Beaver

Oct '72

number 8

GIA plan delayed

The environmental plan for the central area General Improvement Area -- which won public backing at a crowded meeting in June -- is being held up. Even the trial road closures aren't likely to begin till at least March next year.

Hackney planners told shocked members of the newly elected GIA residents' steering committee at their first meeting in August that the delay was caused by "new legislation".

An even bigger blow to a same traffic policy for the area was the news that the Council had agreed to the planners' recommendation that De Beauvoir Road should not be closed to through traffic. The residents' report, which has strong backing locally, argued that it should be closed - or it would remain a danger to all, split the New Town estate, and spray more through traffic down fewer streets.

The officers have back-tracked on a proposal which they previously backed. The environmental plan wanted to close the road round the square to make room for play & amenity areas (but with access for emergency & service traffic). Now the officers propose to keep a 13-16ft road round all sides. Not a word to local people !

NONSENSE

The planners say local hospitals oppose the closure: which is just nonsense. Whitmore Bridge could be closed to all but ambulances & emergency services — which would ease their novement & clear other traffic away.

IF YOU, YOUR CHILDREN OR YOUR OLD FOLK

- have to cross from one side of the New Town estate to the other (to reach shops or the new community centre - when it is built)
- want to send your children to play in the new menity areas in the square from the other side of De Beauvoir Rogd
- have to cross Ardleigh, Stanford or De Beauvoir Roads, particularly at peak traffic periods

THEN THE COUNCIL'S DECISION SHOULD BE OF REAL CONCERN TO YOU. LET'S GET HEADY TO PROTEST ABOUT IT.

Steve Allen was re-elected chairman of the GIA committee, and Stam Miller was elected vice-chairman.

Graham Parsey, George Shephard and Stuart Weir were co-opted.

FRANK FLETCHER & GRAHAM PARSEY

DANGER! MEN AT WORK

Watch out if the Council starts digging up the road in front of your home! Last spring, Council workness did repair work on a sewer in Englefield Road. The Council warned three of the nearby householders who used the sewer that there might be a small sum charged, but as the work involved was on the sewer under the pavement outside their homes, they soon forgot about it.

Suddenly, in July - a year later - Mr Hollingshead, one of the three, received a bill for £127 from the Borough Treasurer's department. He had received no further warning. No explanation of what work had been done or what the Council's authority was came with the bill. Just a brusque statement that if it was not paid within 14 days, the Council would make a charge of 7 per cent interest on the bill.

He has since tried to get an explanation, and even went to see Council officials about it. All he extracted from them was a vague remark that a house-owner's responsibility extended out to the middle of the road in front of his house. Is it really old fashioned to think that Council officials are public servants? Or are they employed and paid for by us to bully us like this?

SOUTHERN AREA

Still no news of the decision of the inquiry into the Southern Area General Improvement Area. We keep asking the Department of the Environment to get a move on. As soom as we have news, we will send round a special De Beaver news sheet with full details.

COUNCIL TENANTS CAUGHTIN THE ACT

Council tenants in De Beauvoir face rent increases of up to £l a week from October under the Government's Housing Finance Act. Hackney Council voted to implement the Act by 33-27 votes in August.

Temants on Lockner Rd estate discussed the Act (see report) last month, and councillors Gerry Ross, Bob Masters and Jim Warner toured the New Town estate with a loud-speaker to call for a two-week rent strike (in which they are joining). "Seven councillors who voted against implementation are on the housing management committee," says Coun Warner. "They won't evict families for rent arrears brought about by the strike."

What isn't as well known is that

• Council tenants face the danger of continuing rent increases of up to 75p a week every year as rents go up to "fair" rent level

• Council tenants can claim rent rebates from the Council to cut the cost of the rents they pay.

Rent Fixing

Tenants & their associations can fight the increases to "fair" rents (though their right to do so is very restricted under the Act). The Council must publish a list of its provisional "fair" rents for Council homes by February 9, 1973, at the latest. Then:

The Council must send all tenants the provisional "fair" rent for their home. Tenants can also see the full list of "fair" rents assessed for other Council homes at the Town Hall (and perhaps at other Council offices).

