HARRIET HARMAN, M.P.

Member of Parliament for Peckham



House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA Tel: 01- 219 3000 01- 219 5137 01- 219 4218

REPORT

March 1988

1. Housing

(i) Housing Bill
I have written to all the tenants associations in Peckham explaining why I am opposed to the Housing Bill and how it will harm the interests of council tenants. A number of tenants associations have, as a result, arranged for me to come and discuss the Bill with them. I arranged for Clive Soley MP (who is our front bench representative on the Housing Bill Committee) to mention how the Bill will make problems worse in Southwark.

(ii) I continue to have a huge number of constituents writing to me and coming to my surgeries complaining about lower standards of service in the housing department. It becomes increasingly difficult to help get their problems 'solved' and often it is only possible to 'let them know where they stand'. But it remains my priority to give every case proper attention and follow up.

2. Schools

- Abolition of ILEA There can be no doubt that the abolition of ILEA and handing schools (and other educational services) to Southwark, would, at the very least, cause severe short-term disruption to children's education and, at worst, could spell a long term obstacle to improving standards in schools. I spoke about Southwark schools in the debate following Kenneth Baker, the Secretary of State's, statement. The Government did not put ILEA abolition in their manifesto and have no mandate for this plan. The ILEA parents group are organising a ballot of all ILEA parents to try and emphasise how widespread opposition is to this move. And I have written to Chairs of Governors in all Peckham schools explaining my opposition to the break-up and asking for their views, which I will present to Kenneth Baker. I have also had a large number of representations expressing concern about the implication for Adult Education.
- (ii) I was at <u>Brunswick Park School</u> on 3rd February and will be at *Warwick Park School on 2rd March, *Peckham Park School on 8th March and *St. George's RC School on 29th March.
- (iii) I am speaking at the Southwark Education Campaign meeting on 23rd March.

3. Employment

The Government plan to introduce a new 'training scheme' in September. My concern is that it will not provide proper training, that it will just be a cheap labour scheme and that it

will not be 'voluntary' because those who refuse to go on it will risk six months loss of benefit. I am sending a copy of the Government's proposals, and my criticims, to a number of trade union and training organisations in Southwark and hope that we can generate sufficient opposition to the scheme so that it flops and the Government is forced to come up with a better offer.

4. I am attending the opening of the new <u>Peckham Police Station</u> on 10th March.

5. Health - Southwark

- (i) I am very concerned about the Accident & Emergency Department at Kings College Hospital. I submitted a response to the consultation document issued by the Camberwell District Health Authority, complaining that the facilities are tatty, overcrowded and depressing and that people have to wait too long. (Please let me know if you would like a copy of my submission).
- (ii) I am participating in the Southwark contribution to national 'No Smoking' day on 9th March.
- (iii) I went to support nurses, and other health workers, who were taking action on 2nd & 3rd February at Maudsley Hospital and Kings College Hospital.
- (iv) I will be speaking at the Southwark Health Campaign launch on 28th March.

6. National Health Service

As Labour's Shadow Minister on Health, I have played a central role in our campaign against the Government cuts in NHS funding and the Governments attempts to undermine the Health Service. It is clear that following the Prime Minister's 'Review', they want to dramatically increase private health care provision, including adopting American style health care where most people have to take out private health insurance and where they are experimenting with 'Health Maintenance Organisations' instead of GPs. On behalf of the Labour Party I am spending seven days in the USA (from 22nd April) to look at health care and will be publishing a report when I return aimed at undermining the Government's review.

HARRIET HARMAN 2ND March 1988

REPORT

May 1988

1. Inspection of American Health Care

I recently spent 8 days inspecting health care services in the U.S.A. I enclose an article about it that I wrote for the Sunday Mirror. The visit was extremely useful as it provided me with ammunition about the realities of commercialised medicine. One of the worst aspects of the system is that most health insurance policies are paid by employers on behalf of the employee. The problem is that if you lose your job through ill-health, you also lose your health care cover. The insight I gained on my visit to the U.S.A. will be part of Labour's fight back against Thatcher's Review of the National Health Service.

2. Joblessness in Peckham

I have got some new figures which show that despite all the Government rhetoric about "solving" unemployment, registered unemployment in the Peckham constituency has only dropped 1% in the last year. The registered unemployment rate shows that 1 in 5 are out of work in Peckham. The real figure is probably much higher but obscured by the Government fiddling the figures by changing the way the jobless numbers are calculated. The Government now spends £52 million per year in paying dole to people in Peckham who would rather be at work. I am publicising these figures to show that though for some parts of the country unemployment might have dropped from the top of the agenda, it is still a major issue here.

