

HARRIET HARMAN, M.P.

Member of Parliament for Peckham



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REPORT JANUARY 1993

1) State of the Economy

Even official figures show unemployment is reaching 3 million. Nearly one million young people are out of work, the waste of the skills of a whole generation. In some places in London over 500 people are chasing each vacancy.

And more jobs are at risk

- * The Engineering Employers Federation forecast 70,000 job losses in engineering.
- * 100,000 jobs are at risk in construction say the Building Employers.
- * The CBI say 150,000 alone are at risk in services and finance

With economic mismanagement leading to a collapse in public funds (fewer receipts into the Treasury and more paid out on unemployment benefit) The Tories panic response has been to cut public services and benefits. This fits in well with the hidden agenda of the Tory Right wing, which is to abolish the Welfare State.

Following leaks of the "public spending review" I called for Michael Portillo to make a statement in the House of Commons which he then did on Monday 8th February. He said they are starting with the Home Office, Education, Health and Social Security.

I argued that if this was a genuine review aiming to change benefits and services to match the changes that are taking place in society we would welcome it. But this is nothing of the sort. It is an attempt to withdraw the welfare state completely from whole areas of benefits and services simply to cut public spending. This will be to break election promises to spend more on health, to provide more nursery places, to uprate child benefit in line with inflation and to put more police officers on the beat.

Cuts in council spending and Government spending on roads and railways will simply throw more people out of work. And cutting training will undermine our long term economic competitiveness.

2) Budget for Jobs

The Budget for Jobs Campaign document has been published. It is designed to involve local parties in Labour's Campaign that the focus of the Budget should be jobs. It sets out the record

of Conservative mismanagement, listing statistics on taxes, growth and unemployment. It also maps out the alternative Labour economic strategy, and gives ideas for local CLP activity. Please let me know if you would like extra copies for your branch.

The national launch on January 19th is being followed by regional launches tailored to address the economic needs of each region. I launched the "Why London needs a Budget for Jobs" campaign on 9th February and I will be launching the "Why Yorkshire needs a budget for jobs" on March 8th.

On February 25th, Mo Mowlan and I will be announcing what we think the budget should do to encourage more provision of childcare.

3) T&G Bus Lobby

I attended a Transport and General Workers Union lobby by bus workers against the deregulation and privatisation of London's buses. Transport routes are suffering and staff cuts threatened as transport ceases to be a service and becomes run for private profit.

4) Electoral Register.

At the last GC I reported that Southwark had made a great effort to ensure that all those who are entitled to vote are actually on the register. Unfortunately, since then Southwark have knocked 2,500 people off! I am trying, with the help of Southwark Councillors, to get this sorted out.

5) Cuts in Legal Aid

Cuts in Legal Aid will mean that about 60,000 people in Lambeth Southwark and Lewisham will no longer be eligible for Legal Aid.

I attended a lobby to save Legal Aid entitlement. The Government are trying to make Legal Aid available only to those on income support, a move which would hit families of criminal defendants or those suffering industrial injury.

Unless you are on income support, you will have no way of going to court however great your need and however good your case. I'm particularly concerned about the effect on people who have been the victim of an accident or domestic violence.

I have written to the Lord Chancellor, raising the concerns of everyone who has contacted me over this matter. And I raised the issue in the South London Press.

6) Women's Rights

February saw the 75th anniversary of women winning the right to vote. To mark this great occasion I attended a wreath laying by Barbara Castle at the statue of Emily Pankhurst at Westminster.

I also attended the national launch of Emily's List, a new organisation devoted to rectifying the discrimination against women which has left us with less than 1 in 10 women MPs. It will provide financial assistance to help potential women candidates.

7) Jet Stationary

I have visited the site of major local employer Jet Stationary following an invitation from the GPMU. This company is an excellent example of a firm which is weathering the economic storm by keeping good relations between the Unions and the Management.

8) North Peckham Estate Management Board

I helped the North Peckham tenants in their efforts for a yes vote in the North Peckham housing ballot. The response was extremely positive on the doorstep.

9) Youth Service

The Youth Service has been subject to considerable financial disruption which has left both staff and consumers demoralised about the future. I attended a meeting of voluntary youth group representatives to discuss the problem and called on the Council, successfully, to delay the cuts until we had explored whether it was possible to get extra funds from Government. I have written to Tim Boswell MP, Undersecretary at the Department of Education to request a meeting so that we can press the case for Government support and intervention. At the moment, it seems likely that a meeting will take place.

10) Health

With the Government response to the Tomlinson Report still incomplete I have been meeting health representatives to monitor the state of health care in South East London. Changes in both GP and hospital services are proposed and I have met with the Family Health Services to discuss GP provision, and the Guy's Hospital Trust.

11) Childcare

I was reported in the Guardian as urging the replacement of universal child benefit with childcare allowances. I have not urged that and they carried a letter the next day putting the record straight.

What I have in fact said is that we need to recognise that enabling the mother to work is an important way of lifting children out of poverty. The review of Party policy options on child poverty therefore needs to take into account not just benefits but the creation of job opportunities, with flexible patterns of employment, childcare and training for women.

12) Visits by the Peckham Labour Party wards to the House of Commons.

I received a visit by Friary Ward to the Houses of Parliament. And shortly I will be receiving Brunswick Ward. I have written to Ward Secretaries to extend a further invitation to all the other Wards. I can take parties of up to 16 and the tour takes about an hour. Afterwards I can meet up for tea and a chat with ward members.

13) Gallery Tickets

Every three weeks I receive gallery tickets for the House of Commons. I have written to Ward Secretaries to see if there are any Party members who would like the opportunity to see Parliament at work. If anyone is interested, can they please contact my Assistant Bob Wilkinson on 071 219 5137. The next dates I have tickets for are Tuesday February 23rd, Wednesday March 10th and Thursday March 25th. You need to come at 2.30pm.

14) Ward Meetings.

I've attended meetings of Friary, Brunswick, Faraday and Newington ward Labour parties over the last month and I am intending to attend as many ward AGM's as possible.

15) Membership Recruitment.

My office are assisting wards with trying to recruit new members. They drop a letter to people from me asking them to join and then follow up with a visit a few days later. I will report further on the progress of this initiative.

Harriet Harman
10th February 1993



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

REPORT

MARCH 1993

1. THE BUDGET

The Conservatives reached a new low by cynically breaking their election pledges.

The Government were elected on a platform of no increases in the rate or scope of value added tax (VAT), no increase in National Insurance Contributions (NIC's), no cuts in mortgage tax relief (MIRAS) and a firm commitment to reduce the burden of taxation. The Budget saw all these promises broken in a single day.

