

BREADLINE BRITAIN 1990s

PROGRAMME 6

POST-FILMING SCRIPT

FINAL MASTER: 26.03.91

TITLES

SUB-TITLE: THE BOTTOM LINE

SYNC MONTAGE

YVONNE

Captions?

I would say I'm poor, because I can't even afford to buy clothes for my children. I can't...I can't even have a decent meal sometimes. Sometimes I don't even know where the next meal is coming from.

STEVE, 317, p.16

...with things going up, just the basic essentials, bread and food, it goes up every single week; we find it very very hard to manage.

KIM, SYNC, 786/1, p.7

If I was to sit here and was a goodie goodie and say, right, I'm never going to beg or do anything, then basically I'd be starving and I'd be dead in the street.

RICHARD

So I mean, you really are struggling on the money. I mean there's no ifs and buts.

JULIE, 154/1, p.24 or p.23

You ask me if I'm poor. Yes, I am poor, to what I used to be. I mean, you've got to be poor, when you can't go out and buy what you want, when you want it.

JIMMY ROBERTS, SYNC, 197/1, p.13

But seeing as I'm not able to work, it just pulls the plug out the drain, you know. Just like you just keep on going down and down. You sink to what you'd

never thought you'd sink to.

ALISON

I would describe myself as poor because I haven't got nothing to call my own at the moment.

JOHN, 100/2, pp.8/9

Just cope, you know, day by day, week after week, it's just the same thing all the time. Coping all the time.

COMPILATION

COMM

These are among the 11 million people found to be in poverty by a special survey commissioned for Breadline Britain.

They all fall below the minimum living standard laid down by society at large.

This is a rise of 3½ million since the first Breadline Britain survey in 1983.

The policies of the 1980s have failed the poor.

In this, the final programme, we look at what can be done to reduce poverty.

Change to Job Centre

There are two parts to our approach. The first is aimed at helping the poor become less dependent on State benefits.

John Malone is still unemployed 7 years after leaving school. The Breadline Britain survey found 1 in 6 of the poor are unemployed.

JOHN, V/O, SYNC, 100/2, p.10

I mean I've applied for jobs, I've applied for quite a few. They just don't seem to be interested if you haven't got no experience in that type of work. I mean, but you can't really get the experience unless they give you a chance to do that job.

COMM

John hasn't given up his search for work. But in today's job market there are few jobs for those with no qualifications and no experience.

During the 1980s, new training programmes have been introduced aimed at helping the long-term unemployed into work.

Last year John undertook the latest - Employment Training. But like the other schemes he's tried, it didn't lead to a job.

JOHN, SYNC

Just a number to add to the employment figures, that's all; it was just a little scheme like that with a cooped-up... Because when you start on the ET, you don't have to sign on any more. And you actually get took off the unemployment list, even though you are still getting your giro.

Table tennis

COMM

Existing training programmes have failed to get the long-term unemployed back to work. Few leave with any vocational qualifications, and only a quarter end up with a job.

Paul Convery,
establisher 727/731

We asked the Unemployment Unit, a research and campaigning group, what could be done to improve these training schemes. They proposed a variety of measures.

PAUL CONVERY, SYNC, 723/1, p.7

There are five key elements to it. The first is that there's got to be good careers counselling and guidance for the...for the unemployed. There's got to be a fair choice between training and education and within those sorts of offers. It's got to be properly funded so that there'll be quality guaranteed and so that you can get relevant vocational qualifications at the end of it.

There must be a visible link to the world of employment and jobs. And there's also got to be an economic incentive, a decent allowance that's linked to the needs that trainees have, so that people have an economic incentive to stay on a scheme once they join it.

COMM

Derelict factories
here

But lack of skills is not John's only problem. Over the 1980s, Britain has lost much of its manufacturing base.

In many areas like Cleveland, there's an absolute shortage of jobs. For every vacancy at the local Job Centre, there's 30 people chasing it.

From earlier

JOHN, V/O, p.45

How do I feel? Pretty angry about it. There's not much of a chance of me getting a job.

John + Martin walking

COMM

Investment in training not only helps the unemployed into existing jobs, but also creates jobs.