3. Benefits

The cuts in benefit, particularly housing benefit, are now in effect. The new laws are now passed but it remains very important to continue campaigning on this issue and I am continuing to:-

- * help individuals to check their entitlement and making sure they are getting everything they should be
- * publicise individual harsh cases to try and get the Government to soften the Regulations
- * draw attention to the poor "benefit service" Peckham claimants get from the local DHSS offices.

In conjunction with the local DHSS unions, Robin Cook, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Health and Social Security, and I made a "public" visit to the DHSS in Blenheim Grove to expose the appalling waiting conditions for claimants.

I spoke at the Southwark Pensioners Action Group about benefit changes.

4. The P&O Dispute

Every Labour Party member must be sickened by the appalling conduct of the P&O management. They are the worst manifestation of the years of Thatcherism. I shall be visiting the picket line to publicly demonstrate my support for the NUS members and my outrage at the P&O management.

5. Schools

Following Tory education laws, the balance of power on school governing bodies will change dramatically later this There will be fewer Labour Party (local authority) The parent governors governors, and more parent governors. will, therefore, have an important say in the 'co-opted' governors. The school governors will be particularly important in the future as it is they who can decide on "opt-out" ballots.

It is very important that in all wards and in all schools we identify parents who are Labour Party members or Labour Party voters and help secure their election. The Tories will be organising to get Conservative parents on.

6. Meetings and Visits

Over the next few weeks I will be attending the Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations; Southwark Trades Council; Southwark Cathedral; Crampton School Prize Day; Southwark Childminders Association; Kings Hospital T&GWU Branch; Southwark Joint Trade Unions Manual Workers; Consort Ward; Friary Ward; Castlemead Tenants Association; Southwark Council A.G.M.; Southwark Council Poll Tax Conference and many others too numerous to mention!

<u> Article from Sunday Mirror - 1st May, 1988</u>

The American nightmare where money talks louder than pain

ULIAN and his wife are expecting their first baby. He's excited about being a father. But he's also anxious

retner. But he's clise enxious
— about the kespital bills.
Even with "full" health insurance, the costs are mounting up.
His wife has just had a scan. The
baby looks fine — but the bill
doesn'tlooks og good. It's \$180 (£85),
and the insurance company gives
him back only \$50 (£32).
When she had the behalts

When she has the baby the hospital will charge \$5,000 (£2,670). He'll get back just \$1,200 (£640) from the insurance.

Julian is the adminis-trator at New York's Met-ropolitan hospital, better placed than most to talk about health care US-style. He's under no illu-sions.

System

"They often do Cae-sarians because the doc-tors get more money and it's faster." he said.
"Why wait six hours during labour when you can be paid for three Cae-sarians during that thme?"

When Americans talk about health care they always talk about money, For most, health insur-ance goes with their job.

people in work and another for the poor, the elderly, the unemployed.

"Why wait six hours with partial abour when you can be paid for three Gasarlans during that ime?" When Americans talk when Americans talk when Americans talk when Americans talk ways talk about mone, "or most, health insurnote goes with their job house with their job house goes with their job house and the subject to the same provided and the subject with the partial provided and the subject with the partial provided and the same reputations are an ight mare. And everyone, rich or poor, has to pay something everyone, rich or poor in the pays the pays

I spent a night at the Metropolitan, New York's largest public hospital.

HARRIET HARMAN MP Labour's Shadow Health Minister reports from New York

"Welcome to the dregs of New York," said Annie, a young nurse.

I asked Julian why his wife was going to a commercial hospital rather than the Metropolitan to have their baby. "Let's face it," he said, "this is a public hospital."

In the public hospitals

If you're not insured you can't be sure of getting the treatment you need. But if you are insured you might well get treatment you DON'T need.

Condemned

The more doctors do to you, the more they collect from the insurance com-pany. Over-treatment is a major scandal.

Doctor Conn. in Massa-

there are fewer nurses, fewer doctors and less equipment.

Health care is the biggest business in America.

If you're not insured you can't be sure of set.

He roundly condemned over-treatment but admits it is commonplace.

An American woman is three times as likely to have her womb removed than her British counter-part.

Many Americans are beginning to campaign for a health services like ours. What an irony that Margaret Thatcher wants to bring the American system to Britain!

