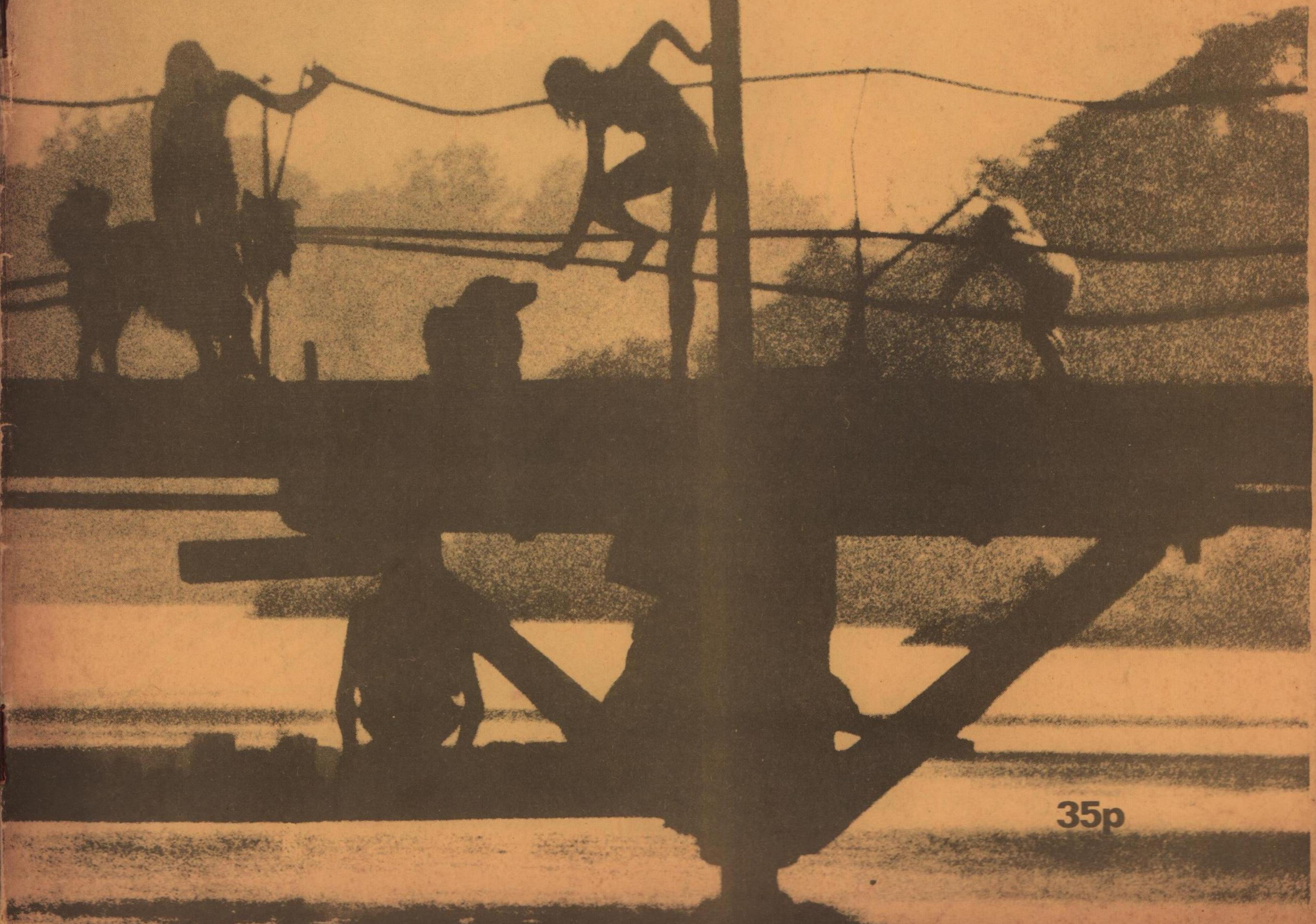


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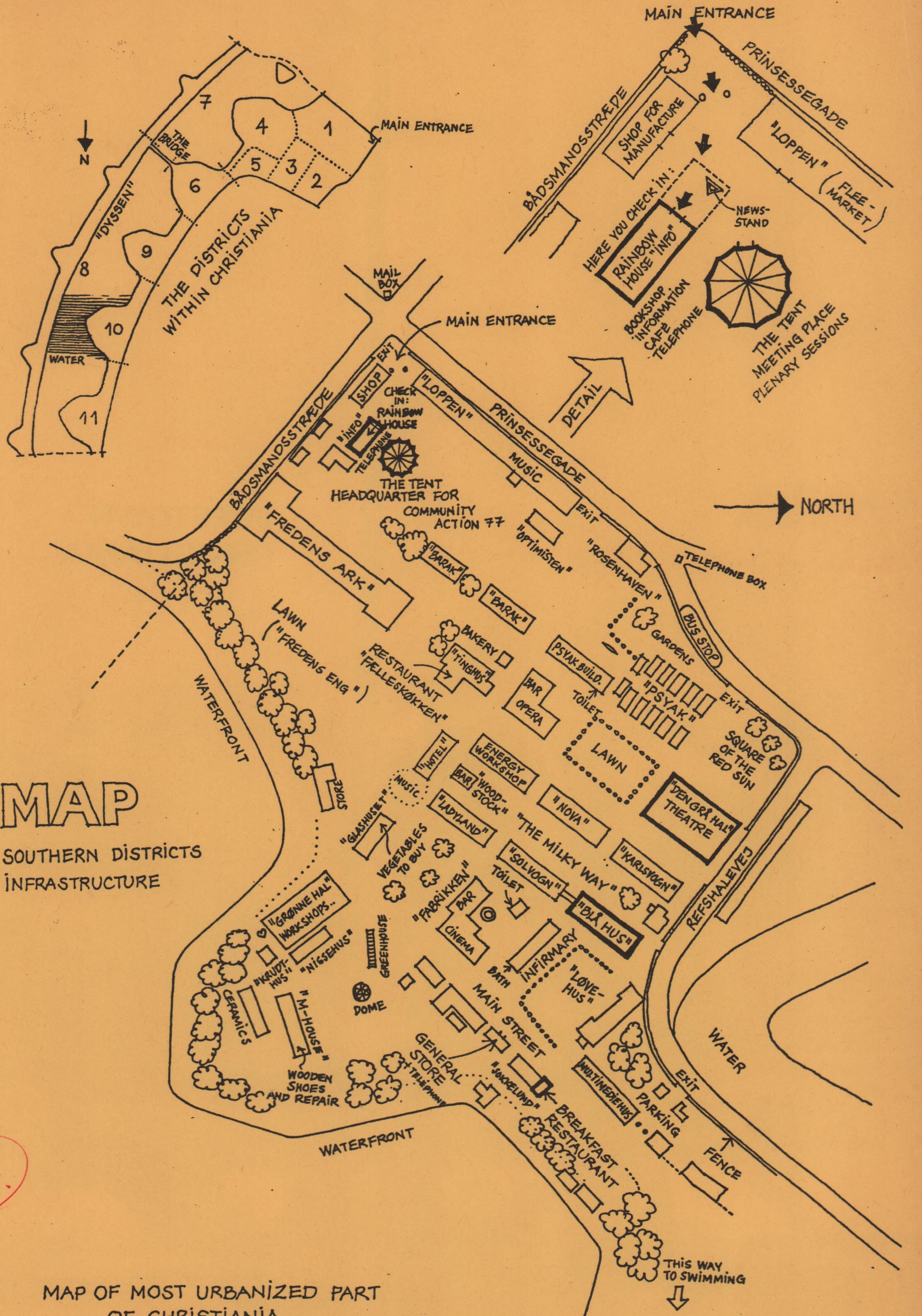
FREETOWN CHRISTIANIA



35p

MAP

SOUTHERN DISTRICTS INFRASTRUCTURE



MAP OF MOST URBANIZED PART
OF CHRISTIANIA
SHOWING SOME FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

STEEN

An aerial view of Christiania.



Christiania is a unique community. What we have tried to do in this pamphlet is to give you, the reader, a feeling of that uniqueness, an insight into the nature of the "free town", and a sense of the ideas that inspire its inhabitants and its friends. We hope that this collection of words, maps and pictures succeeds in communicating at least something of the spirit of Christiania, and that it provides encouragement and lessons for people in this country who are also seeking alternative forms of social organisation.

The bulk of the material has been contributed by Christianites themselves, and we believe that what it occasionally lacks in grammatical precision (because it was written in a foreign language) is more than made up for by the liveliness and commitment which it expresses.

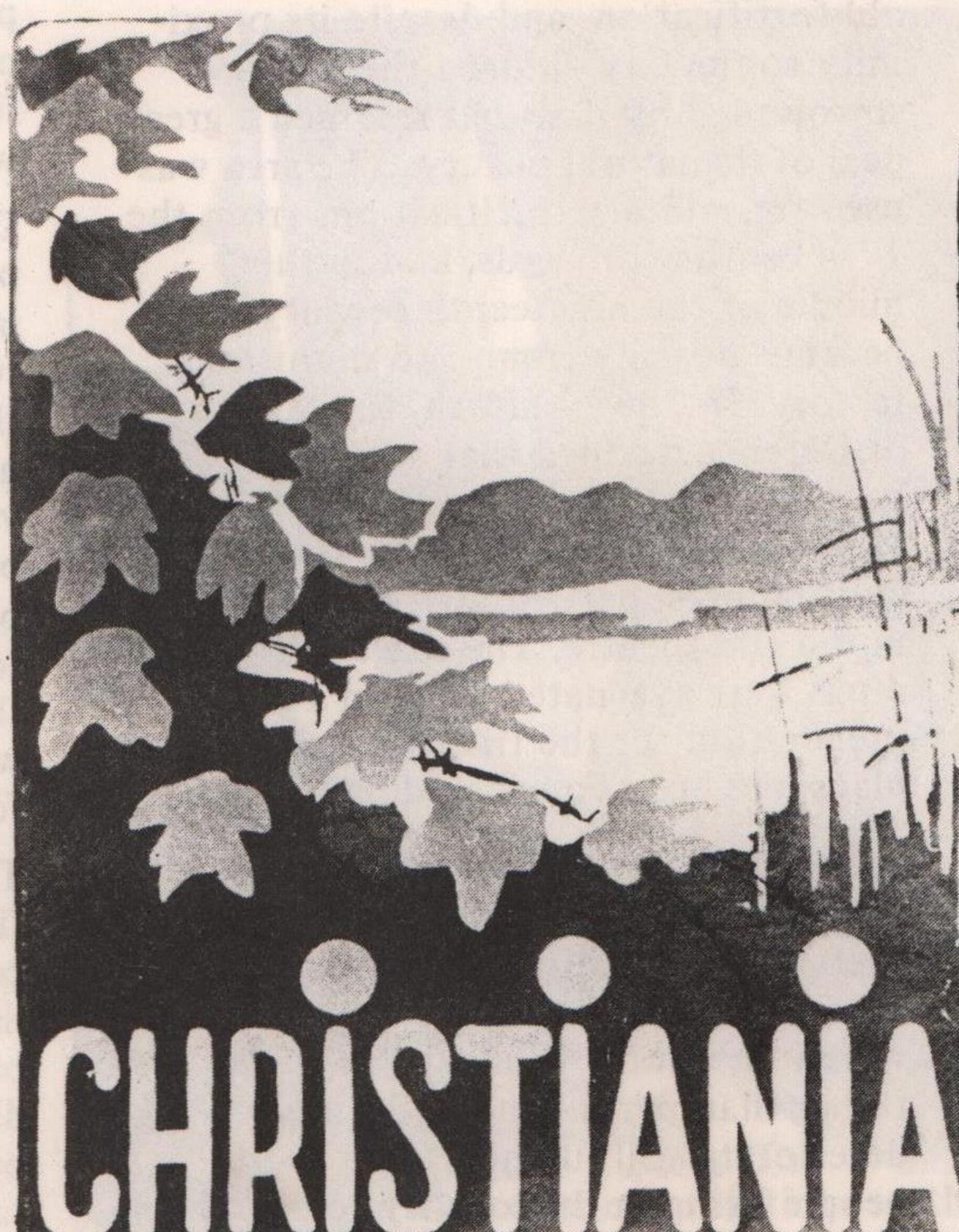
We are grateful to the many people who have contributed in one way or another to the production of this pamphlet. It would be invidious to name particular individuals, and any list would be sure to forget someone. It is, though, worth explaining how we were able to raise the

money to put the whole thing together. Everything, except typesetting and printing, was done by voluntary and unpaid labour. It was a labour of love. The costs of printing and typesetting were met thanks to loans and donations from people who often had no control, nor wanted it, over what actually went into this pamphlet. We received financial help from people all over Britain, some of whom had never even met those of us involved in producing it. To them, for their trust as much as their help, we express a special 'thank you'. We hope that the finished product makes it worthwhile.