PAUL ORMEROD, SYNC, 811/1, p.7

A better trained and more highly educated labour force will of itself create jobs. For two reasons. First of all and most importantly, when we look today at areas of high unemployment, we can see at the same time, vacancies which firms simply cannot fill because the unemployed do not have the required skill levels for companies to employ them. So that's an important reason. I think secondly, companies are encouraged to invest in regions, and invest in industries, where there is a high level of skill of the labour force. So that in itself gives firms the optimism and the encouragement to invest, and therefore to create more

jobs.

COMM

So, these new training measures would improve the unemployed's prospects.

PAUL CONVERY, SYNC, 724/1, p.8

It gives guarantees of vocational qualifications which are relevant, and has a visible link into the world of work. And we would hope at least to double the success rate of existing schemes for long-term unemployed.

GRAPHIC:

BREADLINE BRITAIN ANTI-

POVERTY MEASURES:

FROM BENEFITS TO WORK:

-Improved Education and

Training

COMM

Our first measure to help the poor off benefits is improved education and training. This could lift up to half of the long-term unemployed into work, and through benefit savings and tax revenue, eventually be self-financing.

Jimmy Roberts going to
to disabled centre

Jimmy Roberts was semi-paralysed
by an accident at work 4 years
ago. The Breadline Britain
survey found that 1 in 6 of the
poor are disabled people. Jimmy
would love to work, but finding a
job might be more difficult than
for John.

SYNC if pos.

JIMMY, V/O, 197/1, p.12

The benefit is very low. It
might seem a lot to a lot of
people, but by the time you pay
everything out, you haven't got
nothing.

JIMMY, SYNC, 197, pp.15/16

I find it very difficult. I'd
love to work, to be able to work,
to be normal, as we call normal.

At disabled centre

COMM

Jimmy goes to a special centre
for disabled people twice a week.
It gives him an opportunity to
practice his main hobby -

computing.

With his skills and interest, Jimmy could work. But because of widespread discrimination and inadequate training, only a third of disabled people are in work. Overcoming these barriers would help reduce poverty among this group.

SALLY WITCHER, 795/1, P.16

We have a number of recommendations which we feel would make a very big difference to disabled people seeking employment. The most important of these by far is the introduction of anti-discrimination legislation. Currently there is legislation to prevent discrimination in terms of gender or race, but nothing to prevent discrimination because of disability. The quota system needs to be enforced, it hasn't been. It was introduced in 1944, since which there have been only

ten prosecutions. More resources are urgently needed for training and rehabilitation. And I suppose finally what we would need is some form of commission to make sure that the introduction of legislation is done properly, and to monitor its operation.

GRAPHIC:

BREADLINE BRITAIN ANTI-

POVERTY MEASURES:

FROM BENEFITS TO WORK:

-Improved Education &
Training

-More Jobs for the Disabled

COMM

Our second measure to help the poor off benefits is the removal of barriers to disabled people getting work. The cost to the taxpayer of this would be minimal.

Leaving flat with 3
children

YVONNE

Life is very very difficult. By the time I get my money on the Monday it's all gone in the same day, it doesn't even last a week. And by the end of the week, you're wondering where your next penny's going to come from.

COMM

Playground

Separated from her husband,
Yvonne Barnett has to bring up
their 3 children alone on Income
Support.

Simply to keep her children well
clothed and fed, she has ended up
in serious debt.

The Breadline Britain survey
found that 1 in 10 of the poor
are single parents.

More Yvonne

Most of this group depend, like
Yvonne, on State benefits.

To reduce this dependency, the
Government has plans to force
fathers to pay maintenance.

Keep her in
playground

But even if Yvonne's husband paid
maintenance, she wouldn't be a
penny better off.

YVONNE, W/T, p.19

Even if he was to give me any
money, it wouldn't make much

difference, because I know that the DHSS would stop it out of the money that I'm getting now. You know, I'd still be in the same position.

PETER BARCLAY, SYNC, 778/1

Where a single mother is on Income Support, there is no incentive for her to enforce payment of maintenance by the father and really no incentive on the father to pay that maintenance in the first place, because any maintenance paid in that situation simply is knocked off her benefit and the money goes to the State.

COMM

Yvonne

Enforced maintenance would save the Government money - an estimated £500m.

But for single parents, maintenance is only worth having if they're working, for then they

keep some of it.

Yvonne would love to work and was recently offered her old job back. But because of the high costs of child care, she'd have been worse off.