Harriet Harman 6th May, 1988

HARRIET HARMAN, M.P. Member of Parliament for Peckham



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REPORT

June 1988

1. Benefits

Following the benefits cuts that came into effect in April this year, I am getting a constant stream of enquiries, both through letters and at my surgeries, from people who are suddenly facing cuts in their already low standard of living on benefits. I am taking up each each with John Moore, the Secretary of State for Social Services, (as well as the local DHSS), asking why people should live on less when the rich are getting tax cuts. I will be meeting the Southwark Rights Umbrella Group (the local CAB's, Walworth Advice Centre, Cambridge House, etc., on 23rd June, 1988 to discuss the co-ordination of further campaigning.

2. Tuke School

Tuke is an extremely valuable special school in SE15. When I visited recently I was concerned to discover that they have no facilities for preparing food or cooking. Preprepared food is brought in at set times. This is a disadvantage in any school but it is appalling for a special school which looks after very small children who have special dietary needs and cannot be expected to eat a set meal at a set time. I have taken this up with ILEA. Tuke have the kitchen facilities - but no staffing. It makes it much more difficult for the staff if the children are miserable because they are hungry - but the worst thing is the unfairness to the children.

Castlemead Tenants

When I visited the Tenants Association recently they showed me a play area with lovely modern equipment for children under 5 years - but which is completely unuseable as it is not maintained and is full of nettles, broken glass and rusty cans. The tenants were understandably angry that brand new equipment which they had pressed for (and got from the women s committee) was wasted. I took the matter up with the Chief Executive and responsibility for maintaining the play area has now been decided upon. Previously it was no-one s responsibility. It has now been sorted out but it is an example of why tenants get infuriated when they act collectively, through the proper channels, to get improvements only to see their efforts frustrated by lack of maintainence.

4. The Mayor

We all owe a debt of gratitude to Dot Winters who has just finished her term of office as Mayor. I always see a lot of the Mayor as we tend to attend the same "functions". Dot performed her role with local community groups with grace and good humour and left a good impression for us where ever she went. Very best of luck to the new Mayor, Councillor Rita Sargent.

5. TGWU King s College Hospital

I attended a meeting of 200 ancillary workers, members of the TGWU, at King's College Hospital. As well as expressing my concern for the future of the health service in Southwark and ancillary workers in particular, I also urged them to affiliate to the local Labour Party. It is important for me to try and continue my efforts to broaden and strengthen the Party s trade union base. I hope we will also win affiliation from the TGWU branches based on the local bus garages.

6. Visits to the House of Commons

I have written to each ward asking if they would like a visit to the House of Commons. It has to be a weekday morning (to fit in with security and "sitting hours") which I know does not suit all Party members. Up to 16 people can come for a guided tour through the House of Commons including "The Chamber" and then meet me for a chat afterwards. If 16 members of your ward cannot come - you could always bring Party supporters from local pensioners, tenants groups, schools, etc.. I hope every ward will be able to take up the offer as people always find it interesting and enjoyable.

7. Health Services

- (i) <u>Maternity Services</u> I recently published a report that showed that despite <u>more</u> babies being born there are <u>fewer</u> maternity beds because of financial cuts. There are also fewer cots in Special Care Baby Units in the country as a whole. If any Party member wants a copy please let me know.
- (ii) <u>Cervical Cancer</u> In order to prevent Edwina Currie, the Health Minister, lulling women into a false sense of security, I conducted a survey of District Health Authorities screening programmes. This showed that many women will not be called for their first smear until 1992,



10 years after the Government's own cancer committee told them they must have computerised call & recall for all women between 25 and 60 years. If any Party member wants a copy please let me know.

(iii) Follow up on recent USA visit - In addition to my Sunday Mirror article (included in last month's report), I have now published articles in the Observer and The Times and submitted an article for the NUPE journal. I also talked about the drawbacks of the American profit orientated health care system, on "Woman s Hour" BBC Radio 4.

8. Hanging

It looks certain that there will be another attempt in the House of Commons to re-introduce the death penalty. I will be voting against it because (a) there is no evidence that hanging is a deterrent to murder, (b) our Courts are not perfect and if a mistake is discovered you can free a jailed prisoner - but the death penalty is irrevocable, and (c) it doesn t engender a respect for life to have a gruesome lather of interest which inevitably accompanies executions.

