

MR. INGHAM

cc Mr. Norgrove
Mr. Flesher
Mr. Sherbourne
Mr. Willetts

NHS - DAILY MIRROR

Thank you for your minute of 2 July about the Daily Mirror's campaign concerning the allegedly heart rending effects of NHS cuts.

I am sure that your suggestion for a series of Questions tabled by one MP is good, especially if you can get a rival newspaper to take this up. But I am a bit doubtful whether HMG should refer this matter to the Press Council. Why?

First, the principle of using the Press Council in this way seems to me a bit dubious. We certainly wouldn't want the Opposition referring Government statements to the Press Council.

Second, just suppose the Mirror managed to convince the Press Council, which is after all only composed of fallible men and women, that there was some truth in at least one of their 12 stories. The Mirror would make a great story of this. Remember too that the Mirror have a source of advice on tap which is well acquainted with DHSS press matters.

So all in all, I would keep the Press Council out of this. An extra possibility, which might get some publicity in other newspapers besides the Sun (or the paper chosen for the killer job) would be for Government backbenchers to table an Early Day Motion drawing attention to the Mirror's campaign of misinformation. You might then get that picked up in e.g. the Express and the Telegraph.

I think it worth tabling a note on these matters for next Wednesday's meeting on NHS presentation so that the Ministers present can take a specific decision on how to react to this defamatory campaign.

(N.L. WICKS)

3 July 1986

2. Mr Ingham. ^{6cc V.W}
N.L.W.

Wright rang X
on Wednesday.

MR WICKS

4 July 1986

- cc Mr Ingham
- Mr Norgrove
- Mr Flesher
- Mr Sherbourne

N.L.W.
4.7

NHS - DAILY MIRROR

X

It is a very good idea to take on the 'Mirror' over their NHS campaign. I share your reluctance for HMG to refer the whole issue to the Press Council, but I wonder if the same arguments apply to individual aggrieved health authorities. The District Manager at Bloomsbury, for example, told me that he wanted to refer a wild Mirror story to the Press Council, but I think that the DHSS dissuaded him. The risk is, of course, that the stories which aren't referred get extra legitimacy. But that risk might be worth running.

David Willetts
DAVID WILLETTS

Prime Minister

The manuscript marks are your own. They date from a discussion of flaws in the management structure in June 1984!

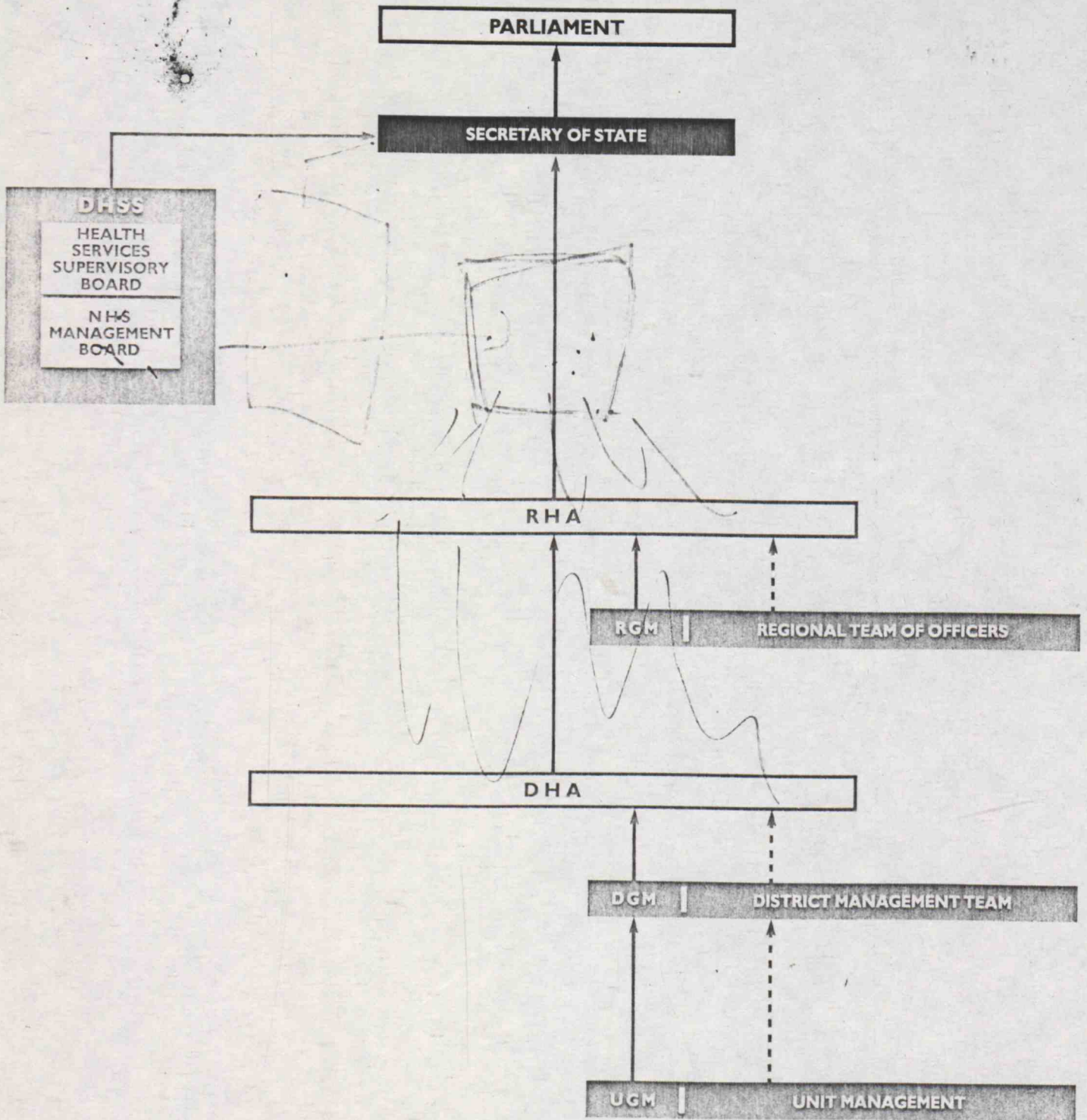
David Willetts

3/7/86

Health Authority Management – The Future

This is a simplified representation of the key future management relationships in Health Authorities and DHSS, how they link to each other, to the Secretary of State for Social Services and to Parliament.

These management developments will all take place within the existing accountability arrangements and statutory framework.



cc: Mr Norgrove)
Mr Flesher)
Mr Sherbourne } Without cuttings

bc willetts

MR WICKS

NHS - DAILY MIRROR

Opposite is a set of 25-30 recent examples, going back only to March, of the Daily Mirror's campaign about the allegedly heart rending effect of NHS cuts.

The DHSS has been trying to do something about it. But since the Mirror does not respond to their prompting, the Government should now use other methods to expose the Mirror as a fraud (since we know some of the stories at least have no foundation in fact).

What I have in mind is a long series of questions tabled by one MP which asks this kind of "formula" question:

"Will the Secretary of State for Health and Social Security establish the facts in the case of reported to be the victim of NHS cuts in the Daily Mirror of....., and make a statement?"

All these questions should be tabled on the same day, and should be answered together 24 hours later.

If we are to have the necessary effect the answer to each question should follow the same formula:

"The Daily Mirror story of..... has no foundation in fact."

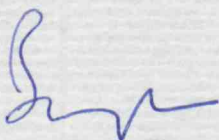
We should so frame the questions to enable exactly the same "killing" answer to be given in each case.

In the 24 hours elapsing between Questions and Answers we should set up the Sun to do a killer job on "The Lying Mirror".

And the MP who tabled the original questions should immediately follow up the original questions with this:

"Will the Secretary of State for Health and Social Security refer the following examples of Daily Mirror stories about NHS cuts which have no basis in fact to the Press Council?"

I think the answer should be: "I have done so today."



BERNARD INGHAM

2 July 1986

HOSPITAL MAKES PATIENTS SLEEP IN THE CORRIDOR

By JILL PALMER

PATIENTS are being forced to sleep in a corridor in one of Britain's top hospitals.

Wards are so overcrowded at London's Maudsley Hospital that staff have squeezed extra beds in a passage next to toilets.

But because of Government health cuts there is no money to improve conditions. Instead many of the hospital's vital units may have to close.

Yesterday leading consultants at the Maudsley—Britain's top psychiatric hospital—slammed the conditions as "Dickensian and diabolical."

Senior Professor Gerald Russell said: "Patients are suffering by living in cramped and uncomfortable conditions which are

EXCLUSIVE

hampering their treatment.

"But the Government doesn't seem to care. All we are told is to cut back."

The Maudsley, in Camberwell, South London, treats more than 8,500 new patients every year and trains most of the nation's psychiatrists.

But because of health

Cash cuts blamed for 'months of suffering'

cuts it is forced to save £400,000 and may have to close its alcoholic inpatient unit, drug dependency clinic, and mentally handicapped children's ward.

Attack

The hospital also houses the country's largest anorexia unit—but Professor Russell pays for a dietician out of his private research funds because the health service can't afford one.