YVONNE, 632/2, p.17;:

I was looking into the possibilities, whether or not I could return back to work. After I sat down and I looked at my figures of what was going out, which was £300 more than what was coming in, I said there was no way.

PENNY GOSTIN, SYNC, 832/1, p.12

The main barrier seems to be the lack of child care facilities, and if there was a network of quality child care provision at a reasonable cost, then I think we would see quite a large proportion of lone parents seeking work very quickly.

COMM

So enforcing maintenance only helps single parents if there's reasonably priced child care, enabling more to go out to work. This too would be self-financing.

PENNY GOSTYN, 826/1, p.3

Well obviously there would be savings on Income Support as women move off Income Support and into work. And there would also be money accruing to the Revenue from Income Tax that would then be paid, and National Insurance which would also be paid. So in fact the costs of a childcare package would be minimal.

COMM

REPRISE GRAPHIC:

So, our third measure to help the poor off benefits is increased child care provision for single parents.

BREADLINE BRITAIN ANTI-

POVERTY MEASURES:

FROM BENEFITS TO WORK:

-Improved Education &

Training

All three measures could be implemented at a minimal cost

-More Jobs for the Disabled

-Increased Child Care

to the taxpayer.

Provision

Steve gardening (ugh!)

Although work is important to help alleviate poverty, it does

or cycling (?)

Bring in cycling

not necessarily mean an end to

from Prog.3

it. The Breadline Britain survey

found that a third of those in

poverty were in work. Steve

Thompson is a gardener at

Liverpool University.

He only takes home £117 a week.

He's not among the very poorest

of the poor, but with a family

it's still hard to manage.

STEVE, 319/1, p.7

In our case though we just

haven't got the money coming in.

There's only one income coming in.

COMM

Family at home

Their problems have been

Tea or Dominoes

growing in recent years, as

Steve's wages have fallen further and further behind.

More with family

Over the 1980s, the wages of the lowest paid have dropped behind those of the highest paid by a third.

The minimum living standard set by society in the Breadline Britain survey has risen in line with increasing prosperity. But the low paid have fallen more and more below it.

MAUREEN, SYNC, 350, p.13

His wages haven't been going up as much as other people's. I mean, last year it only went up two or three per cent, where others were going up nine, ten,

you know, even fifteen per cent, you know. And even the last few years it's not been going up that much.

COMM

Steve's wage is less than half the national average. To lift him and his family out of poverty, his wage would need to be increased to two-thirds of the average.

CHRIS POND, SYNC, 818/1, p.15

The minimum wage set at two-thirds average earnings would have an enormous impact in reducing poverty for millions of families. And of course many other European countries already have a minimum wage set at that sort of level. The difficulty for Britain is that if you were to introduce it immediately it would cause considerable disruption, because so many firms have come to rely on low pay.

But if you were to phase it in over time, the experience from other European countries shows that you could overcome any possible employment or inflationary effects.

GRAPHIC:

COMM

BREADLINE BRITAIN ANTI-

So a phased-in minimum wage

POVERTY MEASURES:

set at two-thirds of average

HELPING THE LOW PAID:

earnings would lift most of

A Minimum Wage

the low paid out of poverty.

Julie eating (?) and talking to budgie

But on top of these measures to help the low paid, and the earlier ones to improve work opportunities, the level of benefit remains critical to reducing poverty.

Julie is a 77 year old widow.

The Breadline Britain survey found that a quarter of the poor are pensioners.

She stretches her pension to the limit.

JULIE, 152/1, p.6

There's a shop in the town that, gets to about 5 o'clock they sell off cheap bread and cakes. I usually manage to buy a couple of loaves at half price, or perhaps get a teacake or scones, which you can use and toast, they're very useful.

ACTUALITY

Julie chatting.

COMM starts after "...flowers are nice."

COMM

Over the 1980s, pensions and other benefits have not kept pace with the rising standards enjoyed by most of us. They've fallen more and more behind earnings.

PETER BARCLAY, p.5

On average the benefit levels, as a whole, have stayed steady in real terms; they have not

increased. Whereas average earnings have gone up by a very considerable amount, almost a third in real terms. So you've got a...a very big gap, increasing all the time, through the '80s between those on benefit and those in work.