We were able to meet almost half of the cost of the pamphlet in this way, and we are indebted to the Self Help Housing Resource Library for loaning us the difference. Hopefully, sales will make repayment of this and other loans a relatively easy task. In the event of any profit being made the money will be used to spread further information and knowledge about Christiania.

Happy reading!

Support Christiania group/London



It is Christmas and the shopping rush is well under way in the stores of Copenhagen. The shops are crammed with people, and no-one pays much attention to the young people carrying large bags who disappear into the toilets of two of Copenhagen's largest department stores one day just before 4.00 p.m. When they re-emerge, however, it will be different, for these are members of Solvognen (Sun Chariot), a radical and imaginative street theatre group who are almost as well known in Denmark as the Royal Shakespeare Company is in the United Kingdom.

The Solvognen actors and actresses have entered the toilets in ordinary clothes, but it is 75 red-suited, white-bearded Father Christmases, or Christmasmen as they are called in Denmark, who come out. They converge upon the book departments of the two shops at precisely four-o'clock, and, to the astonishment of customers and staff alike, proceed to give away books by the shelf-full. Shoppers think it is a publicity gimmick and accept the gifts gratefully. The staff stand aside bewildered. Meanwhile two angry departmental managers have called the police, who arrive just as the Christmasmen are completing their act of seasonal generosity. The Santa Clauses are dragged out to the street where many of them are roughed up before being thrown into waiting police vans. Passers-by are horrified by the sight; children scream and cry. The image of Santa being set upon by the police is not a pleasant one for Denmark's upholders of law and order.

The Christmasmen's Army had been building up to this event for four days. They had been on marches through the centre of Copenhagen with model animals as much as thirty feet high. They had been carol singing at the city police station. They had made a token attack on the Labour Court with pneumatic drills in protest against unemployment. They had held a pre-Christmas banquet in a shut-down car factory owned by General Motors. And they made speeches warning that the spirit of Christmas had been corrupted by capitalism and greed. All this they had done in the red robes of Father Christmas.

Solvognen have been involved in a rich variety of theatre, often of an agitprop kind, and have even won a 20,000 kroner prize from the state's Cultural Fund, much to the displeasure of politicians. They are a troupe who reflect, in the imaginative and colourful expression of their ideas, some of the liveliest and most fascinating aspects of the "town" in which they live: the "Free Town of Christiania".

Christiania is a squatted community in Copenhagen. It is the permanent home of almost 1,000 people, a population that can rise to over 2,000 during the summer months when it is swelled by the presence of visitors and tourists from all over the world.



The Solvognen theatre troupe's Santa Claus Army marches in Copenhagen.

The free town is situated about one kilometre east of the city centre on an old fortification, and despite its proximity to the city—indeed the site is surrounded by it—it has retained a great deal of its natural beauty. The area was used for military fortifications from the 17th century onwards, and in the middle of the nineteenth century it became an army camp and munitions factory. In 1969, though, the Ministry of Defence decided that an area of 22 hectares should be handed over to the Ministry of Culture for educational and cultural uses, particularly in the fields of music and theatre. The site's 175 buildings were evacuated early in 1971 in preparation for the transfer, but no firm plans had been considered.

A civilian watch was mounted on the area, but failed to prevent extensive thefts and vandalism, and when it became apparent that the authorities were in no hurry to make use of the site, rather than permit the buildings to deteriorate still further, a group of people living in the locality removed part of the fence around the land and

began to use some of the property for summer houses and play space. Other people living nearby exercised their dogs or went for walks or fishing there, and for local children the old military base was like a huge adventure playground.

During the autumn of 1971 a number of people moved into some of the buildings intending to set up home in them, and rumours spread around Denmark about the possibility of "emigrating on a number eight bus". By the end of the year well over 200 people were living permanently on the site. Some came because they were homeless, some came to seek refuge, and others came because the place seemed to offer possibilities which could not be fulfilled in their former homes.

They were all pioneers who, during that first winter, put up with often harsh conditions and worked hard to establish themselves. Already many of the buildings had sustained large-scale damage. Almost every window had been broken, all the pipes, electrical and sanitary fittings had been stolen. There was neither water nor power. In



In the beginning was the wall . . .

addition, most of the buildings were factories, laboratories and storehouses which were ill-suited to residential purposes. They were, however, structurally sound, and many of them were rapidly put into shape and occupied.

The government, which was still not even preparing plans for the site, agreed to a settlement, which in 1973 was formalised in a written agreement. Christiania was labelled a "social experiment" and its occupants were allowed to remain while a planning competition was held to determine future use of the area. Residents were provided water and electricity on condition that they each paid 50 kroners a month for it.

It was anticipated that the planning competition would take three years to complete, and afterwards it was intended that the Ministry of Defence should sell the land to the Town of Copenhagen. In fact, the competition was never held, and succeeding Danish governments felt less bound by the agreement reached by their predecessors in 1973. Even during the initial three year period when they had undisputed permission to occupy the site, the Christianites, as the inhabitants of Christiania call themselves, felt that they were being constantly harassed by the authorities, who resented their presence so close to the centre of Copenhagen. In 1974, the Ministry of Defence decided to demolish half the buildings in Christiania, supposedly because they were unsafe, and failed to meet statutory requirements as regards fire precautions and sanitation. The Christianites responded with a "Festival of the Barricades",

in which music, theatre, dancing and other forms of entertainment brought many thousands of supporters of Christiania together in the free town itself in an action of "joyous resistance". In the face of a wave of critical public pressure the plans for demolition were halted.

But the Ministry of Defence continued to harass the inhabitants of the free town, attempting to cut off water and electricity supplies to the site. Again they were thwarted, on this occasion by astute legal action through Christiania's lawyer—74 year old Carl Madsen.

In April 1975 the government decided that the "social experiment" of Christiania should be terminated on April 1st the following year, and the site evacuated. In March 1976 they reaffirmed their decision "to clear Christiania without unnecessary delay", but the Christianites refused to move out voluntarily and on All Fools Day, 1976, 30,000 people joined their nonviolent "Rainbow Army" in a huge demonstration through Copenhagen to protest against the threat of eviction. The march culminated with its participants linking hands and forming a human chain around the free town. Many people remained in the area afterwards, and a carnival atmosphere lasted well into the following weeks.

Since then the threatened eviction has been stalled by lengthy court proceedings questioning the legality of such an operation, but on February 2nd, 1978, the Supreme Court of Denmark ruled against the squatters, and Christiania was faced with the possibility of forced

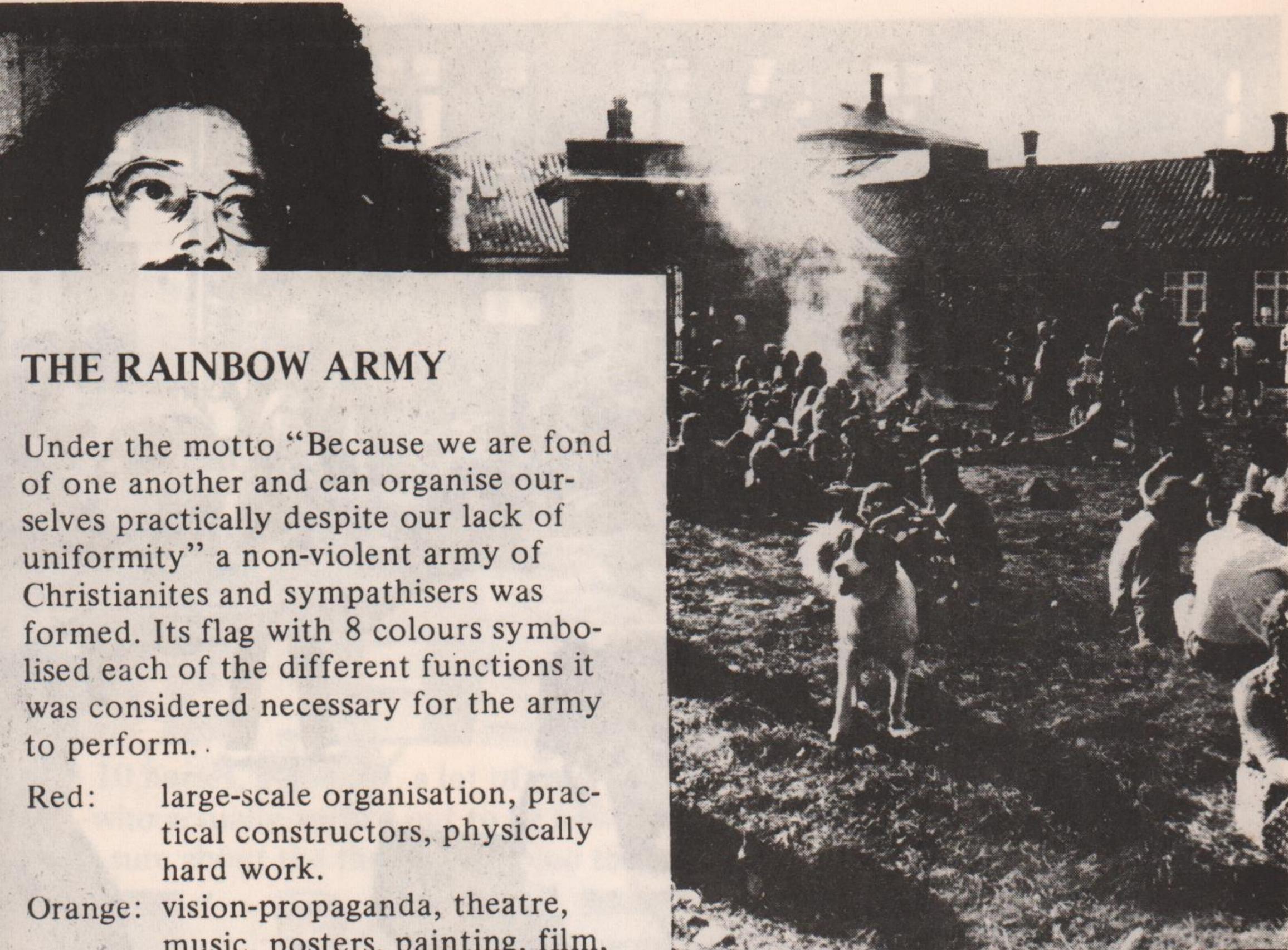
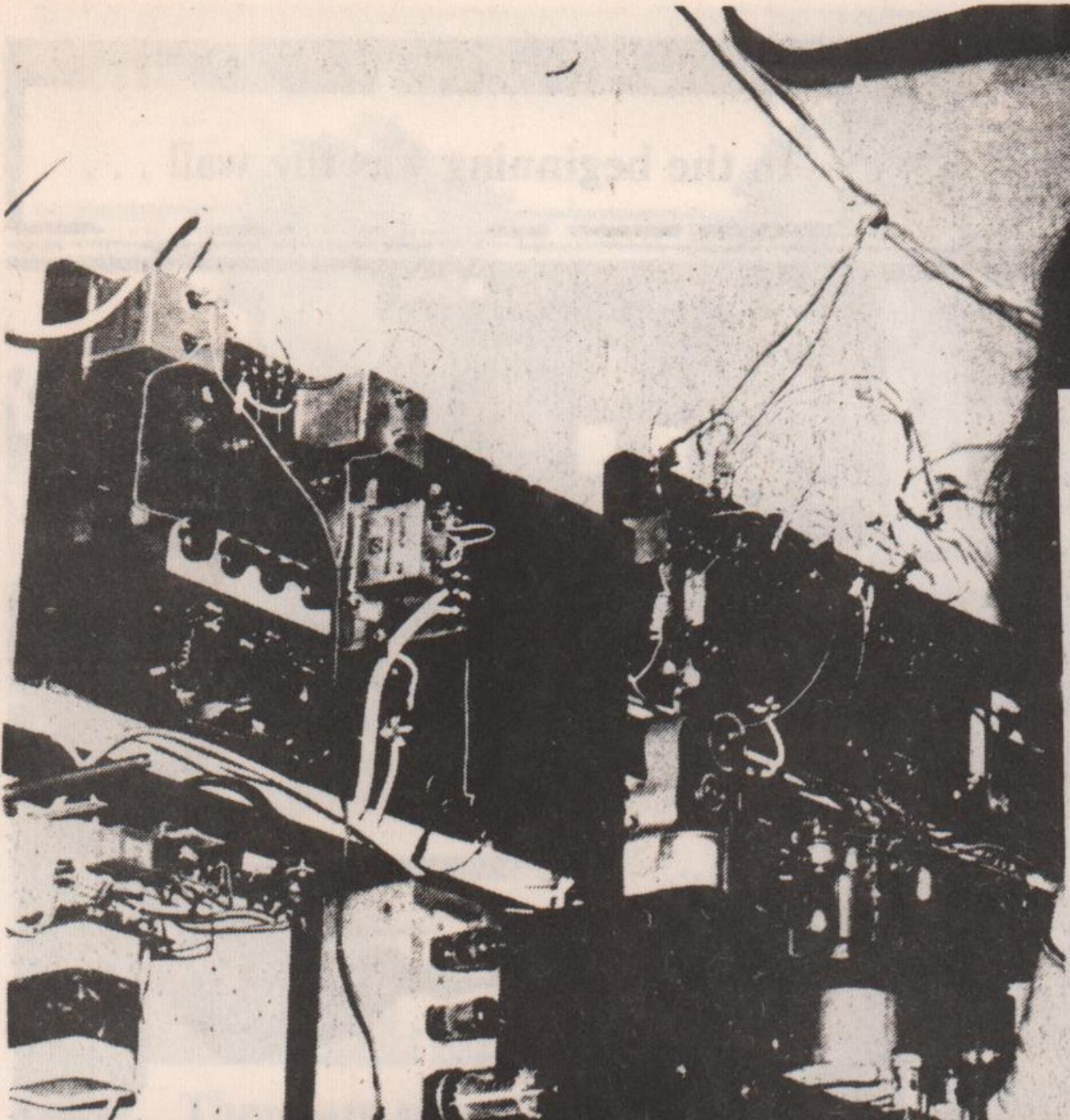
eviction at any time. All that remained was for the government to give the go ahead.