The Chancellor has proposed that:

- * VAT be levied on domestic fuel bills, which were previously zero rated, at 8% in 1993/4 and by the full 17.5% in 1994/5.
- * National Insurance Contributions be increased by 1% to 10% and by 1% for the self-employed in 1994.
- * Mortgage tax relief to be cut from 25% to 20% in 1994
- * Taxes are to increase by £17.5bn (£6.5bn in 1994/5 and £10.5bn in 1995/6), the biggest tax rise announced in history.

All this means that a typical family will pay £8.50 more tax per week from 1994. Far from reducing the burden of taxation, under John Major's Government tax as a proportion of earnings is set to rise from 35.5% in 1993/4 to 36.25% in 1995/6.

Everyone will be hit but pensioners and people on low incomes will be most effected. The VAT proposals effect the poor most because they spend a higher proportion of their income on fuel. The poorest 10% spend 13.25% of their budget on fuel whereas the richest 10% spend only 3.46%.

Norman Lamont appeared to recognise this in his Budget Statement when he announced that compensation would be available for those worst hit by the measures. But it soon transpired, under pressure from Labour, that the Government were not going to fully compensate those on low incomes and benefits, not even pensioners, for the increases.

The Government have been claiming that the VAT increase on fuel and gas usage is a "green measure" designed to reduce consumption and lower CO2 emissions. This has been clearly shown not to be the case. Firstly, increasing the cost of fuel is unlikely to

reduce emissions significantly. Secondly, the VAT is also extended to the standing charge which does not vary with use. Thirdly, the proposals that the Labour Party have been pressing the Government to introduce would have had four times the impact of the Budget measures without the attendant social costs.

National Petition against VAT on domestic fuel.

Following the Budget, I took part in the launch of the National Petition Labour launched against VAT on gas and electricity. The aim of the campaign is to make Conservative Members of Parliament stand by their election promises and vote against the VAT increases at the Finance Bills second reading. y

I am very grateful to the members of the Southwark Pensioners Action Group and the Peckham Labour who came to be present at the launch to highlight the effect VAT will have on the fuel bills of pensioners. I enclose a copy of this petition with this Report. I hope people will be able to get them filled in and returned to me.

I have sent the petition to all the pensioners groups in Southwark and written to Southwark Friends of the Earth stressing that it is not an environmental measure.

I will be campaigning up until the Finance Bill so that we can persuade Tory MPs not to vote to break their election promises.

The Finance Bill will be published on 14th April and will have its second reading on about the 26th April and will go into committee on about the 18th May.

I will be leading the Labour team on the committee which will sit every week, will probably go through the night and will last till the middle of July. I will therefore not be able to do as much constituency work during this period but have made special arrangements in my office to ensure that I am represented at key events.

2. COMMUNITY CARE

Southwark Council take over responsibility for Community Care on April 1st. They do so against a background of rising need and inadequate resources.

I have pressed the Government about their failure to monitor the level of unmet need. And their decision to calculate the distribution of community care resources in a way that means Southwark will lose out to the extent of £1m.

I had a meeting with all the organisations involved in community care in Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark (council, housing associations and voluntary organisations) on March 19th and agreed to work with them to monitor the implementation of

Community care.

3. BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

The Boundaries Commission have notified me that they will be making their provisional recommendation on June 16th about whether we will keep 3 constituencies in Southwark or whether for the purposes of Parliamentary constituencies Southwark and Lambeth will be taken together and reduced from 6 seats (three in Southwark and three in Lambeth) to 5. If that happens Peckham will be threatened and we would lose a Labour seat. We will have one month from 16th June to encourage all the local community organisations to protest at the loss of the Peckham constituency.

It is important to avoid that happening. So the Council are trying to fill all the gaps on the electoral register to ensure that there are enough people on the electoral register to retain 6 seats in the two boroughs.

Anything that the wards can do, particularly in the next month would be very helpful. I have sent a computer print out of the gaps to each ward secretary.

4. MEMBERSHIP DRIVE.

The membership recruitment drive in the Peckham Labour Party is going well. My office has been working with wards. In the last month there were a number of membership canvass sessions.

5. VIC WATSON

I was delighted that Vic Watson, Minister at Walworth Methodist List received an M.B.E.. I have congratulated him on behalf of the Peckham Labour Party and will be attending the celebration service on 1st May.

6. I visited the North Peckham Task Force, a government agency to promote business in Peckham. I also visited Community Industry, a training organisation in Rye Lane

7. COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTION CAMPAIGN

As part of my contribution to the County Council election Campaign (the elections will be on 6th May, I will be launching a document which shows that Labour County Councils have a better record than Tories of attracting inward investment and helping their own businesses to grow through their economic development strategies. This contrasts with the Government who think that the economy is nothing to do with them and it can all be left to the market).

8. SOCIALS

I held two socials at the House of Commons in March. One for new members and one for women members. Both were very successful and I will repeat them next year. I think it would be a good idea to invite ward secretaries to the next new members social so they can make contact. Most of the new members had not been to a ward meeting.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

HARRIET HARMAN MP

REPORT

APRIL 1993

1. THE FINANCE BILL

The debate on the floor of the House commences this week for the start of the Committee stage of the Bill, during which I will lead the Labour team. The debate will be an opportunity to raise all the points regarding the imposition of VAT on Gas and Electricity Bills. The debate will centre on:

- The Tories broken promises
- The fact that VAT on Gas and Electricity will hit hardest at the poor and elderly
- Failure to compensate those on benefits
- That it is not a green issue
- That it is a panic response to the Government's economic failure

The Committee stage of the Finance Bill on the floor of the House will be followed by the Standing Committee Stage which will begin on Tuesday next week and will meet twice a week until the end of June.

2. NATIONAL PETITION AGAINST VAT ON DOMESTIC FUEL

As you are aware following the Budget, I took part in the launch of Labour's National Petition against VAT on gas and electricity. The Petition was extremely successful and was presented to the Prime Minister by both myself and Gordon Brown on the 5th May 1993. At the time of presentation we had collected around 20,000 signatures, and the petitions are still flooding in. We will press on with the VAT issue until the third reading of the Finance Bill in July.

3. MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The membership recruitment drive for the Peckham Labour Party is going very well. The Labour Party headquarters at Walworth Road have now given us authority to join the pilot scheme whereby new



members can join the party for a minimal cost of £1.00. I will be discussing this with the officers of Peckham C.L.P.

4. KINGLAKE AND AYLESBURY ESTATE

I attended a meeting with over 100 tenants from the above estates at Michael Faraday School to discuss the severe problems of drug users and dealers on the estates. I have urged Michael Jack MP, Minister for Home Affairs to come and visit the estates and see for himself the problems that exist. The meeting also agreed to set up a top level working party to demand more police on the estates, to call for a mobile police unit on the estate and also to call for design improvements to walkways and stairways, all in an effort to deter drug dealers.

5. BRANDON TENANTS AGM

I also attended the Brandon Tenant's Association AGM at which we discussed the growing problem of crime on the Estate.