He said: "This erosion

in funding is a devastating attack on the core of British psychiatry and on the future care of a vulnerable sector of the community.

"The Government insists mental health is a priority area and services should be improved.

"But in reality we are having to decide where to cut back.

"We've become the Cinderella of the Health Service. Patients are spending months in these diabolical conditions and

DAILY
Mirror

Sick father must wait 14 months for vital op

HAVE A HEART!

**'I'll probably
be dead by
that time'**

By JILL PALMER

AN invalid who has had five heart attacks in the last year must wait 14 months for life-saving surgery.

Yesterday, desperate father of two Sid Cockburn appealed for the chance of a healthy life and said:

"I'll probably be dead by the time my turn comes round. My doctor has told me my next attack could be

EXCLUSIVE

my last. It's costing the health service a lot of money to treat my attacks in hospital. It would be cheaper to give me the operation."

Mr Cockburn, 53, of Benwell, near Newcastle, needs a triple heart by-pass. He was sent to Newcastle's

Freeman Hospital where all heart surgery in the North East is carried out.

But the hospital only has funds to carry out 600 by-pass operations a year

Surgeon Arthur Hedley Brown said: "There are a possible 6,000 people every year in the North East who need by-pass operations.

"If everyone suitable for surgery came to the hospital there would be a 14-year waiting list.

FAX.

F.A.O. Ms M SMITH

1508 ET.

25 JUN 1986

DAILY Mirror

DI's ward closed

A 28-BED orthopaedic ward, which Princess Diana opened at Lincoln County Hospital less than a year ago, has been closed because of cash cuts.

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Ms Smith.

I would be most grateful for advice on the above (in particular its truthfulness!).

M FISHER

DEPT OF HEALTH

25/6/86.

DON'T BLAME US, SAY DESPERATE DOCTORS

Angry medics take out ad over cash cuts

DOCTORS who have been ordered to save cash by treating fewer patients have taken out a newspaper advert attacking the cuts.

The advert, paid for by the 40 consultants, says: "We apologise for increasing delays in clinic appointments and hospital

By JILL PALMER

admissions." The doctors add that these are due to cuts imposed by the local health authority against their advice.

Only a week ago former Prime Minister Edward Heath attacked the Government over the crisis at the hospital — Queen Mary's at Sidcup, Kent. Wards and an oper-

ating theatre are being closed, the numbers of operations reduced by 20 per cent and outpatients' clinics cut.

The hospital hopes to save £750,000.

Surgeon Jeremy Wilson said: "We have been told we are working too hard and that costs money. We have now been instructed

to work less. Patients will suffer just to save money. Waiting lists will get longer and longer and fewer people will be treated.

Proud

"We took out this advert because we wanted to let our patients know how we feel."

Tony Hare, general manager of Bexley Health District, said: "We are very proud of our record at Mary's in terms of patient care, but we had to rationalise services to keep within our budget limits.

"We must live within our means.

3/16

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27 JUN 1986

SLOW DOWN, DOCS!

SURGEONS are being warned to slow down because their work rate is costing their bosses too much money.

They have performed so many extra operations in the past year that they have helped to create a cash crisis for Newcastle upon Tyne's health authority.

Sixty extra heart pacemaker operations have added £83,000 to costs.

Eye lens replacements have more than doubled — adding £34,000 to the bill.

Increases in wages, overheads and the cost of drugs and surgical hardware have forced hospital chiefs even further into a serious financial crisis.

Now they are scrutinis-

Speedy surgeons' ops are costing too much

By CLIVE CRICKMER

ing all clinical services to see where cutbacks can be made.

All departments will be told to keep operations within the bounds of their budgets.

But pacemaker inserts, eye surgery and hip replacements are likely to

be hit first — and hardest.

The city's health administrative head, Bernard Canning, said yesterday: "The hard fact is that surgical activity has increased in some areas to an extent that we can no longer afford.

"It means that surgeons may have to be told to

hold back on the number of operations they perform."

Borrowing

The regional health authority, alarmed by the surgeon's "overproductivity," has allowed the city's hospitals to borrow

¹⁵
£400,000 from next year's allowance to help them out.

But the loan is regarded only as a stop-gap measure by the harrassed medical bosses, who have already ordered a children's hospital and wards in other city hospitals to be closed to cut costs.

They are also considering charging other health authorities for the many patients from outside Newcastle who benefit from its specialist facilities.

2/8

S11

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Brave Jane, 14, helps out after cuts halt new 'cure'

CANCER GIRL RAISES £1,500 FOR HOSPITAL

A BRAVE young cancer patient has raised £1,500 so that a hard-up hospital can afford to treat other children like her.

Two school friends helped Jane Anderson collect the cash for the children's cancer unit at London's St Bartholomew's Hospital.

The hospital has developed a new treatment which gives hope to many young cancer patients. But because of



By JILL PALMER

Health Service cash cuts the treatment can't be given.

Now doctors have launched their own fund—helped with cash from people like

14-year-old Jane. Jane had a leg removed and was a patient at Bart's for seven months after doctors diagnosed bone cancer.

Now she is back at New Hall school near Chelmsford, Essex.

"I'm not going to let my illness ruin my life," she said.

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3/22

**DAILY
Mirror**

**TRAGEDY
THAT
WON'T
GO AWAY**

P.F. 9

● I AM still reverberating from the terrific blast I got from St Johns Mental Hospital, Lincoln, after my article last March on suicides there.

On all sides I was told there was absolutely no connection between the suicides and the new policy of emptying the hospital of patients, and 'returning' them 'to the community.'

I thought you might like to be kept up to date.

Last month, Irene Longmore, a patient at St Johns, set fire to the curtains.

She is on the list for the next batch of patients to be 'returned to the community.'

Hanged

On June 9, Janet Denford set her nightdress on fire. She has serious injuries.

Hospital administrator Nick Pennell said: "Suicide as a motive can most definitely be ruled out."

Last week Graham Procter hanged himself in his home soon after being discharged from St Johns. At his inquest, Lincoln coroner John Phillips said: "Mr Procter took his own life after being reluctant to leave the hospital."

DAILY MIRROR, Thursday, June 19, 1986

CRUMBS! BISCUIT FIRM TO RESCUE¹⁶

SICK children can have their chocolate biscuits treat after all—thanks to the Daily Mirror and a food firm.

Bosses at United Biscuits learned from yesterday's Mirror that youngsters at London's Maudsley Hospital were being rationed to plain biscuits to save money. They immediately pledged a

gift of McVitie's Chocolate Homewheat. "We couldn't see these children go without their chocolate biscuits so we are sending them two caskloads," said a company spokesman.

The catering cutbacks

EXCLUSIVE

By JILL PALMER

HOSPITAL AXES KIDS' CHOC BISCUITS

SHOCKER: The Mirror story that brought action.

at the Maudsley, Britain's leading psychiatric hospital, mean less jam in sandwiches and only half the amount of tomato sauce with meals.

The cost-cutting has been condemned by the hospital's junior doctors



ATTACK: Mr Dobson

and by Labour Shadow Health Minister Frank Dobson.

Yesterday staff welcomed the biscuit firm's offer of help.

Dr Simon Wessely said: "This is very generous. Food economies may seem a small item, but cuts like these reduce morale."

The Maudsley could be £400,000 in the red this year and is threatened with a series of cuts.

Mr Dobson reckoned the economies on children's food would save only about £10 a week.

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3/8

HOSPITAL AXES KIDS' CHOC BISCUITS

By JILL PALMER

SICK children have lost their chocolate biscuits treat because of a hospital cost-cutting order.

From now on it's plain biscuits only for the kids at London's Maudsley Hospital. Less jam is being put in their sandwiches. And the amount of tomato sauce at mealtimes is being cut by half.

Maudsley is a top teaching hospital housing Britain's leading psychiatric unit.

The cost-cutting brought an angry reaction.

A junior doctor said: "The staff on the children's ward were told to ration food. Jam and tomato sauce have been cut by half. The nurses were told simply to spread the jam more thinly.

"They are all too frightened to talk about it in case their jobs are put at risk."

Shock

Labour's Shadow Health Minister Frank Dobson said: "I couldn't believe it when I was told that the hospital was cutting back on children's food.

"How much can it save? Not more than £10 a week at most."

Junior doctors' leader Louis Appleby called the catering cuts "the last straw".

Hospital spokesman Miss Vivien Newing said savings WERE being sought. But she insisted: "Nothing has so far been agreed on jam, biscuits, or any other food."

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2/4

18 JUN 1986

Surgeons ready—but there aren't enough nurses

BROKE HOSPITAL AXES HEART KIDS' OPS



HEADY BOY Michael Picture DOREEN SPOONER

SICK CHILDREN due to have life-saving heart surgery at a top hospital have had their vital operations cancelled because it has run out of cash.

All young patients—even emergency cases—are being turned away.

The tragic decision has been taken at world-famous Guy's Hospital in London because it cannot afford enough nurses to care for them.

One of the victims is two-year-old Michael Williams, who has a hole in his heart.

He had "patch-up" surgery at four months old, and the full operation which would give him a normal life was due two weeks ago.