JULIE, SYNC, 154/1, p.20

Because things don't go up twopence, or a penny, they go up tenpence. And you go in a shop one week and a thing has gone up from last week. You can't go...nothing ever goes down, it always goes up.

Julie going to chemist

COMM

In recent years, the Government has been encouraging more people to pay into their own private pension schemes. This was never an option for Julie.

JULIE, 153/1, p.13

No, I could never afford to pay a private pension, and the jobs I did didn't pay enough money to do very much saving with. But when I was younger, really pensions weren't...they were never thought about, we always used to think, well there'll be the old age pension when I'm old, and I'll be looked after.

More Julie

COMM

Private pensions will do nothing to help the current generation of pensioners.

Julie's living standard will continue to depend on the generosity of State benefits. Others too will continue to rely on benefits.

Richard

Our earlier reforms to improve job opportunities will not enable everybody to get work.

RICHARD, V/O, pp.3/4

Well, I've tried all over; wrote letters, tried papers, Job Centres. You go all over. But there's no such luck round Moss Side.

Richard

COMM

Unskilled and 50, Richard is likely to remain a victim of rapid industrial change, and the current recession.

Bring forward

RICHARD, V/O, NEW I/V, p.25

Every day you look at the papers or look at television, they're sacking people left, right and centre.

P.28

I don't think there's much prospect of getting a job. But I will try, and I keep trying, very hard to get one. But the point is at the moment, everything looks bleak, I mean very, very bleak.

More Steve

COMM

Until the day when a generous minimum wage could be implemented, the low paid will also depend on State help.

At the moment Steve receives £16.00 a week in Family Credit, a special means-tested benefit for the low paid. This is cheap, because it only goes to a minority of families.

But it traps the low paid into poverty. An increase in Steve's wages leads to a reduction in his Family Credit.

Thompsons
(bus sequence)

Child Benefit avoids this problem because it is not means-tested..

STEVE, V/O, NEW I/V, p.16

The Child Benefit money, it's very important I would say to people on low incomes.

V/O, p.17

I think the Government could do a lot more to put the Child Benefit up.. And a lot of families who are on lower income do need this family income for just day to day living.

COMM

Despite the recently-announced increases to Child Benefit, its value has still not kept pace with inflation.

CHRIS POND, SYNC, 813/1, p.5

The major argument for Child Benefit is that it gives help to low paid families without creating the sort of poverty trap which would result from things like Family Credit. It gives people a certain income which is paid to the mother, which is very important, and it's something on which they can build, which is not going to be taken away as their earnings rise, and which they know is always going to be

there.

COMM

So what can be done to improve the benefits on which these groups depend?

The Breadline Britain survey asked respondents how much extra income tax they'd be willing to pay to help the poor obtain the items they defined as necessities.

GRAPHIC:

BREADLINE BRITAIN SURVEY:
PAYING TO HELP THE POOR

75% said they'd pay an extra 1p in the pound, while 18% said they would not.

On a 5p increase, respondents were evenly balanced. 44% for and 44% against.

We asked John Hills, Co-Director of the Welfare State Programme, to devise a new benefits package, paid for by an extra 5p in Income Tax, the maximum political feasible.

JOHN HILLS, SYNC, 800/1, p.15

What I did was to see what could be financed by a fivepence increase in the basic rate of Income Tax from 25 to 30 pence in the pound. That was enough to almost restore the extent to which benefits had fallen behind general living standards since 1978. And it was enough for instance to increase the level of Child Benefit to £10 a week; to put 22½ per cent on the rates of the main National Insurance contributions, like the Retirement Pension or Unemployment Benefit; it was also enough to increase the main rates of Income Support by 17½ per cent: that wasn't quite as much as the increase in the National Insurance rates, because we wanted to avoid an increase in the number of people on means-tested benefits, and the kind of problems that would create for people being able to escape from poverty, and for incentives and so on.

GRAPHIC:

BREADLINE BRITAIN'S ANTI-
POVERTY MEASURES:
HIGHER BENEFITS
-Pensions up 22½%

COMM

The final anti-poverty measure
is a package of improved
benefits. First, pensions are
up by 22½%.

Julie (in Post Office?)

JULIE, V/O, 154/1, p.23

It's very low. It's very very
low.

OR

walking around shopping centre

JULIE, SYNG, 155/1, p.29

I mean, get to 70, we could
surely have a little bit more
pension.