6. NORTH PECKHAM TASK FORCE

As I reported last month I met the North Peckham task force to discuss the training initiatives for community groups in North Peckham. I have now heard from the Department of the Environment that approval has now been given for the North Peckham Task force to provide funding of up to £375,000 over 18 months towards a total £675,000 to assist Southwark College to establish the Southwark Human Resources Development Agency, an agency that will deliver a range of customised training and employment initiatives for task force residents. Other partners contributing include South Thames Training and Enterprise Council and the Private Sector.

6. COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTION CAMPAIGN

As part of my contribution to the County Council Election campaign I visited both Northampton and Gloucester, where I attended National Press Conferences.



The Elections were a resounding success which resulted in the Tories losing control of all but 1 of the former Shire Counties. Labour now has outright control or is the largest party in half of all the counties contested, 23 out of 47.

For the first time ever labour has more county councillors than any other party, 1,388 at the last count to the Tories 987 and Liberals 874.

7. NEWBURY BY-ELECTION

I also visited Newbury in the run up to the by-election. The election of the Lib/Dem candidate means that this now cuts the Tories slim majority in the Commons to 19.

8. WARWICK PARK SCHOOL

I attended the opening ceremony of the new technology centre at the Warwick Park School that was opened in May.

8. FAIRBRIDGE AND BRADFIELD BOYS CLUB

I visited Fairbridge which is based on the North Peckham Estate, they are a charitable organisation who operate in fourteen inner city areas throughout Britain. They aim through challenging outdoor activities, to develop motivation and self confidence in young people. Their future is now threatened due to the redundancy of Mr Brian Conney the youth worker at Bradfield Boys club, with whom they share their premises. I have made representations to the Director of Education on their behalf.

9. JACK HOBBS CLUB

I have also taken up with the Director of Education the redundancy of the youth worker at the Jack Hobbs Club, which is based on the Brandon Estate. Not only will this threaten vital youth activities - but it will mean the building which is also used by community groups will be closed and become a derelict eyesore.



10. SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHDAY

I attended a celebration of 'Shakespeare's birthday' held at Southwark Cathedral which was organised in conjunction with the Council, it was a very enjoyable and successful event.

11. GLOUCESTER GROVE ESTATE: - PROPOSED ESTATE MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Estate Management bid put forward by the tenants on Gloucester Grove Estate has my support and if successful will result in them taking over the management control of their properties.

12. BARSET WARD

I would like to give my congratulations to Barset Ward for arranging a very successful public meeting at which I spoke, and for the lively discussion that centred on Labour's Economic policy.

13. SOUTHWARK LAW PROJECT

I visited the Southwark Law project to discuss their need for new premises and the lack of legal advisers in Southwark and have now taken up this matter with the Lord Chancellors Department.

14. SOUTHWARK TRADE UNION SUPPORT UNIT

I attended a dinner to celebrate 10 years of the Trade Union Support Unit where I spoke on the subject of an individuals right to join a union and their right to union representation on their behalf.



15. BOUNDARY COMMISSION

I am very concerned that the Boundary Commission will, in June, propose that the 6 seats in Southwark and Lambeth are cut to 5 which will threaten Peckham. When the proposal is published we will have to make strong representation to overturn it.

10th May 1993
Harriet Harman MP



HARRIET HARMAN MP

REPORT

MAY 1993

1. BOUNDARIES COMMISSION REVIEW

The provisional recommendation of the Boundary Commission is to reduce the number of Parliamentary constituencies in Lambeth and Southwark from 6 parliamentary seats to 5. The way they propose to do that will cause the loss of 2 Labour seats

- * Norwood would disappear
- * Dulwich would become Tory (The safe Labour wards in Dulwich would be moved into Peckham and Newington Ward would be moved into Bermondsey)

It is essential that we oppose these proposals by

- * ensuring that individuals and organisations write to the Boundary Commission saying that the current boundaries are right and there are many people who are not on the register because of the poll tax.
- * Southwark Council ensuring a large number are added to the electoral register.

Representations to the Boundary Commission have to be made before July 17th. Please contact my office to be advised on the how and where to make your protest.

This will be a top priority for my work over the next 6 weeks.

2. NEW CHANCELLOR

Following the disaster for the Tories at Newbury and in the County Council elections, Major replaced Norman Lamont as Chancellor but said that the economic policies will remain the same. They now face electoral defeat again in Christchurch.

Despite the fact that VAT on gas and electricity was one of the reasons for the electoral unpopularity of the Tories, Clarke, the new Chancellor says he will stick by the budget. As well as further tax increases being threatened (in breach of Tory election promises) the threat to public services is growing. There are now rumours of cuts in housing benefit and invalidity benefit as well as cutting back on free prescriptions and imposing "hotel charges" for nights in hospital. Together with the Shadow Chancellor, Gordon Brown, I have been campaigning to expose and oppose these plans.





3. MAYOR'S END OF TERM CELEBRATION

I would like to pay tribute to the valuable work done by Mary Ellery during her term of office as Mayor of Southwark. She carried out her duties with great diligence and did a great deal of good for the Party and the Borough. I attended a most enjoyable celebration which was held at the North Peckham Civic at the beginning of May to mark the end of Mary Ellery's term as Mayor.

4. SOUTHWARK MUSLIM WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

I visited the Southwark Muslim Women's Association and discussed with them the problems that exist for the elderly Muslim community in Southwark. I have made representations to the Home office about the future of S II funding which is very important in Southwark and which supports many organisations including the SMWA..

5. KINGS COLLEGE HOSPITAL

I had a meeting with Derek Smith about future developments at Kings. He confirmed reports that there the waits in Accident and Emergency were still too long. He also told me that Kings was having to pay the costs of treatment of seriously ill patients from outside London who need treatment that only Kings can provide but whose health authorities refuse to pay for them. I warned that this would happen under the new market system of health care. It puts Kings in a hopeless position. Either it turns these patients away as there is no money for them and risks that they will die, or it accepts them and local people have to wait longer on waiting lists for non-urgent treatment. I am getting further figures on this and will take it up with the Health Secretary of State.

6. ST GEORGE'S TENANTS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

I attended their AGM. Despite some improvements, there are still many complaints that the Housing Department do not deal, as they should, promptly and fairly with complaints about repairs, failure in heating systems, problems with entry phones etc.

7. LABOUR PARTY POLICY FORUM

I attended the first meeting of Labour's new policy forum. It was a very useful two days of debate and will add to the existing policy roles of the NEC and Conference.





8. NEC

Over the last few years I have received a number of unsolicited nominations for the NEC. I have never accepted nomination, but now that I am on the Shadow Cabinet and now that there is an extra women's place on the NEC Constituency section to be filled this year I feel that I should accept nomination. Obviously it would be very important to me if Peckham Labour Party were to feel able to nominate me..