On February 8th, the Danish Parliament, the Folketing, debated the issue of Christiania from noon until dark, to decide whether or not to stick to its earlier decisions to clear the site. The Defence Minister, in fact, advocated a flexible approach:

"According to experts, 2-3 years will pass until building in the area can be started. The termination of Christiania will raise a number of social and human problems. A comprehensive solution may demand time, and we ought to take the time needed, as there is no acute need to clear the area."

In the end it was an approach backed by a centre-left majority of 89 votes to 71. It was agreed not to press ahead with eviction until such time as plans for the future use of the area were prepared, something that is generally expected to take at least three years.

The condition imposed for even the temporary continuation of Christiania, however, was that "affairs" in the area "be brought up to legal standards". The government announced that it would set up a new committee to deal with Christiania, "provided they (the Christianites) get well enough organised internally so as to be able to cooperate". The first step that has been insisted on by the Danish government was that buildings in Christiania be improved to meet fire and sanitation regulation standards. There remains a possibility, therefore, that



THE RAINBOW ARMY

Under the motto "Because we are fond of one another and can organise ourselves practically despite our lack of uniformity" a non-violent army of Christianites and sympathisers was formed. Its flag with 8 colours symbolised each of the different functions it was considered necessary for the army to perform.

- Red: large-scale organisation, practical constructors, physically hard work.
- Orange: vision-propaganda, theatre, music, posters, painting, film, photography.
- Yellow: child-minding, mouth-to-mouth messengers, initiators.
- Green: the green supply line, baker's shop, eating-houses, shops, pubs, kitchen gardens.
- Blue: poets, pushers, creators of dreams and nice experiences.
- Violet: chiefs, kings and queens who do the cleaning and rubbish collecting (the greatest are everybody's servants).
- White: physical and spiritual healers, first aid.
- Black: maintainers of order—those who can prevent violence without aggression. Samurais and Karate and other martial arts masters.

After the formation of the rainbow army it was quite common to see Christianites walking about with one or more coloured ribbons attached to some part of their bodies or clothing, thus showing others which "colour" they belonged to. If one wished to be placed in more than one of the "colours", one simply acquired more ribbons. The inhabitants learnt quite a bit about each other from the colours they chose to wear. Since "Orla's soldiers" did not appear, the army did not really go into action. ("Orla's soldiers" are those forces in the established society who are trying to get Christiania closed.)



demands will be made which Christiania cannot meet and that the threat of eviction will rear its head again.

Nevertheless, the current outcome of the struggle over the last few years constitutes a great victory for Christiania. The government has been caused to rethink its attitude and its policy towards the free town, largely as a result of two things. Firstly, the people of Christiania have attracted an immense degree of support from all kinds of people; and secondly, they have been able to translate that support into very effective tactics for resistance. This resistance was founded upon two key notions—*openness* and *nonviolence*. The Christianites were completely open about all their plans, wishing to involve as many people as possible, and not to become involved in conspiracies or elitist politics. They declared "We Have Nothing To Hide" in one of their mobilising newsletters, which also went on to say that "The use of nonviolence is essential. If the police can provoke violence (and they usually can) that would justify their behaviour. It would be naive to believe that a confrontation could take place without violence. The main aim of our emergency plan is to prevent a confrontation from taking place at all."

In addition to the tenets of openness and nonviolence, the Christianites also identify efficiency and imagination. They laid out their emergency plans, when they were still faced with eviction in the near future, in an unusual style, as part of a fictional scenario:

"CHRISTIANIA SUDDENLY SURROUNDED BY 3,000 RIOT SQUAD POLICEMEN ..."

It's 4.00 a.m. Dark and quiet. Barbed wire is strung along Prinsessegade while police units in work clothes are sent in to force entry into the houses. After the men are lined up the beams are lit all at once. Doors are rammed, windows smashed, frightened and sleepy inhabitants turn on their lights, children cry, dogs bark. Telephones don't work, the lines have been disconnected.

A couple of inhabitants who try to get help from the outside are caught at an opening in the fence. In a nearby flat people are woken up by the noise of the hectic activity in the streets: loud footsteps and the slamming of car doors. Here too the telephones are out of order. The police have cut the lines in the whole neighbourhood. The Christianites have been taken by surprise, apparently cut off from the outside world. But not for long.

Now Christiania's emergency plan goes into effect. On a roof in the free town a couple of inhabitants have managed to get to the valve of a compressed air cylinder, and tremendous air pressure is being forced through a gigantic organ pipe. An infernal howl is heard throughout most of Copenhagen. At the same time a flock of homing pigeons is



"If the police can provoke violence (and they usually can) that would justify their behaviour." An army of women and children was mobilised to resist the threatened eviction.

released, and flies immediately to arranged places in the city. On all the taxi radios in the neighbourhood a clear voice interrupts: 'Drive directly to Christiania. The police have started a violent attack, and many cars are needed. I repeat ...'

From far away red signal flares hanging over Christiania can now be seen. Meanwhile the telephone chain has been activated. In spite of the cut lines, the first numbers in the chain have now been reached in several different ways. Within twenty minutes many thousands of people know that Christiania has been stormed by the police. The press is also informed. Leaflets are being distributed in the streets, mobilisation posters are being pasted on the buses at bus stops. Bells begin to ring from several churches and instructions are being sent to the populace of Copenhagen from pirate FM radio stations.

Now hardly anyone could be unaware of the situation. In the streets many bonfires are already raging. The police have blocked the streets leading to Christiania but that is not where most people are heading for. The mobilisation is aimed at other targets in the city. The bridges across the port of Copenhagen are being paralysed by huge singing sit-downs. People have to be removed one by one. A couple of fishing boats ferry people across the harbour on special missions. There are traffic jams everywhere in the city. At the Central Station some people have lain down on the tracks to stop trains running for as long as the police continue to attack Christiania. As people are removed from the tracks others jump down to take their places. Kastrup Airport is also having problems.

Military tents are being set up in the municipal parks to shelter people from out of town who have come to help

prevent the destruction of the free town. From schools and factories people come to assist. Some of the bulldozers lined up ready to knock down the houses suddenly won't work. There are people everywhere ...'

The paper from which this extract was translated continues in a similar vein for some time. All the support envisaged in the scenario had already been pledged to the Christianites, so little of it was simply wishful thinking or a product of overoptimistic delusions. Even the former chief of staff of Denmark's defence, Lieutenant-General Wolff, who was also a former head of NATO's Defence College in Rome, characterised the emergency plan as being "sound, extraordinarily intelligent and strategically well thought out". The building labourers' trades unions refused to take part in any forced demolition of Christiania, and a straw poll of readers conducted by a Copenhagen newspaper found 48% of its readers to be in favour of the continued existence of the free town as against 44% opposing it. The Support Christiania organisation, moreover, has over 5,000 supporters in many different countries, and there is a Support Group based in London.

Christiania has attracted this level of support, in spite of the almost unanimous opposition on the part of most political parties in Denmark. Even the Communist Party sees it as no more than a 'slum ghetto' and despite its support, advocates state clearance. In order to understand just what it is that enables a community of squatters to inspire and attract so many supporters, against the opposition of established political interests, it is worth looking more closely inside the free town itself. In the years since it was established Christiania has developed a very strong and individual character of its own. It

has been described as an "anarchist enclave" and many of its inhabitants would be happy with the description. The free town has no appointed or elected "leaders"—"we are all leaders now" as the slogan goes—but instead has a decentralised structure of government. The community is divided into eleven small districts each of which deals with all localised problems or conflicts through general meetings of the people living in them. Problems which affect the whole of the community are referred to general meetings which every inhabitant of Christiania is entitled to attend and vote at. There are not many hard and fast rules or laws, one of the few being that no pushing of hard drugs is permitted, and problems are generally solved by persuasion and argument, rather than by coercion. Indeed, the major problems to have faced the Christianites have tended to be external to the community, in the form of police harassment and the threat of eviction. Daily life in the community goes on remarkably smoothly.

Christiania has its own kindergarten, shops, restaurants, bars, workshops, music rooms, theatres, a cinema and a fleamarket. Its jazz club even imposes its own tax of a few pence on every drink sold there, the money going to a central fund for the town. Small businesses and cooperative workshops abound in the old military buildings. Prominent among them are low technology projects of various sorts and experimental alternative technology schemes. Some of these businesses produce necessities for daily life in Christiania itself, and others sell their goods to visitors and outside. Traditional "village" crafts have been re-established; Christiania has community bakeries and a blacksmith with a small forge. Word of mouth, as in village-life, remains the main form of communication, but there also exists a rich variety of other forms, from street theatre to wallposters. The free town supports three regular newspapers and a host of other infrequent publications, all printed on the community presses.

It is impossible to estimate how many people find employment within Christiania itself, particularly since many of the "jobs" are of a temporary or informal nature, but it must number several hundred. The Health House, for example, dedicated to the principles and practice of traditional and simple medicine and health care, employs twenty people. Many other people work on the various work parties that are organised. Some of these operate on a regular basis, such as those that take care of refuse collection and the recycling of suitable materials, and others are formed for specific purposes such as construction projects.

According to a survey carried out in January 1976 by the Copenhagen authorities 562 people were registered as living in Christiania (several hundred people, however, refused to register).



Regular work parties are organised in the free town.



Over 100 people held full time jobs outside the area, about half of whom were academics and others with high incomes, and nearly 200 people had part time jobs elsewhere. About 200 of the respondents were foreigners, half of them being Scandinavians, and there were 90 single parents and their children plus a further 10 runaway children (a considerable underestimate). They have been attracted to Christiania for varying reasons, but largely because of the "freedom" which the place offers.

Kjeld, a Christianite, described Christiania as "a public demand for greater freedom to make one's own arrangements—to live, eat, breathe, sleep, think, work, believe and bear children on your own conditions. The society outside, in the free town's view, is overadministered and about to deprive its members of the last remnants of self-determination."

That self determination or the freedom to live on your own conditions is at the

heart of the Christiania philosophy, if it is possible to isolate such a thing. Both phrases are used often by Christianites in any discussion about the nature of their town. The first statement of the goals of Christiania described the aim of the free town as being "to build up a society in which each individual can realise himself/herself freely under responsibility to the community".

Of course self determination or freedom manifests itself in different ways for different people. It has enabled some persons to shape their environment to suit their requirements without the normal restrictions of ownership, control and planning regulations. Walls have been enlivened with gaily painted murals. Individual households have constructed their own homes, uniquely suited to their personal needs in a way that only a wealthy person's home could be outside Christiania. Two windmills have been built along with a mini-medieval castle, a home-sized pyramid,

house constructed out of the keel of a boat, a tent on wheels and dozens of self-built dwellings all over the site. The interiors of the houses are as different as the people who occupy them. The now-regular work parties organised during the summer, and involving visitors as well as residents, have added an opera house, an open air amphitheatre and a concert hall. As one Christianite remarked "People have an interest in it because they built it".



For other people, freedom has meant being able to establish new forms of living, to experiment with communal lifestyles, and to relate to others on a different, deeper level. There have been attempts to treat "crime" as a social, rather than an individual, problem, and to seek community-oriented solutions. An unverified story is often related in Christiania of what happened when someone was discovered to have stolen a stove. It turned out that the thief had no heating in his own home, so a group of Christianites took him to the blacksmith, who was persuaded to make him a stove suitable for his needs, which would be paid for in easy instalments. The truth of this story is not too significant, because the fact remains that it illustrates the way in which genuine efforts are being made to deal with crime in a different way to the macro-society.

