

Groups and Resources

Lib ED contacts

Leicester 0455-209029
Bristol 0272-778453 NOTE NEW NUMBER
Nottingham 0949-60306 (distribution and subs)

Buku Resource Project
136 Grosvenor Road, Bristol BS2 8YA

Kirkdale Free School Project
c/o 11 Veronica Road, London SW17
081-675 4388

Liberation Network of People with Disabilities
c/o Townsend House, Green Lanes, Marshfield,
Chippenham, Wilts.

Lesbian and Gay Workers in Education
BM Gayteacher, London WC1N 3XX

National Union of Students
461 Holloway Road, London N7
071-272 8900

Letterbox Library
8 Bradbury Street, London N16 8JN
071-254 1640
(Specialises in non-sexist and multi-cultural books
for children. For details of their free catalogue, write
or phone)

Forest School Camps
Lorna English (Secretary), 110 Burbage Road,
London SE24 9HD
(An organisation that arranges camps for children --
it's very decentralised)

Woodcraft Folk
13 Ritherdon Road, London SW17
081-672 6031
(A kind of non-sexist, non-militarist scouts and
brownies)

Anti-Apartheid Movement
13 Mandela Street, London NW1 0DW
01-387 7966

Education Otherwise
25 Common Lane, Hemingford Abbots, Cambs.
(For everyone who practices or supports the right of
children to learn without schooling)

**Campaign Against Military Research On
Campus (CAMROC)**
190 Burdett Road, London E3 4AA
081-980 2455

New Education Directory
15 Bellevue, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1DB
0272-735091

Shocking Pink
Young Women's Magazine Collective, c/o 23
Tunstall Rd, Brixton London, SW9 8BZ
(A 4 issue sub to this excellent magazine costs £2.40)

Anarchist Student/Bete Noire
Box A, 34 Cowley Road, Oxford
(Student magazine)

**All London Teachers Against Racism and
Fascism**
Panther House, Room 216, 38 Mount Pleasant,
London WC1

Bread'n'Roses/Tenants Corner
46a Oval Mansions, Vauxhall St., London SE11
071-582 7286
(housing & education resource centre run by tenants)

Scottish Civil Liberty Trust
146 Holland Street, Glasgow G2 4NG
(Provides legal information and has published a
series of leaflets aimed at young people in Scotland)

Hummingbird Multicultural Resources
24 Ashley Hill, Bristol BS6 4JG
0272-541946
(publish mail order catalogue of books and other
resources)

Advisory Centre for Education
18 Victoria Park Square, London E2
081-980 4596

Minority Rights Group
29 Craven Street, London WC2N 5NG
071-930 6659

Peace Education Project
Peace Pledge Union, 6 Endsleigh Street, London
WC1
071-387 5501

Third World Publications
151 Stratford Road, Birmingham B11 1RD
021-773 6572

Commonweal Collection
c/o J.B. Priestley Library, University of Bradford,
Bradford BD7 1DP
(A small library designed for anyone interested in
libertarian, anarchist and pacifist ideas)

Z to A Project (New University)
24 South Road, Hockley, Birmingham B18
021-551 1679
(An alternative education project)

Black and In Care
20 Compton Terrace, London N1 2UN
071-226 7102

Teachers for Animal Rights
c/o Wanda Dejlidko, 29 Lynwood Road, London
SW17 8SB

**End Physical Punishment of Children
(EPOCH)**
PO Box 962, London N22 4UX
(A national organisation which aims to end physical
punishment of children by parents and other carers)

The Children's Village School
Tombol, Wangdong, Amphoe, Muang,
Kanchanaburi, 71190, Thailand

**National Coalition of Alternative
Community Schools**
58 Schoolhouse Rd, Summertown, TN38483, USA
tel: 615 964-3670

City as School
16 Clarkson Street, New York, NY 10014, USA

Foundation of Education with Production
PO Box 20906, Gaborone, Botswana
(Education for social change)

ANKUR
J-21, Hauz Khas Enclave, New Delhi 110016, India
tel: 661473
(Society for alternatives in education)

Maharaja Sawai Man Singh Vidyalaya
Sawai Ram Singh Road, Jaipur-302 004, India

Tamariki Free School
Woolston, Christchurch, New Zealand

New Zealand Lib ED group
c/o Richard Bolstad, 26 Southampton Street,
Christchurch, New Zealand

SAC (Syndikalisterna)
Svenvagen 98, 113 50 Stockholm, Sweden
tel: 08-34-35-59

KRUT (Kritisk UtbildningsTidskrift)
Torpedverkstaden, Skeppsholmen, S111 49
Stockholm, Sweden
(Critical Journal of Education)

Frankfurt Free School
Vogelweidstrasse 3, Frankfurt, W. Germany

Familial, Day Nursery Kindergarten School
PO Box 2009, Kathmandu, Nepal

Grupo Impulso Libertario
CC984, 2000 Rosario, Argentina

National Union of Teachers
Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1
071-388 6191

Children's Legal Centre
20 Compton Terrace, London N1 2UN
071-359 6251

**The Children's Home-Based Education
Association**
14 Basil Avenue, Armthorpe, Doncaster, DN3 2AT
0302-833596

Daycare Trust
Wesley House, 4 Wild Court, London WC2B 5AU

A K Distribution
3 Balmoral Place, Stirling, FK8 2RD
(Suppliers of a wide range of libertarian literature
by post: send for their catalogue of titles)

Global Futures Project
Institute of Education, University of London, 10
Woburn Square, London, WC1H 0NS

Kilquhanity House School
Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland

University of the Third Age
Wren Street, London WC1
071-833 4747
(Self-help learning groups for older people)

Blackcurrent Otherwise Project
please write c/o Lib ED for redirection.

Skool Bus Project
24 Clive Street, Hereford, HR1 2SB

Feminist Library
5/5a Westminster Bridge Rd, London SE1

International

Le CERISE
77 rue des Haies, 75020 Paris, France
(Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur l'Innovation
Sociale et Educative, which publishes the journal
"Zero de Conduite")

Graine d'Ecole
La Paillerie, Avenue de Bardenac, 33600 PESSAC,
France

Circule-Air
Agence Informations Enfance, 29 rue Davy, 75017
Paris, France
tel: (1) 42-28-71-64
(an alternative education organisation and
magazine)

Assn. Nationale pour l'Education Nouvelle
1 rue des Neffiers, 31400 Toulouse, France
tel: 61-52-45-10

Connect
12 Brooke St., Northcote 3070, Victoria, Australia

Acrobatic Arts Community School
PO Box 1101, Wodonga 3690, Australia

Centro Studi Libertari
via Rovetta 27, 20127 Milano, Italy
(Libertarian study centre and archive which
publishes the journal "Volonta")

CNT-AIT-Ensenyament
Calle Unio 16, 1-1, Barcelona, 08001, Spain
tel: 301-06-12

CNT-Federacio d'Ensenyament de Catalunya
c/Roger de Lluria, 123 pral, 08037 Barcelona,
Spain
tel: 215-7625 (English spoken Tuesday mornings)
(They publish "Alternative Teacher" (in English),
news for foreign language teachers.)

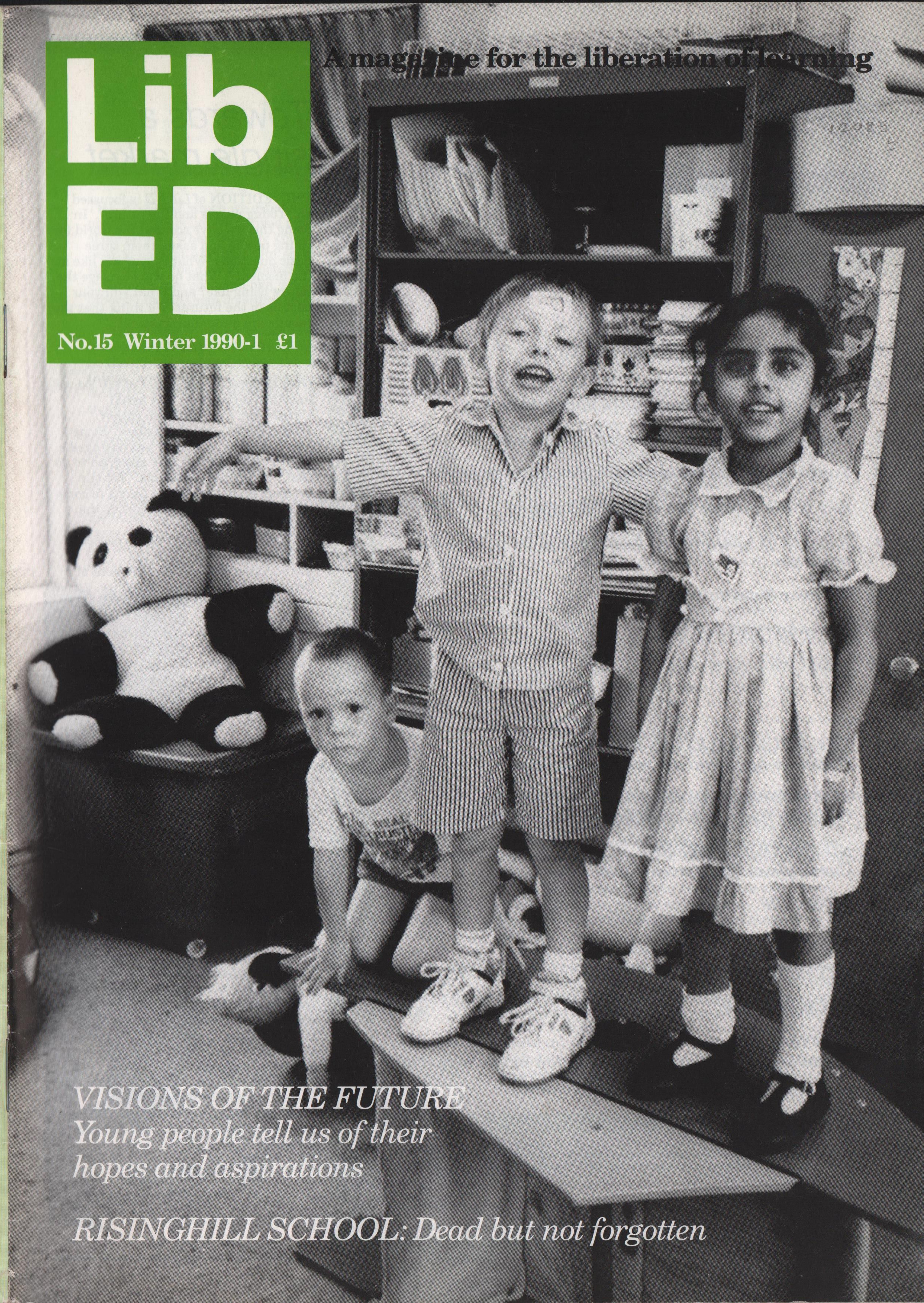
De Weide Free School
Sevekootstraat 67, Erpe-mere, Nr. Aalst, Belgium

Free Schools in Vienna
c/o Davidgasse 6/15, 1100 Vienna, Austria

Lib ED

No.15 Winter 1990-1 £1

A magazine for the liberation of learning



VISIONS OF THE FUTURE
Young people tell us of their
hopes and aspirations

RISINGHILL SCHOOL: Dead but not forgotten

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Towards a single market

THIS EDITION of *Lib ED* is focussed on "Young people and the future". In doing this we have scoured the world for young people and asked them three basic questions: What is your life like at the moment? What do you envisage the future being like? and What will your part be in the future? We think that the results are quite illuminating!

Over the preceding issues of *Lib Ed* we have had a problem. Our serial, Curriculum Cop, has been rather controversial with our readers. Some love it, others hate it. It has outraged a lot of people. In part it is designed to do that. To say the unsayable. Yet our problem is that most of it seems to come true. No matter how outrageous the idea.

Now we find ourselves surpassed. Schools, in the shadow of the introduction of Local Management of Schools, are starting to introduce 'incentives' for children to join their schools.

One school has begun 'marketing' a starter pack, to be given free to all first year students, comprising a case containing new pens, pencils, rulers, rubbers and geometry apparatus.

Another is offering free Filofaxs, provided by a building society under a sponsorship scheme.

The question is, what do we do?

All of a sudden education vouchers are in the news. In our last editorial, we only mentioned vouchers in passing, as the next step following the introduction of Local Management in Schools.

But it doesn't need much imagination to see the new emphasis being placed on them as a reaction from the Right-wing think tanks to the progress that Labour is making in with its new 'Big Idea'.

For there is no doubt that the Government will go into the next election with an agenda, hidden or otherwise, that includes the bringing of their idol, the free market, into the education system.