9. T&GWU Dinner

I attended a dinner with the Regional Committee of the TGWU to discuss closer working together with the TGWU Region 1 and TGWU sponsored MP's.

The TGWU is reviewing the sponsorship of all its MP's. I attended the Emergency and General Purposes Committee and am glad to report that they have agreed to propose that I continue to be sponsored. I am grateful to the officers of the Peckham Labour Party, Mick Larkin and Kevin Williamson (both TGWU members) for their support in this.

10. HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY

I welcome the fact that the Housing Committee of Southwark Councils is considering changing the allocation of flats to include some priority for people who want to be rehoused near their family. I think it is essential that Southwark does all it can to keep the sense of community and keeping families near each other is important in this. I have written to the Chair of Housing Mike Gibson, saying I support the "sons and daughters" policy but that I suggest that the council monitor the way the policy works to ensure that it does not discriminate in favour of white families and against black families.

11. GLOUCESTER GROVE ESTATE

I wrote to Sir George Young at the Department of the Environment urging him to consider the problems with security on the Estate especially in relation to Micheldean and Lesborough Courts and their high proportion of elderly residents. There is a possibility that the schedule or regeneration work that was planned for later will be brought forward.

12. LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE.

I go the L.A.S to apologise for an incident last October when one of my constituents waited nearly 1 hour for an ambulance to arrive after having been involved in a road accident. They blamed the delay on problems with their new computer system but admitted that the service





"fell far short " of what was expected.

13. SOUTH LONDON CHARITIES

As a result of the Budget, charities are set to loose out by a net £14 million in 1995/6 as the extension of VAT takes full effect and the transitional relief on the reduction in tax credits on share dividends begins to be phased out. Charities such as Age Concern Southwark, that do so much good work are set to loose thousands of pounds simply because the Government has made a mess of the economy and are now desperate to claw money back from any source. I, along with the rest of Labour's team on the Finance Bill Committee am continuing to oppose these moves to extend VAT .

14. THREAT TO SUB-POST OFFICES

I have opposed the Department of Social Security's underhand attempt to force pensioners to use banks and building societies rather than sub post offices for the payment of pensions. Under pressure in the House of Commons debate forced by Labour, Ministers did concede that the right to take up the pension through the post office would be remain.

15. COMMUNITY PHARMACIES

I have opposed the threat to local pharmacies and have joined Labour's campaign to get the Government to withdraw its controversial plans to pay a professional allowance only to those pharmacies dispensing more that 2,000 prescriptions a month. I do not want to see any patient lose their local community pharmacy which plays a vital role within the NHS, or the closure of any small pharmacies that serve the community so well ,and I will continue to oppose this ill-thought out measure along with the Shadow Health team.

16. TRAVELCARDS

After overwhelming protest from Peckham constituents about the threat to the London Travelcard I have joined Glenda Jackson's campaign and petitioned Steve Norris the Transport Minister over the abolition of the Travelcard

18. "THE CENTURY GAP"

My book was published on June 10th. It has had good reviews and I hope will benefit the Labour Party at a time when the Tories have clearly lost the initiative on issues of concern to women.





19. LOVE WALK

I was informed by the Manager and Development Officer that the Fire Brigade experienced severe problems gaining access to Love Walk due to vehicles being parked on both sides of the road. This is of course extremely dangerous especially considering that the residents there are physically disabled. After taking up the matter with the Transport Traffic and Road Safety Unit at the Council I am pleased to report that plans of the proposed waiting restrictions include double yellow lines on the corners of Descrespigny and Love Walk

Harriet Harman
8th June 1993



HARRIET HARMAN MP

REPORT

JUNE 1993

1. THE FINANCE BILL : VAT CAMPAIGN

This last month I have led Labour's Finance Bill team during the Committee Stage, the Report Stage and the Third Reading of the Bill. Along with the rest of the Labour's Treasury team I have continued to campaign hard against the imposition of VAT on Gas and Electricity. The vote, at the Report Stage on VAT on Gas and Electricity resulted in a Government majority of only 8. If all the Liberals and the SDLP had voted, the Government would have been defeated.

The petitions against VAT that I have been collecting from all over the country were presented to the Chancellor at 11 Downing Street on Tuesday 13th July. There were at least 70,000 signatures and there are still more coming in. Thank you to everyone who signed the petition. We are still continuing with the petition because there will be renewed anger when the first bills arrive next year when VAT comes into effect.

2. PUBLIC SERVICES

This Autumn will see a major battle over the future of Public Services as the Tories use the mounting public debt as an excuse to dismantle the Welfare State. I am involved in planning Labour's campaign which will take place over the summer and autumn

*to make the case for public services

*to highlight the fact that while pensioners and people who need health care are threatened, the Tories let those who donate to the Tory Party carry on ripping off the country and paying no taxes.

3. IVAN FERGUS

Ivan Fergus was cleared by the Appeal Court this month. Ivan is a 16 year old Peckham boy who at the age of 13 became the victim of a serious miscarriage of justice. He was convicted and sentenced to 15 months youth custody for assault. After repeated claims of his innocence, Ivan Fergus has now been cleared by three Appeal Court Judges. The Court of Appeal, on clearing him, said that his solicitors were negligent and the Crown Prosecution Service should never have taken the case to court in the first place. From the outset I





campaigned with his mother and made repeated representations to the Lord Chancellor's Department to bring forward the hearing of the Appeal. I have now called on the Lord Chancellor's Department to investigate the handling of the case by the Crown Prosecution Service and I have asked the Home Secretary to compensate Ivan for the time he spent in custody.

4. PENSIONERS LOBBY

On June 29th I met with more than 70 pensioners from Southwark who had joined pensioners from all over the country to protest against the cuts in their living standards and the imposition of VAT on gas and electricity. The rally was very successful and the pensioners made a definite impact. It was good to see so many people from Southwark.

5. KINGLAKE AND AYLESBURY ESTATES

Following the meeting on the estate to discuss the increasing menace of drug users and dealers that I attended with over 100 tenants, I invited the Home Officer Minister, David Mclean to visit the estates to see the problems first hand. Unfortunately the Minister declined my invitation. However he has agreed to a meeting between myself, the Home Office, the Metropolitan Police and representatives from the estates. Although I regret that David Mclean feels unable to come down to the estates I welcome the chance of a meeting where we can press the points and report back to the other residents.

6. NATIONAL CHILDCARE PROGRAMME

The Government is blaming single mothers for the rise in the Social Security bill. I have called upon the Government to provide a national childcare programme and job opportunities. This would enable lone mothers to work and not depend on benefits. Figures that I published show that in Southwark there are 7,937 lone parents, 13,716 children in one parent families under 18 years of age, but only 3.7% of under 5's have day care provision supplied by social services.