Not that these efforts have always been wholly successful, of course. Increased freedom always carries certain problems with it, particularly when the rest of society has so many more constraints. By its free and easy nature Christiania has always been a haven for "social losers" of one sort or another. Indeed, its very title—frestaden, or free town—is taken from the name given to towns which, with the acceptance of the state, provided refuge for outlaws, criminals and unwanted ethnic groups during the

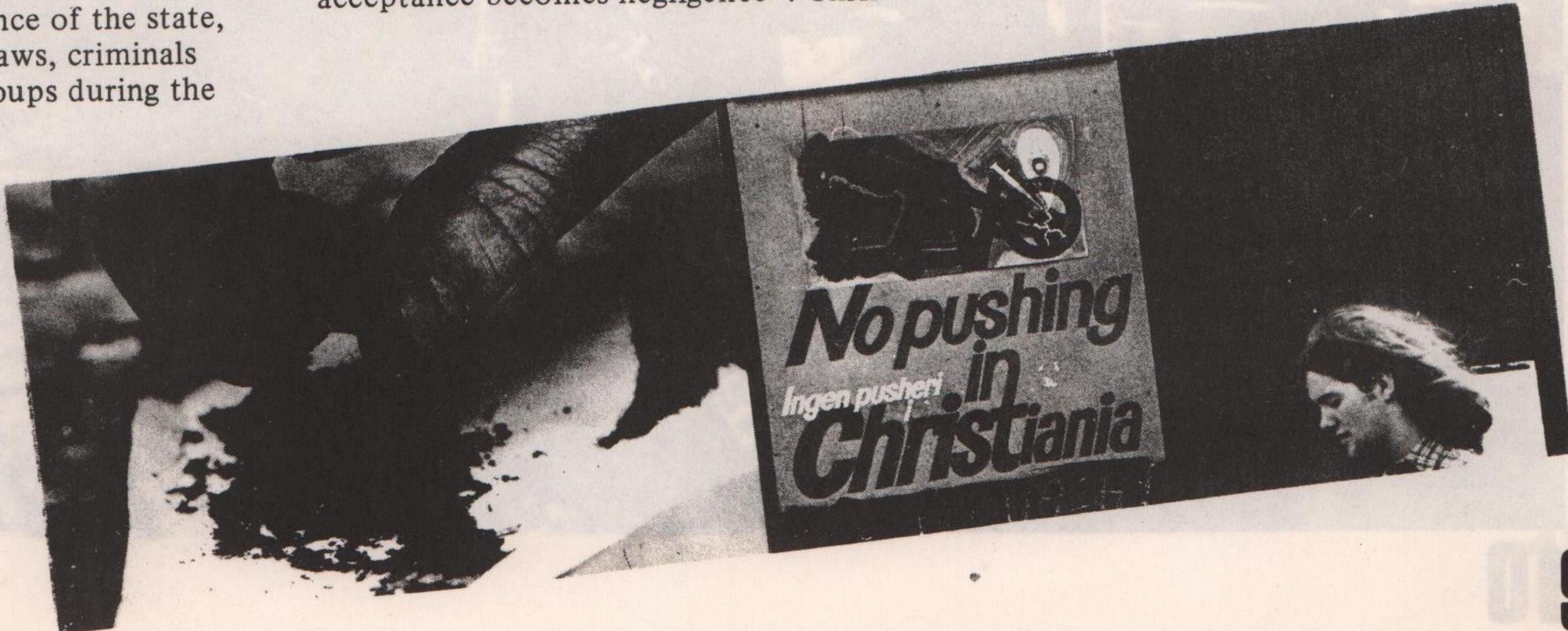
17th and 18th centuries. Among the population of Christiania, then, are a disproportionate number of junkies, alcoholics, runaway children, petty thieves and people with personal and mental problems—all people who are unable to find a respectable niche for themselves in the society outside.

But it is untrue to say, as the Times once did (3/2/78), that the people who live there are "idealists, drop outs, drug addicts and drunkards", although there are some people in Denmark who would agree with such a categorisation—with the addition of "criminals" to the list. In October 1975 a Copenhagen police chief described Christiania as "the biggest centre for drug trafficking" in the city. Another police report claimed that 27.9% of its inhabitants were "ascertained criminals", going on to say that the area was a hotbed of crime and ought to be cleared as soon as possible.

The police attitude greatly overemphasises the significance of crime committed by Christianites. Indeed, much of the crime that they are indubitably involved in is connected with the possession of marijuana, which is readily available and smoked openly throughout Christiania. But the police also display a lack of understanding of the free town's useful role as a refuge for social losers, who can utilise the tolerance offered there to try to sort out their lives in ways that they cannot elsewhere. The Christianites are proud of this role, and often describe the place as a "fools' reservation" for people "who are not taken seriously in the world outside". The absence of any *overt* labelling or stigmatisation of "deviants" as criminal, lunatic, inadequate or whatever, is certainly one of the more obvious differences between Christiania and the rest of society. People feel free to *be themselves*—to live on their own conditions—secure in the knowledge that they are unlikely to be categorised and ostracised for displaying their individuality.

Everyone is entitled to a full and equal say in the running of the free town, and many of the "losers" are said to have contributed greatly with their imagination and intuition. But as a recent SUPPORT CHRISTIANIA newsletter points out, "When the number of 'crushed' people seeking asylum gets too high, integration tends to fail and acceptance becomes negligence". Chris-

tianites are well aware that there is a point at which allowing people to do their own thing actually becomes negligent, and there are many examples of their attempts at community care and help. The Children's House in Christiania was established for runaway children, and at one stage attracted over 40 of them. It was felt that many of the children would actually be better off in the long run if they could be re-established in the wider society. With the aid of progressive social workers, then, wherever possible, children have been persuaded to return to where they came from, and the number of runaways has fallen greatly. There have also been efforts made to help addicts to "rehabilitate" themselves if they wish. Once thirty addicts were taken on a free trip to Egypt to help them kick the habit. Success was limited, however, and within six months all but one of them was back on drugs. But that is not untypical of many drug rehabilitation projects. More success has been achieved in less spectacular, day to day work, often involving people who were professionally qualified to do the same sort of work outside Christiania. Above all, the free town provides a secure and caring environment for those people who do want to tackle their problems, without imposing pressure upon them to do so. It is an environment where possibilities for action are made available rather than where courses of action are prescribed. That sort of environment can produce extensive passivism, but it has also resulted in activism of a remarkable quality.

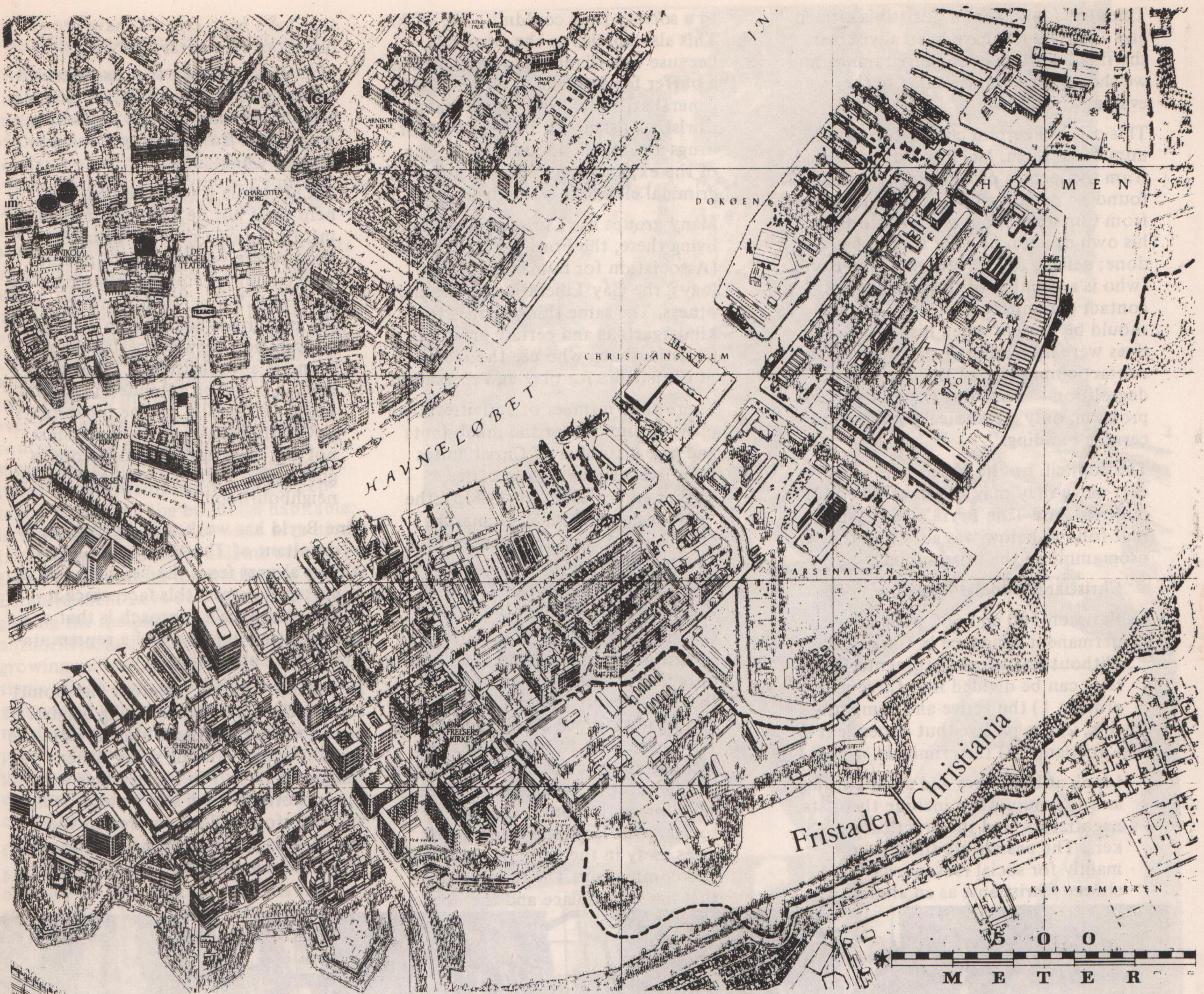


One thing the Christianites certainly do possess is imagination. They have ideas that they are trying to work out in practice, and which they regard as superior to those that dominate western society today. One inhabitant of Christiania remarked that society "is afraid of us because we are doing it better than they are".

Despite their decision not to go ahead with a forced eviction of Christiania, for the time being at any rate, the Danish state does seem to be afraid of the town and the ideas that spring from its free environment. One of the things that Solvognen did recently was to dress up as soldiers at the time of a NATO summit in Denmark. They set up sandbag entrenchments along the route of an anti-NATO demonstration, where they waited with mock guns, taking in police and protesters alike. At one point they "attacked" a section of the march, where fellow actors had concealed themselves, apparently "beating up" demonstrators before dragging them off. What they did was *believable*, and it presented the public with a worrying premonition of what might happen if the current trends towards intolerance were to be continued.

Since then, the Danish state has been seeing Solvognen actors and actresses all over the place, and one occasion they even arrested three of their own policemen who they thought were carrying out a stunt for the troupe. This sort of *angst* (paranoia, a word the Christianites use a lot, usually about their own feelings) is at the root of opposition to Christiania's continued existence, and the recent reprieve they have won is temporary only. It remains to be seen for how long the Danish government, renowned for its tolerance and liberalism, will permit the existence of this "anarchist enclave" on a prime land site in the heart of their nation's capital city.





CHRISTIANIA AS AN INTEGRATED FUNCTION OF COPEHANGEN—OR A HEAP OF DEBRIS?

The prize contest of the Academy Council versus the demolitions of the Secretary of Defence.

By Per Lovetand Iversen

In April 1974 the Council of the Academy of Fine Arts arranged a prize contest in architecture where people were invited to submit plans for the future use of the Christianshavn neighbourhood of Copenhagen, where Christiania is situated. By coincidence, this occurred at the same time as the declaration of war on Christiania by the Secretary of Defence, Mr. Brondum. In the last week of March the Defence Ministry demanded the demolition of the majority of Christiania's most important buildings, which house a number of vital functions and more than half of the total population of the free town.

This coincidence was not intended. Already the previous year, the idea of Christianshavn and Christiania as central subjects in a prize contest had been proposed. In contrast to the destructive and short-sighted political argumentation of the Defence Secretary, which does not allow for more subtle solutions, the Council, in the following motivation for its programme shows a greater understanding and a deeply-felt wish to elucidate the possibilities of a constructive solution, instead of sweeping the problems under the carpet.