9. Meetings

Over the next few weeks I will be speaking at the South East Region TUC lobby of Parliament on Health; going to Southwark Childminders Association annual picnic; St. Giles Ward; National Labour Women's Conference (in Bridlington); Crampton School Prize Day; the Southwark Co-op Women's Guild and others too numerous to mention!

10. NHS Anniversary Festival - 3rd July

This is all day at Alexandra Palace. I hope that as many Peckham Party members as possible will come.

11. A group of children from Michael Faraday School are visiting me at the House of Commons this month. This has been arranged through Mel Taylor, Secretary of Faraday Ward, who is Chair of the School Governors. If any other Labour Governors at schools who haven't visited recently would like to contact me, I'd be happy to arrange a visit.

HARRIET HARMAN, M.P. Member of Parliament for Peckham



REPORT

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA Tel: 01- 219 3000 01- 219 5137 01- 219 4218

July 1988

1. Kensington By-Election - 14th July

Ann Holmes, was the candidate for Labour. I took part in the press conference to launch our by-election campaign and then went with Ann on visits to hospitals and nurseries in the constituency. Obviously it is disappointing not to have succeeded in winning the seat. But we came very near and are closing the gap in the national opinion polls once more between us and the Tories.

2. Labour's Defence Policy

It is probably an understatement to say that there has been a lot of confusion about our defence policy in the past few weeks. My own view remains firmly that we must have a non-nuclear defence policy. The most important arguments against nuclear weapons are:

- * no-one can win a nuclear war
- * a nuclear winter could destroy the planet
- * we cannot possibly ensure our own safety by possessing, and threatening to use, weapons of mass, indiscriminate destruction

I have written to Peckham CND re-stating this approach.

3. NUS/P&O Dispute - Dover

I went to the picket line in support of the sacked NUS members on 28th June. I broadcast my support for their case against P&O on BBC Radio Kent and the local commercial radio station. There is mounting evidence of too few crew and, therefore, the safety of passengers being threatened. I agreed with the Strike Committee that they should collect a dossier of this evidence and I will try and get it investigated by a parliamentary select committee.

4. Underground

I have been very involved in working with the Council to try and safeguard the possibility of an extension of the tube into South East London. The chances of a tube line are good, but only if it can go through the "Bricklayers Arms" site which Ideal Homes and Wimpey are poised to build luxury homes on. I have been urging Ideal Homes and Wimpey to wait until the tube route is decided and am shortly to meet the planning Minister, William Waldegrave, to urge him to delay the development until a firm decision is made.

5. Housing Action Trusts

The Government have announced that they plan to make North Peckham Estate and Gloucester Grove Estate into Housing Action Trusts. This will mean that they are compulsorily bought from the Council and become the property of a Housing Action Trust who will administer allocations, repairs, cleaning, street sweeping and all services on the estate, including fixing rents and collecting them. I have arranged to meet the Liddle Ward Councillors, Chair of Housing and the two Tenants Associations. We will have to consider our tactics very carefully to ensure that we oppose the removal of local democratic control but do not appear to oppose the investment which will no doubt follow. I spoke in the debate following the announcement of the HAT's and expressed my concern that existing tenants will not benefit from any increased investment but that rents will be forced up and existing tenants squeezed out in favour of those who can buy.

6. Benefit Cuts

I am planning to hold a surgery, in each ward, specially for people with benefit problems. The first one is St. Giles Ward on 15th July, 1988. And the surgery for Consort Ward is planned for later this month.

7. Peckham Labour Party

I have written to Larry Whitty, General Secretary of the Labour Party, urging him to re-constitute the Peckham Labour Party as quickly as possible. I have stressed that morale amongst party members has fallen as the months go by without any indication of when the Party will be re-constituted. I have circulated copies of the letter to all wards.

8. British Rail

I have taken up with British Rail the cuts in services from Queens Road.

9. Health

- (i) I am Chairing the national policy review group on health services.
- (ii) There is a shortage of blood causing operations at Kings to be cancelled. I am taking this up in Parliament.
- (iii) As Shadow Health Minister I have launched Labour's campaign to make the Government keep their promise to pay for a substantial increase for nurses. If they don't pay



either nurses will be disappointed and morale will collapse further - or services will have to be cut to meet the pay bill.

10. Labour's Economic Policy

It is often said in newspapers and on TV that it is our economic policy which is Labour's weak point. Currently the party is reviewing its economic policy with a view to preparing our programme for the next election. I have arranged for Bryan Gould MP (who has recently moved into Southwark), who chairs the Economic Policy Review Group, to come to a meeting at Walworth Town Hall on 14th December at 8.00 p.m. The meeting will be for Peckham Labour Party members only and will enable local party members to feed their ideas into the policy review process on this key issue.