But the night before, his mother Maria got a sudden call at home in Ilford, Essex, saying the operation was off.

She said yesterday: "The doctors can't give me any idea when it will be done. Meanwhile, I have to watch

my son deteriorate. It is very frightening."

Michael is just one of eight children who have had their urgent operations scrapped.

They include a one-year-old with two holes in his heart, a four-year-old with abnormal heart valves and an 18-month-old with severe heart obstructions.

The tragedy is that the operations CAN be done, but there are only enough nurses to man two of the hospital's four children's post-operative intensive care beds—and those two are already filled.

The other two have never been used because of cash problems.

Guy's surgeon Mr Alan Yates said: "Operating theatres are lying empty and surgeons and anaesthetists are sitting around doing nothing. It is disgraceful."

EXCLUSIVE

3/16
||
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13 JUN 1986

DAILY Mirror

PATIENTS DIE AS OPS ARE SLASHED

Exclusive 6

By JILL PALMER

HEART patients are being turned away to die by a hospital because of Government cash cuts.

Consultants at St. Thomas's in London have been ordered by the health authority to slash heart operations by 25 per cent to only 300 a year.

Special investigations vital in diagnosing heart problems have been restricted to 750 a year—a reduction of 200.

It means desperately ill patients are being forced to wait more than a year for surgery—and some die before they get to the operating theatre.

Top heart specialist Dr. Michael Webb-Peploe said yesterday: "Some of my patients have had heart attacks and died waiting for surgery.

"We are having to cancel admissions every day.

Disgrace

"These restrictions are purely to save money. It is disgraceful."

The situation will get even worse in August when all routine admissions will be cancelled, up to nine wards closed and all non-emergency operations halted for a month, with 1,000 patients turned away.

The Government hopes this will save £120,000.

Dr. Webb-Peploe said: "We are in the business of saving lives, not money."

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9 JUN 1986

DAILY
Mirror

MUM DIES WAITING FOR HER HEART OP

EXCLUSIVE by ROD CHAYTOR 4

A WOMAN heart patient has died because her family couldn't afford the price of a life saving operation.

The family say they were told private surgery would cost £20,000. They couldn't raise the money—so Ruby Guest went on a Health Service

waiting list.

Six months later she had another attack and was rushed to a Birmingham hospital.

Doctors there spent 24 hours phoning other hospitals in a desperate effort to get her an operation. But 66-year-old Ruby died as an ambulance arrived.

Tragedy

Her husband John, 72, of Barnet Road, Erdington, said: "The doctor was ringing round and round but he could not get a bed. He was very angry.

"There was nothing I could do to save my wife."

The family are now asking their MP to take up the case.

Health Authority chairman James Ackers said: "Waiting lists do lead to difficulties in some cases. I will not use the word tragedies."

Ruby's daughter Janet said: "How dare he say anything so heartless.

"My mother's death is a tragedy to us and the National Health Service couldn't save her life."

9
217

-7 JUN 1986

**DAILY
Mirror**

'HAVE MY BED' SAYS OP WIFE

UNION boss's wife Catherine Guy gave up her hospital bed to a woman who had been left in agony for five hours in a hospital corridor.

Despite being told to stay in Cardiff University Hospital for another week following a hysterectomy, Mrs Guy, 49, said: "She obviously needed the bed more than I did so I told staff I was going home."

Mrs Guy's husband Doug, is the engineering union's district secretary.

She had already been moved five times in five days because of a ward closure at the hospital.

This had resulted in a bed crisis.

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DAILY
Mirror 9

DOCTOR BEGS FOR £9,500 TO SAVE A BABY'S LIFE

A DESPERATE doctor made a dramatic plea last night for £9,500 to save a young baby's life.

Without special drugs the 11-month-old girl will die within days.

But because of Government cuts the hospital which is treating her can't afford to buy them.

The baby, from Leeds, was admitted to London's Westminster Children's Hospital ten days ago.

It has the world's only specialist unit for treatment and research into the B12 vitamin deficiency from which she is suffering.

Dr Ray Bhatt said: "The child has suddenly

A BABY'S LIFE

EXCLUSIVE

By JILL PALMER

become very sick, she is in real trouble.

"We need special chemicals and enzymes so that we can do diagnostic tests and treat her immediately. We must have them in three or four days. Without them the child will die.

"But they are not the

sort of thing the NHS can consider buying."

Labour's shadow health spokesman Frank Dobson said: "I am speechless. A doctor shouldn't have to appeal for money like this."

★ **IF YOU** would like to make a donation please send it to Dr Bhatt at the Westminster Children's Hospital, Vincent Square, London, SW1.

NURSES MAKE CURTAINS FOR HARD-UP HOSPITAL

And doctors fork
out for kids' ward

By JILL PALMER

DOCTORS and nurses at a hard-up hospital have clubbed together to brighten up a dingy children's ward.

THE NURSES spent their spare time making curtains to go around the children's beds.

THE DOCTORS bought the material and paid to have the ward decorated.

Health Service cuts meant London's famous Middlesex Hospital didn't have the cash to decorate the ward before children moved in for the first time last month.

It was formerly used for adult medical patients and was last decorated 10 years ago.

"The ward was grimy and dingy and not at all suitable for sick children," said a top consultant who personally spent £1,000 on the redecora-

EXCLUSIVE

tion. "There were no curtains round the beds.

"We were told that the NHS didn't have enough funds to buy new curtains or repaint the place, so we all stepped in to do our bit.

"The ward now looks very bright and cheerful."

This is the latest cash crisis to hit the major teaching hospital.

Children's beds have been cut from 22 to 14 in a bid to save money.

Four wards are permanently closed. Seventy patients are turned away every month.

Casualty doctors too busy to see injured youngster

SIX-HOUR AGONY OF HOSPITAL GIRL, 4

Mum forced to take taxi in hunt for help

A four-year-old girl in pain was told she would have to wait six hours in a hospital's crowded casualty department before a doctor could see her.

Louise Warren and her mother Gerri had already been turned away from Edgware general hospital the day before because of the long queue.

Finally, distressed Mrs Warren was forced to walk out and take her daughter to another hospital by taxi.

The Royal Orthopaedic

EXCLUSIVE

By JILL PALMER

Hospital, a few miles away in Stanmore, Middx, admitted Louise immediately and she spent the next eight days in traction with an injured hip.

Louise had hurt her leg

in a fall at playschool. Mrs Warren took her to Edgware hospital, near their home, and was advised to return the next day because of the long wait.

When they went back they waited two hours and then a doctor told them they'd have to wait at least another four hours.

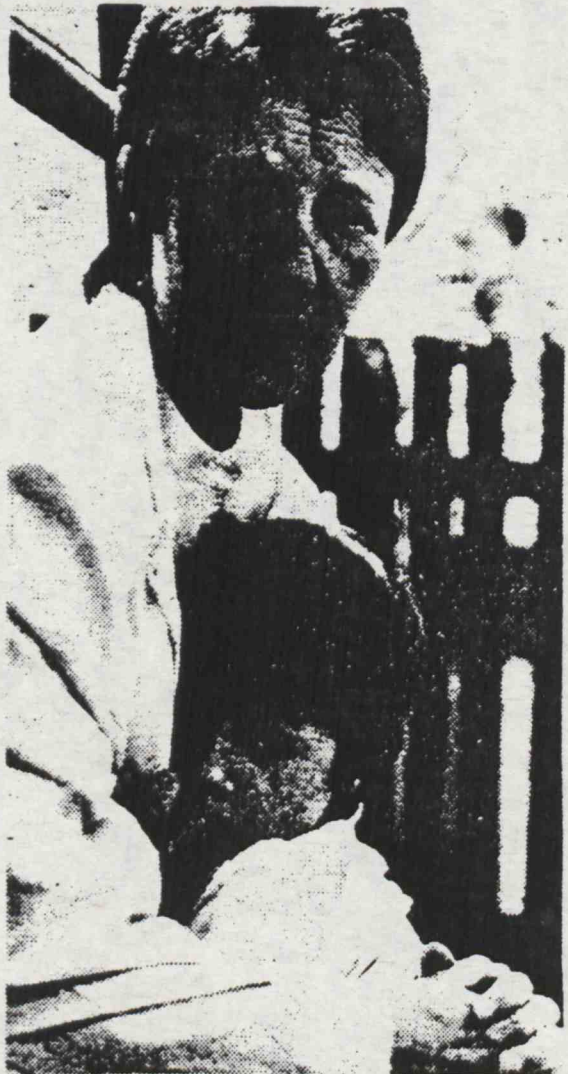
"The doctors and nurses were so overworked and were rushing around trying to cope with all the patients," she said. "It was impossible."

Upset

"I couldn't force a four-year-old to sit in a casualty waiting room for six hours so I had to take her elsewhere."

"I was very upset and so were many of the other patients."

A spokesman for Edgware hospital said: "The department was busy with about 20 patients waiting on that day."



WAITING: Louise with her mother. Picture: JOHN SHENTON

17 MAY 1986

DAILY
Mirror 9

No luck for heart op man

By JILL PALMER

A HEART patient urged to write to his MP when his life-saving operation was put off indefinitely is certain it will do no good...