7. BELLS GARDEN FAYRE

On the 26th June I opened the Fayre. It was an enjoyable and well organised event arranged by three Tenants Associations in Peckham; Oliver Goldsmith - Lindly - Bells Garden, Bells Community Centre and Southwark Council.

8. PECKHAM AGE TO AGE

I attended the reopening of the day centre at St. George's Church in Peckham.





9. DIAL a RIDE AND TAXICARD LOBBY

On Tuesday 13th July I met with constituents from Southwark who attended the lobby to press for the need for better transport in London for disabled and less abled people, and also for adequate funding for Dial-a-Ride and Taxicard

10. SOUTHWARK COMMUNITY CARE FORUM

Tessa Jowell and I met representatives of the Forum to discuss ways in which community care could be most effectively implemented in Southwark, and to discuss the most effective way that the Southwark MP's could work to together with the Forum at a time when government funding for community care is becoming grossly inadequate.

11. NEC

I am very grateful to Peckham Labour Party for supporting my nomination for the NEC Constituency Section.

12. BOUNDARY COMMISSION

Together with the other Lambeth and Southwark Labour MP's I have been working with the Council to inform people locally of the Boundary Commissions threat to reduce the number of MP's in Lambeth and Southwark. The initial representations have been submitted to the Boundary Commission and we will now be preparing the detailed case which will go before a Tribunal in early 1994.

13. PARLIAMENTARY NEWSLETTER

All members of Peckham Labour Party will now be receiving a regular newsletter from me. This is partly to provide a welcome and contact with the many new members who are joining Peckham Labour Party.

14. CHRISTCHURCH BY-ELECTION

On Friday 16th July I will be visiting Christchurch to raise the issue of VAT on Gas and Electricity.

Haniet Harman
14 July 1993





HARRIET HARMAN MP

REPORT

OCTOBER 1993

National Executive Committee

I am most grateful to the Peckham Labour Party for nominating me for the NEC. I was elected at the Labour Party Conference in October (in second place after David Blunkett in first place). The others elected to the constituency section were Robin Cook, John Prescott, Gordon Brown, Tony Blair and Neil Kinnock. Tony Benn was not elected again to the NEC, the first time in 34 years he has not been on the NEC. With characteristic generosity he said that though he regretted no longer being on, he was pleased to see me gain a place. I will be serving on the Women's Committee and the Campaigns and Elections Committee.

The Economy

Despite all the Government's attempts to sound optimistic it is clear that the economy remains very sluggish and that recovery, if indeed that is what we have got, is fragile. Last week Government figures showed that inflation was rising and that factory output was falling. The Government Ministers tried to explain this away as just a blip, but I released secret Treasury papers which showed that the Government fear that manufacturing might once again be on a downward trend and that inflation, far from being conquered was simply being held down by the depressed state of the economy.

As part of Labour's Treasury Team I am now deeply involved in our preparation for the November 30th Budget and Public Spending statement. We will be focusing on:

- * the continued high level of unemployment
- * the continued decline of our manufacturing base
- * unfair taxes, such as VAT on gas and electricity
- * our alternative, fairer ways of raising revenue

We are confident that we can get some more Tory MPs to rebel on VAT on gas and electricity. It is now clear that if it is imposed, as planned, in April 1994, EC agreements entered into by the Government will prevent it going back down again to zero rated. This makes it even more important to stop it before it comes into effect.

Labour will once again be protesting at the Government's pay freeze on public sector pay. The effects of the pay freeze, competitive tendering and VAT on gas and electricity, taken together mean that many public sector workers are seeing their standard of living plunge. I attended the Trades Council meeting on Public Services on 19th October.



School Meals Service

I have taken up the question of the Southwark School meals service with the Chair and Director of Education. The points I am making are:

- * School meals are important for all children, but they are particularly important for those who do not have a proper breakfast or supper at home.
- * School meals and sitting and eating together are an important part of children learning. Some children rarely get the chance to do that at home with their parents.
- * We must not go on the slippery slope towards abolition of the school meals service, as some education authorities have done.
- * Many of the women in the school meals service have worked for Southwark for years (and before that for ILEA). It is unfair for long-standing employees to see their pay and conditions cut.

Cleanaway

Cleanaway are proposing to put a storage depot for chemical toxic waste on a site next to the Elmlington Estate near Burgess Park. I am totally opposed to this plan and have made representations to Southwark Council, who will be considering the planning application and to the London Waste Regulatory Authority. Local Labour Councillors, Ian Driver and Vicky Naish have provided brilliant leadership of the local campaign against Cleanaway together with John Friary, Chair of Brunswick Ward Labour Party.

Sheltered Housing Units.

Once again I have received many representations from residents and relatives of residents in Sheltered Housing Units. They are very worried that proposals to reduce the warden service are again under consideration. I have made representations to the Council:

- * It is important that the residents and their relatives are consulted about and happy with any plans.
- * Residents feel that they will be "Sitting ducks" for burglaries when the wardens are off duty.



Boundary Commission

The inquiry into the objections to the Boundary Commissions proposals to reduce parliamentary representation in Lambeth and Southwark from 6 to 5 is being held in the Town Hall at 10.30 am on Tuesday 7th December. Tessa Jowell, Dulwich MP and I are working closely with the London Region of the Labour Party and with Walworth Road about the presentation of our case.

Surgeries

As usual my surgeries remain packed and I continue to receive many requests for help from letters and phone calls. Over the last 2 months I have had 88 new cases which included:

Immigration	32 cases
Housing	24 cases
Social Services	18 cases
Others	14 cases

Membership Drive

A number of wards are continuing the good work on membership. I estimate that in the last couple of months we will have signed up nearly 80 new members. This will be a great boost to our support in the council and European elections next year. I am now liaising with all the affiliated unions to get them to mail out their members who live in Peckham asking them to join the Party for an extra £3 on top of their political levy. It is important that following the divisions over the question of one member one vote for the selection of MP trade unionists feel confident that the Labour Party wants more involvement from Trade Unionists, not less.

Single Parents.

The Tory Party conference staged a disgraceful attempt to pass off the blame for the Tories' failure on the economy and social policy onto single parents. I have made numerous statements and given interviews accusing the Tories of hypocrisy (many of them have had marriage breakdowns) and emphasising that with childcare and job opportunities single mothers would be able to go out to work and therefore would be paying taxes instead of claiming Income Support. We plan to launch a campaign to urge the Chancellor to announce a National Childcare Programme in the November Budget.



New Leader of Southwark Council

Many congratulations to Jeremy Fraser on his election to the Leader of the Council. Jeremy is one of the Councillors for Newington ward and was my agent at the last General Election. I look forward to working with him and wish him the best in his important work. I'd like to record my sincere thanks to Sally Keeble who stood down as Leader. She did an excellent job as Leader and despite very difficult times with Government cuts and CCT we have seen services steadily improve.

