only is it old-fashioned and inappropriate to change your name on marriage, it has become a distinct embarrassment. When most women were safely tucked away in the home, emerging into the marketplace and enjoying independent careers, it can be distinctly confusing to be only known by the same name as your husband or, as is increasingly the case, the same name as your ex-husband. I wonder if Shirley Conran and Molly Parkin now regret being stuck with their ex-husbands' names?

In her autobiography, Taking It Like a Woman, Ann Oakley, née Titmuss, declares that one of her main reasons for marrying was to change her name. But does she now, as one of our leading feminist commentators, honestly believe that she made a good decision? The fact that Oakley is a much nicer name than Titmuss seems to me to be beside the point.

One of the reasons for my own intense anger at women who think so little of themselves that they take a man's name is because I have to own up to having done it myself. When I married, as a 21-year-old student, it never occurred to me to do anything else. All married women changed their names.

OVER the years I have paid a high price for this foolishness, and I have not found one single advantage in taking a man's name — only the feeling of having made a horribly irrevocable mistake.

But nobody told me that I didn't have to change my name; I thought it was the law. Of course, it wasn't — it was only custom. But customs always exist for a very sound reason. In this case, it is to bring home the subordinate status of women. Black slaves in America also had to use their master's surname.

Taking one's husband's name is a sign that you are prepared to merge your identity with his, take on second-class status, that you are happy to lose a part of yourself. Nowadays, most women in public life — apart from MPs, who, with the exception of Harriet Harman and Clare Short, seem content to be known as Mrs — do not change their names on marriage.

The fact that there is now a tradition for high-profile women to keep their own names makes it easy to imagine that this has become a universal custom. Unfortunately, the birth columns tell a very different story — they remind us that consciousness-raising has penetrated to only a tiny, tiny section of the female population.

Most of us are unthinkingly conforming to the outdated customs laid down by our forebears. But if for no other reason, the extreme likelihood of divorce should encourage us to hang on to our birth names. Many women now revert to their maiden names on divorce because they do not want to bear the name of a man they no longer love. But there's no reason to change in the first place.

Even many women who keep their own original names will frequently bestow the man's name on their children. In the past, women often married simply to "give the children a name". Their own, of course, didn't count.

Some women will argue that as their original name is their father's — a man's — anyway, and that their mother's maiden name is also a man's and so on, it makes little difference to change it to another man's. But there are actually plenty of solutions to this problem. If women kept their original names, then a tradition of "female" surnames could grow up. Couples who wanted to be linked together by name on marriage could both change to a joint new name, or put the two together. We could perhaps have a system whereby female children took the mother's surname and boys the father's. There is no inherent reason why not.

It seems to me that nowadays, far from being a status symbol to take a man's name, it has become the ultimate embarrassment. So why do women still do it? I wish somebody could tell me.

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Loophole on homes for elderly to be plugged

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At present, care homes with less than four residents do not have to register with local councils and are not subject to inspections.

The Health Department estimates there are at least 2,000 such homes. Critics claim some are run by people found unfit to run larger homes.

Mrs Bottomley said: "Vulnerable people in homes are entitled to protection whatever the size of the home.

Power

"We do not intend to risk spoiling the homely atmosphere these small establishments can provide by applying detailed rules in any sort of bureaucratic way.

"But local authorities must satisfy themselves that a person applying for registration to run a small home is a fit person. In addition, authorities will have the power to visit a home if they believe it necessary."

The change was welcomed by the Labour health spokeswoman, Ms Harriet Harman.

"We, together with Nalgo, Age Concern and the Association of Directors of Social Services, have been pressing for this for three years.

"This is a great victory for our long-running campaign," she said.

Ms Harman said she would now withdraw her own Safeguards for Residents in Private Care Homes Bill, which contained proposals similar to yesterday's move.

She urged the Government when it made the change to also introduce regulations covering private home-help companies.

"There are a growing number and they are completely unregulated," she said.

"The Government has here an opportunity to nip the problem in the bud."

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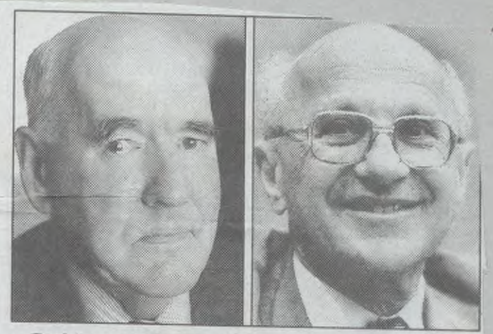
BIRTHDAYS OF THE WEEK



Parkinson, 81 tomorrow: Friedman, 78 on Tuesday

TODAY

Lord Scarman, former Law Lord and author of the report on the Brixton riots, 79; **Lord Grimond**, Liberal elder statesman, 77; **Mikis Theodorakis**, Greek politician and composer, 65; **Lord Weinstock**, managing director of GEC, 66; **Nigel Aspinall**, eight times British Open croquet champion, 44.