In our next issue we will feature an in-depth analysis of the issues of vouchers, opting-out and other problems and options that are confronting state schools.

Beyond belief

Matthew Appleton, from Summerhill, makes a case against the adult-eration of childhood

THE ENERGY which we expend on maintaining and perpetuating beliefs is derived from our lack of knowledge of ourselves. When we truly know ourselves, we have no need to hold onto beliefs. Our source is then our sense of self and the world we are rooted in. Beliefs segregate experience into good and bad, and distort our perception of others, placing them on either this side of the fence, or the other.

The periphery of our beliefs are the fences of our perception, dividing truth from illusion. Self-knowledge, on the other hand, recognises the vital grain of truth in all things, and has no need to erect such boundaries. When we inflict our beliefs on children, we inflict wounds upon their integrity, we insult their self-knowledge.

All beliefs are functional. They are emotional and energetic investments. A belief gives either intellectual credence to an aspect of ourselves we cannot accept for its own sake, or denies an aspect of self that we cannot accept at all.

So, the fascist embroiders a mystical philosophy to give meaning to his murderous impulses, whilst the Christian casts out sin to defecate his darker thoughts. Babies are not born fascists, Christians, socialists, communists, Buddhists, Hindus, nor do they subscribe to any other "ist" or "ism", yet millions of human lives have been consumed in gas chambers, before firing squads, at the stake, or on the battlefield, in the name of such beliefs.

God, Queen and Country, Jesus Christ. The Fatherland. The Revolution. The maiming and the murder is given meaning. Nobody is responsible. The "Great Truth" transcends personal responsibility. The truth is always on "our" side. Life, with its inbuilt affirmations becomes a secondary event.

When we attempt to spiritualise or politicise children we wound their inherent understanding of life, we uproot them from THEIR reality and bind them to OUR beliefs.

We turn people into issues, reducing human interaction into a series of "dos" and "don'ts". A belief does not exist in a vacuum, it arises from experience, it is functional. When adults attempt to foist their beliefs on children, those beliefs are imbued with a living history. Children do not perceive

concepts in isolation, but experience them within a living ocean of expression and emotion.

Beliefs are charged with the relationship between the adult and the world, the adult and the child, the child and the world. Old guilts, fears and prejudices are given a new lease of life, passed on like invisible germs on the rim of a cup. Only when we actively encourage and support our children to live their own lives, to ask their own questions, however distasteful or impolite we may BELIEVE them to be, do we set our children free of the "sins" of their fathers.

Nor is it a question of encouraging them to do the things we never did, or avoiding the mistakes we feel we have made. They have their own eyes, their own minds, their own hearts. How many young lives have been riddled with anxiety trying to please the parents, or with resentment trying to rebel from them? How many years would we end up with if we added up all the hours of human misery that have been spent awake at night, tortured by questions of "is it normal", "is it bad"? (It being the abstraction of the I which has met with disapproval).

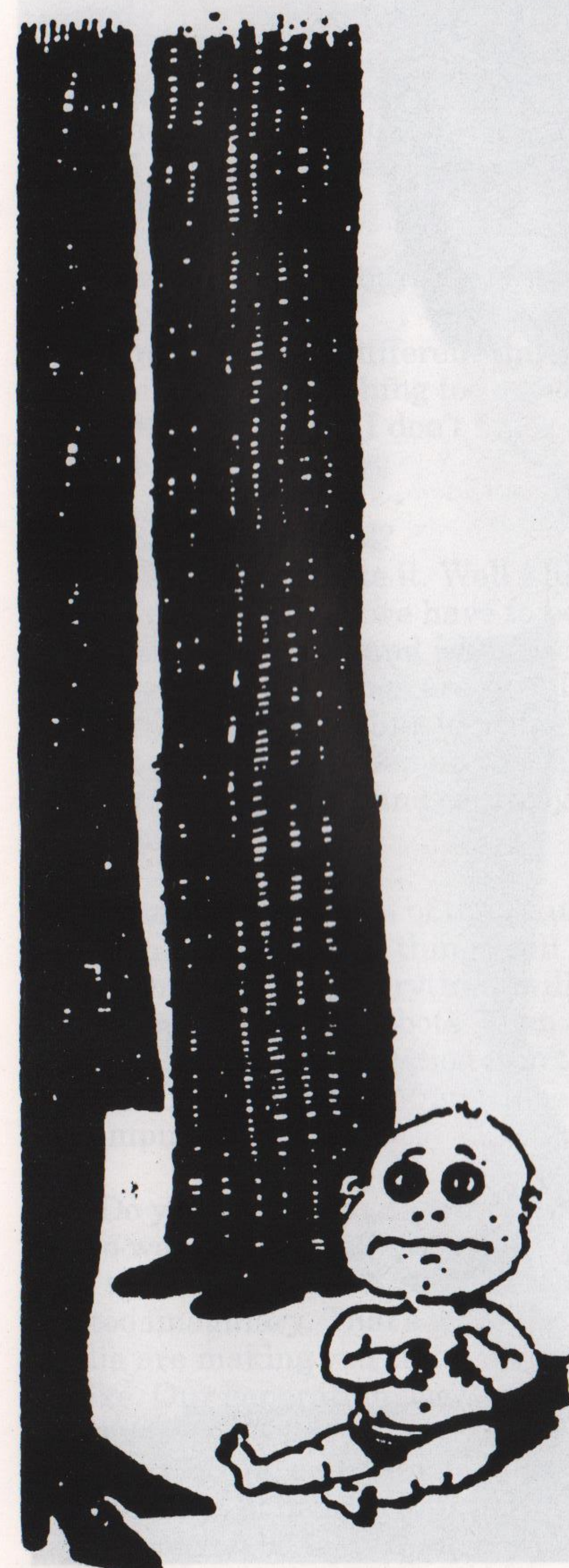
This is the legacy we hand onto our children when we endow them with our beliefs. These are the internal wars that erupt into external wars when the starting flag is raised.

Life is much broader than any belief. The landscapes of childhood are much further reaching than any imposed reality can hope to do justice to. A belief is not a reality. At best it is a sketchy map. yet we are continually mistaking the map for the landscape itself. Have you ever looked into a newly born baby's eyes? Can you ever hope to improve on the inherent wisdom that dwells there? Beyond any belief there is such a vastness which cannot be comprehended. Maybe it is the terror that such a vastness can evoke which makes our beliefs desperate, so dangerous. From this vastness our children are born to us. To this vastness they will die. It is the one route we all share.

We are all children of this incomprehensible vastness, yet we have not learned to trust it. We hold onto our beliefs like they are life itself. But they are not. None of us have the final say on reality. When we impose our beliefs we adult-erate the minds and bodies of our children, we rob them of the horizons with our fenced-in truths. When we place our children on the other side of our illusionary fences we lose sight of them. When we drag them over to our side they lose sight of themselves of who they really are.

Beliefs are not necessary. they are simply fossilised experience given meaning. All beliefs are limitations which prevent us from fully seeing or being. A belief is an inability to be. Maybe, one day, people will look back on the system of beliefs of which our civilisation is woven as we now look back on the superstitions of our ancestors. Maybe they will recognise the grain of truth, the function behind the fence, and step out from its fortifications. As long as we continue to deal in beliefs at the expense of a fuller realisation of life, we are not really there for our children.

Belief, though has another meaning, beyond the realm of the concept. It can also mean to trust. To believe in our children, rather than pushing them to believe in us, we are endowing trust. When we begin to trust in life our children will do so naturally, for life has not yet become an enemy to them. Then, and only then, will we really be there for our children, for only then will we be able to see them as they really are, and face them as we really are.



I'm not the same and I like it

Lani Parker is eight. She has a disability which makes walking difficult and she talked to *Lib ED* about her life, the future and what her part in that future might be.

I'M HAPPY really, well mostly happy. It's a bit sad at the moment because Sati has gone away and she's one of my best adult friends. I've got a lot of adult friends which is great because adults, well some adults, are fun to play with.

What I don't like is rules. Rules are boring. Like wearing my 'proper' shoes for instance. My dad always makes me wear them. It should be up to me. In fact I hate rules. There shouldn't be any rules, well not like the ones we've got now. My friend Nathan, he's always getting into trouble because he swears but he doesn't mean any harm.

He gets picked on because he's black. I don't like rules but there should be a rule against this. There are lots of things I don't like about our world like this like how people treat animals. We treat animals terribly killing them just for ourselves. Everything has a right to live.

I hope that the future is going to be better for me and for the world. I don't think that things are going to be that good though. People are horrid to black people, to animals, to anyone who isn't the same as most people. If the world is going to be a better place we have to start looking after it and looking after people and things in it. I want people and animals to have a better life but I don't think it will happen unless people start caring a little bit about each other.

When I'm older I want to travel and have a child. I don't want to live with a man and I certainly won't get married. I want to be like Kerry in Neighbours. She's my favourite character. I want to go to Africa and to India. Travelling would be great, much better than having a job and being all tied down.

I hope that the world is going to be there for me to travel in. Sometimes I do wonder. All in all I want to be different. I'm not the same as everyone else and I like it. People who are the same are boring. I don't want to be like everyone else. I am different and I want to stay like that.



Young and angry

Charlotte and Maya are two young black women. Charlotte is 13 and lives at home. Maya is 15 and has been in care for many years. She ran away from her last foster home and now lives with her cousin. They both talked openly and lucidly to *Lib ED* about their lives and hopes.

Lib ED: What's your life like now?

Maya: I'm quite content now. I never used to be. I've been through a lot of traumas in my life. I never got on at school for a start but things are OK now.

LE: Did the teachers pick on you?

M: Yeah. I beat a teacher up once. She was pulling me around the classroom so I hit her.

LE: Did you plan it?

M: Yeah. I used to want to get punished. I hated school so I used to do everything to get expelled but they wouldn't because of my circumstances.

LE: Did you explain to anyone that you hated school and that was why you were behaving that way?

M: Not really. I just used to accept it. I used to bunk all the time anyway. The teachers only wanted to teach the ones who wanted to get taught. I wanted to get taught but I needed a lot more encouragement. I went to a school once where I was encouraged and I did really well.

LE: How about you Charlotte, what's your life like now?

Charlotte: Loads of different things are happening to me. Nothing too exciting. Life is weird anyway. I don't know the purpose of life anyway.

LE: What about school?

C: At school I don't like it. Well I like it I just don't know why we have to be ruled by the teachers and why we can't have a say in how things are run. They don't really care if we like learning or not. We just have to keep up the school reputation of uniform and courtesy out of school.

LE: What is your vision of the future?

C: I think in the future things will be very computerised. Everything will be run by machines and robots. Then all the people with an education won't be any use because everything will be run by computers.

LE: Do you think that's a good thing?

C: No way. Too artificial.
M: I think robots are a bit far fetched. It's too imaginary. That's what the media are making you think it's gonna be like. Our generation, we've got images of perfect people: straight teeth, a certain figure, a certain height, certain ways of having your hair. In the future we will be told what we should be



We're over-ruled by the government and I don't think we should be

like.

LE: So the future will be dominated by computers and robots. Is there anything else you can see in the future?

M: I'm quite looking forward to growing up and dying actually. I know it sounds a bit morbid but ...

C: We're over-ruled by the government and I don't think we should be but I suppose if there wasn't a government people would just be going around doing what they wanted.

LE: What's wrong with that?

C: Well take the people who are really horrible, we'll still have them and we wouldn't be able to stop them from committing crimes - rape, murder ...

M: I think anyone who rapes should be put to death. I hate people who rape.

LE: So you think if we don't have a government there would be a riot. What about other forms of control? Could we do it ourselves?

M: Yeah I think that's a really good idea. Like in my sister's school. The kids just got together and decided to abolish school uniform.

LE: What about doing something like that out of school? Could people make it work?

C: You could but you'd always get someone who wouldn't participate.

M: Not everyone could cope with the responsibility. I think I probably could.

LE: So it's robots, computers. What else do you see in the future?

M: Well racism will be a big issue. Being black in this world makes it difficult to get on but it's gonna get better. By the time our kid's kids are alive things will be better. Put it this way, there's not as much racism now as there was a hundred years ago and in a hundred years time I don't think there'll be much.

LE: So what about your place in the future?

M: I think I'm going to work for a feminist publisher like the Women's Press.

C: I'm not sure. I think I'll have to do something with computers because that's going to be in. I want to do loads of things ... I don't know what will happen. I'm not sure. Can we listen to the tape now?

"The world will become a much smaller place ..."

Nakl Kapur is 17 years old, and attends a state school in Leicestershire.