Tenants have 2 months from receiving notice of the provisional "fair" rent to put forward arguments for reducing it. The Council must consider these arguments. The Council must then send the list of all provisional "fair" rents (either changed or confirmed) to the Rent Scrutiny Board, the body which finally fixes the "fair" rents. There is no appeal against the Board's decisions.

If tenants just send in statements that their existing rents are "fair", then the rent-fixing Board has an easy job (anyway, who says the existing rents are fair or "fair"?) The Board can simply fix rents block by block, and even estate by estate. All the two-bedroom flats on the New Town estate could, for example, be given the same "fair" rent.

But if tenants send in carefully argued reasons for reducing their rents which vary from flat to flat -- and the Council accepts these arguments -- the Board has to consider "fair" rents for all Council homes individually. The Act says all the circumstances of Council homes, and particularly their "age, character and locality", and state of repair, have to be taken into account when fixing their "fair" rents.

Traffic, dust, etc

So tenants in Fermain and St Martins Court can argue that the dust from Picons reduces the value of their homes. Tenants of homes along Kingsland Rd on the new Lockner estate can argue that the traffic moise cuts the value of their flats. Tenants can point to other

But darling, it's
Such a bargain it's
only £30,000, it was
E35,000 last week...
and it's got all the
original features &
look at the chimiey
pots, we could grow
flowers out of them:

UNIVERSAL FOLK

Every Friday

things like smoke or fumes from factories, a noisy play area, an erratic lift, draughty access balconies, the Granville "knock", bad sound insulation, condensation in the kitchen, etc.

Rent Rebates

Tenants earning up to £40 a week or more may be entitled to rent rebates, depending on their family circumstances. Anyone who is in doubt should fill in the application form the Council has sent round anyway. And as soon as possible. A Citizens Advice Bureau will help fill in a form. Rebates can be worth up to £8 a week -- so they are worth claiming. Next issue: PRIVATE TENANTS and RENTS

Tenants' fight

A meeting in the crypt of St Peters organised by the new Lockner Estate Tenants Association last month discussed the effect of the Act on Council & private tenants. Coun Bob Masters explained the position of Labour councillors who voted against implementing the Act. Tenants should do everything possible to delay its introduction.

Bob Darke, of the Hackney United Tenants Federation, called for tenants to withhold 2 weeks rent in protest & urged support for the federation's policy of seeking TUC and Labour Party action.

A report by the chairman of the tenants association put the view that anger about 'fair' rents should not be chammelled into the arms of N.P.s & councillors or wasted in appeals to "move the TUC". It was a tenants' fight and in the end they would have to rely on their own strength. The whole community had to be involved & real help would come from people who didn't want the tenants' vote. Tenants didn't stop being workers once they came home from work. They were printers, building workers, postmen, etc, and we should seek solidarity here at grass roots level.

It was unlikely that mything short of a total rent strike could defeat the immediate rent increases. As little had been done to organise this, it was not likely to happen in October. "We need real organisation, estate by estate, block by block, street by street, Council tenants and private tenants."

ED RUSSELL

Open air meeting

The Lockner Estate Tenants Association was formed at an open air meeting on the estate. It was decided that a strong & independent tenants organisation should be set up with block representatives to give out & collect information quickly & effectively. A constitution which involved the greatest possible number of people in the association's work was adopted. Playgroups, women's group, old people, kids activity, etc, would be linked to the main body of tenants. People were urged to control the association's development. Where there is isolation & frustration, a tenants' association is a key factor in organising community action. Its beginning should mark the birth of tenants' self-activity & a wider understanding of their problems. ED RUSSELL

Prees please

Watch for THEATRE OPENING Oct, Nov

Culford Grove is a short, bright road with levely wide pavements which would look very pleasant with trees ... and it is going to have them soon. Some residents of the Grove sent a letter to the Council (Acting Borough Engineer) and he, in turn, passed it on to the Open Spaces Superintendent who has said that trees will be planted in the Grove this winter. We feel lucky and grateful to the Council and we hope that other areas of De Besuvoir Town may be fortunate enough to become greener in the near future.

ROSALIND VERITY



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Burnt fash fingers ...?



An interesting sidelight on the excesses of the London property boom is provided by the last half year's history of 178 Southgate Road.

