

terms, what to put on top of their expensive car park when it is finished in about a year's time.

Work is continuing on the car park, despite the latest estimate that it will cost just under £2,400,000. It will provide room for 500 cars, which comes to £4,800 per parking space.

The Leader of the House, James Prior, told MPs last Thursday that he would give time for the debate and was rather hurt when some wanted to talk of the oil crisis instead.

So, last night, members sat there worrying about whether New Palace Yard should be grassed over, enhanced with a reflecting pool and a fountain, or paved with a uniform surface of granite sets. The Royal Fine Art Commission felt that grass or water would be foreign to the tradition that the Yard has always been a large, open, paved place. The Department of the Environment told the Services Committee that "a surface of granite sets, unlike the cobbles of the old Yard, would not be rounded but dressed to a comparatively smooth surface which would be comfortable to walk on". While they are about it, they should give the car park bunkerlike qualities, in case the worse happens—and lay in good stocks of baked beans.

## Terrifying

The baleful antenna-eye was dimmed, the grasping limbs were stilled, and it was altogether a sadly benign Dalek who presided over the tenth anniversary celebration of the BBC's *Doctor Who* series yesterday at the Television Centre. It was, explained Bernard Wilkie, senior visual effects designer, a mere crowd-scene Dalek, not a principal.

Terry Nation, author and inventor of the series, was gestur-

ing with a chicken drumstick as he attempted to explain the Dalek's appeal to children. The Dalek, he said, represents pure, total evil. "I remember that one of the posh Sundays had a psychiatrist or someone say that children saw Dr Who as a father-figure, and it was the innate wish of every child to destroy his father."



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Barry Letts, producer of *Dr Who*, had another complicated explanation for the Dalek's appeal. "They are just frightening enough to be interesting, completely fantastical and also very powerful. Children like identifying with someone powerful."

"Yes, my own children hid behind chairs when they came to see the Daleks in the studio",

said Wilkie. "And at a lecture in London when the Daleks came rolling on, the first three rows of the audience got up and moved back."

The Daleks made by the BBC cost about £300, but should you want to fantasize killing your father, or impersonate all evil, the *Radio Times* publication *Dr Who*, on sale on Thursday, gives an intricate account of how to build your own for only £15.

## Canvas crisis

The struggling artist is having to struggle that bit harder these days because of a shortage of canvas—linen and cotton. Diana Constance, who paints extra large canvases, says she has run out of canvas and does not know which way to turn. She will have to put away her oils for the time being.

Russell and Chapple, the art material suppliers, say that high prices and shortage of raw materials govern the canvas crisis. The company has a limited supply of canvases, and a spokesman said: "It is very much a question of here today and gone tomorrow." Meanwhile, the cotton famine is causing a struggle in the denim belt of America. Denim slacks, suits and jeans, which have been popular there for the past three years, are in short supply. Anxious Americans are wondering whether there is going to be a return to gaberdine.

*Connoisseurs of graffiti have long held a special respect for the politically motivated wit whose patch is the tunnels around Barnet on the line to King's Cross. For some time they have been relishing his: KROPOTKIN LIVES. Yesterday they were mulling over his latests work: REMEMBER WEIMAR.*

PHS