Local Meetings

*** Kingsdale School**

Tessa Jowell and I attended a special day of activities at Kingsdale school to boost morale of pupils and teachers as they face the very difficult publicity that will come as a result of the trial of a pupil following the stabbing in the school in January this year.

*** Pensioners**

I attended the Southwark Pensioners Annual Meeting and talked about VAT campaigning.

*** Police**

I attended the Camberwell Police Working Party.

*** EC Funds for Southwark**

I led a deputation of Southwark and Lambeth MP's, Councillors and officers to the Environment Minister asking that extra EC funds come into Southwark. The DTI and DOE has now submitted the case for the borough of Southwark (together with 18 other UK boroughs) to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in Brussels. It is hoped that the ERDF will give Southwark 'Objective 2 - Industrial Areas in Decline' status and consequently additional funding. The outcome of this submission will be known in mid to late November.

Harriet Harman
21 October 1993



HARRIET HARMAN MP

REPORT

NOVEMBER 1993

1) Boundary Commission

The public enquiry will take place in Southwark Town Hall, Peckham Road, from 10.30 am to 4.30 pm from 7 to 10 December 1993. Any member of the public is allowed to attend any part of the enquiry. The 3 Southwark MPs are being represented by Anthony Lester QC and Southwark Council is being represented by Michael Beloff QC. David Gardner who works at Walworth Road is representing the Labour Party. Tessa Jowell and I have worked closely with the Lambeth MPs and the London Region of the Labour Party and our case is as follows:

- * Southwark has enough electors on the register to justify 3 seats. The electors of Southwark should not be prejudiced because Lambeth's register was low.
- * Lambeth's register was artificially low at the time the Boundary Commission looked at it because people were not registering in order to avoid liability for poll tax.
- * It would break up a long established pattern of representation for the Parliamentary Boundary to cross Lambeth and Southwark and put Lambeth residents in with a Southwark MP

It will help greatly if people who are concerned about this come along to the enquiry as it would demonstrate to the enquiry that there is a lot of concern locally.

2) Oliver Goldsmiths School

Once again I have intervened on the amalgamation of Oliver Goldsmiths Infant and Junior School. The Education Department of the Council held a consultation. The overwhelming majority of the teachers and parents in the infants do not want an amalgamation and yet the Council is determined to press ahead. I believe that it is pointless to hold a consultation and then override the views of those consulted. I am still making representations to the Education Department.

3) Cleanaway

I am delighted to report that Cleanaway's application to Southwark Council for planning permission to build a storage depot for dangerous chemicals in the middle of the Elmington Estate has been turned down. The local school, Brunswick Park and the local residents are relieved that this threat has been averted. The campaign was a model of the local councillors, Ian Driver and Vicky Naish working together with myself, community groups, the parents and teachers in the local school and the local Labour Party (particularly Brunswick Secretary) John Friary. I have urged Cleanaway not to appeal against the decision because of the hostility to the plan locally.

4) Ordination of Women

On Friday 29 October the House of Commons voted on the ordination of women priests. There was a free vote and I voted for the ordination of women.

5) Community Care

I have been dealing for many years with the case of an 81 year old woman who has a grandson with severe mental illness. His mother has given up on him and he is now threatening his grandmother, assaulting her and stealing her money. She loves him and does not want to see him back in prison where he will not get help and treatment. She has long involvement with the NHS, the police and the social services but the situation still is not resolved. I have taken the case up with the Secretary of State for Health arguing that this is a classic case of the gap in the community care provision and asking her to say how the matter is to be sorted out.

6) Local Meetings

- * I attended the launch of the council and the Police's joint initiative to combat street robbery.
- * I attended the launch of Toucan Employment's current services and future development plans. Toucan Employment provides specialist employment services for individuals with learning difficulties.
- * I opened a wonderful new playground for the nursery in Brunswick Park School.
- * I chaired a session at Southwark College's conference on 'Business Advice, Investment and Success'.
- * I attended an award presentation evening at the Black Contractors Association.
- * I went to the Remembrance Day service at Walworth Town Hall and laid a wreath on behalf of Peckham Labour Party.
- * I spoke at the Southwark Trades Council meeting on the cuts in public services on 19 October
- * I visited the Renal Unit at Dulwich Hospital which is threatened with closure.

7) The Economy

I am heavily involved in planning our response to the Budget.

- * We are highlighting our determination to make the Government back down on VAT on gas and electricity.

- * We are drawing attention to the fact that as a result of measures introduced in the March Budget there will be direct tax increases as well as the indirect tax increases of VAT. The freezing of personal allowances, the reduction of the married couples allowance and the increase of 1% in National Insurance contributions means that the average family will be paying £357 more in tax taken from their pay packet. This will hit particularly hard at public sector workers who are suffering a pay freeze.
- * We will be drawing attention to the failure of the Government's investment measures. The Government's public private finance investment initiative has failed. The Channel Tunnel rail link has been delayed again. The reasons this partnership approach has failed is not because it is not a good idea, but that the Tories want to privatise involvement in national infrastructure projects rather than play a role as partners.
- * We will be exposing the fact that the money for investment by councils from the sale of council housing and other assets has fallen far short of the Government's estimate at the time of the budget of £1.75 bn.
- * Before the Budget and public spending statement we aim to highlight the collapse of the construction industry and urge the Government not to cut capital spending for Councils or Housing Associations. In 1978 (the last full year of a Labour Government) there were 87,000 new council homes built and 21,000 new housing association homes, a total of 108,000. Last year that had dropped to 2,600 council homes and 33,000 housing association homes, a total of 35,600. The figures for private new homes being built has also fallen as has the figure for the amount being spent on home renovation. What this shows is that our housing stock is being starved of investment. If the Government cut the grant to the housing corporation (it is rumoured that they will cut it by £300m) this will mean :
 - 9,000 fewer homes built
 - Tens of thousands more jobs lost in construction
 - Housing Associations will end up putting their rents up again which will mean a higher bill for Housing Benefit.

8) **Front Bench Responsibility**

The last Shadow Cabinet elections resulted in losing my place on the Shadow Cabinet. However, John Smith has re-appointed me to my post as Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury and I am delighted to be carrying on my work in the Treasury team. I would like to thank all the Party members for their messages of support. Messages of sympathy for my loss of Shadow Cabinet place overlapped with messages of congratulations for keeping my job as Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

Harriet Harman
18 November 1993



HARRIET HARMAN MP

GC REPORT

DECEMBER 1993

THE BUDGET

The Budget cuts public spending, puts a freeze on public sector pay and puts up taxes. It is proof of how the Tories have mismanaged the economy, but the budget measures which will hit investment and consumer spending will make things worse.