First offered by trendy estate agent Roy Brooks in January for £17,995, in an Observer advertisement which began "FASH DE BEAUVOIR TOWN, N.1. ... " and ended "Parking for 3 cars. INTERESTING GARDEN !", it was later withdrawn from Brooks and advertised privately in The Times.

In April, this "dominant, mid-19th century family house, thoughtfully and imaginatively modernized" with a "3 car forecourt" and a "dramatic split-level L-shape reception room opening to large terrace" was for sale again, with "offers over £19000 for quick sale" being invited.

By June, the asking price had crept up to £22,000. But presumably prospective buyers tended to shy off when they discovered that the "forecourt" was no more than the front garden shamefully - and badly asphalted to give a space big enough to take two Minis and an invalid carriage; and that the "IN-TERESTING GARDEN !", - one of the smallest in the area - is intensively cultivated with thistles.

Those who ventured inside found that the modernization was only "thoughtful" in that it had been designed to create one impressive room and a pleasant master bedroom; the rest of the house had barely been touched except that one attic bedroom had been turned into a dingy boxroom by removal of a gable window. But eventually, hoist by his own gazumping, the vendor was apparently forced to sell for a rumoured £15,000 - because he had to complete the purchase of another property he was going to "thoughtfully modernize" in the Liverpool Road. Net now it is for sale again -- Debenham, Tewson & Chimnocks, jointly with Prebbles, are offering it at (wait for it) £25,000. At least the first salesman did spend on some "improvements" and even lived there for a time. The present owner doesn't seem to be bothering to live there or to spend anything . . he is just after a fast buck. Let us hope that the collapsing housing boom and shortage of mortgage funds means that this speculator will burn his fash fingers. ' JEREMY HAMAND

137 BALLS POND ROAD N1 CAVET is a FREE community newspaper for the people of De Beauvoir - old & new towns. We are sponsored by the De Besuvoir Association, a reg -istered charity, but are here to help everyone and not just Association members. We're pleased to print your letters, news, pictures, ideas & answer questions. Please send contributions for the December issue in by November 20 latest to Doffy Weir, 137 Balls Pond Road, N.1. Thanks to those who helped with this De Beaver.

'IT'S NOT THE MONEY · · · · · · IT'S THE COMPANY'

When shopping in De Beauvoir New Town, Downham Road, you may have noticed a large new building next to the supermarket and wondered what it is. Well its proper name is the HACKNEY ASSOCIATION WORKSHOP FOR THE ELDERLY and it opened last February under the supervision of Mrs Daniels who met us and showed us round, and is very willing to do the same for anyone interested.

The building is pleasantly modern with lots of light and many wonderful plants growing in the warmth of the central heating. It's spacious with a large workroom, a very comfortable restroom, beautifully clean lavatories, an office and a kitchen.

"We do any work that an old person is capable of doing and that local industry can supply us with" is how Mrs Daniels described the function of the workshop, and indeed the very cheerful workers, seated four to a table, were doing light assembly work and packaging the day we called. Local firms - among them Klinger Boxes, Mortimer Road, Florida Auto, Tottenham Road, and Dory's of Kingsland Road deliver and collect the work which is done by local people.



It's all light work and the jobs are small and can be done sitting dom . In fact they are therapeuties as one old lady told us "It keeps the fingers moving and the arthritis away". All the old folk said how much this outlet had helped them to get out and meet people and how they thoroughly enjoy themselves while earning a bit of money. "It's not the money we come for, it's the company" was a remark we heard many times.

The workshop is open Monday-Friday, 10-12 am and 2-4 pm and up to ten hours a week can be worked. The pay is 9p per hour so up to £2 a week can be earned. This cannot affect pension money or Social Security, so please, if you'd like a couple of hours light work a day in a congenial atmosphere (men and women welcome) and are a resident of Hackney, go along to the workshop and ask for Mrs Daniels. There is room for one hundred people - and only 30 go so far.

Mrs Levy, Mrs Biddle and 81 year old Mrs Franklin from St Martins Court spoke for everyone when they said "It's a real pleasure to work here".

We are organising another "night out" for old people this Christmas - possibly, another Music Hall evening at Horton Hall. Please can we have some generous donations to Mrs Liz Fletcher, 74 De Beauvoir Rd ? And please send them in now.