MY LIFE will have improved in seventeen days when my exams are over. I really hope I do not have to retake them.

I am quite apprehensive about what is going to happen. Otherwise I am generally happy, content, well clothed etc. I don't have as much spending money as I would like to have.

My view of the world is that there have been great changes over the last few months. Far more than in my life before. Along with others I am developing much more consciousness about the environment.

The future - what I hope is that it will be much more peaceful, but perhaps there will be another war. History will repeat itself. Nationalism in Eastern Europe is very worrying; look at Poland for example.

Europe has generally become much more unstable - the last forty years have been very stable; too much so almost. I think that Germany will become too powerful; the tendency for Germany to want to expand is still there.

The USA will deteriorate economically and socially, drugs etc. but this too will be an important fact. Europe as a whole will be a much more important feature.

With reference to the environment, a crisis point will be reached ... the destruction of the rain forests ... global warming ... flooding in Europe and Asia etc.

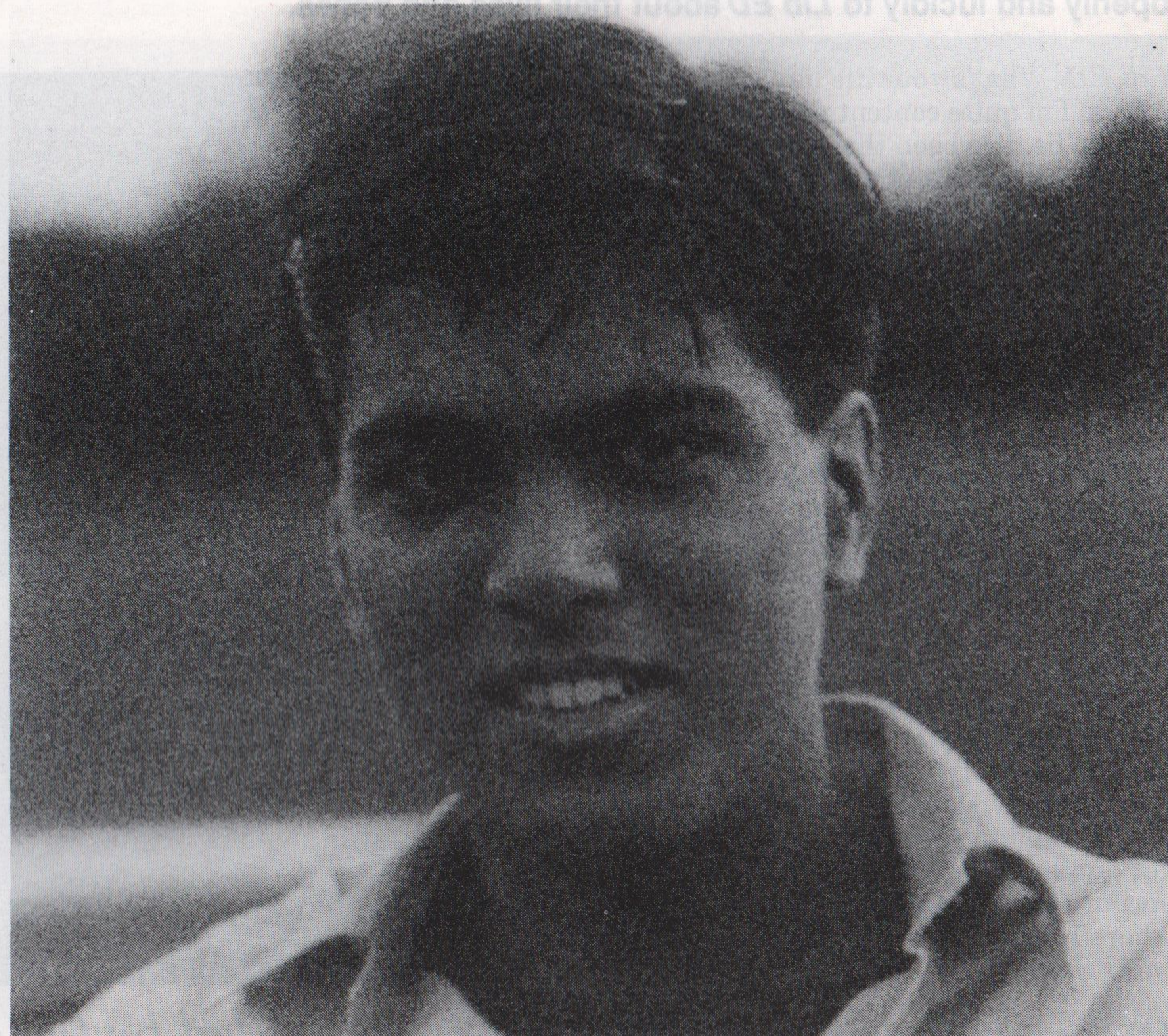
I do not see many changes on the global military front. However, there may be less of an arms race.

Me? In ten years time hopefully I'll be married, yes at twenty eight, and settled down. I cannot play a part in world affairs, but I will be concerned about the environment. I may be a bigger layabout than I am now.

People will start to die; I may have lost an uncle or someone.

I may move out of Britain into Europe, just to see if there is anywhere else and what other places are like. The world will have become a much smaller place, so I would like to do more travelling.

Generally I do not envisage a very happy future - but we shall see!



"... but there may be more people"

Sushi Moles - aged 9 years - attends a state junior school in Leicester.



I HAVE ENOUGH to eat. I am doing well at school. I have just passed some exams. It was out of 100%. I got over 80% on all of them. Maths 1 (95%), Maths 2 (88%), English 1 (90%), English 2 (88%), General Knowledge (882%), Story (94%). I came top in all the second year with my story.

I couldn't do without my friends. I do not like people smoking, spiders and hurting myself.

I hope there won't be another war. I think there will be a Labour government because of the Poll Tax. I think there might be a cure for AIDS. There may be more or there may be less people in the world because of droughts and the Ozone layer.

I would like to be craftsperson, or an artist or perhaps even do chemistry, but I probably will have changed my mind by then. Even if I haven't I might not be able to do it.

"The rich will be really rich"

Claire McEwan is 13, lives in Leicester, and attends a state school.

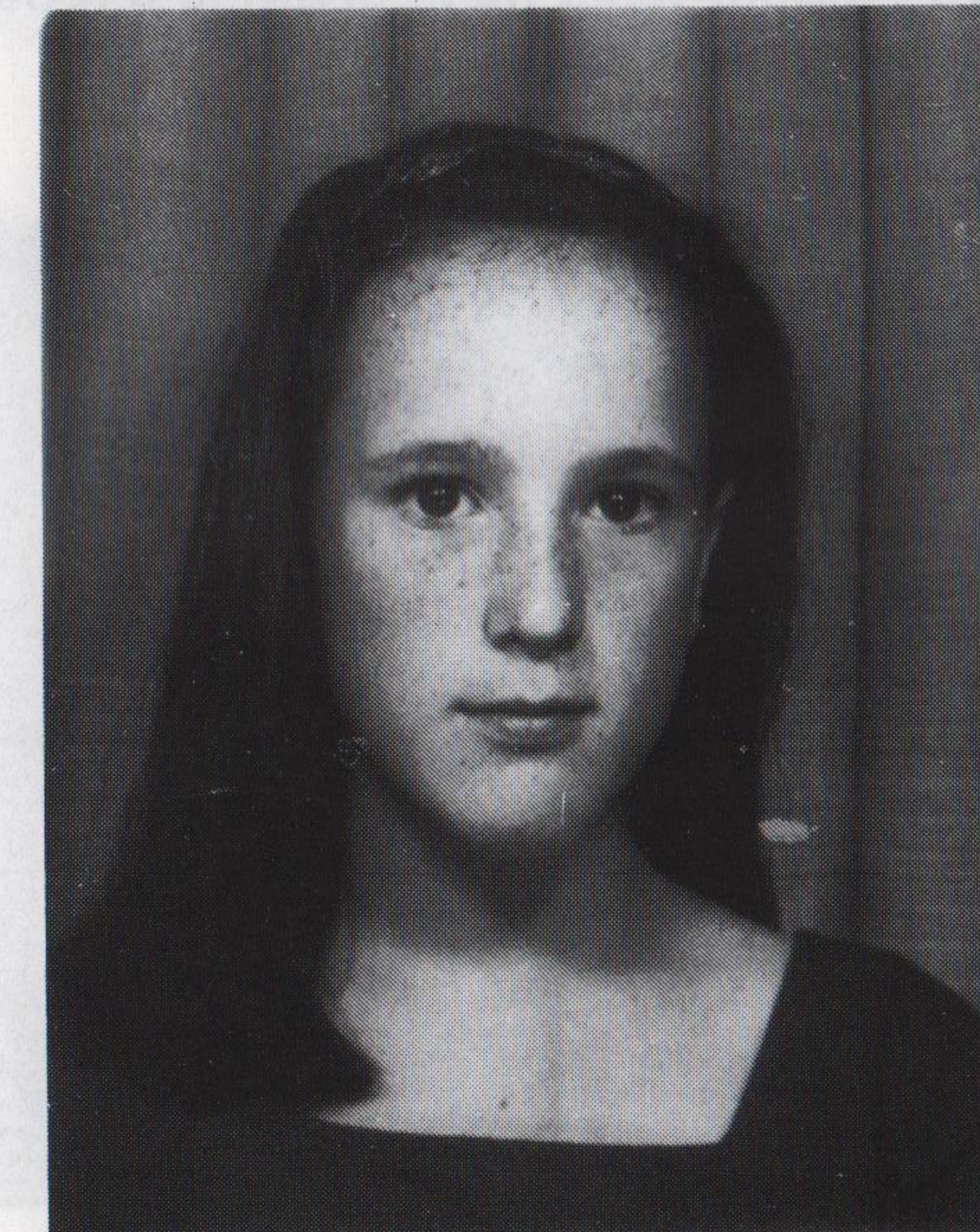
LIFE TREATS me well. I like playing instruments, but I would like to be good without practising. I like artwork, jogging, aerobics and sunbathing. I like being dead lazy, having good food and eating kebabs and Indian food, especially Tandoori chicken.

I do and do not like going to school. I do not like tidying up, or having to find my friend's hamster when it escaped under the floorboards!

I get angry when my brother, sister and parents are all listening to their favourite music in different rooms and I am trying to get to sleep! The other thing that annoys me is when programmes on the television are put off for the World Cup or Wimbledon.

In the future the poor will get really poor and the rich will get really rich. Prices will go up and it will not be safe to walk around after dark. The world will be a much more dangerous place.

There will be hardly any countryside



left anywhere; everything will be buildings and car parks.

People will have to pay a lot for tap water on a meter. For the very poor it will be much worse - many people will not have good life chances.

The rich will be really rich. In the near future there will be a change of government to Labour, and then back to the Conservatives.

The poor people will try to set up their own things, but the rich people will just buy them out if they set up anything good.

I will probably have a really underpaid job. It could be servicing the rich people, and I'll be living in a horrible house.

If I was really well off I would set up a home for poor people. That is if I was really rich ... but I don't know ...

I would not want to stay in England, but live on a hot island where people could speak English. What about an island such as Hawaii?

It may be a "wasted world"

Vijay Gosai is aged 11, and goes to a boys' secondary school in Leicester.

I ENJOY LIFE generally and I really enjoy most sports. I have lots of involvement with my family, with religion and weddings. I am one of the few Gosai brothers - well, cousins really - but one is only two years old and the other lives in Africa. At weddings I can pick up a little extra money by throwing water off pan leaves at the groom - and then the groom's family give me some money. I put it into a bank account.

I have my own bank account. I am not sure what I will do with the money, but I like spending my pocket money on the odd ice cream or sweets. I've only got a little bit left in my money box at the moment.

I have a packed lunch once a week so that I can be in time for games practice, and I can make my own sandwiches. I like Dairylea Cheese Spread, salami and cucumber sandwiches. I can make quite a lot of food myself. My mum taught me how to make a nice omelette with onions, red and green chillies, milk, salt and eggs; I just whisk it up and fry it. If you cannot look after yourself it is not good - I can tidy up my room and take care of my sisters and all that.

I like my school and I like my subjects, but there is a tutor who just gives you a book and says "do this", and

never seems to talk it through. I get the feeling in one subject that I'm just wanted to get good grades at the exam, but the tutor would not care if I forgot it all the day after.

Then there's the tutor who likes to joke with the class and make funny noises, but cannot stand it if you joke back. He gives detentions for very little things; such as if you are having a brief conversation about how to do a piece of work, when he goes mad and threatens you.

I find that in History they explain more, so you know what you are doing.