For Harry Davies's MP is junior Health Minister Ray Whitney, who denies there is a crisis in the hospitals.

"It would be a total waste of time putting pen to paper to write to him," said Mr Davies, 53.

Mr Davies, from High Wycombe, Bucks, is one of many patients on the waiting list for urgent bypass surgery at Hammer-smith Hospital, West London.

Shocked

As revealed exclusively in the Daily Mirror on Thursday, they have all been told by heart consultant surgeon Ralph Sapsford that their operations have been put off because the hospital cannot afford the intensive aftercare.

He told them it was no longer possible to give any idea of when their operation would be and suggested they write to their MP.

**DAILY
Mirror**

SICK KIDS GET GIFT OF LIFE

By JILL PALMER

A GRATEFUL farmer has stepped in to help a hard-up hospital save children's lives.

Peter Maguire, whose daughter is a patient at Addenbrooke's hospital in Cambridge, has raised the cash for a new life-support machine.

Two days ago the Mirror revealed a cash-cuts scandal at the world famous hospital.

The only life support machine suitable for children in the operating theatre was so old it was held together with sticky tape.

It broke down in the middle of major surgery.

Donations

Peter, whose five-year-old daughter Julie has a liver disease, said yesterday:

"One day it could be Julie that needs this equipment. It could be life or death for her.

"I know hospitals shouldn't depend on charity but if the Government

EXCLUSIVE

won't pay there is little alternative."

The £8,500 Peter raised for the life-support machine is the latest in an amazing list of donations for vital equipment.

He started raising cash two years ago when Julie, who will soon need a liver transplant, first became a patient.

He has raised nearly £150,000 from sponsored walks, jumble sales, raffles, and charity auctions.

Peter said at his home in Gosport, Hants: "It started as my way of saying thank you for giving Julie hope."

Patient warned of agonising wait after vital surgery is axed

DYING HEART MAN TOLD: SHOP AROUND FOR AN OP

**Health cut hospital
can't afford care**

A DYING heart patient has been urged to shop around for treatment after a vital operation was put off indefinitely because of health cuts.

Peter Fowles, a 47-year-old porter was told that his hospital couldn't afford the necessary intensive after-care.

Yesterday, shocked and distressed, he said: "Am I going to have to wait until I'm in my coffin before I get treatment?"

"I need this operation to live. Now I face shopping round to see where I can get it done."

Wait

Mr Fowles, from Edgware, Middx, is on the urgent waiting list for by-pass surgery at Hammersmith Hospital, West London.

He suffers from angina and his condition has rapidly worsened in the last few months.

Now heart consultant Ralph Sapsford has told him in a letter:

"The situation at Hammersmith has deteriorated to the point where we can hardly maintain an emergency service.

EXCLUSIVE

by JILL PALMER

"This is largely due to a totally inadequate provision of intensive care beds.

"It is no longer possible to give you any idea of when your operation might be."

He suggested Mr Fowles try and find treatment elsewhere "although all cardiology units have a long waiting list."

Mr Fowles, who has two young children, said: "I am constantly in pain, I can't work and I can't go out because I can't climb the stairs to my flat.

"I was prepared to wait a few months, even though I was told the operation was urgent, but this has disgusted me.

"I'm not blaming the hospital, I've seen firsthand how the Health Service has deteriorated because of cuts."



CALL: Kinnock

'SPEND ON NHS' PLEA

LABOUR leader Neil Kinnock demanded more Government cash for the Health Service yesterday.

In a letter to Mrs Thatcher, he rejected her claim that resources are being switched from London to benefit the regions.

He said: "The NHS needs to increase in real terms by at least two per cent each year if it is to meet the additional demands placed upon it."

DAILY Mirror

HOW the Mirror has covered the crisis

IN the middle of a vital operation on a desperately sick child a hospital's life support machine broke down.

As surgeons and anaesthetists battled to keep the child breathing, staff raced from the operating theatre to borrow another machine.

Thankfully, a spare ventilator was found in the intensive care unit. The child's life was saved.

All this happened at Addenbrookes, a huge, modern hospital in Cambridge.

It has 900 beds, but only one life support machine suitable for children in the operating theatre.

And that machine—which takes over the task of breathing for the chronically ill—is eight years old and held together with sticky tape.

This shocking story is yet another example of the effect Government cash cuts are having on the health service.

Hospitals all over the country are reeling from the current squeeze on spending.

Yet you'd never know this listening to junior health minister Ray Whitney.

He denies there is any crisis in the NHS and has accused the Daily Mirror of running "a fantastically inaccurate campaign."

Blame

He ignores the facts that hardly a week goes by without wards being closed, operations being cancelled, and patients being turned away.

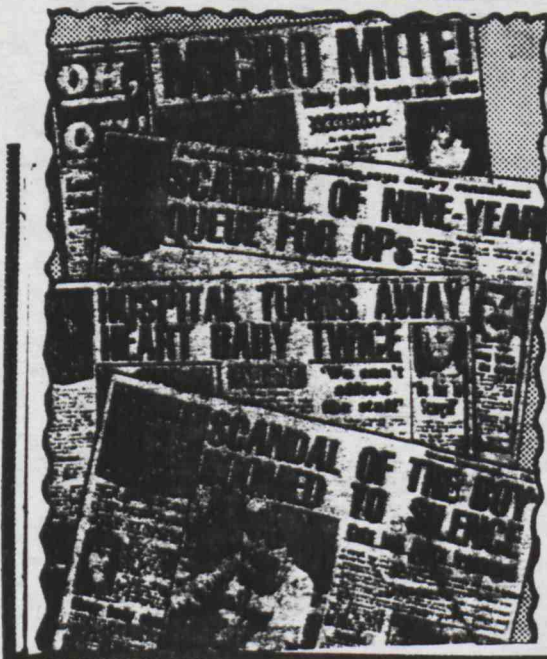
Mr Whitney claims that "the real problem with the health service is being caused by morale which is being damaged by people like the Daily Mirror."

Would he blame us for the problem at Addenbrookes?

The hospital's children's unit there is desperately short of funds for life-saving equipment.



THE DAILY MIRROR, APRIL 7



6

Yet ANOTHER health scandal

—but who's listening?

by JILL PALMER

Doctors have to depend on charity for much of their vital machinery.

Surgeons carry out at least 25 children's operations every day.

The ventilator is vital in half of them including open-heart surgery and liver and kidney transplants.

But the hospital can't afford the £6,500 to buy a new one.

"We have managed to stagger on using this old ventilator but the situation is now desperate.

"We urgently need a new one but are extremely short of money

and just can't afford it," said consultant anaesthetist Dr John Farman.

"We cannot depend on this machine any more. It is too much of a risk to use it during operations when it could break down at any moment.

Grim

"Eventually there will be a crisis like that again and another machine won't be available."

Can Mr Whitney deny that this and other hospital horror stories in our campaign show the NHS has reached crisis point?

● A seven-month-old baby needing heart surgery was turned away from Guy's in London twice because the hospital couldn't afford the nurses to care for her.

● Patients at Frimley Park hospital in Surrey have to wait NINE years for some routine surgery.

● A mum in premature labour has to wait five hours and travel 70 miles to find a hospital bed.

Can Mr Whitney deny that these stories in the last two weeks show that the health service isn't being properly funded or provided for in the community?

Yesterday eleven London consultants warned that their patients are being put in peril be-

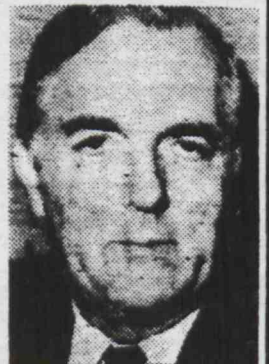
cause of cash cutbacks. "It is no exaggeration to say that the care of the sick is now being jeopardised in our hospitals," said protest leader Dr Richard Thompson.

"There is a serious deterioration of the hospital service and patients are suffering.

"The health service is underfunded and we must have more money otherwise the future looks grim."

Would Mr Whitney claim these doctors' fears are inaccurate?

Saving lives costs money but saving money costs lives.



RAY WHITNEY
Dentals

'The care of the sick is now being jeopardised'

Chaos, crisis, confusion

THE rot is eating deeply into this Government. It is running scared. Half the Cabinet doesn't know whether it will be coming or going in the next reshuffle.

And the rush to get out from under is indecent.

MR JOHN BIFFEN goes on TV to voice his doubts about Mrs Thatcher and her future as Prime Minister.

MRS THATCHER retaliates and sends her Press Secretary to talk privately to journalists of her doubts about Mr Biffen.

Defence

Mr Biffen makes it clear he doesn't like Mr Norman Tebbit's manner or Mr Nigel Lawson's policies.

MR PETER WALKER springs to the defence of Mr Tebbit, which will do Mr Tebbit no good at all.

MR LAWSON says Mr Biffen is wrong about Mrs Thatcher. He also says that the Government's policies are a consid-

MIRROR COMMENT



THATCHER



BIFFEN



TEBBIT

erable success but it isn't putting them over very well.

A much sounder argument is that the policies have been put over so well that everybody understands them, which is why the Government is in such a mess today.