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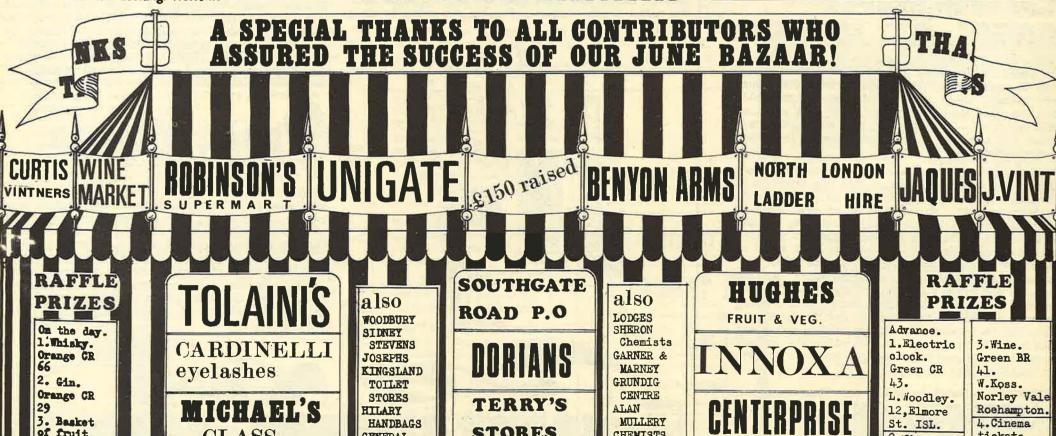
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Mrs Doris Kibblewhite, secretary of the De Beauvoir Association, is retiring after four years. Mrs Kibblewhite became the secretary almost immediately after the Association was founded and has since been a tireless worker for local people. Quite apart from her work as secretary, she has played an important part in other local initiatives - such as the setting up of the play-group at the Kingsgate Estate hall - and has always been ready to help anyone individually as well. To many people she is the De Beauvoir Association; to some, she is "the lady on the bicycle" who delivers leaflets or De Beaver, who rang the public health department about the damp, who advised on a leasehold difficulty, who got the De Beauvoir Trust to re-house them. She won't thank us for writing about her - she has always avoided self-publicity - but to us she gave the De Beauvoir Association a human face and heart.

TOP OF THE COPS

Did you know we have our own policemen -- two bobbies who are on the spot, year-in, year-out? PC Anderson, 29, covers the morthern part of De Beauvoir. I asked him how he felt about his job.

"A policeman gets a lot more responsibility now than he used to," he said. "My grandfather was a policeman and we chat about the differences between his work and mine. Before the war, senior officers were called in where now a constable can deal with the problem on the spot.

"Up to 4 years ago, there were 24-hour patrols by two men and a policeman's beat was always being changed. Now a policeman is assigned to a particular area, so

he can get to know it wall, and the people in it can get to know him. It's important that people should feel that we're there to help. If they know you, they're that much more likely to give you a ring if they spot anything unusual going on."

PC Anderson says that a drawback of being a policemen is that friends tend to clam up at first when they realise what he does for a living. "People tend not to realise that you're a human being -- just like mybody else."

WILLIAM VERITY

DE BEAUVOIR'S LOSS

Two couples from Buckingham Road, friends for many years, are being forced to leave the area - Eric and Joy Pavely for Leigh on Sea, Ernest and Fanny Veazey probably for Wanstead. Neither pair are keen to go, but the decline of industry in central London and the spiralling cost of living in De Beauvoir have combined to make it hard for them to stay. More's the pity as De Beauvoir, where the Veazeys have lived for 41 years and the Pavelys for 23, will miss them very much. Also, the Pavelys have done much work for the De Beauvoir Association. Joy Pavely will still be very much around though for some time to come, visiting her mother, who still lives in De Beauvoir Road.

All four members of the SAAG planning team, Tom Clay, Niek Hare, Jon Stevens and Peter Misheon are now through their final exams and are firmly on their way to become fully-fledged architects and planners. They all remain vitally interested in everything that goes on in De Beauvoir and wish to be kept in touch through De Beauvoir.