We just see the Head in assembly. He did organise the first year raffle ticket selling. I won first prize for selling forty seven books, so he was involved in that. But when it comes to a pat on the back, it's the Year Head and Deputy Head who do it - they're the ones who keep the school running.

There was one incident that really confused the whole first year. There was a puppet theatre coming to the school, but it would cost 75p to see it. They sent a form home that asked, "Would you like your son to watch it? Yes or No?". Then a few days before the performance, one of the teachers blew his top off at the kids, just because some of the parents said "No" when he had

asked. He now said you HAVE to come. Some of the children, including some of the really tough ones, were in tears because they were told off for not bringing their 75p. And then the performance was not very original. It was about a vegetarian *Duckula*, but without the fun.

In twenty years time, some people say the world will be overrun by computers. I think they will make things better by helping to avoid the wasting of products. If we carry on as we are with aerosols and cutting down wood, there will not be enough left to protect.

I try to use ozone-friendly spray and recycled paper when I can. I take our paper to the recycling bins. If everybody recycles the future will be better. Some people want a good future for their children and grandchildren - if everyone does it, it will work. If they do not do it, it will be a bad time for the new children coming into the world; it will be a wasted world.

I see myself as being something to do with computers; perhaps to avoid waste. If they go on cutting down the rain forests, we will not have the pleasure of seeing the wild creatures. The BBC nature films of today will be a view into the past.

"The future is tomorrow"

Ray arrived in London from Plymouth three months ago. When he went to a benefit office in Kilburn he was told he would have to wait six months before signing on because he had voluntarily given up a job. He does not understand why he has been denied benefit since. What he is given is a food voucher usually for £10 meant to provide for the week. He is seventeen and inevitably homeless.



"MY VISION of the future," Ray said, "is all about tomorrow. Don't try and talk to me about politics, it means nothing to me. When I arrived in London all I could get was a poxy food voucher. What they don't seem to realise is that you can't store food when you're homeless. You have to spend the voucher all at once. So tomorrow means I have to get some food, that's all."

Ray lives in a cardboard box in an area called the Bullring by the southern end of Waterloo Bridge, but now has his eye on an empty property where he thinks he might, when he gets himself together, manage to gain entry. And when a hand infection clears up he may get a job. He has been arrested repeatedly for vagrancy - first a year ago when he says the police began stepping up their activity against begging, and most recently three weeks

ago. Arrests often involve nights in the cells, followed by a court appearance and maybe a fine of between £5 and £30. The only way young people like Ray can pay the fines is by begging for them. Of his life now Ray says:

"The Bullring isn't what they say it is. We have a little fun together. We have a joke and a laugh. We don't sit and think, "Oh God we're on the streets", but if God came along I'd ask him for a bit more than the price of a cup of tea. Why? Because it's all about survival down here."

Ray's conversation reveals a strong sense of morality. He says that he has chosen to survive by asking people for money instead of stealing it which would probably be easier, less humiliating and more lucrative,

"I saw six CID last night in 20 minutes. You can usually tell them by

the way they walk. They are wasting everybody's time - ours, theirs and the court's. It costs a helluva lot of money to take someone to court for a £10 fine or a day in prison. You want to know about my vision of the future? I told you, it's about tomorrow. You know, the law should be that the homeless can beg and only the homeless. People from the hostels beg and they get three meals a day and benefit. I think that's wrong."

As far as the long term future is concerned Ray is under no illusions. He would like a job and somewhere to live but he is not over-optimistic:

"One of the problems about getting a job is that people just don't want to touch you if you have been homeless or charged with vagrancy. We're the bottom of the pile now and in lots of ways I can't see a way up. Maybe this is my future."



"A world of playgroups"

Simon, Girpreet, Mark, Tasha, Gasharan, Seema, Robert, Patrick and Ruth are all four. They spend every morning in a small playgroup in Leamington Spa and they talked openly and amusingly to *Lib ED* about their lives and the prospect of 'growing up'.

Simon I live in Leamington and my Dad works for Ford. I like playing and going to the Safari Park. I've got a camel in the back garden. We play with it every day.

Mark I've got a camel too.

Simon Yeah, we've both got camels and we like them don't we Mark.

Girpreet They haven't really. We went to the Safari Park and that's where they got the idea from.

Simon NO!

Girpreet They just want a camel really.

Lib ED Is that right Simon? Would you like a camel?

Simon Yeah, when I'm a big boy I want to have a camel.

Robert When I'm a big boy I want to mess about.

Lib ED Is that what you like doing Robert, messing about?

Robert Yeah. We come to playgroup and Jo says we have to play nicely with the toys but I like to mess about. When I go to school I'm going to mess about too. It's good fun.

Lib ED Do you only mess about then Robert?

Robert No, I like eating as well. I like all foods. Eating's great.

Lib ED When you go to school then do you think that you will just be able to eat and mess about?

Robert Yeah.

Girpreet Well they won't be able to you know because they have teachers and you have to behave or you get in big trouble.

Gasharan Yeah that's true. My sister told me and she's six.

Robert Well I'm going to do what I like.

Simon And me.

Lib ED What about the rest of you? What do you like doing?

Tasha I like painting.

Ruth I like painting too.

Seema And me.

Gasharan I like to paint and eat and play and my favourite is hearing stories. I like going out too and I'm going to go to school soon.

Lib ED And what about when you are older? What do you think you would like to do then?

Robert I want to mess about.

Lib ED Yes we know that but what about everyone else?

Girpreet I want to be a teacher. I want to go to school to learn but I'm not looking forward to all the sports and getting changed and things. I don't think you should have to do that if you don't want to.

Seema I want to learn to cook.

Patrick And me.

Mark I live in Leamington and that's what I want to do. I'm going to have a job and a house and then I'll be happy.

Lib ED Who knows what Leamington might be like in a few years time?

Girpreet It'll be bigger and there won't be as much room for everyone. We'll have to all live together I think.

"Afraid for the future"

Joel Gougue lives in Carcassonne, and is a teenage student at an alternative school, Nouvelle Vague Accueil in Avignon.

LIFE IS GREAT in so far as nowadays you can do a great many different things in different places. While my life exists in the present, the good times were in the past and I am a little afraid for the future, but I shall just let it happen of its own accord.

Ten years ago, people thought that the future would be the era of robots and atomic war. Today the United States and the USSR have taken a great step on the road to peace, robots are not really developing, and more and more people are looking at human values.

I think that problems will be on the level of overpopulation, genetic manipulation which will become dangerous, health, unemployment, etc.

I do not know what my place in this future will be. I will fight for the survival of planet Earth and for its good relationship with humans.



"I will protect nature"

Jeanne and Irene Couhe, aged 11 and 13 respectively, attend state schools in France. Their mother is a Further Education lecturer in Technical Drawing in France, and editor of our sister journal, *Zero de Conduite*.

JEANNE: My life varies; some days I am not very happy, and there are some when everything goes well. I am not



very happy at school because I'm getting a bit bored with some of my friends. I am happy when I am at home in the evening, when I get out of the school, and when I stay at Bois Renault in the country.

The future will be made up of technical things and people will not bother about nature which will completely disappear. There will still be wars and people dying of hunger.

I will be a vet and I will protect nature; I will struggle to protect endangered species. I will demonstrate against wars and against famine; I will help people and I will travel.

IRENE: My life is fine.

If people do not do anything to look after nature and stop wars, and if people are only preoccupied with money and themselves, the future will be catastrophic, and not like you find it in the story books.

I will try to struggle against drugs and against illness. I would like to be a journalist so as to make people

understand what is going on in the world, or I could help people by being a doctor.



Remembering Risinghill

In 1965 London's education authority closed Risinghill, a brand new comprehensive in Islington. A quarter of a century later Risinghill's headteacher, Michael Duane, talks to Graham Wade

THE MEDIA COVERAGE of Risinghill's closure focused on the school's reputation as a place where various liberal and radical educational ideas were being put into practice. Newspaper headlines spoke of a "Wild School...Tamed By Love" and asked "Does Sparing The Rod Breed Crime?"

There was a preoccupation with the school's abolition of corporal punishment - at that time still widely used, often on a daily basis, in the capital's centres of learning. A more

"Wild School... Tamed By Love"

thorough account of the complexities of what happened during the five brief years of the school's life appeared in a popular paperback by Leila Berg called *Risinghill: Death of a Comprehensive School*, published as a Pelican Original in 1968, and still well worth reading.

But even there, over almost 300 pages, the central issue behind the school's disappearance was missed. According to Michael Duane, now 75 and living in comfortable retirement in Devon, the crucial factor was not his struggle to make the school a caring community, but a longstanding battle between the London County Council's full-time education officials and a group of Labour Party political appointees.

"I only found out about it at the very end," Duane recalls. "One of my school governors, Irene Chaplin, told me of this enormous row that had taken place over where the school should be sited between the education officer and the Labour Party. The politicians, who were refurbishing Islington, wanted to build it on ground occupied by the old Risinghill Street School."

"The education officer said that on no account should that site be used because 'if you put it there, it will be a wreck in a month'. Later I became aware that every item of repair I

requested at Risinghill was being delayed. The education officers were deliberately creating a self-fulfilling prophecy."

Duane's theory is that his liberal ideas became a convenient target for the education officers' attacks, masking their real aim of proving to the Labour Party that it had made a mistake going against their wishes over where the school should have been erected.

"It really had nothing to do with me - I was merely an instrument used to batter the Labour Party with. The phrase used by the education officer, Houghton, was: 'The elected members must come to heel. We are the people who make the educational policy.' Their end objective related to the Labour Party's attitude."

Duane goes on: "They wanted to destabilise the school to get the Labour Party back into line. The administration at County Hall was spending untold millions to forward its policies. It was very powerful. The education officials' attitude to the Labour Party was that they were a load of trade union nitwits. Them saying what they wanted done was quite intolerable for the officials."

Duane had made it clear at the interview for the Risinghill headship that he had no time for corporal punishment. "I hoped to be able to reduce the element of fear in learning by not using it. I assumed I wouldn't get the job because I knew they still hung on to corporal punishment in London. In fact I had never come across a school in the state system at that time where it wasn't used."

But against his expectation, Duane

"if you put it there, it will be a wreck in a month"

was appointed to head a brand new mixed comprehensive serving an extremely poor neighbourhood close to Islington's Chapel Market. (Incidentally, White Lion Free School occupied premises very close by - and William Tyndale Primary School, which also fell foul of the education authority,

is not far away.)

Duane categorically rejects the notion that corporal punishment was the main issue. "The subject came up when a boy was caught stealing from one of the cloakrooms and was caned by his head of house. To my surprise the

it was the only school to be officially closed down that had never been officially opened

staff held a meeting where it was agreed the punishment had been unnecessary because the boy's father was in Pentonville prison for larceny. I heard about the meeting the next day and their decision that they didn't want to use corporal punishment, so I announced this to the school, saying there would be no caning from now on."

Unknown to Duane, however, some diehards among the staff continued using corporal punishment surreptitiously. When he eventually discovered this, he asked the inspectorate to discipline the teachers concerned - as, against regulations, the punishments were not being properly recorded - but nothing was done. One of the inspectors, Macgowan, told him: "Six of the best will cure most disciplinary problems."

Macgowan soon began spending long periods in the school, not talking to Duane, but to the deputy head and others who were unsympathetic to the liberal regime Duane was attempting to institute. "Macgowan's task was to sow dissension among the staff," Duane says. "At one point they began to remove from the governing body those who supported me."

He believes the education officers decided they wanted the school shut not long after it opened after Easter 1960. "When a new school arrives the usual thing is not to have the official opening straight away, but to wait about a year until all the teething problems of the building can be sorted out. In fact the school was never officially opened - it was the only school to be officially closed down that had never been officially opened."

A massive inspection report on Risinghill appeared in 1962, mostly written by Macgowan. "All departments in the school, except one (which was severely understaffed), received the highest praise. But when it came to the head, I was slated from hell to bedlam. I was accused of showing no leadership, giving no central direction or control, and of only being interested in conviviality."

Gradually the governing body was becoming less sympathetic to Duane as a result of this campaign. Irene

Chaplin, a dedicated Labour Party member, was one who continued to support him. "She knew the whole thing was set up and they tried to undermine her at one point by alleging she had fiddled her expenses as a councillor - something she would never have dreamed of doing," says Duane.

The attack mounted on him became so intense that at one point he began doubting his own competence. "The nastiest moment came when an HMI, Leonard Clarke, asked me: 'Do you really think you're fit to be a teacher?' I think they were trying to psychologically destroy me. I was pretty low and even offered to resign. I was working at school until 11.30pm on administration for the first few years because I wanted to teach a lot during the day."