"The development of the Freetown Christiania and the continuous debate in this matter—as a social

This article was written at a time when the Ministry of Defence was trying to have 50-60 of Christiania's main buildings demolished. Although it is now several years out of date, it remains a lively testimony to the spirit of Christiania, and it contains descriptions of life in the free town which remain true today.

experiment as well as an areawise disposition—in the opinion of the Council has given this subject a central place in a principal discussion about what kind of city we want in future, and what possibilities should be given to the improvised and independent settling that takes place in all large cities, and how a spontaneous phenomenon like Christiania can be adapted and developed as a more natural ingredient in the pattern of a metropolis."

The architects Viggo Møller-Jensen, Holger Sørensen and Ole Themassen are the authors of the prize contest; psychologist Lise Østergaard, social worker

Tine Bryld, and I (as a Christiania citizen and an architect) have been advisers in the final wording of the programme, and we shall serve as consultants in the evaluation later on.

This offers a certain contrast to the ministerial form. Mr. Brøndum declared from the lectern of Parliament that he found no need for talking with people from Christiania, but was able to form his own opinion of what should be done; neither did he see why Tine Bryld (who is a member of the government contact committee for Christiania) should be present when his representatives were informing Christiania and the contact committee of the decision on demolition—"since this was not a social problem, only a technical problem concerning buildings".

The council, on the other hand—however naive they may be—have asked for our help, and Tine Bryld's contribution that follows below was added to the programme of the prize subject:

"Christiania's social function

Between 500 and 600 people have permanent residence in Christiania. Without statistical documentation they can be divided into three main groups: 1) the active and sympathising, 2) the passive, but dependent on Christiania, 3) the criminals.

I look at the active and sympathising as one group. They include theorists, negotiators, and the practical workers. The passive are those who, mainly for social reasons, have chosen Christiania as an alternative

to a society they couldn't cope with. This also applies to the criminals, because Christiania has functioned as a buffer for deviants of all kinds. The general attitude, however, is that Christiania shall not be a market for drugs and stolen goods. This is one of the explanations why the group of criminal elements is relatively small.

Many groups use Christiania without living there, the Ford-A-Club, KRIM (Association for humane criminology), the Gay Liberation Front and others. The same thing applies to kindergartens and certain groups in Christianshavn who use the facilities of Christiania for play and recreation.

There are a number of activities that provide supplies for the inhabitants and give a number of Christianites their living (information office, leather and ceramic workshops, the "purchasing central", the market hall, the jazz club, restaurants, etc). Several former drug addicts and petty criminals are occupied here with support from the more hardy ones.

Christiania has a function—not as an institution for those who have known only institutions—but as a society that needs every individual, where everybody is given an opportunity to work according to his abilities and inclination. It is not a society that patches up the damage it is responsible for, with money. It is not a society that makes demands, but gives away in the form of acceptance and community. The development that has taken place and the norms

that have been created, have grown out of an elementary survival situation. It is a society that has received no support from outside, its citizens are people who in many cases have withdrawn from the larger society outside Christiania.

If Christiania is to be helped, the help must not be a change into an institution or a number of institutions where young and old people who couldn't be placed elsewhere are put away. So far, the contribution of the authorities has been to establish cooperation between certain social agencies and Christiania. This cooperation could be extended in several ways, also locally, to the inhabitants in Christianshavn. Christiania must not and does not wish to become a ghetto, but part of a vital and active neighbourhood."

Tine Bryld has worked in Christiania as a consultant of The Ministry of Social Affairs almost from the beginning. It is important to stress this fact, since it reveals that Tine's approach is that of a sympathising *outsider* and a representative of the authorities.

Personally, I have a different viewpoint, namely that of a sympathising insider. I have lived in Christiania almost from the beginning, and, among many other things, taken part in the dealings with the authorities. I am also an architect, and therefore will try to present the situation as a Christianite with the spectacles of an architect.



Any materials that can be recycled are collected and centrally stored.

The Development of Christiania

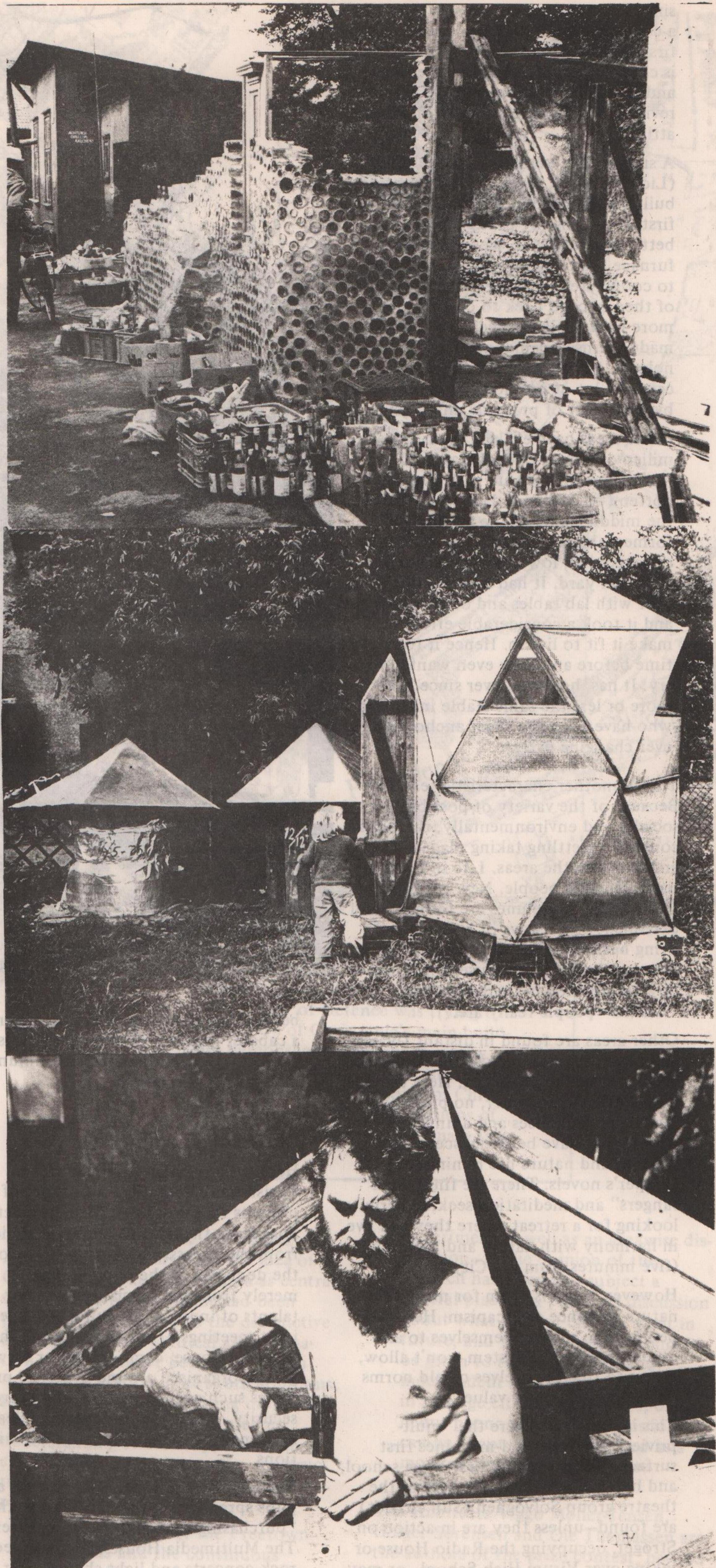
Christiania was created spontaneously and circumstantially, but with a background in the revolt against the failures of the Establishment, and in the accelerating social problems of the late 1960s. Without any economic support and without any structure, against the opposition of the authorities and a negative public opinion (we are spongers on society, as Urban—the chief Lord Mayor of Copenhagen—put it), with raids—not authorised in any law—made by the “Trouble Spotters” of the police (we were outlaws anyway), with all the social problems of Copenhagen represented, with 120 different opinions about everything—we succeeded in making this contradictory experiment function. We succeeded in forming a structure that is based on fellowship, unity, and acceptance; in making the buildings habitable; in establishing a series of basic activities; in tackling the social problems better than the mammoth institutions of the Establishment have ever been able to; in getting the incipient acceptance of the authorities; and finally in developing a growing understanding outside Christiania which now materialises in a genuine and strong support from the most unlikely places, from ordinary people, from labour organisations, politicians, and the press—and last but not least—the Support Christiania campaign.

One may wonder what makes this possible. In my opinion it happens because we *live* what to others is still a theory and a hope; that each of us has rejected the barren tutelage of society and realised our lives on our own conditions. This is what unites all us heterogeneous “deviants” and so-called “social losers”. Out of this springs a mutual acceptance, solidarity, and a joint strength which obviously provokes—or inspires.

The Plurality/Complexity/Variety of Christiania

What, then, is Christiania behind the words and the myths? Its land is large and varied, from the harsh and aggressive barracks and factory environment to the lush and country-like ramparts. It is part of Christianshavn (the oldest part of Copenhagen) and is reached by bus No. 8 in five minutes from the centre of Copenhagen, and, nevertheless, it is unknown country to most Copenhageners.

This variation makes it possible to choose your site according to your needs. The result is a number of very different “provinces” with their own specific nature and clientele. We have, for instance, the easily accessible Fredens Ark (Peace Ark) with entrance from Badsmandsstræde, formerly a barracks building with single rooms and facilities. For these reasons it became the haunt of people who looked for



simple and instantaneous solutions. As a consequence, it was also the place that first collapsed, and was deserted. Now it is changing character again; the sloggers and the idealists are moving in trying to revive it with a new purpose and a new attitude.

A similar fate was that of Løvehuset (Lion's House), former administration building, situated at Refshalevej. At first, it was mainly occupied by the better-off; however, when the common furnace broke down, they were unable to cooperate in getting it repaired. Some of them moved back to civilisation, the more hardy folks rigged up ovens and made themselves independent of technology. An attempt at organising, which caused a lot of problems, was succeeded by some sort of practical anarchism.

Other areas have evolved from a specific milieu or a clear-cut geographical limitation. This is true with Mælkebøtten (= Løvetand, dandelion, hence the middle name of the author!) in a former laboratory made up of a number of scheduled, low buildings around a common yard. It had been equipped all over with lab tables and other fixtures, and it took a considerable effort to make it fit to live in. Hence it took some time before anybody even wanted to try. It has, however, ever since been more or less the same stable inhabitants who have been the sheet anchor in an ever changing pattern.

This is another characteristic feature. Because of the variety of possibilities, socially and environmentally, there is a constant resettling taking place within and between the areas. Life in Christiania changes people. New connections are formed; communes are founded and extended; other ways of housing and living become more attractive and so on. It is worth noting, because it may show how imprisoned in their situation "normal" people really are.

Other areas are found in distant Dyssen and Nordprovinsen across the bridge on the other side of the moat. Here there is no electricity, no water, no plumbing, but old store houses and ammunition depots that have been the scene of a frontier and nature life reminiscent of Cooper's novels. There we find "lone rangers" and meditation-seeking hermits looking for a retreat where they can live in harmony with nature and themselves (five minutes from the City Hall!).

However, there is room for more than nature romance or escapism. Here are people who realise themselves to an extent that a rigid system won't allow, trying to free themselves of old norms and looking for new values.

This is the place where the "multi-privies" and the wind-machines first surfaced. Here was the first Yoga school, and here some of the members of the theatre group Solvognen (Sun chariot) are found—unless they are in action on Strøget, occupying the Radio House or taking over Virum High School—or may-



be they are producing a Peking Opera or a cabaret for the Christiania festivals in the Grey Hall, Christiania's community hall and theatre house.

Christiania's activities

Here we broach another chapter of Christiania's activities. A number of projects that unite and form a structure arise from the wish to be self-sufficient, from the necessities of daily life, from the demands of the community, or merely from the special interests or talents of individuals. Out of the weekly joint meetings of the early period, held in a cold house, came a number of work groups organised around practical problems such as information, economy, security, sanitation, renovation, clearing up, repairing, demolition and negotiations.

The Common Kitchen, tea-houses, and pubs sprang up as did the bakery, the "purchasing central", and the grocery. The Multimedia House arranged weekly rock concerts and light shows; later on

followed the Electric Ladyland Club.

At the same time came production activities like leather and ceramic workshops, candlemaking, dressmaking, and the forge-joiner's shop (in connection with the fast-growing Flea Market). Then came the Market Hall with a secondhand material, haulage, and kerosine shop. Together they formed the basis for a Christiania economy. The increasing pushing contributed to this but it was strongly condemned at the Joint Meeting, and the pushing of hard drugs was practically abolished, whereas hash pushing has been accepted to a small extent. There was, and still is, much debate and resistance concerning individual capitalist enterprises, particularly the pubs. This, in connection with the controversy with the authorities regarding value-added-tax, which was not being paid by Christiania's businesses, resulted in an agreement that a turnover tax should go to the common Christiania treasury to be administered by the Economy Group.