The Good Neighbours Club formed just two months ago wish to thank Mr Bill Nicholson and the players of Tottenham Hotspur FC for their signatures on a foctball given by John Pratt as first prize in a raffle and presented by Mrs M Pratt at the time of the draw on Wednesday October 18th in the Talbot salcon at 8.30 pm. The proceeds are being donated to a little party for our Senior Citizens in the salcon of the Talbot in the near future. MRS K PRATT MRS HALL AND COMMITTEE

We would like to welcome to De Beauvoir, the Reverend John Maggley, who will shortly be taking up his duties as the new vicar at St. Peter's Church. The Induction Service is being held in the Church on Monday, 9th. October at 8 o'clock and everyone is invited.

Council changes system-built homes

Hackney Council's plans to erect industrialised housing on the pre-fab sites in Hertford, Englefield, Ardleigh & De Beauvoir roads have been modified after local pressure. De Beaver reported in March that the Council was going to use system-built houses on the sites which are all near or in the Conservation Area in central De Beauvoir.

In fact, very sketchy plans were put in — which did not even show what the new housing would look like, let alone how it would fit into the neighbourhood. The De Beauvoir Association pressed Hackney to call together the Planning Consultative Committee which

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the Council set up three years ago to provide for public participation and which had never met.

It met 1 By then, the Council's officers had drawn up plans which met some local criticism. The new housing will use bricks which match existing houses, and on 3 sites the new housing will be in proportion to the old.

But the Council plans three-storey housing in Hertford Road -- an otherwise intact street of two-storey villas : It hadn't applied to the Department of the Environment for grants to design housing which did not conform to the usual cost limits. But Councillor Alf Linzell, the chairman, undertook to look into these two points & to report back. So the meeting was constructive and showed that public participation can work in Hackney.

GRAHAM PARSEY

CHEAP PLAY SITE?

At last, the New Town community hall & library scheme is moving again. Tenders for the work must be in by November. This means work could start in the spring. But will it? Frank Fletcher failed to get a starting date from Council officers at the last GIA steering committee meeting. He complained that 2 summers had come and gone and nothing had been done with the site — which could have been cleared & levelled for the hard-pressed kids of the area to play on, A high screen on the Downham and De Beauvoir Road sides of the site would make it perfectly safe. Even if work is due to start in 1973, the site could still provide a cheap play-space for winter & spring games.

Dr Thorpe, whose home was compulsorily purchased and hastily demolished over 18 months ago to make way for the community hall scheme, says she would feel less bitter about all which had happened had the sits been put to good use. To see children playing there would be some consolation. Local shop-keepers would also be pleased to see something done. With so much rubbish about, nobody knows we are here, is a remark which is frequently made.

The annual meeting of the De Beauvoir Association is at 8pm on Wednesday, November 8, in the cryst of St Peters Church, Northchurch Rd. All members welcome.



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GIVE US A CROSSING!

For some time people living in the Southgate Road area have been aware of the dangerous traffic conditions in this road, particularly between its junctions with Northchurch Road and Downham Road.

This stretch of road is probably used by over 200 local households every day, because of the sheps and bus stops on either side. Crossing the road is made more dangerous because of the large number of parked vehicles, some illegally parked on yellow lines and some double parked at times. On such a busy main road it is not surprising that pedestrians forced to dodge between oncoming cars endanger their lives and are a hazard to motorists.

Indeed, in the last month two very serious accidents have occurred near the shops; one causing the death of an elderly woman and the other involving a young child, who was severely injured. To avoid more accidents and to improve the general safety of pedestrians, application has been made to the GLC and to the Borough of Hackney for a pedestrian crossing at some point between Northchurch Road and Southgate Grove.

There are traffic lights at Englefield Road and a zebra crossing at Downham Road, the latter serving the Council estate. These are apparently thought to be sufficient for this stretch of road. But, in view of recent accidents, local opinion believes this is not so. A petition with over 400 signatures has been forwarded to the Mayor of Hackney for consideration by the appropriate Council committee at an early date. The petition has now been put through to the Council's Policy Committee.

The position is complicated in Southgate Road as the boundary between Hackney and Islington runs down the middle of the road. Therefore it was felt that Islington Borough should be informed of the residents' request and accordingly a copy of the petition



has been forwarded to the Mayor of Islington. He has sent it to the Islington Town Clerk. We are also grateful for the support given to us in this matter by Mr Clinton-Davis and Mr John Grant, the MPs for Central Hackney and Islington.

