



The new anti-tenant 'Unfair' Rents Bill will rob tenants to reward money lenders.

That's the message of a report published recently which shows that about 80% of rents collected from tenants are eaten up by interest charges.

The accounts of the Municipal Treasurers' and Accountants say that interest rates on loans rose by 32% in the two years 1967-8 and 1969-70.

The Unfair Rents Bill will double, or treble, rents within three years, so giving a greater slice to the finance houses.

Already about £2 of the weekly rent paid by tenants goes, not to the Corporation, but to moneylenders.

And this figure will almost certainly go up even though the reason for every rent increase is the high rates of interest which already exist.

Recently Liverpool's Conservative controlled Housing Committee put off a decision to raise rents by at least 50p from next October. They are hoping to leave this unpopular task to the Labour party, which will almost certainly gain power in May.

The Conservatives are aware that there will be an angry reaction from tenants when these new sky-high rents are imposed.

## How 'fair' rents will rob tenants

— and reward money lenders

BY FRANCIS EASTMANN

For recently the Government's secret official estimates of the new unfair rents were leaked. These show that rents will rise higher than the worst forecasts.

In London, for example, the present rent of £3.10 plus rates is expected to rise to £7.45 plus rates in five years' time.

### HEAVY FINES

So, the Government have already thought of two ways of crushing the opposition. Firstly, under the new Bill, tenants will be liable to a £50 fine if they refuse to let the Rent Assessment Officer (just one of the new array of bureaucrats to be created) into their house or flat.

Secondly, the Government are not repealing immediately, as they promised in the White Paper, the ancient Small Tenements Act of 1838, which gives councils the power to evict tenants for any reason.

This gives them two powerful weapons in the event of organised opposition, such as rent strikes.

One aspect of the new Act will hit Liverpool council tenants living outside the city boundary — such as those in Kirkby and Halewood — especially hard.

These overspill tenants will contribute about twice as much to Liverpool's housing revenue account, giving it a large surplus.

This surplus will then be handed over to the Treasury, who will hand back 50% as a support for the general rate fund.

But all these tenants outside the city won't benefit. They will help keep down Liverpool's rates, — not those in their own areas.

# The man who (almost) saved the Empress

MacDonald Steward, leader of the city council, returned recently from an expensive trip to North America to find more jobs for Merseyside.

In a "boudoir" press conference held in a cabin on board the doomed Empress of Canada soon after she docked in the Mersey, Macdonald Steward and Bill Sefton, Liverpool's Labour leader, who also went to America, answered questions about the trip.

Mac was in an exuberant mood. He hinted to pressmen that in travelling by sea he had probably saved the Empress of Canada.

"I wanted to show the flag on this vessel," said the deluded Alderman. "And there's no doubt

that the captain and crew were delighted that the leader of Liverpool council was on their boat."

But Mac was a little peeved by one episode. When he boarded the ship at Montreal, he discovered that a cabin clerk — doubtless eager to save Liverpool's ratepayers some money — had booked him in tourist class.

"But we soon changed that," laughed Mac.

The leader also spoke of an interesting sidelight of the American tour. The party apparently visited Chicago where they met Mayor "Shoot-to-Kill" Daley, one of the most notorious city bosses in the world.

Daley was the man who ordered the bloody smash-up of the 1968 Democratic Convention.

But he was evidently suave enough to impress his "country cousin" from Liverpool, "Mr Daley struck us as a kind, gently spoken man. Didn't he, William?" said Mac, turning to Bill Sefton.

And sadly Bill Sefton did not disagree.

## How Mr Lee got his degree

On November 5 Mr Lee Kuan Yew, Prime Minister of Singapore, received an honorary degree in law from Liverpool University.

Nobody seems to know why Mr Lee should have been honoured by a British University, for he is a nasty little man. He has imprisoned without trial editors of a Singapore newspaper which dared to criticise him, and while he was in the country he entertained a meeting of the Institute of Directors by mocking trade union figures for work absences due to sickness.

So why did he receive a degree from Liverpool? One reason might just be that he is an old college chum of the university's Vice Chancellor, Trevor Thomas. They studied together at Cambridge. It's a small world.

## A LONG SELLING RECORD

The Echo's latest gimmick, a boring record called "Echoes of Merseyside" is not selling as fast as they had hoped and the Corporation have been called in to help flog it through their information office.

In spite of daily publicity for several weeks in the 'news' columns of the Echo, it seems that public demand for this 'limited' edition of the LP is even more limited than the supply.

# Kirkby jobless make their stand

The dole queues in Kirkby have grown longer and longer as unemployment in the town has spiralled from 1,600 to 4,000 in the two years November 1969-71.

Many men and women have faced for the first time the long

## One owner 20,000 drivers

Between September and August every year thousands of hire cars 'disappear' in autumn sales;

When a buyer studies the log book he may think he is buying a fleet car, a demonstration car or even a one-owner car.

Hertz use two or three names, a holding company and those of individuals.

Godfrey Davis cars are in the names of two directors.

Avis have their cars registered under another name for 'administrative' reasons.

delays and red tape, and, sometimes, unsympathetic response of the assistants at the Department of Social Security, when they go to claim their rightful benefits.

But any person who feels he faces a wall of indifference at the Social Security can contact the Claimants Union which has been set up in Kirkby.

The Claimants Union was set up by a few members of the Kirkby Work for All Committee, which has just gained permission to open a workshop.

During the summer the union has had some successes, notably in getting the wage stop updated for some claimants.

Members of the Claimants Union include Pat Mitchell (Chairman) of 42 Mintor Road, Northwood, Frances Mensah (Secretary) of 33 Sydney Powell Avenue, West Vale, Margaret Tillston, of 26a Westhead Wall, Northwood, and Eddie McLeod, who has been giving out up to 3,000 leaflets a day.

## Little Red Schoolbook

Extracts from the Little Red Schoolbook's chapter on sex were to have been included on this page but the printer objected and they had to be cut out. This article is now being printed separately and given to our distributors to insert in the Free Press as a loose sheet. If there isn't one in your copy and you would like one please write to us enclosing a stamped addressed envelope or call at 24 Wapping, Liverpool 1.

LATEST TOWN to join the list of those pampering the unemployed is Birkenhead who plan a social centre for the out-of-work.

While I appreciate there are many genuine cases of jobless through no fault of their own, these sort of facilities are more likely to attract the growing numbers too damned idle to work and who sponge off the rest of us.

Liverpool Daily Post,

November 20, 1971

Friends of the Earth need room for office meeting place in or around Liverpool centre Ring Southport 4084

## CHEQUE-MATE!

Latest attempt by the Midland Bank to put on a trendy image and please Women's Lib:—

A recruiting advert (allegedly written by a girl employee) says: "I'm going to make a great career as a housewife — but not for a good few years yet. I'm thoroughly enjoying my job at the Midland Bank. It pays me well, TREATS ME AS AN EQUAL, has some useful extras.... I may even decide to have two careers. I'd make a good bank manager."

And her chances of becoming a manager? The Midland have 2,700 branches — and just eight female managers.

WHEN I STOPPED THE DEFENDANT IN LEEDS HIGH STREET, HE FAILED TO OFFER THE CUSTOMARY £5 BRIBE.....



to his wheel

LIVERPOOL FREE PRESS SUBSCRIPTION RATES

6 issues...40p

12 issues...80p inc. postage