

Port tenants

TOLMERS

REHOUSING AT LAST!

The action in Tolmers Village is about to begin. In the next few weeks over 40 families from here will move into the newly-built Council flats in nearby Netley Street. Most of them are delighted at the prospect of living in accommodation provided with such 'luxuries' as bathrooms and running hot water.

But not everyone is as pleased as the Council would like them to be. Some are aghast at the expensive rents (one man has found that he will be paying £8 more per week). Some, worried about the cost of moving, have approached the Council for help, only to be told that 'it is unlikely that removal expenses will be granted'. And no-one will receive Home Loss Payments although many have lived around the Square for over 20 years and were under the impression they *had* to move.

WHAT NOW?

Residents are asking what will happen to the houses when they are vacated. The TVA suggested that they should be used for short-life housing until the proposed redevelopment takes place, which is likely to be at least another two years times. Mr Aldridge, Camden's Housing Manager, said that the Council could hardly re-house families in these places in their present condition, and that to start work on bringing them up to standard was 'out of the question.'

The landlords, Joe Levy's Stock Conversion, cannot re-let the properties in their present state because of notices served on them by the Public Health Inspector — and they have no intention of improving them. In a letter to Camden's Director of Housing they stated that 'we do not propose carrying out any further works on those properties where you are about to re-house the tenants as we consider that it would be *wasteful misuse* of building resources'.

The Council has agreed to let Stock Conversion know when the houses become vacant so that they can 'arrange for builders to be present to secure the premises' against 'illegal occupiers'.

There is little chance they will succeed. In case they hadn't realised it, there is what is euphemistically referred to as 'The Housing Crisis'. Or, to put it more plainly, people without homes. They will no longer stand by and see empty property 'wastefully misused'. Whether it suits the council and Stock Conversion or not, these houses will certainly be occupied.