TOMORROW

Daley Thompson, once the world's greatest all-round athlete (Olympic decathlon gold medallist 1980 and '84), 32; **Frances de la Tour**, actress, 46; **C. Northcote Parkinson**, inventor of Parkinson's Law, 81; **Sir Clive Sinclair**, electronics entrepreneur and chairman of Mensa, 50; **Peter Bottomley** MP, who lost his job as junior Northern Ireland minister in the reshuffle, 46; singers **Kate Bush** 32, **Teresa Cahill** 46, and **Paul Anka**, 49; **Christopher Warren-Green**, violinist, 35; **Harriet Harman**, MP, an Opposition health spokeswoman, 40; **Peter Bogdanovich**, film director (*The Last Picture Show*), 51; **Meredith Davies**, conductor, 68.

TUESDAY

Professor Milton Friedman, monetarist guru, favoured by Mrs Thatcher, 78; **Jonathan Dimbleby**, broadcaster and journalist, 46; **Marina Ogilvy**, the newest royal mother, 24; **Peter Nichols**, playwright, 63; **Evonne Cawley** (nee Goolagong), Wimbledon champion '71 and '80, 39; **Norman del Mar**, conductor, 71; **Geraldine Chaplin**, actress, 46; **Sherry Lansing**, film producer (co-producer *Fatal Attraction*), 46; **Ralph Koltai**, stage designer, 66.

WEDNESDAY

Yves Saint Laurent, designer of perfect classic clothes, 54; **Laurie Taylor**, ubiquitous broadcaster and professor of sociology at York University, 55; **Lionel Bart**, composer, lyricist and playwright, 60; **Sir William Hayter**, former ambassador to Moscow and later Warden of New College, Oxford, 84.

THURSDAY

Peter O'Toole, actor who recently impersonated Jeffrey Bernard, 58; **Alan Whicker**, TV's most famous globetrotter, 65; **David Waddington**, Home Secretary, 61; **Lord (Len) Murray**, former general secretary of the TUC, 68; **Sir Christopher Hogg**, chairman of Courtaulds and of Reuters, 54; **Julia Foster**, actress, 48; **Alan Tuffin**, Gen Sec Union of Communication Workers, 57; **Sammy McIlroy**, former Northern Ireland football captain, now with Preston, 36.

FRIDAY

Terry Wogan, smooth-talking TV chat show host, 52; **P. D. James**, best-selling thriller writer, 70; **Ossie Ardiles**, Argentine footballer who played for Tottenham Hotspur, now manager of the unfortunate Swindon Town, 37; **Jack Straw**, MP, Opposition spokesman on education, 44; **Tony Bennett**, American singer who left his heart in San Francisco, 64; racing trainers **Josh Gifford**, 49, and **Peter Easterby**, 61; **Anthony Sampson**, the anatomist of Britain and political commentator, 64.

SATURDAY

HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, 90; **David Lange**, New Zealand's former Prime Minister, now attorney general, 48; **William Cooper**, novelist (*Scenes from Provincial Life*), 80; **Dr John Cunningham** MP, shadow Leader of the House of Commons, 51; **Georgina Hale**, actress, 47; **Mary Decker-Slaney**, athlete who had a contretemps with Zola Budd at LA Olympics 1984, 32; **Martin Jarvis**, actor, 47.

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EDUCATION BREAKDOWN

CHILDREN are being turned away day after day from SIX primary schools in one borough, according to an MP's survey.

Hundreds of pupils lose out on lessons

by TERRY MESSENGER

Hundreds of children are being denied lessons by a teacher shortage in Southwark, it revealed.

Peckham Labour MP Harriet Harman carried out the investigation after angry parents occupied a school in protest.

She said, "Ministers must take urgent action. They must not stand by while children's education is jeopardised."

According to her survey, children are regularly sent home from Bessemer Grange, John Ruskin, John Donne, Brunswick Park, Crawford and Friars schools.

The survey was limited to Ms Harman's Peckham constituency — although the teacher shortage is a problem throughout south London.

Neighbouring Lewisham Council admitted its schools had also turned children away.

Meanwhile Southwark Council promised to supply a teacher to Crawford Primary in Camberwell to end a protest occupation by parents who vowed to teach the kids themselves.

A spokeswoman denied the move was linked to action taken by parents — furious over a teacher shortage hitting class 7 at the school, in Crawford Road.

An experienced teacher would take over the class on Monday in a reshuffle following the employment of a newly qualified teacher, she pledged.

Protest leader Jackie Nicholson, whose son Dean (six) has been without a teacher for most of this term, said, "We'll just have to wait and see.

"We've had empty promises before. If a teacher doesn't turn up, we'll continue our action."

Supervise

She said the borough's assistant education director Richard Edwardes told parents they would be welcome to supervise children in future cases of teacher shortage.

Wandsworth and Greenwich councils said there had been no cases of children being sent home in their boroughs, while Lambeth failed to answer our inquiries.

What is Recycled Paper?

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