MR TEBBIT says that he is too old a dog to be taught new tricks, overlooking the fact that old dogs—and old politicians—occasionally have to be put down.

Mrs Thatcher herself said yesterday

that last week's election results were "a shattering rejection" of Labour's policies. That kind of self-delusion seems, in the end, to afflict all Prime Ministers.

One Tory backbencher has called for the return of Cecil Parkinson. Nothing could be more desperate than that.

The Government may still boast of its achievements. Nobody believes it any more.

Falling

It says it is spending record sums on the Health Service. But read Page 6 today. A world-famous hospital in Cambridge has a life-support machine held together by sticky tape because it can't afford £6,500 to buy a new one.

We have a hospital crisis, a housing crisis, an education crisis and an unemployment crisis. Those are the real achievements of this Government.

Mrs Thatcher knows that. The Cabinet knows that. Most of all, the voters know that. And that is why the Government is falling apart.

WORRIED MUMS RAISE £26,000 FOR HOSPITAL¹⁵

**Cash will help
heart children**

By JILL PALMER

TWO mothers have raised £26,000 so a hard-up hospital can afford to give their sons vital surgery.

Three-year-olds Nathan Kybett and Jonathan Gordon both needed hole in the heart operations. But they were turned away from London's world famous Guy's Hospital because it couldn't afford enough nurses to care for them.

Their desperate mums decided to help and launched a fund-raising campaign 18 months ago. They organised sponsored walks, bring and buy sales, coffee mornings and raffles.

Yesterday Carol Kybett, of Eastbourne, Sussex, said: "It was the least we could do to help the wonderful staff at the hospital."

Important

"It's disgraceful that they don't have enough money to treat important heart surgery."

The cash will be handed over next week and means Guy's can afford enough nurses to open another intensive care bed for children like Jonathan, who is due to be admitted in two months' time.

Nathan finally had his operation last month after it had been cancelled twice.

5

HOSPITAL TURNS AWAY HEART BABY TWICE

EXCLUSIVE

By JILL PALMER

A SEVEN-months-old baby needing life-saving heart surgery has been turned away from hospital—TWICE.

The second time was AFTER the baby had been given anaesthetic for a hole-in-the-heart operation.

Her mother was told to take her daughter home because there were not enough nurses to care for her.

Guy's Hospital in London—one of the

'We can't afford ^{'s} the staff'

country's leading children's departments—can only afford staff for two intensive care beds.

Both were occupied each time the little girl was admitted.

Miss Carol Kybett, whose three-year-old son Nathan, was in an adjoining bed said: "Obviously the baby's mother was very distressed."

Children's heart consultant Professor Michael Tynan said: "We have to cancel operations because we cannot fit them into our budget.

There aren't the beds available."

7 MAY 1986

26

11 Patients could die as they wait for operations

CAN YOU COME BACK IN NINE YEARS?

By JILL PALMER

A HORRIFIED doctor told yesterday of a hospital with a NINE-YEAR waiting list for some routine operations.

And he said some patients would die before they reached the top of the list.

Dr Robert Bown, a consultant in the hospital in stockbroker Surrey, said:

"If anyone wants a routine prostate operation the wait is in excess of nine years. They might as well forget it.

"The only chance is if the condition gets so bad they go into kidney failure and are admitted as an emergency.

Worst

"My waiting list just for an appointment to see me is 27 weeks.

"If you need a hip replacement you are likely to die before you get to the top of the waiting list."

Dr Bown, who works at Frimley Park Hospital, added: "It is one of the worst hospitals in the country for treatment and services because of lack of resources.

2 MAY 1986

W

MICRO

MITE!

Baby Kelly beats cash cuts

EXCLUSIVE

By JILL PALMER

FOUR-day-old Kelly Mackay is a miniature miracle. She weighs just 1½lb and is winning her fight for life.

But she nearly didn't make it into the world, because of health service cuts.

When Kelly's mother Linda went into labour three months early, the local baby care unit turned her away because they were full.

After a three-hour search, doctors found a hospital to take Linda. But she had to suffer a two-hour ambulance trip to London, 70 miles away.

Tiny Kelly was born soon after Linda arrived at St George's Hospital, Tooting, following the dash from Selsey, Sussex. She was put in the only spare incubator.

Linda, 27, said: "The nurses told me that if it had been 24 hours later they would not have had any room for Kelly. They had to turn away three premature babies the next day because they were full up."

Terrified

Many premature babies die because health service cash cuts have led to a dramatic shortage of special facilities.

Linda's ordeal was especially nerve-wracking. She has already suffered five miscarriages. Two years ago a baby died in the womb and last year a premature son died within hours of birth.

Linda said: "I was terrified this baby wouldn't survive. It was a very frightening experience."



LINDA: "I was terrified."



SAFE: Baby Kelly. Pictures: BRENDAN MONKS.

SNAP! "BONNY BABIES BAIL OUT HOSPITAL

By PETER KANE

A MATERNITY hospital is to sell photos of its bouncing new babies to help it out of a cash crisis.

Staff at The Rosie Maternity Hospital, Cambridge, will use medical research cameras to take snaps of the newborn babies—and then sell the pictures to doting parents and relatives.

John Ashbourne, Cambridgeshire health authority's chief executive, said yesterday: "We hope to be able to produce a photographic service for the family.

"The snaps are just one of many ideas we have for generating money."

The maternity hospital was opened just 30 months ago—six years ahead of schedule—by TV rental tycoon David Robinson. He put up half the £6million costs on condition it could be finished quickly.

Desperate

But now, along with the nearby Addenbrookes Hospital, it is almost £2million in the red after severe Government cuts.

"We are desperate for cash and are even considering renting out our incinerator to businessmen as well as holding a hospital sweepstake," said Mr Ashbourne.

"Our staff have come up with some really good ideas for bringing in extra money."

**Photos to
help pay
£2m bill**

21 APR 1986

**DAILY
Mirror**

RACHEL GETS HELP ¹⁴

A BRAVE little girl who faced life in a wheelchair because of hospital cash cuts can look forward to a brighter future—thanks to the Daily Mirror and a childrens' charity.

Rachel Dance, who has spina bifida, needs regular physiotherapy to keep her walking.

But Frimley Park Hospital,

in Surrey, won't be able to keep up the treatment after Rachel reaches her fifth birthday in September.

The Handicapped Children's Aid Committee read about Rachel's plight in the Mirror last week and has arranged for a private physiotherapist to visit her at home in Farnborough, Hampshire, every week.



BRAVE: Rachel

9

18 APR 1986

Cash cuts threat to cancer children

By JILL PALMER

DESPERATELY ill children needing emergency brain surgery are the latest victims of Health Service cuts.

They face being turned away from Britain's leading psychiatric hospital because of a government purge, it was revealed yesterday.

Dr. Simon Wessley said: "The Government is destroying everything we have built up.

Dr. Wessley was attacking plans to close a major childrens ward at the Maudsley Hospital in South London for two months a year and every weekend — or even to shut it completely.

The ward specialises in treating youngsters with brain cancer

A ward for mentally ill children and an alcoholism unit also face the axe, because the Maudsley is being forced to save £450,000 after overspending last year.

2A

Daily Mail

Patients go home too soon'

By JOHN ILLMAN

Medical Correspondent

HOSPITAL patients are being sent home too soon in order to save the Health Service money, a doctor claimed yesterday.

Dr John Ledingham challenged Government statements that more patients were being treated than ever before.

He told the British Medical Association's annual scientific meeting in Oxford that the 'increase' in hospital patients could be re-admissions due to less-efficient care.

He said: 'To re-admit and prematurely discharge the same patient three or four times in a few weeks would look to increase the number of patients treated as well as reduce the length of stay.'

Dr Ledingham, Reader in Medicine at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, added: 'Another claim that 11,000 new hospital beds opened between 1980 and 1984 does not mention that the total number of hospital beds available dropped by 12,900 in the same period.'

Morning Star

BMA doctor accuses Tories of making false claims

Hospital cost cutting forces patients out

HOSPITAL patients are being discharged prematurely after their operations to save money, a leading doctor warned yesterday.

Oxford physician Dr. John Ledingham said the length of stay in hospitals among people aged 15 to 44 was rapidly falling and the quality of service for them is deteriorating and continuing to do so.

"And the short length of stay and premature discharge of patients is not only bad medicine, it has considerable ill effects on the teaching of medical students although it is seen by the DHSS as more efficient use of resources," he said.

Dr. Ledingham, president of the Oxford division of the British Medical Association, gave the warning in his opening address to the BMA's annual scientific meeting in Oxford.

He said the government was claiming that more patients were being treated and the NHS was being given more money and more staff.

But the counter-argument was that government figures were misleading.

"For instance the claim that the number of in-patients treated increased by 12 per cent between 1978 and 1983 does not indicate what proportion of these were re-admissions for the same patient as opposed to new cases.

"The increases may be due to less efficient care and consequent re-admission. To re-admit and prematurely discharge the same patient three or four times in a few weeks would increase the number of patients treated as well as reduce the length of stay," said Dr. Ledingham.