Structuralisation in Christiania

In connection with the agreement with the authorities in May 1972 on, among other things, payment of electricity and water, we agreed upon a system of area treasurers who, together with the Economy Group, make decisions about the income from the Goat Market and Barricade Festivals on recommendation from the Coordination or Joint Meeting. This is an expression of the structuralisation of the decision process that has evolved little by little.

Originally, the Joint Meeting made decisions according to the unity principle. The Meeting lost its importance when Christiania obtained acceptance through negotiations with the authorities. The interest shifted from exterior problems to interior ones, and the area meetings became more significant. It was therefore agreed that decisions should be decentralised and now only problems of common interest to all of Christiania (surprisingly few) are submitted to treatment outside the areas. At a subsequent coordination or community meeting the results are presented, and it is then the responsibility of the work groups to realise the recommendations/decisions in the way they find the most relevant. It is essential to mention that all work groups are open to anybody who wants to join in.

I have dwelled on this structuralisation process because it is interesting to me, and because it tells about an open organisation form that evolves from practice and takes form from the needs of the moment. Under the recent pressure from outside, the Joint Meeting became newly important, and new work groups for warning and protection, clearing up and construction, information and coordination were spontaneously created, resulting in an enormous communal activity. The barricade festival, for example, was a brainwave which in the course of a few weeks and at a time when mobilisation against the threat of demolition had just come up, was realised with music, theatre, and other happenings for two full days—out of the blue so to say.

Communication within Christiania—and out of Christiania

This of course is only half the truth. Before the realisation of this idea lies among other things the spread and acceptance of *the idea*. Communication in Christiania, like everything else, is something that springs up out of a necessity, a need.

The Joint Meeting, in the beginning, was the main news medium. Later on came handbills and mimeographed reports, which were supplemented with the weeklies *Ordkløveren* (*Hairsplitter*) and *Christiania-Alternative*. When the Joint Meeting had been partly replaced by the



Area Meetings, notice boards and wall papers were introduced with little effect. Actually it is the mouth-to-mouth method around the "Purchasing Central, Info and all the other rendezvous that are the essential news media. Christianites simply get together a lot and talk a lot the length and the breadth of the town.

Recently, under pressure from outside, more advanced forms have developed, like an internal radio and the beginning of a telephone network. Together they have reached a stage where two-way programmes have been produced (which Radio Denmark has been allowed to transmit, as an example of what they are dreaming to do in future). This is a product of the Communication Factory,

which also includes an offset-printing press that sends out Christiania's Voice and also made publications for Valborg, the electoral pact for Christiania at the time of the municipal elections.

Here we have reached a new phase with communication to an increasing number of groups and individuals outside Christiania. There are panel discussions and invitations to high schools and various associations that want to hear about Christiania—and learn. There is active participation in the newly established Association of Inhabitants of Christianshavn; there is our jointly elected woman in the City Council, who is working hard to shake up the councillors. This last development has caused much concern outside.

Christiania and the Environment

The Barricade Festival and the just as illustrious Goat Market, together with the series of celebrations at Midsummer, anniversary, Christmas, and Shorvetide (when we had tilting at the ring and tilting at the barrel, with Urban—the mayor of Copenhagen—inside, instead of the cat)—they have the same double meaning. They are a joint manifestation of spontaneous gaiety, but also an open invitation to all the freinds, and fiends, to come and look—and participate.

From the very beginning it has been Christiania's idea that it should be an open town—a refuge for everybody. Naturally with due regard to its inhabitants and their fellowship. For example, we have decided to ban cars, and we don't want unnecessary camping because because of insufficient sanitary facilities, neither do we want pushing or any other criminality going on in this "idiots' reservation", which many of us find is a more adequate designation than the authorities' "social experiment".

This openness is obvious to a great proportion of the neighbours in Christianshavn who spend their spare time in the summer in Christiania on the Square, or the Palm Garden as they call it themselves, which in cooperation with the Christianites was rigged up with a fireplace, tables, and benches. Likewise, the Ramparts are the natural target for anglers and pensioners and neighbourhood kindergartens. Swimming in the moat is also attractive, sprinters mix with loafers, and the first kayaks have ventured out on the water.

The kids from the Aladdin district were the first to build their own "caves" and a club room, and "rockers" occupied their private hangout for themselves and their machines (which they actually agreed to *push* inside the gate). The more mature age groups frequent the tea-houses and pubs in increasing numbers.

Epilogue

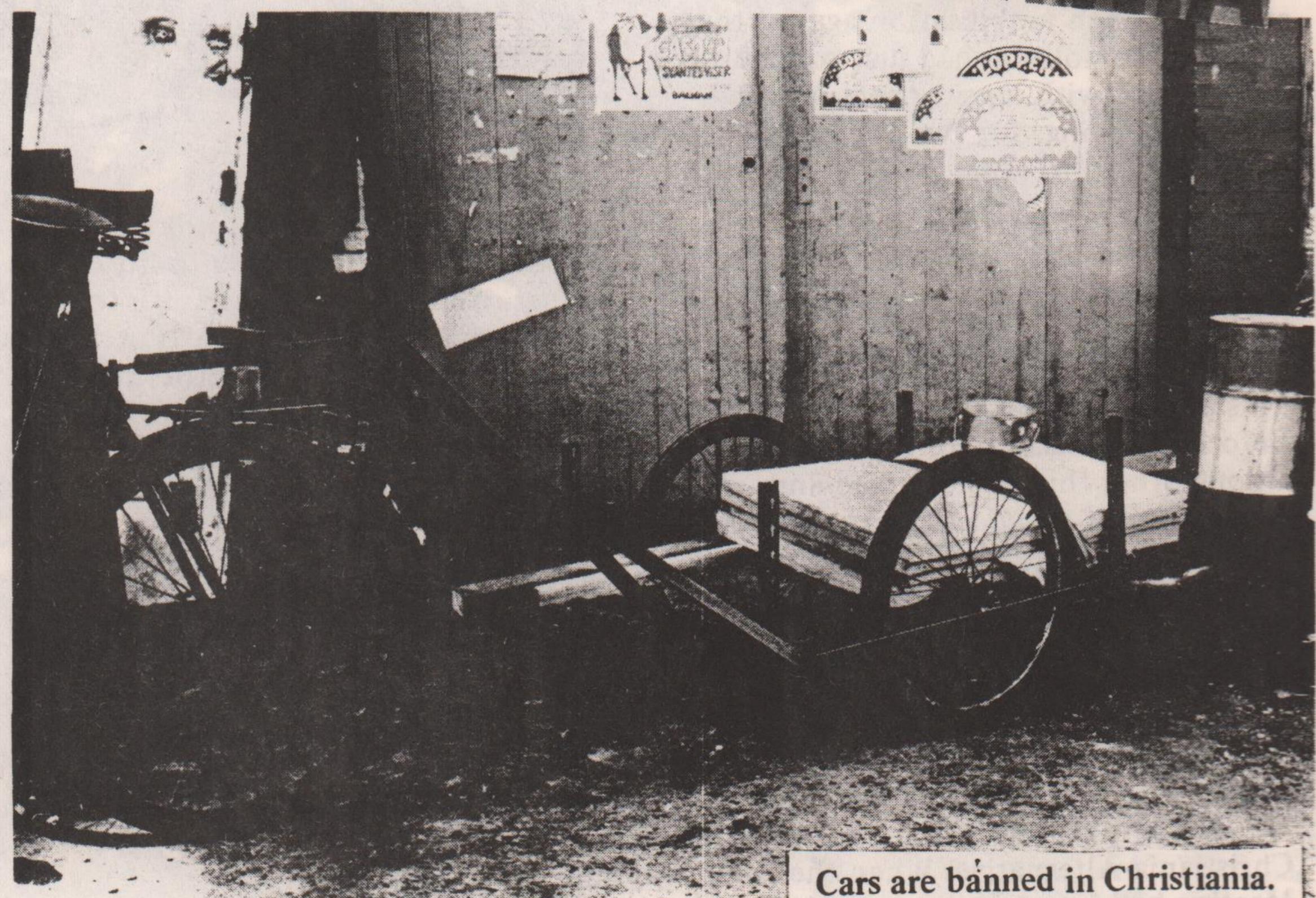
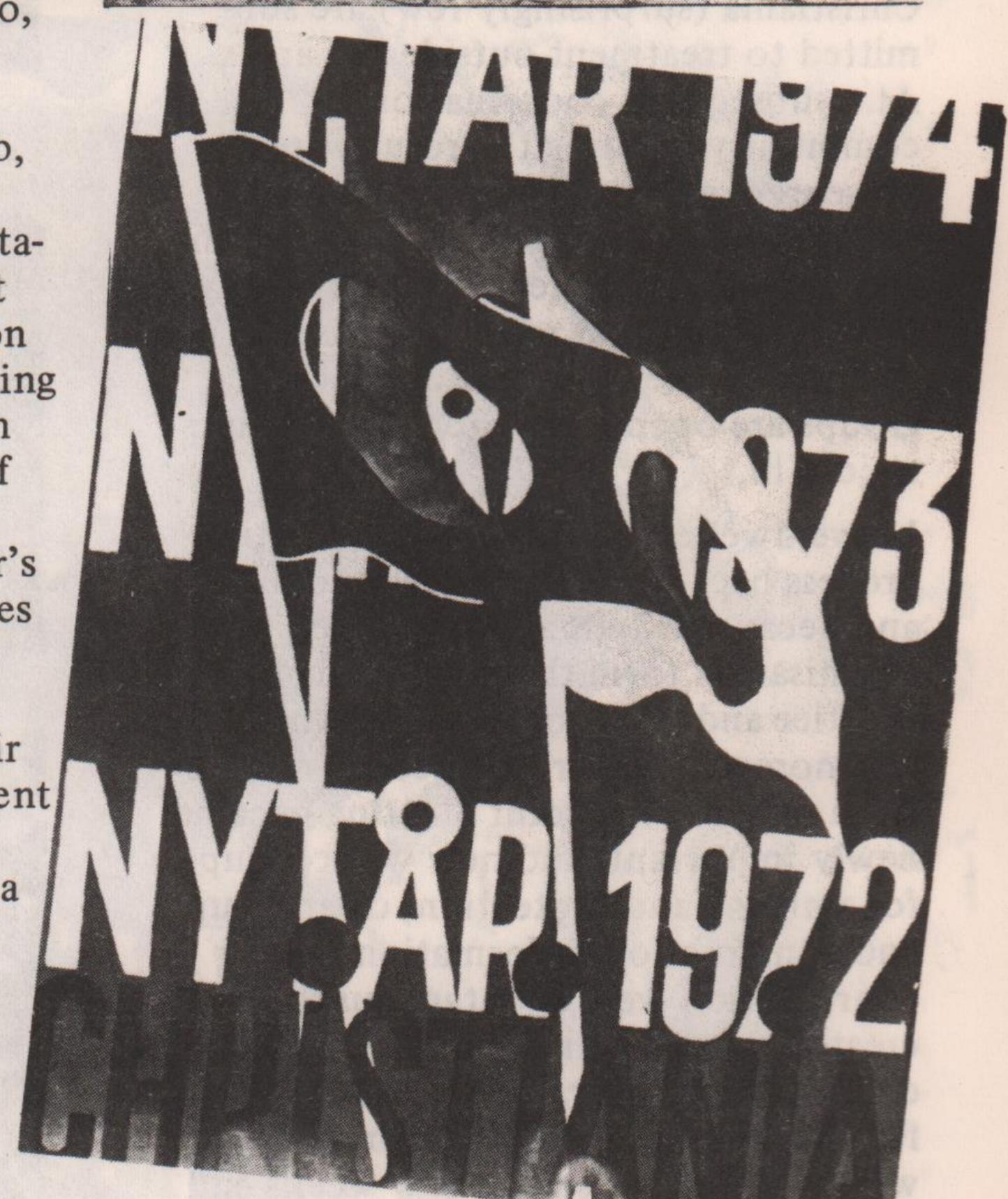
The Danish authorities and their hate myths are slowly being undermined by reality and the sound judgement of ordinary people. Ask the fishmonger in Brobergsgade, or Kissel, the salesgirl in the bakehouse, ask Mrs. Olsen in number five, Mr. Pedersen in No. 1. Ask the bum from Kofoeds Skole or the Greenlander and the sailed-astern Finn—ask anyone who *knows* Christiania. That's why they are afraid, these destructive career politicians and power-lovers who dare not face realities. They don't understand what is going on, and the people don't believe them any more. That's why Mr. Brøndum is desperate and wants to crush Christiania with his bulldozers, demolish century-old architectonic masterpieces like a big storehouse, a big riding hall, the barracks building itself, and a beautiful train stable. Not because they are decrepit.



