

, nobody hurt

on a Tube train except to pose; he had wrecked the Underground; he had achieved the "impossible treble" of uniting unions, management and bidders against his plans. Between ideas and reality there was a great chasm... find joke... "Mind the gap!"

Redwood fizzed, spluttered and spat his way to a conclusion — and sat down. The Thing from the Swamp arose, chins aquiver.

We braced ourselves for violence. But no: just as Redwood had attempted music hall, Prescott now had a stab at Senior Common Room, lowering his voice and adopting a donnish air of disappointed intellect.

He said kind things about Redwood's predecessor, Gil-

lian Shephard; regretted that Redwood was relying on newspapers; and looked forward to his Shadow's reading himself properly into the job. Every so often the old monster would surface, and Prescott would begin to bellow — then, remembering, turn down the volume, and try another donnish thrust. Mostly they missed.

As these weird creatures jabbed, head-butted and stumbled their way through the prospects for public transport in London, Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare peered down, pterodactylically alert, from the Lords' Gallery. He hopes to take charge as Mayor. Heavens, what a trio.

Plans for Tube, page 4

YVES HERMAN



ges with a nest, perch and scratching strip for each animal

not be disadvantaged by higher standards.

A spokesman said: "We do not want cheap eggs flooding into Britain from other countries where producers have not had to make investment in a new system."

She said that the price of eggs was a sensitive issue and that 80 per cent of people still bought the cheaper budget

eggs produced from battery cages rather than free-range eggs.

"This does prove that people will look at the price when they buy eggs."

A recent study by the RSPCA found that one in three battery hens suffered a broken leg or wing when it was freed because of their cramped conditions.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Blair dares Sinn Fein to condemn the IRA

Tony Blair challenged Sinn Fein either to deliver disarmament or condemn the IRA as he acknowledged yesterday that the peace process was in crisis. "No one will believe that a party with a close connection with a paramilitary group could not bring about decommissioning," the Prime Minister said in Belfast. "If they can't bring it about, why can they not make it clear that they believe decommissioning should happen, and condemn those who fail to bring it about?"

Mr Blair's challenge came as he exhorted the people of Northern Ireland to demand that their politicians make the compromises required to save a peace accord for which "the alarm bells are ringing". He said: "The Good Friday agreement is the one chance Northern Ireland has got. I know it. You know it. I appeal to you to urge your politicians to be flexible, to show imagination."

Mr Justice Singer

In our report "Judge rescues girl from wedlock: fake court order prevents parents marrying her off" (May 28), we suggested that Mr Justice Singer had composed a "bogus" court order. An unfounded suggestion to the same effect was included in an article yesterday "Bound by law not love". There was no justification in either case. The order, which the judge hoped would have some effect abroad, was designed to encourage relevant authorities in India to assist in finding and repatriating a ward of court. The order had the desired effect, and we apologise for any suggestion that the judge improperly concocted an order intended to mislead or to deceive.....Law report, page 36

Sentencing drive

Ministers are set to double magistrates' sentencing powers so that they can jail the worst drink-driving offenders for up to one year. The magistrates are also calling for an increase in fixed penalty notices used by police to deal with many thousands of parking offences a year. The move for tougher sentences — put forward by the Magistrates' Association — reflects JPs' concern that many motorists are escaping too lightly.

£58,000 tennis sale

Tennis memorabilia belonging to Helen Wills Moody, right, the champion known as "Queen of the Courts" in the 1920s and 1930s, sold for £58,144 at Christie's in London yesterday. Moody, who won eight Wimbledon and seven US singles titles, died of Alzheimer's disease aged 91 last year; proceeds from the sale will go to an institute for brain research named after her in America.



Ideas man sues Shell

The Shell oil company's highly successful Smart card customer loyalty scheme was "pinched" from an idea put forward in confidence by the man behind many of its earlier promotions, a High Court judge was told. In a David and Goliath legal battle, John Donovan, 52, is suing the petrol giant over its alleged misuse of confidential information and its refusal to credit him as creator. Shell says the idea came from a different source.