

# Daily Telegraph

FRIDAY, JULY 31, 1992

45p

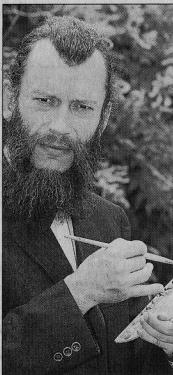
## PETERBOROUGH

**A** RUSSIAN artist, Leonid Efross, is turning heads around the royal courts of Europe — on a mission from the Kremlin. Palette in hand, the exotic-looking Efross has been palace-hopping around London since March. The Queen, the Queen Mother, the Princess Royal and Princess Michael of Kent are among those who have posed for his daubs.

After sittings, the frock-coated Efross shuffles off on the Tube to his modest digs in Cockfosters. He will eventually make enamel miniatures of the Royal Family, to be housed in the Kremlin Armoury museum.

The sort of Russian who chooses Dostoyevsky for his breakfast reading, Efross likens his work to that of an alchemist. "When I make an enamel, it is through a mystical combination of work, will and fire," he explains.

A bibliophile, he is collecting English books to take with him to Holland in September, when he will call in on Queen Beatrix. "I've found a very good English author," he tells me, tweaking his beard like the worst sort of Aunt Agatha. "His name is P G Wodehouse."



Palace palettes: Efross

## Council rates

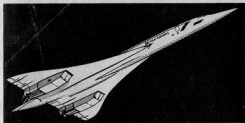
MENTION Bolsover and most people will immediately think of its boisterous MP, Dennis Skinner. But the town's district council (Labour-run) seems determined to change all that. It has just launched a glossy leaflet, advertising itself as a "gateway to leisure".

The pamphlet, which tells how Bolsover has moved on from its coal-mining past, advertises the area as "a beautiful place to grow". The council, anxious to become a unitary authority in the latest shake-up of local government, hopes the blurb will appeal to the sort of entrepreneurial types who usually see Skinner reaching for the barricades and polishing his guillotine.

The council wants to build and develop a partnership with the private sector, says the brochure, and points out that Bolsover has wage rates "amongst the lowest in the country".

□ *FLICKING through Tatler magazine, I notice a photograph taken at a recent wedding reception. The publication's veteran "social consultant", Peter Townend, is shown kissing the graciously extended hand of Ann Heselbine, wife of the President of the Board of Trade. The only other man I know who still regularly practises such chivalry is Bernard Dorin, the French ambassador. My impression is that women rather like having their hands kissed, but that other men, looking on, consider it "de trop".*

ing the recent hippie encampment in Wales; 900 men with shields, helicopters and walkie-talkies were thought necessary to control a convoy of bedraggled pacifists who had stopped off to play some music and peddle soporific the sex war — and judging from the number of enraged letters I receive whenever I have touched on either subject in this column, there are quite a few of you — Laurie's novel will provide food for yet bleaker thoughts.



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