The army has always built solidly.—No, the reason is that they give shelter to some of Christiania's most important functions, the Flea Market, a jazz club, the Gallery, Ford-A-club with repairshop and museum, and inns, and habitation for a lot of people. Only four out of many houses worthy of preservation have been recommended by the Building Inspectors. The other 50-60 have been picked out to hit the very life nerve of Christiania, e.g. the well-functioning Children's House, the forge, the joiner's shop, etc. Behind all of these places lies an immense effort of courage, hard labour—with insufficient funds—from people who want to lead a life on their *own conditions* trusting to an agreement that the Government is now trying to violate and instead leave Copenhagen a heap of debris.

I ask on behalf of Christiania and on behalf of all Copenhagen: IS THIS REASONABLE?

Per Løvetand Iversen



Cars are banned in Christiania.

CHRISTIANIA

a social experiment, and much more than just that.

Secretary of Defence, Mr. Brøndum, has peeled off the labelling of Christiania as a "social experiment"—but of course it has no influence on the contents of a bottle that you supply it with another label.

Most corporations spend a good deal of time and money in research and on refining their products. Denmark is such a corporation in steady growth. The last ten years have seen bigger changes than the preceding 50 years—which also created great changes themselves.

One feels, however, that less interest is placed in the products of Denmark Inc.,—namely people and environment—because everyone has become obsessed with the by-products: consumerism, motorways and economic growth—so much so that one is led to believe that these are the main products. At the same time, everything has become so specialised and intricate that anyone having seen anything wrong in society, has actually become prevented from doing anything about it.

Today we have seen that everything should be more human. In spite of this we're still building enormous, waste concrete deserts, even though most authorities have long since agreed that nobody wants these things. But there's money in it. The architect may even insist that the renters of his apartments must have black-and-white striped curtains, and also that they are not allowed to put their own private visions at work anywhere in these blocks—out of fear that this might disturb "the overall appearance" of the buildings. Also fearing anything popular and crazy, architects strive to build houses more square than everybody else—presumably to persuade each other that they are all sane and healthy in their minds.

In order to invoke a little humanity we have specialists to work out plans for democracy in the companies. The hunt for profit again links up with the fear of the popular, just as the institutionalised church is a hindrance for an everyday religion. Left behind all this are many lacking identity and security which could have been derived from a meaningful environment (to experience that, one's surroundings have to have been created to a certain extent by oneself). In order to get out of this situation (which is called to be estranged) one has a choice of different roads: 1) You can participate in the hunt of the golden calf in order to learn the joys of the hunt. 2) You can play/act normal. 3) You can have your share of the half a billion pills that are consumed yearly here in Denmark, or you can turn yourself onto drugs. 4) You can write yourself a life-script and play "I'm not OK". 5) You can act criminal (play cops and robbers), or 6) you can venture to try to follow



Bringing the country into the heart of the city.

your experience and analyse your situation. If you follow the last path, you'll have to follow up with a minimum of adequate action, if you do not wish to analyse yourself out of your mind or become utopian.

It was the need for such action that founded Christiania. One hour's worth of action is more real than years of talking, and many different visions and ideas were thrown into the reality-testing.

What is actually going on out there in the dreamed-of land, that has been closed to the public for centuries??? The exciting stories which the papers relay are quite different from the actual experience that is the life of the Christiania-inhabitants. Surely, you'll get a good story, if that's what you want.

First and foremost, you'll find people here—trying to live their lives in their own fashion, on their own conditions. This has created a varied reality in Christiania. And if you've seen any random series of slides from Christiania, you'll have to admit, that no other housing area in Copenhagen nor in the rest of the country can show you anything half as exciting as this. The story is about our fears and inmost wishes—and there's a Christianite in all of us.

Christiania is many things, for instance:

A CONSTRUCTION PLAYGROUND FOR GROWN-UPS

Building today is so specialised and formula-filled that most people are estranged from it. Where does water and current come from? Where does it go? You press the button, pull the rope, decorate your rooms like the neighbour,

and call for the carpenter when the door won't go up, or something has to be redone. We have not been brought up to create our own surroundings.

Many people work hard at a boring job in order to pay for a high rent in an uninspiring environment. They have no other choice. It is a disgrace towards humankind. One can imagine more exciting surroundings, which people helped build and influence. Without cars, with a little craftsmanship, and room for children and old people.

It is possible to integrate work and play. Then maybe, you wouldn't have to go away, every time you had a spare moment.

The buildings of Christiania appeal to your imagination, since they are not "structured for living". We may wonder how buildings would look, if we could create them ourselves without undue respect to "how it is done"—and what kind of an experience would that be???

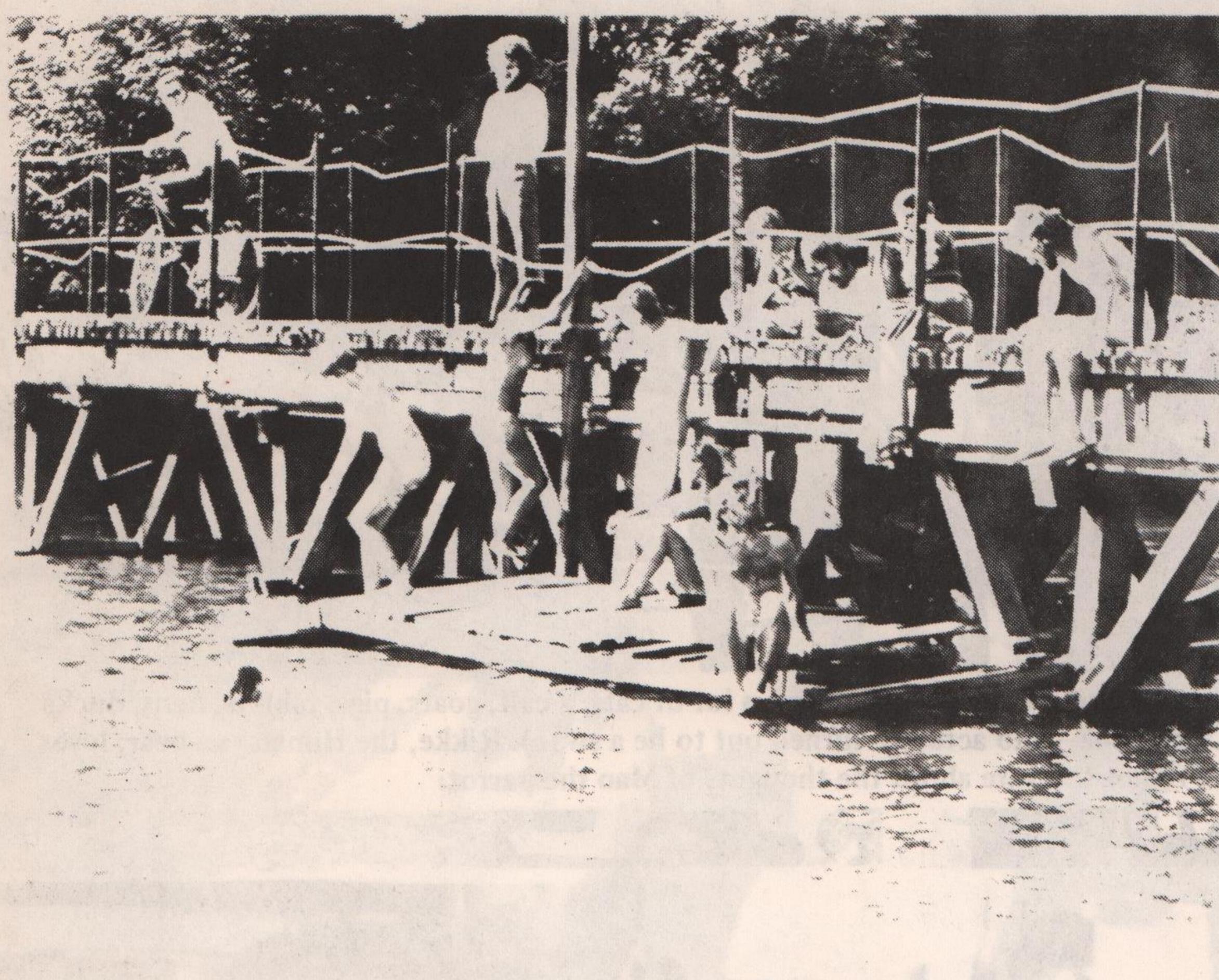
AN ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIMENT

Partly on the inside (especially politically), and partly through the contacts with the outside, Christiania is an environmental experiment. What happens when we start anew, and put aside our ideas and prejudices, and together try to "create a new society" by being open towards the situation and towards each other. Here, Christiania has taken a big mouthful in trying to dig under established idioms such as normality, criminality and deviance in trying to understand our reality in a practical and pragmatic way. This creates moments, the depths and love of which are enchanting. Naturally, there



... A series of lessons in commonhood, waste, responsibility, energy, building, authorities, communal living, criticism, leadership, fear, love, shit, craftsmanship, booze, police, decisions, violence, work, visions, piss, biodynamics, back to nature etc. etc. ...





are many problems connected with the Christiania-situation, but they do not weigh too heavily, since the prevailing notion is that they are not "real"—that it does not matter to do something about them, as far as you can bear to follow your own experience.

The society of Christiania has no exerting power over its inhabitants, which means that decisions can only be made when everyone has understood and agreed to them.

It is improbable, but in principle not important, that Christiania should turn out looking like the surrounding environment. If this should be the outcome of the ongoing experiment—then the christianites would have learned, and would no longer be estranged.

A THERAPEUTIC SOCIETY

Maybe it is a coincidence, but Christiania looks a lot more like a therapeutic society than any description of such a society could possibly do. In Christiania everyone is equal. There are no class distinctions, but many different groups of interest. All functions are intended to be as open and understandable as possible.

A SERIES OF LESSONS

Because many people are facing a new situation, Christiania is a series of lessons in commonhood, waste, responsibility, energy, building, authorities, communal living, criticism, leadership, fear, love, shit, craftsmanship, booze, police, decisions, violence, work, visions, piss, biodynamics, back to nature, etc. Through its many meetings (partly out of necessity, curiosity, and interest from both parts) with a number of public authorities and organisations, and with the reactions from the press—Christiania

is a series of unforgettable lessons about politics.

A LUNATIC RESERVATION

The term lunatic reservation is Christiania's own. It is used to express that the people who are of no use in industrial society, are normally coined lunatic or crazy, and partly that in Christiania there is no pretence when it comes to "soul-rescuing".

Every person has his/her own truth. Be as you are. You are the only one of your kind. Be awake. Opt in, and opt out. Don't take criticism for more than what it is worth. Learn from it if you can, and don't be afraid of criticising. It gives you a very real sense of security not having to live up to anything that you are not.

If you feel like living on a raft or with a TV-set and flush-toilet, then that is your own choice, and you can do it so long as it does not harm others. It is the crazy and real things that make life colourful and worth living for in commonhood. There is no wide gap from the wise to the fool, and things which at first may appear queer, may later turn out to be wise.

THE JOKER OF COPENHAGEN

It must be one of the most exclusive jobs for Christiania to play the part of joker for its surroundings. In olden days, the joker was a respectable person who was allowed to say whatever he pleased, without anyone being sour for that reason. The jokes of the fool usually contained deep, true, and naked aspects in the present situation, which the court and the bourgeoisie could not allow itself to be aware of. The point was that things were said without anyone being obligated by it: you could merely laugh. It was just a fool. The fool was a source of inspiration. He was sacrosanct, and normally did not have to fear what he said. Apart from that, he was often a person in whom you could confide.

Christiania could be such a fool in the middle of Copenhagen, questioning one and all. A beautiful recreative park is just a side of today's Christiania. Not too "preserved", and with a glimpse of reality. A place to breathe in the middle of town. A safety valve for nervous Copenhagen, psychologically and physically. Life is not less serious here—it is deeper. Christiania is an active park, where you can always find someone to talk to, and something to look at. It would indeed be preposterous to turn this place into a ruin, to merely destroy theatres, workshops, housing and so on without any *real* reason.

*By Richard the Lionhearted,
Christiania*





There are some 200 dogs in Christiania, around 10 horses, a donkey, a lot of cats, a calf, goats, pigs, rabbits, hens, ducks (including an ugly duckling named Christiania—who actually turned out to be a swan). Rikke, the Himalayan bear, loves flowers and playing with kids, but we're not too sure about the thoughts of Mao the parrot.

