SENTINEL 100

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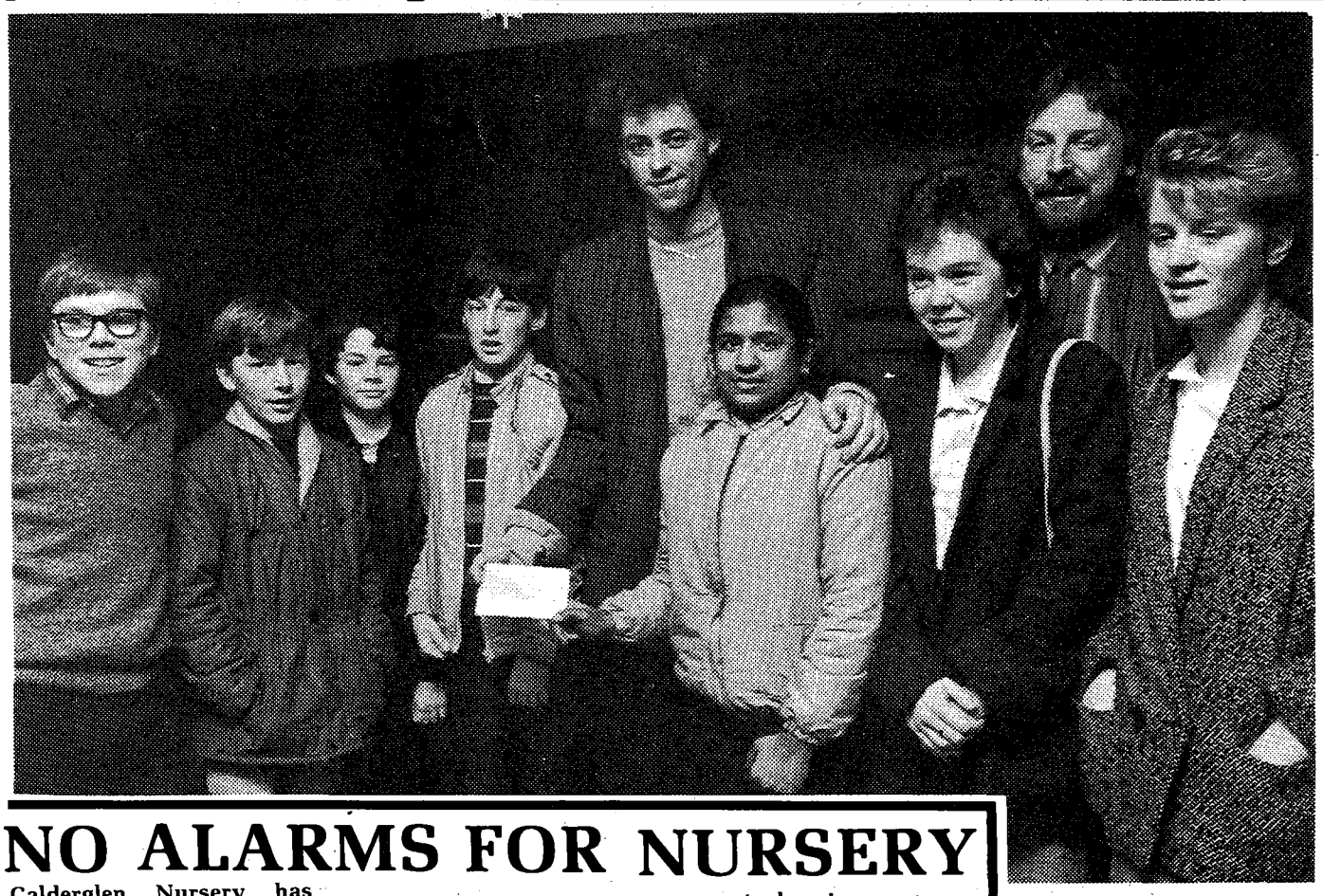

W.H.E.C. Pupils presenting Bob Geldof with a £675 cheque for the Band Aid Appeal (above). They are: (L to R) Jason Hardy, Kevin Daniel, Peter Thomson, Duncan Durie, Bob Geldof, Jasmin Ramzan, Debbie Hislop, Bill Clark (assistant principal), Jane Hercus.

LOOKING AFTER OTHERS

Bob Geldof, the man who has enabled millions of people in the west to translate their anguish at the suffering of millions in Ethiopia into tangible material help, paid a recent visit to Edinburgh.

Bob, on tour with his group the Boomtown Rats, did not want to talk to the press, but when the Sentinel offered to put him in touch with a group of teenagers from W.H.E.C. who had raised £675 for the Band Aid Ethiopian Appeal he was delighted to take time off to chat with the kids.

Feeling very cold in the severe Edinburgh weather Bob soon warmed to the youngsters from Wester Hailes.

After being presented with the cheque he looked at the amount "This is great" Bob told them, "what you've given me here is, quite literally, 675 lives. That's how important your achievement is."