Over the coming months we will continue to campaign about the stubbornly high levels of unemployment; the low growth in the economy, the failure to scrap VAT on gas and electricity and the unfair tax increases particularly the 1% increase in National Insurance Contributions.

I have prepared a detailed briefing on the budget. Please let my office know if you would like me to send you a copy.

- * I will also be highlighting our opposition to the new tax on insurance premiums. The cost of insurance is much higher in Peckham than it is in outer London areas. It costs £300 to insure £15,000 of contents in Peckham and only £90 to insure the same amount in Enfield. The 3% tax on insurance premiums will therefore hit much harder in high crime areas.
- * Gordon Brown, Shadow Chancellor and I launched a campaign just before the Budget calling for more nurseries. Conservative Ministers complain about single parents being dependent on benefits. But instead of complaining about them the Government should ensure that there are nurseries and job opportunities so that they can get out to work to support themselves and their family.
- * I have published a document setting out our case against the public sector pay freeze. It will hit particularly hard in Peckham where there is a very high level of people working in public services, both in transport, health and council services. They are already being hit by privatisation and contracting out and the pay freeze will make these low paid workers even worse off.

BOUNDARY COMMISSION

The Boundary Commission enquiry has been completed and we now await the decision which will be some time in the first quarter of next year. A very good case was put forward for retaining 6 constituencies in Southwark and Lambeth and not reducing to 5. The Council did an excellent job, as did the Labour Party National Office and the London Region of the Labour Party.



SOUTHWARK BOROUGH ORGANISER

The new Labour Party organiser for Southwark has been appointed. He is Derek Gadd and I'm sure he will be a great help to all three parties. Next year is very important because of the council and European elections.

SECTION 11 FUNDING

Section 11 funding goes too many important educational projects and schools in the Borough as a contribution to work with people from ethnic minorities. I have been working with the council to protest that the government plans to cut it. Sadly our protests have been ignored and all funding will be cut in Southwark from April 1994 by £600,000. Obviously it is impossible for the Council to make up this shortfall in all the projects so it is a blow to our local services.

SOME LOCAL MEETINGS

- * Thanks to Joan Amodio for once again inviting me to be a guest at the Christmas celebrations for pensioners at the Hour Glass Public House. It was an excellent evening, about 100 pensioners from the area round the Aylesbury estate received free drinks and presents.
- * Congratulations to Rod Robertson who received a TUC award for 21 years service to Southwark Trades Council. I attended the celebration event.
- * I attended a meeting of the Wilson Road Residents Association. I am helping them with their campaigning to be able to "reclaim" Lucas Gardens. Lucas Gardens, the small park opposite the Town Hall is being used by drunks to drink and sleep in. Community care is clearly failing if people with alcohol problems have to spend their days in the park, local residents feel reluctant to take their children into the park because of the broken bottles and beer cans lying about, and urination. We are urging the council to take action both to investigate the care needs of the alcoholics and ensure that the park is a valuable asset for local people.
- * I welcomed Tony Blair on his visit to Peckham where he launched the 'safe routes' initiatives. This is a very good project worked out jointly by the police the council and local tenants associations. A route for entry onto the estate is identified as being the safest and an orange line is painted on it. Special security lighting and video cameras are put on the route so that people know where they will be safest. This is the first time this sort of project has been tried and I am hopeful that it will succeed in making people feel safer walking to and from their front doors on estates.



- * As usual, on Christmas day, my family and I will visit Dulwich Baths to bring Christmas greetings to the elderly who have their Christmas dinner there. This is organised every year by the People Care Association. Many members of the Peckham Labour Party play an important role in this, particularly Ron Slater of Faraday Ward.

Finally, I'd like to wish all members of the Peckham Labour Party best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

TWO MANAGERS ARE SUSPENDED

Two managers at a council-run old people's home have been suspended, leaked documents reveal.

Southwark Council acted on a report from staff at Corbet Residential Home for the Elderly, in Wyndham Road, Berwells, wrote a damning 18-page letter to town bosses alleging alarming trends at the home.

The findings of Southwark's inquiry into the home have been held back until disciplinary action, if any, is taken against the two managers.

A confidential interim report Corbet was due to be discussed by councillors on Tuesday night, but was usually postponed after a stormy debate on another Southwark care home, in Ship Lane.

The report, leaked to the London Press, states that the home's Residential Care Unit (RCU) and the Service Manager (senior manager) are currently suspended from duty pending disciplinary proceedings which will take place over the next two months.

Disciplinary action is also to be taken in relation to other staff.

It gives no further details

Action over old people's home



of the workers' protest.

The fact that for written to Dr. him by flouted.

They times his residence once.



● From left to right: Acting Jeremy Fraser, Cllr. Cl. Ma.

JUST SLAM OUT VILLAINS

With offensive aimed at stamping out on a depressed inner city estate nunched on Tuesday.

Home Secretary Tony Blair cut a tape to main's first community route, on the Cam-late, Peckham Road, Peckham, funded by

personal alarms for victims of domestic violence and CCTV for Elephant and Castle and parts of Peckham.

Home Office surveys show that most people are

A CHILDREN'S charity is calling for a review of child abuse cases following a spate of cases in which violent parents walked free.

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children has studied 10 trials, including that of south London couple Roy Aston and Christine Mason, who were jailed in 1988 for killing their 16-month-old daughter Doreen, then later freed on a legal technicality.

The Appeal Court ruling in 1991 said that there was not enough evidence to indicate which one of them had inflicted the injuries, so the manslaughter charge against both were quashed.

The NSPCC also found that violent parents were escaping conviction because of their right to remain silent and refuse to answer

by JEAN SEAGER

The charity last week launched a Justice for Children Campaign during which it tabled a series of recommendations to be put to the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice to close the loopholes.

It wants clearer charging guidelines, monitoring of cases which are dropped before reaching court, reference to previous offences allowed in court, separate trials where possible and a review of the right to silence law.

Unpunished

The society also wants a speeding up of child abuse cases and more use of video links to remove the need for children to appear in court.

NSPCC director Christopher Brown said, "If there is a clear example of justice not being done, and unless we review the way in which joint pleadings are being

unpunished and more surviving children put at risk."

But Peckham Labour MP Harriet Harman who spoke out against the freeing of Aston and Mason said the NSPCC's proposals are wrong — and she wants a new offence to get around the pitfalls of joint pleadings.

She said, "The NSPCC has correctly identified a problem and drawn attention to something which I have been concerned about for many years."

"But they are wrong to tamper with the law of right to silence because this would remove the need for the prosecution to prove its case."

"I also think it is dangerous to bring up previous offences. If a child is horribly injured then the evidence is there for the jury to see."

She is suggesting a new charge of neglect or failure to protect a child from injury, which would be proved by a child's injuries



● Labour MP Harriet Harman



AN MP has stepped into the row surrounding the merger of an infants' and junior schools.