"Another claim that 11,000 new hospital beds opened be-

tween 1980 and 1984 does not mention that the total number of hospital beds available dropped by 12,900 in the same period."

Dr. Ledingham, reader in medicine at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, said that while family doctors had never had it so good, the hospital service had never had it so bad.

"There is a very real feeling among the doctors and nurses of the hospital service, particularly the teaching service, that things are very bad and that worse is to come," he said.

The most damaging effects of the cuts had been on academic medicine although this was vital for the inspiration of the next generation of doctors.

Some doctors were comparing the role of Social Services Secretary, Norman Fowler, with that of Thomas Cromwell, who helped to restore Henry VIII's finances by closing monasteries.

DAILY EXPRESS

Top doctor's warning

HOSPITALS are discharging patients too soon after operations simply to save money, according to a leading doctor.

The length of stay in hospital for those aged 15 to 44 was falling rapidly, said Dr John Ledingham.

He asked whether they were previously being kept in bed too long, and added: "More probably the quality of service for them has deteriorated and is continuing to do so.

"And the short length of stay and premature discharge is not only bad medicine.

"Although it is seen by the DHSS as a more efficient use of resources, it has considerable ill-effects on the teaching of medical students."

Claim

Dr Ledingham, president of the Oxford division of the British Medical Association, gave the warning in his opening address to the BMA's scientific meeting in Oxford.

He said the Government was claiming that more patients were being treated and the NHS was being given more money and more staff. But the counter argument

was that Government figures were misleading.

"For instance the claim that the number of in-patients treated increased by 12 per cent between 1978 and 1983 does not indicate what proportion of these were re-admissions for the same patient as opposed to new cases," said Dr Ledingham.

"The increase may be due to less efficient care and consequent readmission.

Dr Ledingham said that while family doctors had never had it so good, the hospital service had never had it so bad.

10

DAILY Mirror

Hospital scandal of 'quick service'

By JILL PALMER

DOCTORS are being forced to send hospital patients home early because of cash cutbacks, it was revealed yesterday.

Consultant John Ledingham said people were being discharged too soon after operations.

He told the British Medical Association: "The quality of service is deteriorating,

"The premature discharge of patients is bad medicine, but it is seen by the Health Department as more efficient use of resources."

Dr Ledingham, who is based at Oxford's John Radcliffe Hospital, warned: "The hospital service has never had it so bad.

"In Oxford it is not far short of desperate."

8 STAR

OPERATION RUSH AT HOSPITALS

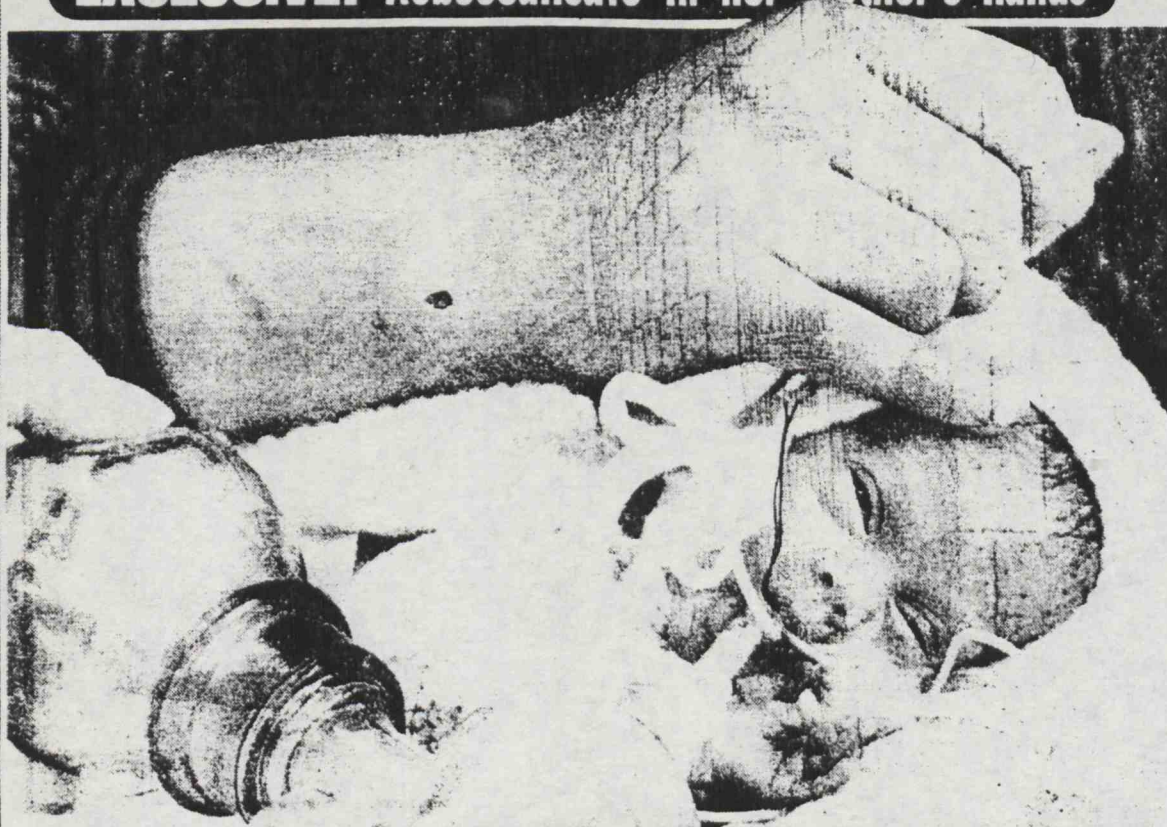
HOSPITAL patients are being discharged prematurely after their operations to save money, a leading doctor said yesterday.

Physician John Ledingham, president of the British Medical Association's Oxford division, gave his warning at their annual meeting.

He said the length of stay in hospitals among people aged 15 to 44 was rapidly falling.

"Is this group less ill," he said. "More probably the quality of service for them is deteriorating

EXCLUSIVE: Rebecca..safe in her mother's hands



FRAGILE: Rebecca drinks contentedly from a special feeding tube yesterday, soothed by her mother's tender touch.

Picture: GEORGE PHILLIPS

FOUR MINUTES OF HEAVEN



By SYDNEY YOUNG
PRECIOUS mite Rebecca McNally rested ever so briefly in her mother's gentle hands yesterday on her perilious path to survival.

For just four blissful minutes Mrs Karen McNally was allowed to hold her 1lb. 12oz. daughter, whose miracle birth captivated millions of Mirror readers.

Then it was time to place her back in the life-supporting incubator provided by charity.

The Mirror told in its special report on the Health Service last month how much of the equipment at Bristol's Special Care Baby Unit has to be paid for by sponsors because of Government cut-backs.

But the harsh world of politics was temporarily forgotten yesterday as Karen and her husband Bill gazed in wonderment at their four months premature baby.

**Touching moment...
 Karen**

The couple take it in turns to hold Rebecca on their visits to the hospital.

Their daughter is still

SURVIVAL: The Mirror report on Rebecca's birth.

attached to a ventilator, food tube and cardiac and oxygen monitors.

And because of the tubes and wires surrounding her they have not been able to give her a proper hug.

Rebecca, who weighed just over 1lb at birth on February 20, was too tiny to be touched by untrained hands at first. It was a month before her parents got the chance to hold her.

Bill, 32, a machine operator, said: "It's hard to describe just how having a baby as small as Rebecca on your lap.

"She's so incredibly fragile."

Karen, 25, said: "It makes me very angry when I think the lives of Rebecca and babies like her depend on charity."

"I don't know how Margaret Thatcher can sleep at nights."

Rebecca, described as a "little fighter" by hospital staff, is now progressing steadily.

But she will not be allowed home to her parents in Weston Super Mare before her proper birth date—and that's not until June 11.

4A

NO BED FOR A MUM HAVING TWINS

Another Mirror exclusive

By JILL PALMER

A MOTHER expecting premature twins had to wait FOUR HOURS while doctors tried to find her a hospital bed.

Kim Elliott was then rushed 40 miles in an ambulance after being turned away by her local hospital, where a baby died recently because of health service cash cuts.

Kim's ordeal began after she went into early labour at her home in Grays, Essex.

Doctors at cash-starved Basildon hospital, ten miles away, said their special baby care unit was full up.

Kim, 26, waited four hours at nearby Orsett Hospital while doctors tried desperately to track down a bed.

They finally found one 40 miles away at Hammersmith Hospital in West London.

It took an ambulance

Misery of cash cuts

another two hours to get Kim there.

Afterwards, Kim's father Roy Leyland said: "It's a disgrace.

"My daughter got to hospital at 3p.m.; but it was nearly nine in the evening before she got the proper treatment in a hospital miles away.

"When she got to Hammersmith, they put her on drugs and drips and managed to stop the labour. Now she has to stay there until the

● From Page One

babies are born. She is very distressed."

On Saturday the Mirror exclusively revealed that a baby girl had died at Basildon because the hospital could not afford to buy a heart monitor.

After Kim was turned away, the hospital's administrator, Mr Steve Topham, said: "We have a very good special care

baby ward but we never have enough equipment.

