TITLES

SUB-TITLE: THE BOTTOM LINE

SYNC MONTAGE

Captions?

YVONNE

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.

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.

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.
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/l, 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

Leaving flat with 3 children

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.

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.
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.

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

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

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

All three measures could be implemented at a minimal cost to the taxpayer.

Steve gardening (ugh!) or cycling (?) Bring in cycling from Prog. 3

Although work is important to help alleviate poverty, it does not necessarily mean an end to 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**

Their problems have been growing in recent years, as Steve's wages have fallen further and further behind.

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.

COMM
So a phased-in minimum wage set at two-thirds of average earnings would lift most of the low paid out of poverty.

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.
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.
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.

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

The Child Benefit money, it's very important I would say to people on low incomes.
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 my an extra 5p in Income Tax, the maximum political feasible.
What I did was to see what could be financed by a fivelpence 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 22\% 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 17\% 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.
The final anti-poverty measure is a package of improved benefits. First, pensions are up by 22\%.

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

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

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:
BREADLINE BRITAIN'S ANTI-
POVERTY MEASURES:
HIGHER BENEFITS:
- Pensions up 22\%\%
- Invalidity Benefit up 22\%\%

Next, Invalidity Benefit would rise, also by 22\%\%.

JIMMY
Got to be something wrong.

COMM
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:
BREADLINE BRITAIN'S ANTI-POVERTY MEASURES:
HIGHER BENEFITS:
- Pensions up 22½%
- Disability Benefit up 22½%
- Child Benefit up to £10.00

COMM
Under the package, Child Benefit rises to £10.00, an increase of £2.75 per child.

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:
BREADLINE BRITAIN'S ANTI-POVERTY MEASURES:
HIGHER BENEFITS:
-Pensions up 22\%\%
-Disability Benefit up 22\%\%
-Child Benefit up to £10.00
-Restore benefits for under 25s

Next, benefits for under 25 year olds, cut in 1988, would be restored.

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

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

Finally, Income Support would go up by 17½%. It's slightly less than the others in order to increase incentives.
Alison Childs brings up her 2½ year old son Ricky alone on Income Support of £47.00 a week.

ALISON, V/0, 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
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