Peckham MP Harriet Harman has written to Southwark Education Director Gordon Mott about the proposed amalgamation of Oliver Goldsmith's School in Peckham Road, Peckham.

She said there are 'grave doubts' among parents and teachers in the infants' school over the plans, which were suggested by Southwark following the death last year of the infants' school headteacher.

Ms. Harman said, "Despite the overwhelming opposition to these plans, the education department is insisting on pushing ahead."

"The complete disregard given to parents' views shows the so-called consultation exercises, which have been taken place, have no credibility whatsoever."

She is pushing Mr. Mott to consult further with parents and publish the results. Southwark said the final decision would

by JEAN SEAGER

rest with the governors who submitted their proposals in January. The merger is planned for next April.

Parents have launched a campaign to fight the amalgamation, claiming the link up will make the school too big and impersonal.

They want over 600 children lower standard.

Campaign of said, "The plan of parents and parental choice."

The governing body, "After all over a year, at views expressed support staff, amalgamation."

"The governing body, achieving the

THE POOR FACE TAX DOUBLE WHAMMY

ANNUAL REPORT

1993

LOOKING AHEAD: 1994 ELECTION YEAR

1994 will be a very important year for Peckham. We will have the Southwark Council Elections. It is vital that we keep Southwark Labour and keep the Liberals out.

We will also have the European Elections. While we can be confident that Richard Balfe will be re-elected - it is important that we get him as many votes as possible, as national attention will focus not just on the number of seats held by each Party nationally but the number of votes polled for each Party.

CONSTITUENCY CASEWORK

In 1993, as in previous years, my constituency activity has involved a substantial amount of casework. Constituents ask for my help with their problems through coming to my surgeries, writing to me or phoning my office.

Most of the complaints are issues which concern the council - principally housing. But the type of complaint about housing has changed. There are now fewer complaints about constituents not getting answers when they phone the Housing Office, or not getting replies to letters. There are fewer complaints about repair work and refuse on estates. This does not mean these issues have been solved - but it does indicate some welcome improvement.

I still have many requests to help from people who want a transfer to a larger flat or a house with a garden - reflecting the continuing and enormous problem of housing need which the council is unable to meet.

Whilst complaints about housing services have fallen I have had a big increase in the number of immigration cases and social security problems.

This year I am keeping a record of the number of cases and what they are about, for more detailed comparisons.

SOME CONSTITUENCY CONCERNS

Together with local organisations, Labour councillors and Peckham Labour Party, I have been involved in a number of local campaigns.

- * The Accident and Emergency Department at Kings College Hospital remains deplorable. Many patients have to wait up to 20 hours on a trolley before admission to a ward.

I have made representations to the Secretary of State for Health, met the Chief Executive at Kings, tabled questions in Parliament, spoken in the House of Commons and referred individual cases to the NHS ombudsman.

The closure of Guys - as well as threatening the future of important specialised services - means the loss of 500 hospital beds in South London and is bound to make the situation at Kings worse.

- * Many signatures were obtained in Peckham on our anti VAT on fuel petition. I presented them to the Chancellor in No 11 Downing Street. There are many pensioners who live on their own in Peckham and for them the VAT compensation which will cover only half of their tax bill will hit particularly hard.

The irony is that on some estates in Peckham the tenants will be exempt from VAT on their gas and electricity, because they are part of community heating schemes, while everyone else will have to pay the VAT.

- * I have strongly supported a number of issues related to race which include:
 - Protesting against the government cuts in Section 11 Funding (which goes to the Council for schools and projects which have a high level of people from former Commonwealth countries).
 - Protesting against the deportations of the passengers on the scheduled flight from Jamaica on 22 December 1993.
 - Voting against restrictions on immigration issues.

PECKHAM LABOUR PARTY

This year Peckham Labour Party joined the Labour Party pilot membership scheme. We are able to offer membership at £3 for Trade Unionists who pay the political levy and £3.50 for everyone else. The result has been a good influx of new members with 144 joining us in the last year.

Particular effort was put into St Giles ward where they were able to recruit an extra 58 members bringing their membership to 118. I hope that we can build on those encouraging initial results.

I have asked trade unions to mail Labour membership invitations to their members in Peckham. And we need to ensure that as few as possible of our members lapse by failing to pay their subscriptions.

We have a great deal of support among the voters of Peckham. We can turn that support into a bigger and active membership.

THE ECONOMY

As part of Labour's Economic team I have been involved in our campaign on tax. Our strategy on tax is:

- * **TRUST** - The Tories broke their promise to cut taxes and will never be trusted on tax again
- * **UNFAIRNESS** - The tax increases hit hardest at those who can least afford it
- * **ECONOMIC FAILURE** - The tax increases are not to pay for better schools, hospitals or public transport. Instead they are to pay the bills of Tory economic mismanagement, high unemployment and low growth
- * **LABOUR'S APPROACH** - fair tax and full employment will mean people will be better off with Labour.

Labour's Treasury Team has been arguing that Britain has been suffering long-term economic decline. Tory economic policies have resulted in collapse of our manufacturing base and lack of investment in industry and training.

To rebuild our economy will need to address the lack of investment and re-building our shrinking industrial base. This must be done both by public investment, public and private in partnership and incentives to private investment.

ELECTION CAMPAIGNING

Over the last 12 months I have campaigned for Labour in the May County Council elections, the Newbury and Christchurch by-elections. I expect to take part at national as well as local level in the campaigns for both the Council elections on 5th May and European elections on 9th June. And the forthcoming by-elections in Eastleigh, Barking, Dagenham and Rotherham.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

I was elected to the National Executive Committee at Labour Party Conference for the first time in October 1993. I have had a particular role on the Joint Policy Committee which scrutinises all policy documents and the election campaign strategies.

SHADOW CABINET

I lost my seat on the Shadow Cabinet in October 1993 but retained my post as Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury. I will stand for the Shadow Cabinet again this year.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

I owe a great debt of gratitude to all the Party members over the past year who have helped in my surgeries - particularly Di & Charlie Robinson, David Barrass and Ros Tabor.

I would also like to thank those who have served as officers of the Party over the last year and those who have served as ward officers. The Party locally depends on them and we owe them a big thank you.

I would like to record my thanks to the TGWU of which I am a member of their sponsored MPs panel. As a result of that sponsorship Peckham Labour Party receives £600 per year.

I would finally like to record my thanks to NALGO (now part of UNISON) for giving me a grant in order to employ a researcher to assist me with my Treasury team work.

Harriet Harman
February 1994

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS

I would like to invite all new members to a social occasion on 24 MARCH from 7 - 8.30 pm, in the Astor Suite of 1 Parliament Street, Westminster.

I have also taken the opportunity of inviting Officers from each Ward so that you will get to know them better and also the Officers of Peckham Labour Party.

I look forward to seeing you.

* * * * *