● Government calls to the health service to save money by being more efficient were attacked yesterday by the chairman of the British Medical Association.

Dr John Marks said: "Cost efficiency is a pseudonym—a euphemism for cuts."

● Four minutes of heaven —Page 5.



The Mirror campaign

● Turn to Page Two

4

DAILY
Mirror

Hospital cash cuts kill a baby girl

By JILL PALMER

A NEWBORN baby died because health service cash cutbacks left a hospital without vital equipment.

Doctors didn't have the heart monitor that would have told them little Samantha Rayner was slowly choking to death. By the time a monitor was available it was too late. Samantha had been strangled by her own umbilical cord.

Her distraught grandmother Mrs Linda Rayner, said: "Instead of a beautiful baby my daughter has a death certificate.

"The Government's policies have killed my little granddaughter.

"The consultant told us that if they had a fetal monitor they would have spotted the baby's distress and performed an emergency operation.

Disgrace

"They just don't have enough equipment. They are being starved of funds, and it's a disgrace."



●The Mirror campaign.

Samantha was born at Basildon hospital in Essex. Mrs Rayner said her 17-year-old daughter Zoe had a normal pregnancy.

The problems began after she went into labour.

"She was in labour for six hours and the contractions were only a minute apart, but there was still no sign of the baby's head," said Mrs Rayner.

"I could tell the midwives were worried because they kept going to try to find a monitor. But the labour ward has only two and both were being used.

"When the baby's head appeared the cord was wound tightly round her

neck and she was blue and lifeless.

"They cut the cord before she was fully born but it was too late.

"Samantha was rushed to the intensive care unit. The staff did all they could but it was useless."

Cord.

The baby died two days later after attempts to revive her on a ventilator failed.

A post mortem revealed that she died from lack of oxygen due to the cord round her neck.

Basildon hospital was

● Turn to Page Two

“They could have saved her...
they just don't have the pounds”

Cuts killed a baby girl

● From Page One

built 13 years ago. There are 10 places in the labour ward and only two fetal heart monitors, which cost £3,812 each.

On the day Samantha was born there were four other women in labour.

Hospital administrator Steve Topham said: "Fetal heart monitors are expensive pieces of equipment. We just haven't got the resources to purchase them.

"We can't just go out and buy the equipment we need. We often have to rely on people raising money to buy it for us."

Why Mrs Thatcher should see this show and act..

MIRACLE OF THE PETER

‘Loving touch ‘cure’ that you can’t get in Britain?’
PAN BOY

LITTLE Joe Horsley is an enchanting, lively youngster... but he was once destined for a worthless life in a wheelchair.

Five-year-old Joe was born with cerebral palsy and until a year ago was unable to use his legs, talk or, apparently, even see.

Last August Joe started special intensive therapy to stimulate his mind and body. His transformation was remarkable.

Sadly, it is not a British success story. The treatment is not available here.

Hopes

Joe's devoted parents, Lise and Mike, had to take him the other side of the Iron Curtain to Hungary, where such 'miracles' have been happening daily for years.

This week Joe finds himself the star of Standing Up for Joe on BBC-1, a tearjerker of a programme that carries the hopes of

Special Report by STEVE DOUBLE

Britain's 100,000 handicapped children.

For Lise and Mike are hoping it will shame the Government into providing the funds necessary to bring the treatment here.

It should also touch the hearts of British doctors who dismiss youngsters like Joe as Peter Pans, children who can never grow up.

"We have written to Mrs Thatcher asking her to

watch our programme to see for herself what can be done," said Lise.

An ambitious £1 million charity scheme to set up an Hungarian style centre for 200 handicapped youngsters in Britain has asked for just £100,000 from the Government.

It hasn't received a penny.

It's not as though the

'Our shame' by MPs

MPs slammed the Government's failure to provide a £100,000 grant for conductive education as "shameful" last week.

The man behind the frustrated £1 million scheme to start Hungarian style treatment for the handicapped in Britain is psychologist Andrew Sutton, of Birmingham University.

He said: "The method is remarkable. That £100,000 would be the answer to my dreams.

Mr Sutton, backed by charities and Birmingham City Council, wants to set up a conductive education centre here after sending a team to Hungary to study their methods.

So far the Departments of Health and Education, both responsible for caring for handicapped children, have provided just £11,000 for a survey of how a similar less successful system is working

MP John Silkin said: "The current £11,000 is totally inadequate."

A spokesman for the Education department said: "We need to know more before we earmark more cash."

Sir John Cox, director of the Spastics Society, which does much for handicapped children, said: "It's dangerous to think of the Hungarian system as a miracle cure."



Angry—John Silkin

27 MAR 1986

DAILY
Mirror

NHS: Tax the rich



Yesterday's Mirror

PRIVATE patients will face huge cutbacks under Labour—to stop them bleeding the National Health Service, Opposition health spokesman Michael Meacher said yesterday.

“We want to reduce the entire scale of the private sector and put the money and resources back where they belong,” he said. “And one way to do that would be a ‘conscience’ tax on private patients “who can well afford it”.

Mr Meacher spoke out after congratulating the Mirror on our special issue highlighting the cash crisis crippling Britain's hospitals.

He added: “Anything that might make this Tory Government take action to save our hospitals is of

● From Page One
immense benefit to the entire nation.”

Mr Meacher's praise last night added to a flood of thanks from doctors, nurses, union leaders as well as the public.

Rodney Bickerstaffe, General Secretary of NUPE said: “The special issue was superb. You have given the lie to the Government claims that the people's health service is safe in Tory hands.” Both COHSE and the Royal College of Nursing also applauded the report.

And Dr John Harvard of the British Medical Association said: “We are delighted that the Daily Mirror is trying to force government's hand.”

DAILY
Mirror

Fury over tragic Chris, 13

THE furious parents of tragic schoolboy Chris Pullman hit out at Government cuts yesterday after our Special Report on the health service.

His mother, Pam, said: “It's about time the Government stopped playing poker with people's lives.”

Chris, 13, is paralysed from the neck down after a car accident and is kept

alive with a ventilator while he waits for a special ‘pacer’ to come from America.

Our report told how he had to be moved from an intensive care ward at Cardiff Royal Infirmary to make way for an elderly woman patient.

Now he is in another hospital 20 miles away at Bridgend.

by SYDNEY YOUNG and
CHRISTENA APPELYARD *Woman's Editor*

A HAND smaller than a postage stamp brings shame to the Government's penny-pinching paymaster.

It closes on a doctor's finger inside a premature baby incubator that charity bought.

Tiny Rebecca McNally, who weighs little more than one pound, clings to life on equipment paid for with pence from caring schoolkids and jumble sales.

The new technology maintaining her tenuous hold on life would not be there but for the sponsored swims, pounding feet and piles of coins in smoky pubs.

Rebecca is lucky.

Other babies desperately needing care have had to be turned away because of the Government's spending cuts.

Most of the £21,000 worth of new technology keeping Rebecca alive at Bristol's special care baby unit was paid for by volunteers and doctors who turn fund-raisers when they go off duty.

BUT she owes just as much to the dedication of the overworked doctors and nursing staff who keep the ten-year-old unit going.

It has six intensive care cots. It needs another four—and nineteen more nurses.

Consultant Dr Peter Fleming says: "We have had to turn away quite a lot.

"Imagine how difficult it is to tell parents: 'Sor-

ry, we cannot look after your sick baby'."

More than 100 miles away, the same blend of high technology and good old-fashioned caring is helping to save babies lives at King's College Hospital, London. But here too the cuts are biting.

In the intensive care baby unit, ward receptionist Maureen Fox is filling in her fortnightly order.

"They even dispute the number of nappies we need," she says.

"Can you imagine that? We've got babies fighting for their lives and they ask us if they need their nappies changing so often.

"It's not really the fault of the stores department. They've had their budgets cut so drastically by head office."

IN between duties the nurses and doctors chat about their fund-raising activities.

They are trying to raise £250,000, and a charity called Children Nationwide has promised to match every pound they make.

They already pay the salary of a consultant, Dr Anne Greenough.

But still babies sometimes have to be turned away.

Ward sister Anne Rowan says sadly: "It's hard because the paediatrician sometimes says: 'You realise if you don't take this baby it will die?'"

"In a lot of cases the babies WILL die. And the mothers will not realise it was because there weren't enough beds to save their baby."

**WRITE AND TELL US
WHAT CAN BE DONE**

WHAT do YOU think about our hospitals?
Write to: Jill Palmer, Health Crisis, The Daily
Mirror, Holborn Circus, London EC1P 1DQ

26 MAR 1986

a colleague is sick, she works extra hours with no overtime. But she never complains, she would never strike.

The National Health Service can rely on her no matter how much it is cut.

"I suppose it is emotional blackmail, but I'm not in it for the money. A cure for leukaemia would be worth a million pounds pay rise to me," she says.

"There is no way in the world we would walk off and leave those kids."

Out on the ward she gets down on her hands and knees to try to mend a faulty cardiac monitor measuring the lifebeat of a 21-month-old with breathing problems.

The equipment is old and needs repair, but it is the only one. Moments later she is counting out a variety of multi-coloured pills for an 11-year-old kid-

ney patient having dinner. "Here you are love—pills and chips."