Paradoxically, the education officials refused to accept Duane's resignation even though all their assaults on the school isolated him as the main weakness. His disappearance from the scene would have spoiled their desired outcome: the school's closure.

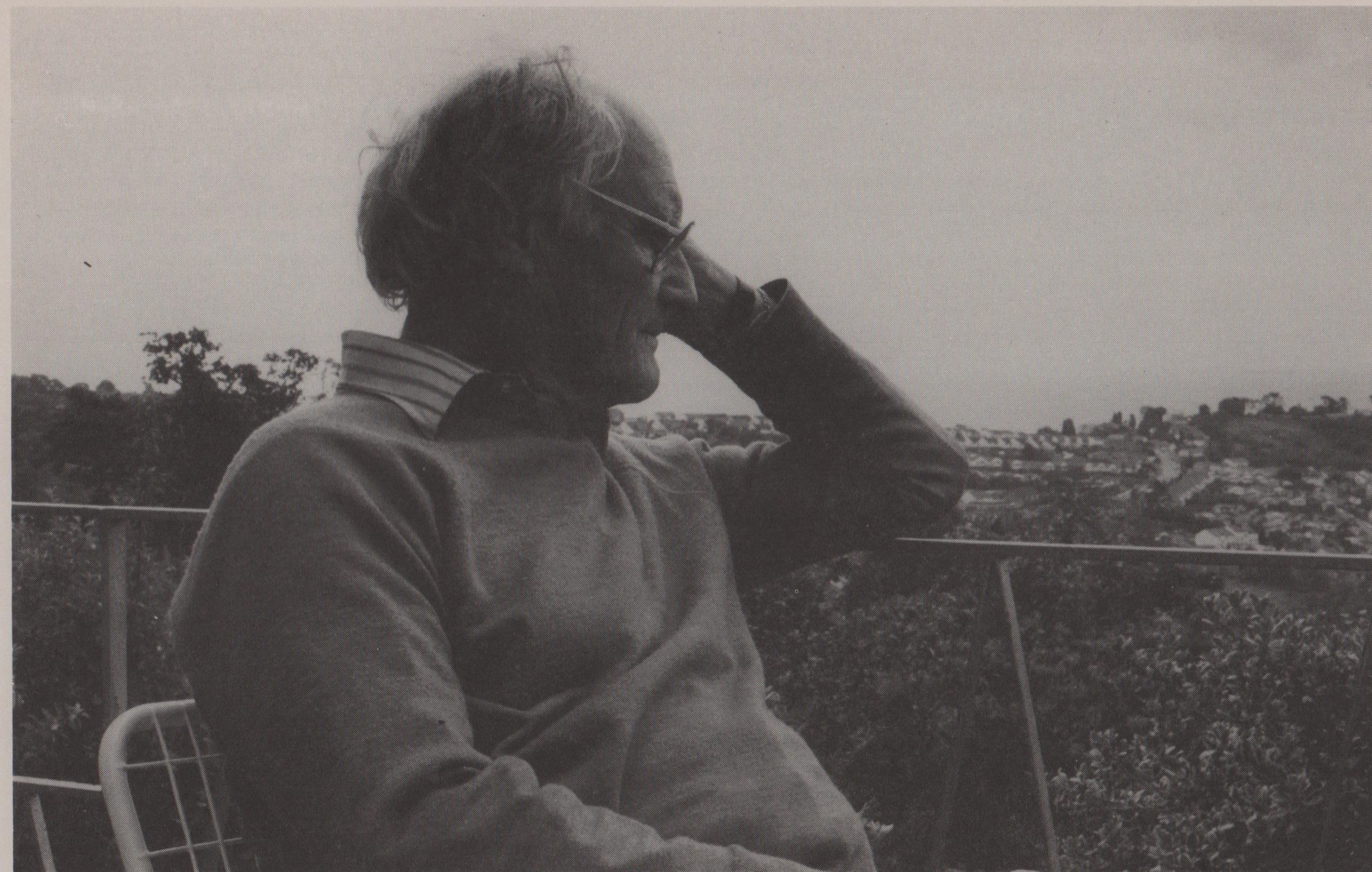
But Duane recalls many happy moments at Risinghill: the times he would chat to visiting parents over a cup of tea were very satisfying; the loyalty and efforts of many of the staff who tried their hardest to support what he was working towards; the children who responded to his requests for reasonable behaviour.

He remembers one day walking along a corridor and hearing a sudden crash of glass. He turned to see three boys nonchalantly walking away with their hands in their pockets as a smashed light bulb lay on the floor. "I lost my nut with them, complaining about all the breakages we'd had. I asked them where they thought all the money came from and they mumbled something about the council."

"One of them, George, had his grandmother taken to hospital the week before, so I went on at them saying what would have happened to her if some jokers had come along and slashed the ambulance tyres for fun. Then I told them to push off and not to be so stupid in future. Later that day there was a knock on my door, George came in, put a shilling and seven pence ha'penny on the desk and left without saying a word. I thought: I've got through."

After the inspectors' report Duane was summoned to meetings at County Hall where he was confronted by large numbers of officials. Eric Briault, the assistant education officer (later to

"I was slated from hell to bedlam"



Michael Duane recalls many happy moments at Risinghill.

become education officer), expressed his anger at one such meeting. "I remember Briault hammered the table and said: 'This is the worst report I've ever seen. You must use corporal punishment to restore order.'"

"After one meeting one of the officials suggested to me privately that I should get a union lawyer to represent me during the confrontations. I did, but came to distrust the union's lawyer and hired my own. When I first arrived with a lawyer at one of the meetings, the education officer, Houghton, said sarcastically: 'Oh, we must be careful what we say!' And so it went on."

Eventually the education authority revealed it wanted to shut down Risinghill, not because of Duane, or because of the school's liberal atmosphere, but because the premises were urgently needed for a school for girls, Starcross, which did indeed occupy the Risinghill buildings from September, 1965, and still does.

Despite popular protests from pupils, parents and others in the locality, the local authority, unimpeded by a Labour government, pushed through the closure. In his final address to the school, Duane said: "What is important is not examination results, but our concern for each other. When we started here I had to inquire in a dozen different directions at once when I wanted to find out how something had gone wrong. Now I ask: 'Did you do

this?' And in nine cases out of ten I get the answer: 'Yes, I did.' If you behave like this, people will treat you as a person; not as a thing."

He continued: "In this school, we have had good teachers, some of the best I've ever met in my life. And we've had bad ones, some of the worst I've ever met, who have brought us a lot of

"What is important is not examination results, but our concern for each other"

trouble. The good ones are the ones who treat people with respect, as friends. The bad ones are the ones who push children about, who have no respect for them."

"You will go into other schools and meet good teachers and bad teachers. But how you will behave will not depend on them. It will depend on you. I hope you will take from the good teachers you've had here the understanding that respect for other people, and for other people's ideas, whether you agree with them or not, is the main thing that matters."

He urged the older children, many of whom were extremely resentful at the school's closure, not to let what had happened affect them negatively.

that doomed school's history...

"Stupidity, ignorance, prejudice and sheer spite have been at work. But we don't start lashing out, hurting other people because they have done that to us."

"You will go to other schools, or you'll go to work, and you'll meet other people who will try to take it out on you because you've been to Risinghill. Talk straight to them about the school. Tell them honestly, if you like, the bad things. But don't forget the good things."

In fact, during Risinghill's five years of existence, the school's examination results showed steady and marked improvement. In 1960 18 students entered GCE O level and five passed. In 1964 this rose to 80 entrants and 42 passes with two students going on to university. On the other hand, the number of pupils on probation fell dramatically over the same period.

On leaving Risinghill, Duane found himself well inside a Kafkaesque world. He was a headteacher without a school, whose career lay in tatters, yet he had been formally accused of nothing and certainly had been found guilty of nothing. Personally, he was, he admits, at a low ebb. "I was exhausted and it finally got to me."

But the educational bureaucracy was not finished with him. Between July and November, 1965, he applied to many vacancies for headships, but was turned down for all of them. One job the authority suggested he should take was an inspectorship in Nigeria. Clearly they wanted him well out of their way. The ludicrous offer made Duane laugh and he quickly turned it down.

After several months - all of the time on full pay - he was offered a principal lectureship at Garnett College, London, which specialised in teacher training. The principal of the college was well briefed on his new member of staff because the first thing he ever said to Duane was: "Of course, you will not actually lecture to students in this college."

At Garnett, Duane was allowed to do virtually what he wanted. He became very interested in the study of intelligence and linguistic skill, concentrating on the work of Bernstein, Luria, Vygotsky and Sapir. He even

managed to fill Garnett's main hall for a series of popular lectures on the subjects that concerned him.

Meanwhile he was receiving dozens of invitations from all over the country and abroad inviting him to talk about his Risinghill experiences. He reckons he lectured up to 30,000 people a year for 15 years in this way.

When he retired from Garnett in 1980, true to form the principal didn't even acknowledge he was leaving. As far as the authorities were concerned he had become a non-person an educational leper who happened to remain on the payroll until his 65th birthday. After a couple of more years living in London, he and his second wife, Margaret, moved to the seaside in

"The good teachers are the ones who treat people with respect, as friends. The bad ones are the ones who push children about"

Devon, from where Duane continues to write occasional articles mainly for the anarchist press.

Duane was born in 1915 to working class parents in Ireland. His mother was a trained pastry cook and his father worked as a telegraph engineer on the railway. Until he was seven he mainly lived in a small cottage in a village near Waterford and saw little of his father, who was away during the First World War and after that often away working. He was killed in 1922, an innocent bystander shot by a stray bullet in the Irish Civil War on his way to work.

Subsequently Duane's mother was forced to support herself by looking for work as a cook in England, while he was left with his grandparents in Ireland. For the next four years he rarely saw his mother as he lived a pretty bleak existence on his grandparents' marginal smallholding. Eventually his mother brought him to England in about 1926, although he still couldn't live with her as she was a resident cook.

After a year or so boarded out with various families in Bedfordshire, his mother met a man of means in London, who lived in a large house which he had used as a hostel for young men studying at London University. He agreed to board the 12-year-old Duane and sent him to a Jesuit Foundation school, St. Ignatius, Stamford Hill.

After about five years living with the unlikely named Mr Pretty, who then died, Duane spent a brief time at a

school friend's home, whose father was a *Times* leader writer, before entering Queen Mary College, London, to read English. Here he met his first wife, marrying just before the outbreak of the Second World War.

After Queen Mary's he took a teacher training course at the London Institute and began teaching at Owen's Grammar School, which had been evacuated to Bedford. Then he was called up into the army as a private soldier, but soon found himself as a second lieutenant in a tank regiment, and not long after that as a staff captain of a brigade.

He had a distinguished war, shouldering considerable responsibility for practising tank landings for D-Day,

carrying out behind-enemy-lines reconnaissance of Antwerp docks, and being among the first troops to liberate Buchenwald concentration camp. This last he describes as a horrifying experience, which eventually led to his interest in studying psychiatry and psychology. He finished his army life as a staff major.

After the war he returned to teaching at Owen's Grammar, subsequently spending a couple of years as a lecturer in English at the London Institute. Before starting at Risinghill he had two longish spells as headteacher of Howe Dell, then a new secondary modern near Hatfield, and of Alderman Woodrow Secondary Modern for boys in Lowestoft. At both schools he had skirmishes with the authorities, which are detailed at the beginning of Leila Berg's book.

Looking back on Risinghill, Duane now reckons that few people remember it. "It may have stayed with people who were around at that time, but it's virtually sunk without trace," he says. His assessment is probably right, which is a great pity because that doomed school's history contains many valuable lessons for those wishing to promote a more caring type of state education.

Duane describes himself as a pragmatic anarchist in the Herbert Read tradition. And although he insists he is not at all a religious person, he quotes the words of Jesus Christ (perhaps the legacy of his Jesuit education) to explain his views. "If ye love not one another, ye shall perish - love your neighbour as yourself. That's where I stand. That's all."

Note: Leila Berg's *Risinghill: Death of a Comprehensive School* (Pelican Original, 1968) is out of print. Libraries are the best bet - secondhand copies are rare.

"I like change"

Ashley Majzels is 11 years old and living in Winnipeg, Canada, where he attends state school.

WINNIPEG is nice - except that there are lots of mosquitos. I'm getting used to people because they are not English! Everybody has their own habits. Canada has some strange habits. In England people have a dialogue type of humour, but in Canada it is much more an individual type. Houses are newer and better, streets are cleaner and in summer it's more cloudless in Canada.