HARRIET HARMAN MP 17th July, 1988

HARRIET HARMAN, M.P. Member of Parliament for Peckham



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REPORT

September 1988

1. BENEFITS

(i) "Benefits in Southwark" - 16th November, 8.00 p.m. - Walworth Town Hall

I have invited Tess Gill, National Officer of the Union for DSS, to come to a meeting, for Peckham Labour Party Members, to discuss campaigning at ward and constituency level on benefits in Southwark. As well as providing Peckham Party Members with factual information about changes in benefit offices locally, the meeting will be a chance to discuss with labour members of NUCPS (the DSS union) how we can work with them at a local level.

- (ii) The Government plan a pilot scheme and are using both Camberwell and Peckham Social Security Offices to test a system whereby only 15 officers are left in each office. All the rest of the work is done by "social security centres" outside London. In conjunction with the DSS unions locally I am opposing this scheme because
- there will be a worse service for local claimants resulting in even more people not getting the benefits to which they are entitled
- that this will lead to even more disruption and even violence in local offices
- * jobs will be lost in an area where we already have high unemployment

(iii) The Camberwell DSS office is failing to pay out the money allocated to it for social fund grants. (These replaced single payments under the April social security changes). By August the Camberwell office should have paid out £70,400 but instead have only paid out £15,775. I have complained to the Secretary of State, John Moore MP, and the local DSS Manager. I have met with the Southwark Rights Umbrella Group (all the advice agencies in Southwark) to discuss monitoring the situation.

2. GLOUCESTER GROVE & NORTH PECKHAM ESTATES

I have had a number of meetings with Liddle Ward Councillors, the Leader, the Chair of Housing and the two tenants associations, about the Government's plans to impose a Housing Action Trust on tenants on the North Peckham and Gloucester Grove. My view is that there should be two

central themes to our opposition to the imposition of HATs

- (i) that our main concern is the interests of the tenants
- (ii) that in promoting the interests of the tenants there will be co-ordinated action between myself as MP, the Council (Chair of Housing and Leader), the local councillors and the tenants associations
- (iii) that we should jointly determine our political strategy, always involving all those listed in (ii).

- 3. I continue to press the Labour Party at National and Regional level to act as quickly as they can to reconstitute the General Committee of Peckham Labour Party.
- 4. HEALTH
 (i) The Camberwell District Health Authority (which includes Kings College Hospital) is in a serious financial crisis. This will be made far worse if the Government does not give them enough money to meet the nurses pay increase.
 - (ii) I publicised the shortfall between what the Government planned to pay District Health Authorities for the nurses pay award and what Districts.would need. At the time the Secretary of State dismissed my figures as "mere guesstimates" but they have now been confirmed.
 - (iii) As part of the Labour Party's Policy Review, we held a seminar on how to improve the quality of care in the Health Service, such as how patients are treated at reception, improving the food and appointments systems, etc. The results of our review, which will go to the NEC in May, will show, not only that we need a dramatic investment of extra resources in the NHS, but that we also need policy and management changes to improve the service patients get.
- 5. EDUCATION
 (i) I am hoping to meet shortly with the new Chair of the Education Sub-Committee, John McTeirnan, and his team of officers, to get a full briefing on the plans for Southwark.

(ii) The Parliamentary Select Committee on Education is conducting an enquiry into the "supply of teachers for the 1990s". As I have had representations in the past few years from 6 schools within my constituency, about the shortage of teachers, I have decided to give evidence to the Committee about the desperation caused to parents and teachers by the existing shortage. I have contacted the Beads and Chairs of Governors of all the schools in my constituency to gather information and quotes about the impact of the existing shortage. Could any parents or Governors who have any comments please contact me before mid-October.

(iii)I am continuing the series of visits from schools in Peckham to the House of Commons. So far I have met groups from: Lyndhurst Primary, Michael Faraday Primary, Gloucester Grove Junior, Warwick Park, Saint Josephs, Camelot Primary.

· 6. VICKY'S SILVER WEDDING

Congratulations to Vicky Naish, the Chair of Peckham Labour Party on her Silver Wedding.

7. I will be attending Labour Party Conference and will be speaking at numerous fringe meetings.

HARRIET HARMAN 23rd Suptember 1988.

HARRIET HARMAN, M.P.