COMM

The Breadline Britain survey
found that Julie would need
around £75.00 a week to be lifted
out of poverty. Her pension of
only £55.00 is £20.00 short.

Under our benefits package, Julie
would be better off by £12.80 a
week, substantially closing the

gap.

REPRISE GRAPHIC:

Next, Invalidity Benefit would rise, also by 22½%.

BREADLINE BRITAIN'S ANTI-

POVERTY MEASURES:

HIGHER BENEFITS:

-Pensions up 22½%

-Invalidity Benefit up 22½%

JIMMY

Got to be something wrong.

COMM

Jimmy & Paula

Jimmy and Paula would be better off by £22.50 a week. If Jimmy was unable to find work, this would at least go some way to help.

PAULA, V/O, 247/1, p.12

I'd like it to be a lot better than what it is.

PAULA, V/O, 247/1, pp.6/7

But on the benefits you get

nowadays you just can't manage.

I mean, you're lucky if you have enough to pay for your bills.

PAULA, SYNC, 247/1, p.12

And I don't like asking charities all the time, I think it's degrading. But it seems to be the only thing nowadays that you can do.

REPRISE GRAPHIC:

COMM

BREADLINE BRITAIN'S ANTI-

Under the package, Child Benefit

POVERTY MEASURES:

rises to £10.00, an increase of

HIGHER BENEFITS:

£2.75 per child.

-Pensions up 22½%

-Disability Benefit up 22½%

-Child Benefit up to £10.00

Maureen combing hair

MAUREEN, SYNC

It is hard, especially, you know, the beginning of the school year, getting the school uniform, because it's so expensive. You can't afford to take them swimming as much as we'd like to.

We'd also like to do...go to the Guides, but we couldn't afford the uniform.

COMM

Maureen would gain an extra £5.50 a week, which goes some way to enabling her children to join in the activities they now miss out on.

REPRISE GRAPHIC:

Next, benefits for under 25

BREADLINE BRITAIN'S ANTI-

year olds, cut in 1988, would be restored.

POVERTY MEASURES:

HIGHER BENEFITS:

- Pensions up 22½%
- Disability Benefit up 22½%
- Child Benefit up to £10.00
- Restore benefits for under 25s

Kim - all over begging

Kim is 17. She's been living

rough in London for 2 years. She has no income at all.

KIM, V/O, 787/1, p.7

Being on the streets like and things like that, that's the poorest you can get really. You know, I don't think you can get any poorer than being on the streets 'cos you...like every day you're just hoping you can get some money for something to eat.

COMM

Under our package, Kim would become entitled to benefit. She'd receive £24.65 a week, giving her a better chance of getting off the streets.

REPRISE GRAPHIC:
BREADLINE BRITAIN'S ANTI-
POVERTY MEASURES:
HIGHER BENEFITS

Finally, Income Support would go up by 17½%. It's slightly less than the others in order to increase incentives.

-Pensions up 22½%
-Disability Benefit up 22½%
-Restore benefits for
under 25s
-Increase Income Support
17½%

In hotel

652/1

Alison Childs brings up her 2½

year old son Ricky alone on

Income Support of £47.00 a week.

ALISON, V/O, 652/1, p.21

I would say...it makes me

embarrassed to say it but I am

poor. I can't give my son what

I'd like to give him.

652/1, p.20

And if we're out and he if he
sees ice cream or a hot dog, he
wants them. I just can't afford
to get them and I feel bad 'cos I
can't afford to give him...give
'em to him.

ALISON, SYNC, 652/1, p.22

...because the money...[Ricky,
stop it]...the money the Social
Security give you just doesn't go
anywhere. They think it's a lot
but it's just not.

COMM

Under the package, Alison's
Income Support rises by £11.20
per week.

Richard & Joyce

Although Richard's left on the
dole, his benefit too rises, by
£18.90 a week.

RICHARD, SYNC, 409/1, P.19

The money is very very low; they
give you the least amount of
money they can possibly give you.

COMM

Compilation

These measures would have a big
impact. We estimate that of the
11 million found to be in
poverty, 40 per cent would be
lifted out altogether, and the
others would be at least
partially helped..

To reduce poverty further would require higher benefits, costing more than a 5p tax increase.

This would depend ultimately on the generosity of society as a whole.

END OF PROGRAMME 6