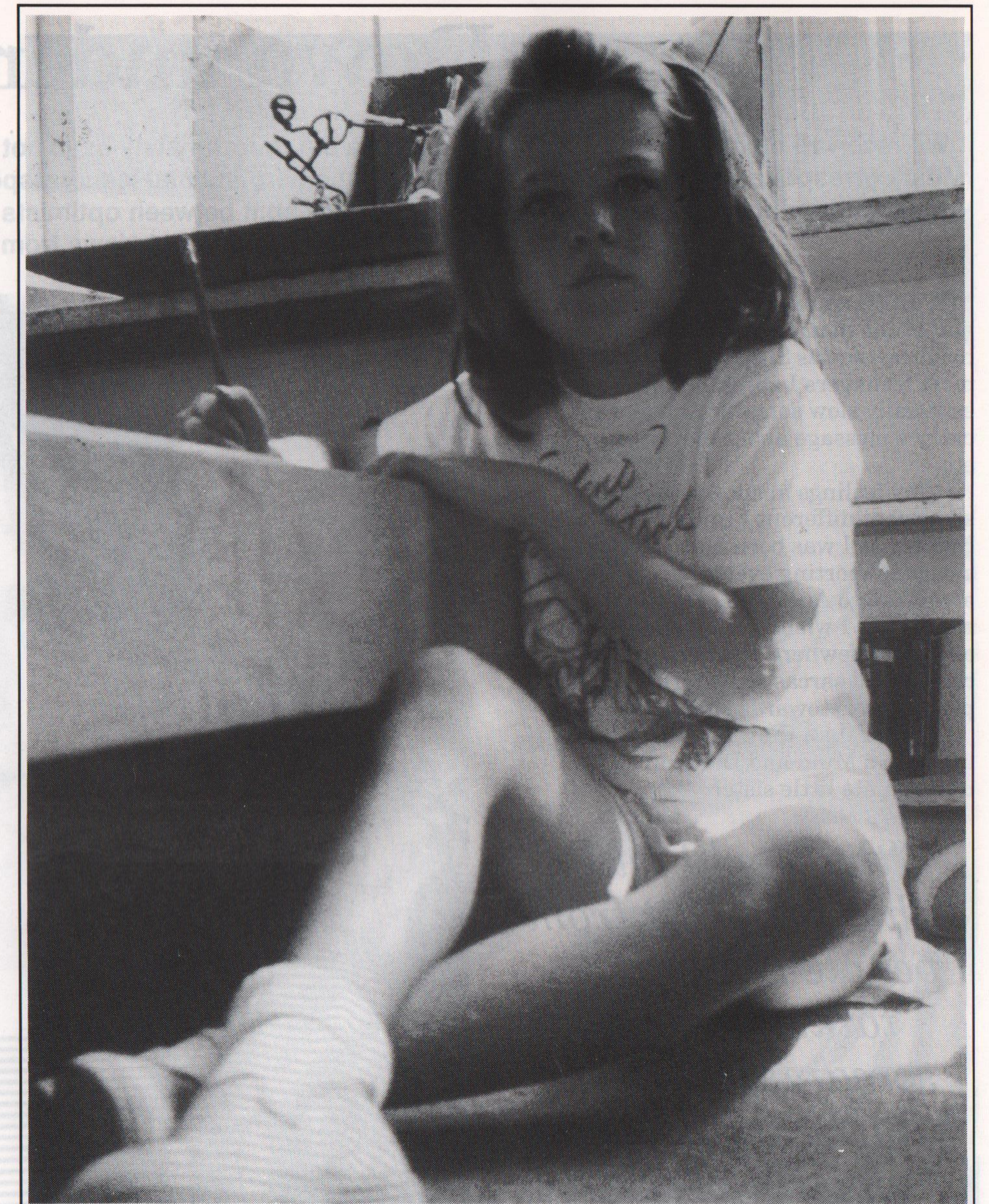
In Canada you have both more and less responsibility, for instance you find children doing crossing patrols. However, jobs are more for adults. You get enormous school fields here, four times the size of British ones, but the school is smaller. There are more parks, but less golf courses. The sky seems to be larger. The stores are very different. For instance there are two very similar Canadian stores that are rivals - but even they have a pedestrian tunnel connecting them, so the people only need walk between them.

The electric plugs in Canada are very small. It is strange, but I like the English plugs that have a good solid feeling when you push them in. There are more computers in Canada, and this is very important to me. In England I remember that there was one computer per school. I prefer English ways of teaching, more direct. The past two years it has been all reviews, so I have not learned too much. I found Science concepts were slightly different, but not that bad really. Social Studies was very pressurising. I was amazed that Canadian kids can make a huge mess of things sometimes, when all I had to do was get on with it.

In England everyone really knows each other. In Canada after the winter the streets have to be repaired, which is a nuisance. England is better for education and social contact, but in Canada there is less stress in social things.

Kids in Canada stick together much more than in England. For instance you have a fight and next day you forget it and make up. The change affected me harshly, but I am going to a new school and it will be better.

I am really not sure about the future. I think the world is due for a big new happening in Science. We are working on lots of little things at the moment, but not on the big things. The



"I think that the world will be a disaster because of the litter, not saving water and cutting down trees." - Megan Harter, who is 10 years old, and is in 4th grade in Berkeley in California.

currency and money business is mad; why can't people work for everyone's good? The *Jetsons* is a series which is about the future on TV - people get into dilemmas, but it turns out all right in the end; but in the series there are space cars that turn out huge amounts of pollutants. It is disheartening to see a future like that with enormous cities above ground.

I think that the middle class is going to be erased, it will just be poor and rich. There will be "good times rich" and the "conscience rich". Half of the poor is going to want to rebel and other half not. It will be very distressing; people with power will want more. The poor will be suffering consequences of wars, the new rich people city will be burnt down - everything will collapse. The nuclear power conflict will be resolved and it will go down. After a little while there will be new and better leaders and new breakthroughs.

History does repeat itself.

I do not know what I will do in the future. Something towards science, or computers, which I find very interesting. I am very interested in health sciences. I like science. I like music too, I am now quite good at piano. I like music a lot. Anything with patterns, definite patterns. There is one type of music I really do not like, probably through over-exposure; I cannot stand classical music. I like drawing pictures, but most art bores me. I did a computer course at Manitoba day camp, and I really enjoyed that.

It seems as if all the old conflicts are breaking down, you know, the USA/USSR thing, which is probably good, but there's a lot I just don't understand. I'll let the world get on and find my place in it. I like change because without it things are not exciting.

Down under

We received many contributions from Australia but unfortunately have not enough room to print them all here. Most correspondents were very concerned about environmental issues especially the damage to the ozone layer and the greenhouse effect. They were fairly evenly split between optimists and pessimists regarding the future of the planet. Here is a small selection of views from 'down under'.

"MY LIFE mainly consists of school, and at the moment I'm not doing any hobbies." writes Shirley D'alfonso, "Like most teenagers I absolutely love music, especially slow songs and those that carry a message about life, growing up etc.

"My feelings about Australia are somewhat different I think. I love the country as I was born here, and when it comes to sporting events my support always go to Australia. However sometimes I wish I could move away and go somewhere else because of the racism and sarcastic remarks that some people make towards each other.

"Other than that, I'm living a good life with a Mum and Dad and an unfortunate little sister.

"the world will either be silent from people refusing to talk... or loud screams, tempers fuming from anger of each other"

"In another twenty to thirty years I'm not sure if we, the people, will be here. With the earth warming, ozone depletion, floods, drought and famine growing rapidly across Asia and more and more crimes being committed, if we're 'lucky' to be around I don't think it will be a pleasant place to be in, who knows what lifestyle we'll be living.

"Most of all people's attitudes will have changed. Nowadays I think there are more and more breakups of families concerning breakdown of communication. Therefore the world will either be silent from 'the people' holding grudges against each other or refusing to talk, or loud screams, tempers fuming from anger of each other.

"In thirty years time I think I would like to have a well established home and family but at the moment that is far from my mind. The role I will be playing is a question I ask myself much of these days because I don't know myself, where I'm heading or what I'll be doing is something I'm trying to decide right now."



NECTA Polomkakis was born in Australia in 1979. Her mum and dad were born in Greece. She likes roller skating, bike riding, swimming, collecting teddy bears and playing with her neighbours.

"In twenty years time I think the world will be like a junk yard, everything will be expensive and people will be posh.

"I would like to be a teacher, teaching grade prep and 1."

"I hope the world will be happier"

"I'm Cheryl Remedios, and I live in Melbourne. I go to Sancta Sophia College for girls from years 7-10, this is my last year.

"I consider myself lucky to be living in Australia. I was born here though my family background is Indian. The reason I feel I'm lucky to be living in Australia is because of the way of life. Though sometimes hectic, rushed and unhappy, life 'down under' is nice and comfortable compared to life in other nations.

"We are not a third world country where everyone is suffering from starvation, we are not at war at the present and though we have our fair share of crime, we are not under the pressure of terrorism.

"I hope the world will be a happier, peaceful and unpolluted place in the future. If people don't stop to think of each other and the world as a whole, then a harmonic atmosphere is impossible.

"I don't know what the future holds for me but I hope whatever I do, I will help society in some way."

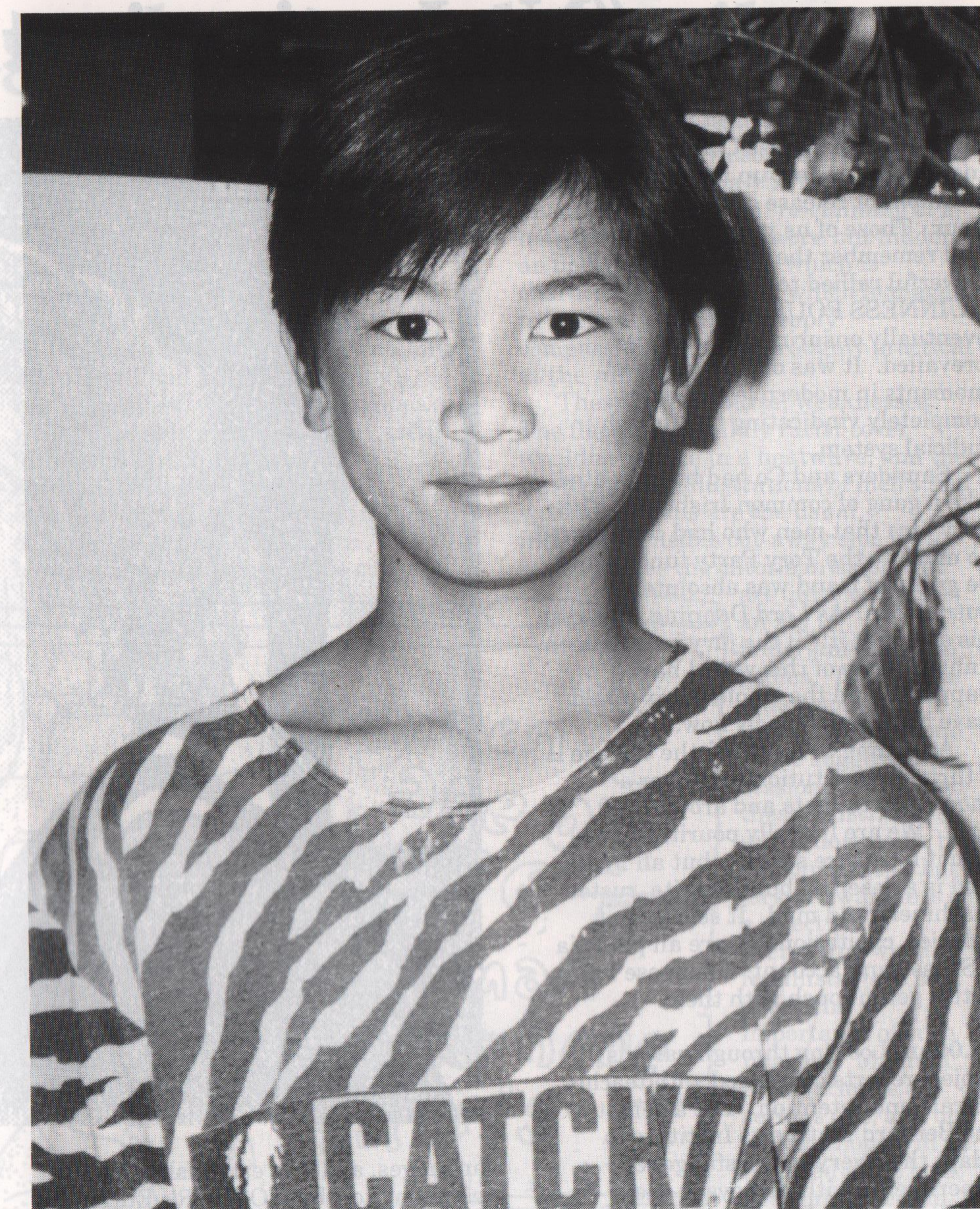
Campaign through music

"I LIKE the fact that the music industry today supports, and gives support to different world-wide organizations." says Katie Hutchinson, "We are also contributing, as we are paying for our entertainment and leisure, which then goes on to these organizations."