He laughs and swallows them one by one. "Do you rattle now?" asks sister.

A glum 12-year-old with an arm fracture gets a measure of cherry pink medicine. "Cheers darlin'—have a drink." He has to smile.

The colour TVs the children watch were donated, like the Walkmans the leukaemia patients in months of isolation wear to take their minds off the pain.

Elsewhere the hospital relies on donations to help save lives, too.

She checks on a 10-year-old leukaemia patient, bald from drugs and with the haunted face and frightened eyes of an old person who might not live.

Back in her office, she slumps, exhausted.

"It's a fine life. Isn't it," she says softly to a young doctor taking a breather.

"The only one," he says.

Mirror Comment

FORTY years ago, a Labour Government had a dream. It was that one day the finest medicine in the world would be available, free of charge, to the poorest of our people.

It called that dream the National Health Service.

Today's pages of the Daily Mirror are its epitaph.

The NHS only survives now because of the devotion and care and humanity of those who work for it. There is a daily triumph over a tragic wreck.

Perish

Nurses work themselves to the brink of exhaustion and beyond it. Doctors do more than should ever be asked of them.

Still, patients are turned away from hospital. The old are sent home to die. Children share kidney machines. Surgeons choose whom to

save and whom to let perish.

The Government says that the NHS employs more doctors and nurses and spends more money than ever before.

Almost every patient knows the emptiness of that boast. As Disraeli said, there are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies and statistics.

This Government is good on statistics.

Starved

The National Health Service is being deliberately starved of money to finance tax cuts. The ill and out of work are subsidising those who are well and in work.

The very least the Government should do now is to put a tax on the private patients, native and overseas, who buy up our doctors at the expense of those who can't afford to.

The money could go to the NHS. We could call it a Conscience Tax.

12

Our thanks . .

HOSPITALS throughout Britain opened their doors to Mirror writers and photographers. We wish to thank those hospitals and their staffs for the help they gave.

London area hospitals: Middlesex; Guy's; Dulwich; Hither Green; King's College, Denmark Hill; Royal Free, Hampstead; St Mary's, Praed St; Central Middlesex, Park Royal; Queen Mary's, Roehampton.

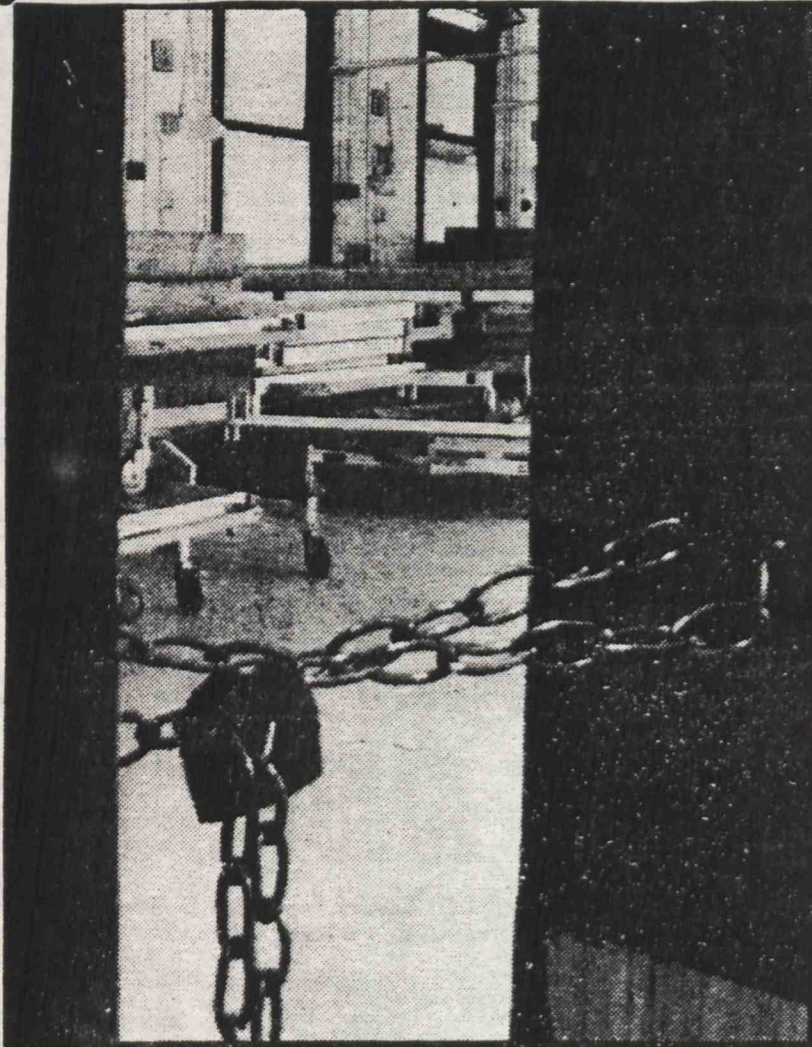
Hospitals outside London: Bristol Maternity; Wythenshaw, Manchester; Withington, Manchester; Manchester Royal Infirmary; Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle; St James University, Leeds.

Rosemary Collins, Clive Crickmer, John Gilbert, Gordon Hughes, Harry King, Michael McCarthy, John McShane, Jill Palmer, Frank Palmer, Mary Riddell, Noreen Taylor, Edward Vale, Georgina Walsh, Stephen White, Reg White, Sydney Young.

MIRROR STAFF

WRITERS: Christena Appleyard, Ian Cameron,

PHOTOGRAPHERS: Tom Buist, Peter Case.



CLOSED BY CUTS: A disused ward at the Middlesex Hospital.

"The support services for old people will be cut. Bed numbers will be cut."

INSTEAD of three old ladies who were not really ill there would be seven or eight.

"They'll be overflowing into the surgical wards and preventing people having operations for which they've waited months.

"The Government's aim is to redistribute resources to the lowest common denominator rather than raise everything up to the level of efficiency and sense.

"It is truly crazy."

Next day he paid another visit to Mrs G, she of the phoney limp.

He took her for another walk around the ward and asked her. And how are you feeling today, darling?

"You know," she said, "I feel well enough to go home now."

by FRANK PALMER

IT might be Broadmoor or Rampton. But this is Middlesex Hospital, London. And the chains are to keep patients out, not in.

Sandhurst Ward, through whose chained doors Professor Howard Jacobs now peers, is one of ten closed by cuts.

"The trouble," the professor sighs, "is that a cancer won't stop growing in the interests of economy."

He and his colleagues find it difficult to explain to a patient who has arrived, bag packed, for a long-awaited investigation, that the beds are full so come back another day.

Three floors below consultant Stuart Steele is writing a "very much regret" letter to a doctor who wants to refer to him a woman with fertility problems. Mr Steele has a waiting list of 300 and it is getting longer.

His "gyne" beds have halved since 1982.

Two wards and an operating theatre in the Soho-based Hospital for Women, where he does much of his work, are shut, despite a recent £100,000 facelift.

In 48 hours, 20 to 24 operations would have taken place in that theatre.

In out-patients paediatrician Charles Brook is finishing a clinic, where he has seen 20 children all with brain tumours.

He still frets about the baby discharged stay who became a cot death victim five days later.

"Patients go home too soon," he complains.

Although the Bloomsbury Health Authority are satisfied that the baby was fit and well when discharged, Professor Jacobs says: "Quote cases like that to NHS big-wigs and they start to massage their statistics. It's bloody disgraceful."



Gerry Crowther, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Ian Hunter, Denis Hussey, Bill Kennedy, Alison McDougall, Mike Maloney, Peter Nicholl, Harry Prosser, George Phillips, Bill Rowntree, Arthur Sidey, Phil Spencer, Doreen Spooner, Peter Stone, John Varley, Dick Williams.

Fury over hospital cash squeeze

BABY IS SENT HOME TO DIE

A SICK baby named Sara was sent home from hospital to a seedy bedsitter because her bed was needed for another child. Three days later she was dead.

Four-month-old Sara's distraught mother rushed her back to the hospital from the freezing bedsit. But it was too late. Last

EXCLUSIVE

By JILL PALMER

night Health Service cash cuts were blamed for the tragedy.

Hospital consultant Dr. Charles Brook said: "I'm sure she would have stood a chance if we had kept her in."

Labour's health spokes-

●Turn to Page Two

From Page One

man Frank Dobson declared: "This child's death is sad proof of what everyone has been saying except the Government—bed cuts will cost lives."

Sara was in London's Middlesex Hospital where eight children's beds have

been closed to save money.

She spent four days there with a tummy bug before going to her unmarried mother in Soho.

Dr. Brook said: "There was a child waiting to come in for treatment for cancer. We needed the bed desperately.

"Obviously we gave the mother instructions how to care for her child. But she just couldn't cope.

"She was in a terrible state when she brought her daughter back dead."

Sara was recorded as a cot death victim.

Dr. Brook added: "Normally we would fix

up social workers and health visitors before allowing a baby home.

"But because of the squeeze there was nobody free to do that and there just wasn't the time."

Bloomsbury health authority have defended their cost-cutting decision.