We told him about the "Sentinel 100" shop and that the money raised was for the Ethiopian Appeal "That's it", he said, "keep going, don't stop now. They're depending on you. To know that people over here care about them and are doing things really counts."

Bob wanted to be introduced to all the pupils individually and was interested to hear what each one and their class had done in raising the money. "I'll tell you what else you can do" he told them, "it might sound strange, but it is really important, get all your pals and their parents to knit small clothes for the children, because it gets so cold and they're so thin they can't keep warm."

It is heart warming to learn that not all pop stars are in the business for the glamour and what they can get for themselves. Bob Geldof is one pop star who believes that looking after those less fortunate than himself is more important than the pursuit of his own self-interest.

NO ALARMS FOR NURSERY

Calderglen Nursery has been refused a burglar and fire alarm because it is not on the Director of Education's "highest priority" list, despite a spate of break-ins over the past few months.

The 120 children in the nursery have to rely on hearing a handbell or teachers shouting if there is a fire. As a small unit, an electric alarm system is not considered essential.

Councillor John Mulvey, who wrote complaining about the lack of alarms to the Director of Education, Mr Semple, says that the situation is "totally unsatisfactory". Since he received his reply from Mr Semple even the existing fire alarm -- the handbell -- has been stolen.

The Director of Education complained of limited resources and said that the nursery was not on the "highest priority" list. Only the most vulnerable buildings are on this list.

Councillor Mulvey is asking for money to be set aside in the 85/86 budget to provide the alarms. He feels that the action of the Director of Education "indicates the way in which important little items like these have become less of a priority due to cuts in spending. Things are only a priority if they fit in with what's available".

The nursery staff have been told that they do not qualify for a burglar or fire alarm because the building is small and detatched.

Before Christmas thieves broke in and stole all the Christmas presents which were to be given out at a Christmas party. Fortunately when the local residents heard about this they poured in replacements for the Christmas presents so that the children could still have their party.

The local Tenants' association, many of whom have children at the nursery, contacted Councillor Mulvey in the hope that he could find out what was being done about the situation, which he himself described as "ridiculous".

So far, the Director of Education has failed to come up with a satisfactory solution to the problem, and the parents are now left wondering just when something will be done, and whether it is going to be too late.

FLATS AVAILABLE

The Wester Hailes Flats Project have new accomodation to suit young people.

If you are homeless, living rough or just interested contact Landi immediately at the Wester Hailes Youth Programme (453 6912) between 11am. and 3pm.

100 SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

"JOURNALISTS - A RACE APART"

We wrote to Daily Mirror Journalist, Paul Foot, asking for an article on the media. Here is his reply.

Dear Sentinel

I was absolutely delighted to get a copy of the Wester Hailes Sentinel, which I had not seen before. I congratulate you very warmly on it, and I only wish that there were many more papers like this all over the country.

When I joined the Mirror 5½ years ago, I asked for only two things. The first was my own space, which I could fill with material which I chose. The second was some kind of link with the readership of the Daily Mirror. As someone who has spent about 20 years in journalism trying to ferret out information from people who are very anxious not to give it, I have found that most of the real stories about our society are within the knowledge and experience of the ordinary people in it. Unfortunately, so distant are our newspapers and journalistic habits, that few ordinary people ever come to newspapers with their stories, or even think that their stories are remotely significant to the outside world.

As a result many of the so-called "stories" which appear in newspapers are trivial or obscene or ridiculously parasitic on the Royal Family and other similar institutions. The link between journalists and papers on the one hand and their readership on the other is constantly being cut, and journalists are trained to look on themselves as a race apart from the people who read their work.

I have always been a very enthusiastic supporter of the community newspapers which have risen and fallen over the years. There are one or two around the country which have managed to survive. What I appreciate most about them is their democratic attitude, and the way in which they serve to breakdown a lot of the loneliness and isolation that exists in the communities which they serve. At a glance this single copy of the Wester Hailes Sentinel shows that you have all these things very much in mind, and I wish you the very best of luck for your next hundred issues.

I don't really want to write you an article, chiefly because I don't really think I'm important enough, but if you would like to use this letter, I would be very happy.

All the very best of luck to you.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Foot.

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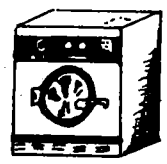

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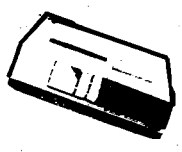

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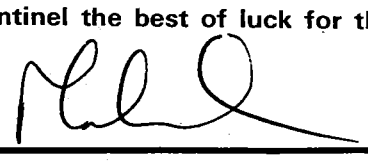
SENTINEL 100 MESSAGE

MALCOLM RIFKIND
Conservative MP for Pentlands
Interviewed Issue 93

I would like to congratulate all concerned on the quality and professionalism of the newspaper, which has become essential to the community in Wester Hailes. I would also like to commend it for keeping a reasonable political balance.

I wish the Sentinel the best of luck for the next 1,000 issues.

Yours ever.