"In 1985, there was the Live Aid performance which set out to help the starved and war stricken lands in Africa, in particular Ethiopia. Then there are those artists who fight against Apartheid. An example of this is the Sun City LP (1988).

"There are other musicians who crusade for the cause of Amnesty International, where the 'Conspiracy of Hope' tour in 1986 brought about a world-wide response of letters to different governments. Since then there has been healthy support for Amnesty International.

"And, of course, on July 1st 1990 there was the huge production of the Nordoff Robbins concert, which attracted a world-wide audience. This performance was set out to aid autistic children and children with similar impairities. They should receive their therapy through music, with the money raised. I feel that it is good to be innovative and to think of different ways to cure rare disabilities."



TWELVE YEAR old Thong Dang likes to play tennis and ride his bike. He has two brothers and one sister.

"I was born in Viet Nam. My favourite food is chips. I think the world will be different, everything will change. They will build houses in space ships. The cars will fly. They will have a special liquid to kill carbon dioxide to save the ozone layer. The cars will use solar power to run.

"I think I will be working in science and technology. I will make space ships that fly at faster than the speed of light and a time machine to travel to another galaxy."

"No Justice, just us"

9.00 am Visit the Ernest Saunders Sixth Form Business College. This fine institution was set up after the triumphant release of the Guinness Four. Those of us young enough can still remember the way the rich and powerful rallied to the FREE THE GUINNESS FOUR campaign, eventually ensuring that justice prevailed. It was one of the finest moments in modern legal history, completely vindicating the British judicial system.

Saunders and Co had been treated like a gang of common Irishmen. The very idea that men who had contributed so much to the Tory Party funds could be guilty of fraud was absolutely outrageous. As Lord Denning, God rest his soul, put it: "If the jury had all been hanged, none of this would have happened and the whole affair would have been forgotten by now."

According to my brief, the College is a thriving institution with over a thousand students and around 150 staff. We are literally pouring money into it to ensure success, but all I can find is a deserted building site, rusted machinery and mud. It seems that salaries, capitation etc. are all paid via a Swiss bank account. I suppose I'd better get in touch with them.

11.00am Looking through various project reports concerned with teacher morale and retention. The attempt by the Bernard Matthews Institute to adapt their very successful genetic experiments with turkeys to the teaching profession seems a bit dubious. I can see the application to teachers with regard to producing turkeys that pluck and stuff themselves, but we have enough problems stopping teachers putting their heads in the oven around Christmas time already.

More promising is the report from the DES's own germ warfare department, concerning their CREEP project. For some years now, secret experiments have been carried out in selected schools with the Career Related Educational Enzyme Plague. This virus causes its victims to always talk and act as if they were being interviewed for promotion. It is conveniently transmitted by arse to tongue contact and has quickly spread in every school it has been introduced into. There are, however, unfortunate side effects; it leads to chronic constipation and a massive drop in IQ. I suppose this explains why so many senior staff in schools are full of shit.

1.00 pm Visit the Nicholas Ridley City Technology College in Ongar. This institution specialises in the teaching of



languages, and was established as a testimony to BIG MOTHER's European commitment. If students insist, they can study Frog, Kraut, Eyetie and Dago, but most tuition focuses on classical Greek and Latin. This is in line with BIG MOTHER's famous dictum; THE ONLY GOOD EUROPEAN LANGUAGE IS A DEAD EUROPEAN LANGUAGE.

The college is organised on a house basis, with each house named after a famous historical event: Crecy, Blenheim, Waterloo and Alamein.

I watch a games lesson. A third of the class pretend to be European football supporters and then the rest beat them up. With this sort of preparation, we should do well in the next World Cup.

2.00 pm Help interrogate a teacher suspected of trying to leave the profession. He has been caught doing a law degree with the SECRET UNIVERSITY, a subversive organisation set up when teacher salaries became too low to pay OPEN UNIVERSITY fees.

The creep denies everything, but I can always tell when they're lying; their

lips move!

We slap him around a bit, more for amusement than anything else. The wimp breaks down in tears. "I want Justice", he whines. I lean over him; "There's no Justice, just us."

3.30 pm Emergency! Emergency! We have just received a ransom demand from HATE (Headteachers Against Tory Education), an extreme terrorist organisation committed to progressive liberal reform. They have been holding Boss Clarke hostage for three weeks apparently, and have at last decided to issue a ransom demand so that we notice.

In return for his safe release, they want the abandonment of Tory education policy: an end to testing at 7, 11 and 14, the withdrawal of the National Curriculum, the closure of the City Technology Colleges, an end to opting out, and adequate funding for LMS. Either that or five grand a year extra for all headteachers.

I reassure my colleagues that this does not mean the end of BIG MOTHER's educational revolution. I'm sure we can knock them down to two grand.

No longer beyond the pail

Boys will be ...? Sex Education and Young Men

A book by Neil Davidson
Bedford Square Press, £7.95

As an HIV/AIDS educator I have trained young people from 14-25 and adults whose job it is to work with those young people, and whose ages range from eighteen to over sixty. Whatever the context, from youth club to drugs project, from kids in care to kids on street corners, from a rural Guides company to an urban youth theatre project, the same frightening problem sooner or later surfaces; heterosexual masculinity.

utter contrast, work done with boys and young men is alarmingly thin on the ground, and often seems to take place with little or no support..

In this respect it seems to parallel the general situation with regard to feminist work in this country ... the women have been getting on with it, and the men now have a lot of catching up to do. When teaching in a boy's comprehensive, working three times a week with girls who came to my sixth form lessons, the gap became alarmingly clear. The girls had obviously benefitted from the influence of feminism on their schooling. The boys, on the other hand, were cultural

exonerating men for their oppression of women. Neil Davidson rejects outright that ad-men's ghola 'the New Man', favouring instead the "re-claiming of a man who is **already there** but hidden", an optimistic approach which is characteristic of a book which manages to be highly political, deeply compassionate and thoroughly practical at the same time.

There are, of course, weaknesses. The flaccid and mildly racist cover wouldn't sell ice in a heatwave, and the photocopyable illustrations of men's and women's organs are the usual, incomprehensible cut-away side view which makes the clitoris invisible and

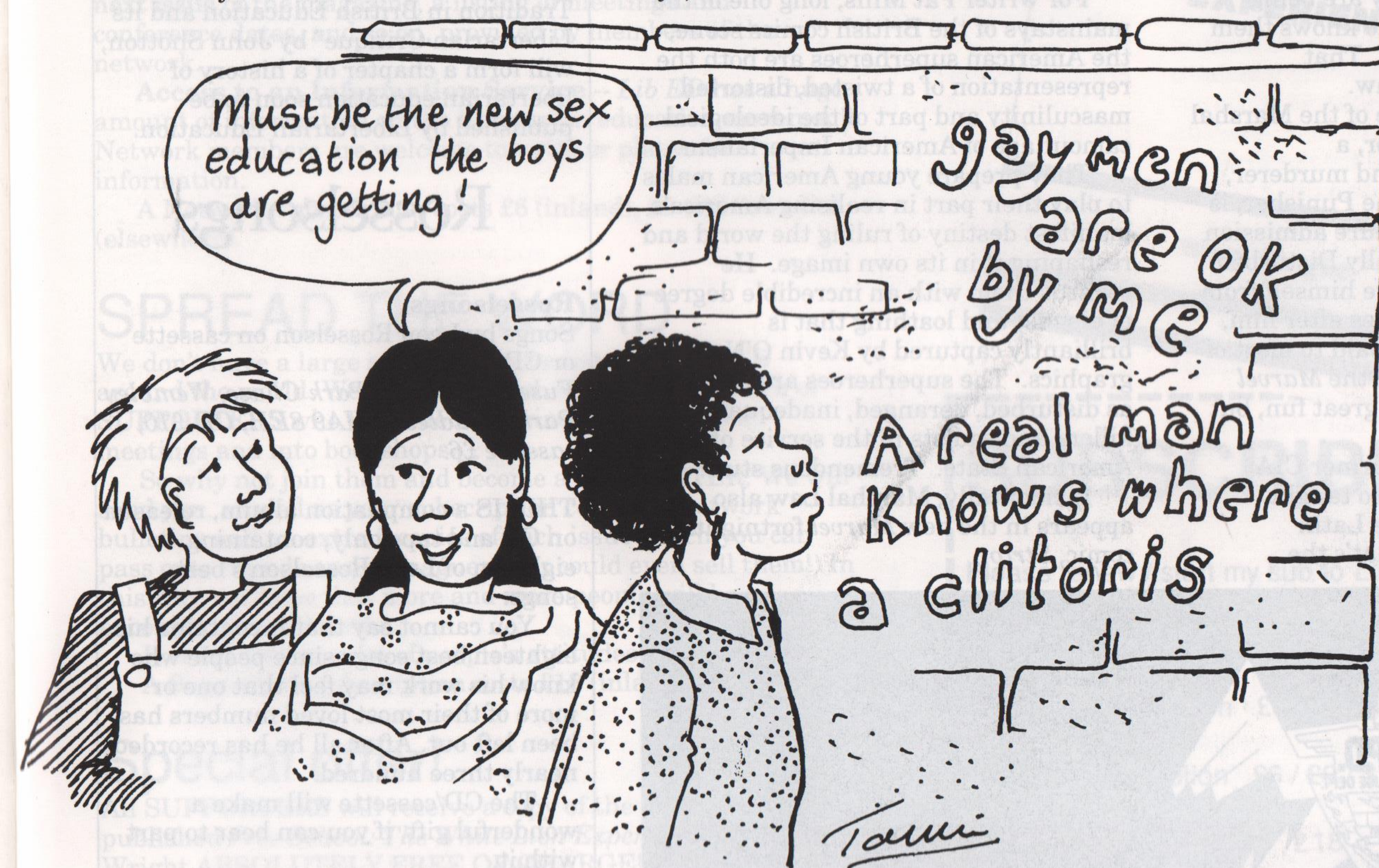
are quite useless as an aid to understanding real bodies. This isn't a minor point, especially since one of the suggested sessions is based on these illustrations, and it does seem to demonstrate either a lack of awareness or a rejection of everything which feminists have said about the importance of such imagery. My final reservation is a serious one, and one which I hope will be rectified if the book goes into a second edition (which it should!).

Working with teachers and youth workers in England, Scotland and Wales, I am aware that many of them,

perhaps the majority, still believe that Section 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act prevents them so much as mentioning lesbian or gay issues in their work. This is an appalling situation, and one which *Boys will be...?* does little to rectify. A couple of paragraphs explaining the irrelevance of this invidious law to youth work and teaching is essential in any sex education book, and especially one aimed at young men, where it becomes vital to challenge homophobia and support young gay men.

Apart from these rather surprising flaws, this is a long overdue resource, and offers insights and practical advice to anybody concerned about gender in education. And it's only the price of a round of drinks ... buy it!

Tamsin Wilton



The vitriolic abuse directed at gay men, the outright refusal to wear condoms (occasionally accompanied by physical violence against women who make the request), the stubborn inability to consider any activity other than penetration as 'real' sex, are all expressions of 'masculinity' as it is interpreted in our culture. Assertiveness training for young women, a suggestion made by some feminist HIV/AIDS writers, is cruelly inadequate when faced with the major task of re-writing male conditioning overnight.

I have gathered during my work a large number of excellent resources on girl's work, especially around sex and sexuality, and have become aware of some first class sources of support, notably the National Organisation for Work with Young Women and Girls. In

throwbacks, proto Andy Capps. How were these two groups of people ever to make a success of living **together**?

With these concerns in mind, it is a great joy to come across a book like Neil Davidson's *Boys will be...?* Neil worked at the famous Grapevine sex education project in London, before its collapse last year due to unforgivable withdrawal of funding. (What kind of people stop the funding of a successful sex education project in the face of an epidemic of HIV?) His book is based on his experiences working with young men on that project, and is in addition full of references to other useful resources.

The book makes quite clear the misery and harm inflicted on young men by growing up in a deeply sexist society, without in any way belittling the damage done to women, or

The Law comes to Manhattan

Marshal Law Takes Manhattan
A graphic novel by Pat Mills and Kevin O'Neill
Epic Comics

SUPERHEROES ARE the staple of American comics. *Superman, the Hulk, Captain America, Thor, Iron Man, the Fantastic Four, Daredevil, Sub-Mariner, the X-Men, the Punisher...* they are legion. And all dedicated to preserving the American Way from the many enemies that threaten to bring it down.