Let us hope that if sufficient pressure is brought to bear upon the authorities concerned a crossing will be provided. VIVIAN STOCKDALE

Traffic lights needed

Following the fatal accident to Mr. Charles
Toomey of "Tolley's" stores, a petition, signed
by 652 customers and neighbours, has been handed
to De Beauvoir ward councillor Jim Warmer. It
calls for urgent action by the Council to make
the pedestrian crossings at the junction of
Stanford/Englefield and De Beauvoir Roads safer
by the introduction of a system of traffic lights.
The councillor stated that the petition would be
presented, through the mayor, to either the policy committee or the accident prevention
committee.

WARNING

Reports have come in from residents of the Southern area that they have been visited by people purporting to come from the Council and asking to take measurements of their houses or gardens.

If you are visited by such a person, ask to see their letter of authority. If you are not satisfied, take the caller's name and contact the Town Hall to ask about the survey; alternatively, please contact a member of the De Beauvoir Association committee for advice. Do not admit anyone to your home unless you are completely satisfied that the caller is on legitimate business.

NEWSIN ERIEFNEWSIN ERIEFNEWSIN ERIEFNEWSIN ER

Councillor Jim Warmer is organising a petition about the broken rubbish sheds on the New Town estate. He has asked for repairs to the sheds in Rosel & Fermain courts, both of which have been set on fire. "The shed at Rozel has no doors and the other at Fermain has only one door. They've been like that for 18 months," he says. He thinks the answer is steel or metal doors.

De Beauvoir's three ward councillors are asking the Hackney Council to keep the two launderettes on the New Town estate. Coinamatic, the firm which ran the launderettes, has withdrawn from its launderettes on Council estates in Hackney, and the Council is holding meetings with councillors ward by ward to discuss what should be done. The difficulty is providing adequate supervision for the launderettes if they are opened again. As yet, the Council has come to no decision, and does not seem to have asked the other local launderette operators if they are interested in taking over.

Fenants in Rozel Court have set up a social club & have the loam of the hall on the Colville estate for bingo on Thursday evenings. Monthly collections are being taken for trips, parcels for OAPs at Christmas and other activities. Further information from Mrs Rose (No 50) or Mrs Sanders (No 71).

Residents of Brunswick Terrace, in Balls Pond Road, hars not together to send a petition to the regional director of Unigate about new barbed wire fencing which has gone up between United Dairies and their bask gardens. The fencing made the back gardens look like prisoner-of-war camps, they complained. They also asked the dairy to do something about the noise of the refrigeration plant. Unigate have promised to put things right. So far all that has happened is that the noise has got worse!

LETTER

A snippet of information that may be of interest to any Tomlinson living in the area. Whilst searching for my forebears in the Parish Register of St Mary and St Benedict, Huntingdon, I saw the following entry: "1823 February 22nd married by licence Huntingdon Henry Tomlinson of Kingsland Road in the St John's Parish of Hackney, County Middleser, and Hannah Tomlinson of St Benedict's Parish, Huntingdon.

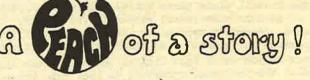
MISS G.M. NORMAN, 106 Hertford Road

Overnight Lorries

With the changes in the lighting law in May and the ban in Tower Hamlets, the number of lorries parked without lights in De Beauvoir has increased this summer. There is no law to stop parking overnight but lorries must be parked on the nearside and display lights front and rear. Unlike the drivers of cars and light vans, lorry drivers MUST show lights.

It is up to us to improve the safety of our streets by bringing the attention of drivers of unlighted lorries to their legal requirements. The police have agreed to give cautions to persistent offenders if they are notified. The object is not to persecute lorry drivers but to make our streets safer at night.

ALAN RAYNER



People in De Beauvoir Square have been complaining to the Council and to the police for ages about the huge lorries and trailers which get parked in the Square and move out noisily in the early hours of the morning. The police said nothing could be done unless the lorries were double-parked and were being loaded. Came the day shortly after the dock strike was over when three lorries in the Square were triple-parked and peaches were being transferred. Down swooped a police ear and earried off a box of peaches.

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