Member of Parliament for Peckham



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House of Commons, London. SW1A 0AA Tel: 01- 219 3000

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REPORT

November 1988

1. Struck down by pneumonia!

By the time this report reaches you I hope I will have recovered! I fell ill on 10th November and have been instructed by the Doctor to stay at home for 3 weeks. I was very disappointed not to have been able to lay the wreath on behalf of Peckham Labour Party on Remembrance Day at the Walworth Town Hall ceremony. I have done this every year since becoming MP - including when I was 9 months pregnant with Joe.

2. Benefits

- (i) Special benefit surgeries: So far I have, together with local councillors, held special surgeries for claimants in Newington, St. Giles and Consort Wards. I have fixed dates with Brunswick and Barset and hope to make arrangements soon with Friary, Faraday and Liddle.
- (ii) It is very disappointing not to be able to do anything to help many of the people who come to my surgeries wanting housing transfers on medical grounds. But I am taking up the suggestion of doing a take-up campaign on attendance allowance for such people. Even if I can't get them transferred at least I can help them get the benefits to which they are entitled.
- (iii) Benefits meeting, Walworth Town Hall, 16th November, 1988. I was not able to attend the meeting, but I understand it was a very constructive meeting. I will write to wards with a full report shortly.

3. Parliamentary Labour Party

The appointment to the front bench have just been announced. I will be keeping my Health responsibility. I was particularly pleased with the appointments of David Blunkett MP to the front bench to work on local authorities; and Joan Whalley MP who is to take on environmental issues.

4. Housing Bill

I spoke in the House of Commons in the final stage of the Housing Bill.

The Government have now agreed to allow tenants a vote before they are taken over by a Housing Action Trust. This gives a new importance to our campaigning work with tenants on the North Peckham and Gloucester Grove Estates - and to the Council initiatives to improve services to those tenants.

5. Schools

I have submitted evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education about the shortage of teachers in Peckham primary schools. Without enough teachers, attempts to improve education are frustrated. Even outer London boroughs such as Redbridge and Bromley are having difficulties. Southwark needs to find ways of attracting and retaining teachers.

6. Health Service

- (i) Camberwell District Health Authority, which covers Kings College Hospital, is cutting services to try and stay within its budget. The Government keep announcing on national TV that the Health Service is awash with money yet our own hospitals are dilapidated and short staffed.
- (ii) The nurses grading dispute threatens to get even more bitter. The Government intended the pay rise and clinical regrading to be a morale booster! But their penny pinching and mismanagement have turned it into a disaster.

One of the problems is that if a District Health Authority allow a nurse's appeal against grade, the money to pay for that has to be paid for by cuts elsewhere in that District's health services. So management don't want to allow appeals - however justified-if it means closing more wards. It's no good Kenneth Clarke, the Secretary of State for Health, saying that most nurses are happy with their pay rise. Even a minority being unfairly treated leads to a fall in morale of all.

- (iii) I will be meeting David Mellor MP, Health Minister, in December to discuss the effect of the nurses pay award on hospices. Hospices are not run by the health services, but are funded by charities. To increase their nurses pay by 15% will cripple them financially. I will be asking Mr. Mellor to give hospices grants to pay their nurses.
- (iv) I am preparing a report on women in the health service. The NHS is the biggest employer of women in Western Europe. Yet it fails to provide good maternity leave, parental leave, flexible hours, childcare, etc.. As a result there are constant staff shortages.
- (v) Private Health Care: I carried out a survey and published a report which showed that the private sector:
 - * cannot deal with accident or emergency cases
 - * cannot deal with out patients
 - * is more expensive to administer than the NHS
 - * is being taken over by big American companies
 - * is almost entirely base in London and the S. East.



The Government's commitment to private health care is based purely on ideological commitment to the free market - and not at all on evidence

7. North Peckham Task Force

I recently visited the Task Force. The Government claims that Task Forces are a great success at bringing initiative to the inner cities. But they are not able to produce hard evidence for their claims. I am doing some analysis of their 2 years work in North Peckham and will be tabling more parliamentary questions.

8. Vandalism by Brossettes!

Following a visit to the Ledbury Estate I asked Bros to pay for the damage their young fans had caused by graffiti in Peterchurch House, overlooking Bros' parents' house in Commercial Way. They have agreed to pay £500 - which might just cover the cost of cleaning up and painting over the graffiti!

21st November, 1988

Harriet Harman MP

HH/shf