June 1977

Welcome to Fr  e Town Christiania

We assume that it is curiosity and your sympathy for unconquerable Christiania which has attracted you to our little community. When you look around here, you will probably discover that you are just one of a crowd of Christiania's guests. Hopefully you will also understand that you may represent a new problem for us, who already have to struggle hard to survive. Maybe we can succeed in getting you to understand us and our problems, and so we'll gain an ally who will take an active part in our daily life through work, discussions and pleasure. That way you can help us to demonstrate an alternative to the existing western industrial society.

Now we'll try to describe the most important problems you will face when you have crossed Christiania's borders, and also say a little about how we would like you to act while you're here. Even though the police regard us as lawless and we have no written laws at all, still there are a few rules which have evolved and proved to be sensible during Christiania's existence. You shouldn't imitate the people who ignore these rules. When they do that they are only showing their contempt for Christiania.

Thousands of tourists come here during the summer, and they all want to visit Christiania for a couple of days or longer. There are between 800 and 1000 of us actually living in the free town, so it's clear that our hospitality has to have limits. Therefore you shouldn't be angry if a lot of doors turn out to be closed and if Christianites are not overwhelmingly friendly.

We do not want you to set up your tent in Christiania! We are tired of becoming a big campground in the summer, with people making a mess out of our wall

and waterfront. You will also see that our sanitary arrangements are none too adequate even for the permanent residents, so you have to help in keeping our toilets clean and preventing Christiania from becoming a huge dump.

As you probably know, hash is OK in the free town. We have a relaxed attitude toward this drug which doesn't cause the same psychological or physical problems as alcohol. But—anything can be misused. It is unfortunately true that hash is illegal in Denmark, and so the police can always use it as an excuse to bust people in or near the free town. Besides, there is a lot about the capitalistic character of most of the hash-dealing in Christiania which is very negative.

You can help defend the relative freedom we have in this area by keeping all other drugs out of Christiania. Dealing in hard drugs is about the only thing for which we get together and throw people out of the free town, possibly even turn

them over to the police.

One other ground for getting thrown out is gross violence. If you are a witness to a fight, keep cool—unless the weaker party is in real danger—and always ask a Christianite about the background to what is happening before you intervene—if it's necessary to prevent extreme violence.

Since a court decision of last February ruled that the government was legally justified in ordering us evicted on April 1, 1976, certain of the authorities regard us as non-existent. This means, for example, that the police consider that we are outside the law and harass us almost every day. The policemen you will become better acquainted with are tactical police in plain clothes. If you are not a Danish citizen and they find as much as one gram of hash on you, you will most likely be kicked out of the country after an uncomfortable night in a cell. You might also be taken to the police station for no special reason; for



example, if you are picked up during a raid. If you are subjected to this sort of harassment you'll probably have to put up with it without resisting—but we'd be very glad if you'd afterwards write a short report about what happened (especially if there was violence). You can give this to our information office, and it will help in our struggle against the misuse of power by the authorities.

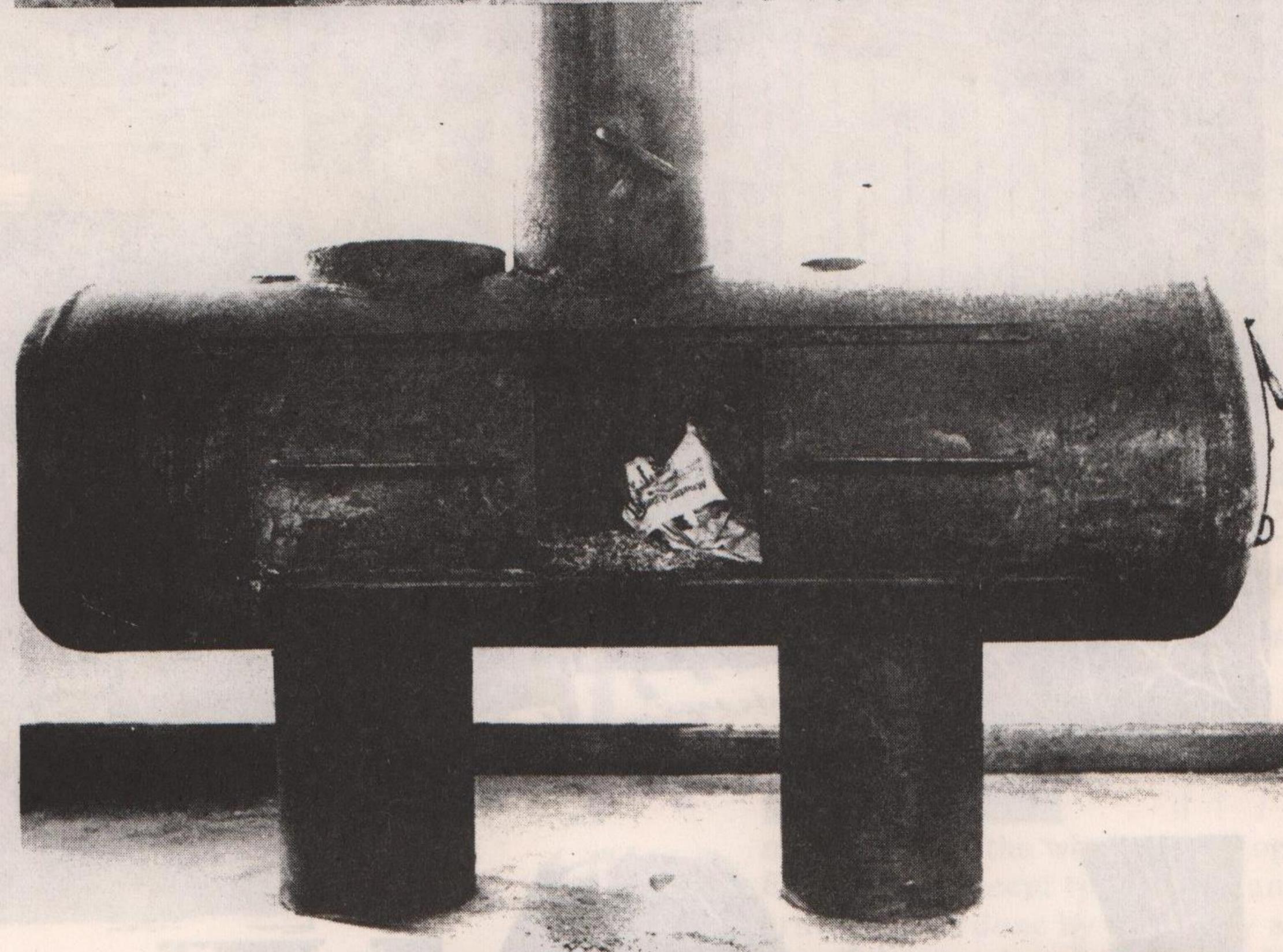
If you live in Christiania more than three weeks you have a financial responsibility as a Christianite. This means that you should pay 100 kr. every month to the area treasurer where you live; then you'll get a citizen's card. Every time you pay the card gets a stamp which shows that 50 kr. has been received for water and electricity, plus 25 kr. for the common (Christiania) treasury and 25 kr. for the treasury of your region. A valid citizen's card also entitles you to reduced prices for certain Christiania activities and parties. The reason we put so much weight on paying the state for the use of water and power is that we've been subjected to a smear campaign about our debt for this consumption. Even though we are saving the public millions per year, it's a useful argument for enemies to use against the free town to say that we are parasites who don't pay for what we use.

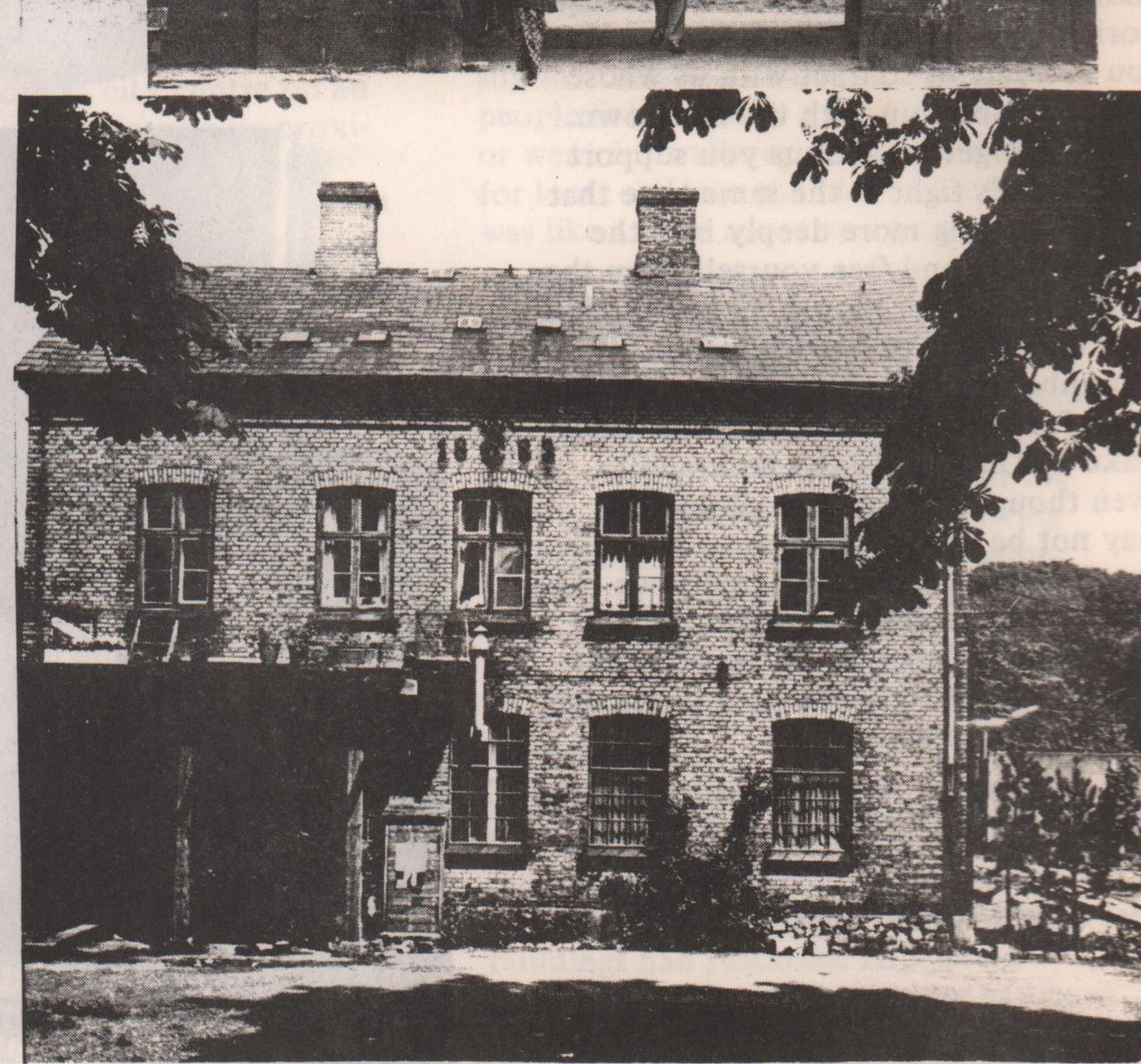
When you have lived for a while in Christiania you will discover that there are a great number of possibilities here for work, and that lots of them are vacant. However, much of the work in Christiania is unpaid and so there is a certain demand for the paying jobs. Most of these are only able to pay a salary after a lengthy building-up period in which many of the original people are replaced by newer workers.

In addition to the summer's pleasures such as beer, chillums (pipes) and music, taking part in Christiania's community work projects will be the best way for you to come in contact with us whose lives are bound up with the free town. Working together with us you support Christiania's fight at the same time that you are getting more deeply into the environment and free yourself from the feeling of being a tourist. In connection with our offensive last winter we formed a "rainbow army". The rainbow colours stand for the different functions which make up Christiania as a community. Even though the rainbow philosophy may not be obvious right now it is still a key to understanding the free town. The Info office can tell you about the meaning and function of the different colours. Go into the rainbow house and declare your colour!

You can also get a more detailed printed description of Christiania at our Info office.

Best wishes—Christania.







Four seasons in Christiania.



1977 - 1979

The SUPPORT CHRISTIANIA/ENGLAND group has a wide collection of posters, badges, postcards and literature available (to browse through or to buy), and welcomes enquiries from people interested in further information about Christiania or the Support Christiania Movement. We can be contacted via

Self Help Housing Resource Library,
Ladbroke House, Highbury Grove,
London N5 2AD.

Tel. 01-607 2789 ext. 5027.

Display materials, speakers, a slide show and film can also be obtained from the Support Christiania group. We invite your interest. Be seeing you . . .

the term 'freetown' is the designation for a town which, with the acceptance of the state, was a refuge for outlaws, criminals and unwanted ethnic groups in the 17th. and 18th. centuries.