Now at long last they are being hunted by somebody who knows them for what they really are. That somebody is Marshal Law.

In this latest episode of the Marshal Law saga, the Persecutor, a psychopathic torturer and murderer, modelled on *Marvel's* The Punisher, is desperately trying to secure admission to the Asylum for Mentally Disturbed Superheroes so as to save himself from justice. Marshal Law goes after him, and in the process puts paid to most of the other superheroes in the *Marvel* pantheon. The result is great fun, but much more than that.

The persecutor is a former CIA agent, Don Matrione, who taught torture techniques to the Latin American military. "What's the

difference," he asks, "between killing a man on the battlefield and in a sound-proofed torture-chamber? Answer: my way doesn't disturb the neighbours!" Matrione demonstrated his methods on beggars picked up off the streets, torturing them to death in front of his attentive students. He is clearly derived from a real life American 'superhero', Dan Matrione, the CIA agent kidnapped and executed by the Uruguayan Tupamaros guerillas in 1970.

For writer Pat Mills, long one of the mainstays of the British comics scene, the American superheroes are both the representation of a twisted, distorted masculinity and part of the ideological camouflage of American Imperialism.

They prepare young American males to play their part in realising America's manifest destiny of ruling the world and reshaping it in its own image. He regards them with an incredible degree of disgust and loathing that is brilliantly captured by Kevin O'Neill's graphics. The superheroes are revealed as disturbed, deranged, inadequate killers and sadists in the service of the American State. Tremendous stuff!

Incidentally, Marshal Law also appears in the new *Marvel* fortnightly comic, *Strip*.



Raven on Ed

The Raven 10
A quarterly journal
published by Freedom Press, pp96,
£2.50

AN ANARCHIST QUARTERLY, *The Raven* published its tenth issue earlier this year.

On the theme of education, it includes an article on Kropotkin's view of technical education by Michael Smith, author of *The Libertarians and Education* (Allen and Unwin, 1984). One of Colin Ward's five contributions is a review of this latter excellent book.

The case for home schooling is made by Zeb Korycinska, whilst the opening article, "The Authoritarian Tradition in British Education and its Libertarian Critique" by John Shotton, will form a chapter of a history of libertarian education soon to be published by Libertarian Education.

Rosselsongs

Rosselsongs
Songs by Leon Rosselson on cassette or CD
Fuse Records, 28 Park Chase, Wembley Park, Middlesex, HA9 8EH, CD £10, cassette £6.

THIS IS a compilation album, released on CD and tape only, containing eighteen of Leon Rosselson's best songs.

You cannot say that it contains his eighteen best songs since people who know his work may feel that one or more of their most loved numbers has been left out. After all he has recorded nearly three hundred.

The CD/cassette will make a wonderful gift, if you can bear to part with it.

Breaking point

When the bough breaks...
A book by Lloyd Timberlake and Laura Thomas
published by *Earthscan*, pp262, £6.95.

"WE ARE poisoning our planet and destroying the lives of our children", so opens the blurb on the back jacket, "...Adults make the decisions but children pay the highest price. They are physically vulnerable and politically powerless."

This book, published to accompany a documentary which was broadcast by Central TV last spring, is from the list of an interesting new publisher. More next issue.

Don't miss the next issue...

The Spring '91 issue of *Lib ED* will be published in January. Why not subscribe to ensure that you don't miss *LIB ED 16*, or any of the following issues. Our ordinary three issue sub costs £3 (inland), £6 (EEC), or US\$12 (elsewhere). But see below for other attractive packages. Fill in the subscription form, write a cheque and post it to us TODAY!

Join the Network

The *Lib ED* network is an informal network of people with an interest in libertarian education. By joining you will get even more information on what is going on in Britain and around the world than we can fit into the magazine. Network members receive the following:

National Contact List -- a listing of individuals in the network, so that people can get in touch with each other.

A regular bulletin -- published in March, July and November to keep you in touch between issues of *Lib ED* magazine. This always includes...

An Information Exchange -- news, articles, plans for the next issue of the magazine, a listing of meetings and conference dates, and so on, provided by members of the network.

Access to an Information Service -- *Lib ED* has a huge amount of information on the libertarian education movement. Network members are welcome to write or phone for information.

A Network subscription costs £6 (inland), £9 (EEC) or \$18 (elsewhere).

SPREAD THE WORD

We don't have a large scale system to distribute *Lib ED* around the world. We rely very much on a small network of SUPPORTERS who take the magazine to conferences, meetings and into bookshops.

So why not join them and become a SUPPORTER. We will send you, as well as your subscription copy, the network bulletins and an extra 5 copies of each issue which you can pass onto friends and colleagues (you could even sell them!) In this way, we hope that more and more people will be encouraged to subscribe.

It could change a lot of people's attitudes to education. A Supporter's subscription costs £18 (inland).

Special offer!

All SUPPORTERS will receive a copy of the recently published *Free School: The White Lion Experience* by Nigel Wright ABSOLUTELY FREE OF CHARGE!

PRICE RISE!

Unfortunately, due to ever increasing costs, we are having to increase the cover price of *Lib ED* as from this issue. However, we will accept subscriptions and re-subscriptions at the old rates, published here, until the end of January 1991. So HURRY, get your sub in soon.

The NEW D-I-Y Guide

Lib ED publishes a book giving a wealth of information on libertarian education, a comprehensive bibliography, extensive contact addresses and a number of articles explaining the ideas. This guide is undergoing substantial revision and will be published early in the new year.

Overseas subscribers please note: we will accept the equivalent in any overseas banknotes, otherwise please send a bank draft in sterling.



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Send this form to:
**Lib ED, The Cottage, The Green,
Leire, Leicester, LE17 5HL.**

This magazine is against authority

Dear Lib ED

Hey! I've just noticed that the banner "this magazine is against authority" is no longer proclaimed at the front of *Lib ED*. Is this an index of growing maturity in the editorial team, or - like me - a hardening of the libertarian arteries?

Bryn Purdy

Definition required

Dear Lib ED

The increasingly accepted definition of Free School, which is encouraged by Nigel Wright's book, *Assessing Radical Education*, is non-pay schooling which brings to mind endowed schools of the past with their strings attached. The earliest form of prototype for the Free School in this country is described in Stephen Humphries' *Hooligans or Rebels?* published by Blackwell.

100 years ago, people of small means were choosing to contribute directly to their local schools, and following the imposition of compulsory education they chose to continue with their alternative schooling (The bliss of no television or tabloids). The genuine Free School does

carry connotations of the 19th century friendly society. To restrict *Free* to mean non-pay is to distort the importance of the free development concept, as does a school with political overtones. By contributing directly into a venture people's interest was assured.

Yours sincerely
Rodney Aitchey

Green

Dear Lib ED

Please make your minds up whether you oppose all compulsory curricula or only right-wing ones. "It is important to undertake some political education... This is vital work if a balanced understanding..." !?!?!? How on earth can Ruth Coleman's green article be read as anything but her curricular specification of a subject as universally right to teach children through the present system?

Even including HOMEWORK and FIELDWORK. Children have got as much right as us to be sceptical of crazes. "Think globally, act locally" sounds fine in theory, but our ribald society is constructed such that anyone who acts first against normality risks social destruction. So far, my experience of Greens is that they retain the use of ribaldry for their own purposes, despite saying they're a spiritually peaceful alternative movement. Try out such trendy local

action as messing around with bits of land, and you'll find it's cosmetic drudgery with no effect on the climate. How would Ruth Coleman handle me if I was a pupil in her class, expressed scepticism towards environmentalism, and REFUSED to do my fieldwork because I didn't want to, without accounting for my reasons to her authority?

Maurice Frank

School plans

Dear Editor

BROCKLEY SMALL SCHOOL

A group of parents are planning to set up a small parent-run school in Brockley, South East London. We aim to start with a group of 10-15 children aged 4-7 and to cater for ages up to 11 as the children get older. Brockley Small School will be largely parent-taught and will have at least one full-time experienced teacher. The school is committed to equal opportunities and aims to be involved in the local community. We would like to hear from people interested in joining us, and we are particularly keen to hear from any would-be teachers. For further information, write to: Brockley Small School, c/o 71A Cranfield Road, London SE4 1TP.

Yours faithfully,
Viv Talbot,
Brockley Small School.

Back Issues Offer

Now in its 23rd year, *Lib ED* is the only chronicle of practical and theoretical developments in radical education -- if you've just caught up with us, catch up with what you've missed. Each back issue is yours for 75p (inc. p&p) (*Lib EDs 11 to 14 are £1*) but for only £8 you can have the complete set of back issues in print. At present that's Volume 2, numbers 2 and 4 to 14. We can also supply photocopies of articles published in all out-of-print issues of *Libertarian Teacher/Education/Lib ED*. Please send a stamped addressed envelope for full details.

Cheques to: **Lib ED, The Cottage, The Green, Leire, Leicestershire, LE17 5HL.**

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Summerhill today

Dear Lib ED,

I have just read Nigel Wright's book *Free School* with a great deal of interest. I am an American who attended Summerhill School in the early 1960s and came back to England over a year ago to join the staff.

Reading this book and the same author's *Assessing Radical Education* as well as some recent copies of *Lib ED* I am struck with Summerhill's low repute. Perhaps the school is blamed for the failure of the free school movement to prosper, maybe it is viewed as a kind of Establishment Institution or thought to have lost its validity because Neill is long dead...

Whatever the reason I think libertarian educators should take another look at what's going on there. Summerhill was the world's first self-proclaimed Free School and its children have been governing themselves effectively for sixty eight years. Since Neill's death in 1973 the school has not only survived - it has flourished. The system works, it doesn't need Neill, or anybody else for that matter.

Reading Nigel Wright's book about the White Lion school gave me an impression of the place rather different than the author's intent.

His conclusion was pretty much that freedom didn't work. He paints a picture of a directionless organisation playing host to a myriad of radical intentions.

Between the lines I could see a much more positive picture. It sounds like the kids on the whole had a good time there and grew in emotional strength. In other words it handsomely achieved the bottom line for a Free School. Not that it quite fits my definition of a Free School.

I believe a free school is a place where, as long as children are not breaking the community's laws or hurting anyone else they are free to do as they please.

Lessons should be available but not compulsory. Social control should be administered democratically through a system of self government. The purpose of such schools is to turn out emotionally strong people who can go on to achieve whatever goal they set for themselves.

I'm not even sure that you can have a Free School like Summerhill in a day-school environment. The only one I ever saw that looked good was the 15th Street School in New York City back in the late 1960s and they only took younger kids.

The Summerhill model gives kids great personal freedom but then

provides the most potent kind of social control through their own self government.

At the White Lion school the meetings took their vote by consensus. Until everyone agreed on an issue there was no decision. That has worked fine for the Quakers but in my dictionary Democracy is "government by the people; esp: rule of the majority".

As well as "rule of the majority" speeding up the business in a meeting it empowers those on the losing side to campaign for their cause and come back and fight another day.

In a community where one man has one vote it can create, in effect, a two party system. This is just one of many ways in which children can be structurally empowered in a real free school.

Perhaps the problem is that aspects of Summerhill are not exactly "Libertarian". Staff with anarchist leanings have had a lot of trouble with the school. In the most vital areas of social life there is an overwhelming authority.

The power at Summerhill is invested in the Meeting. The school law governing the responsibility of the chairman says: "the Chairman has Absolute Power". This is also true of the Meeting. And let it be remembered that in the Meeting the children always outnumber the adults.

Lessons are not compulsory at Summerhill, there is no nagging from the staff, no hidden agenda to try to co-opt the children into the classroom. This may have its problems but it makes the transition to freedom faster.

The kids who come there break out until they are satisfied that no one cares and then they settle down to find their place in the society of children. That "place" is ancient, the kids have been running the school it seems like forever and a whole culture has grown up of kids looking after kids.

To be a Big Kid at Summerhill is to really be something. Nigel Wright quotes Bettelheim in saying that Summerhill's success depended on Neill's persona. I dispute that strongly. What it needs are kids and staff that have been there long enough to understand what is going on and can bring that understanding to bear on the whole community.

People have often come to Summerhill and not seen the forest for the trees. Right now the school is struggling financially due to the fact that its physical dilapidation has finally caught up with it and yet the kids hardly notice it.

Summerhill has been accused of being sexist and racist because it makes no concerted attempt to educate children in these areas. Actually it deals with these issues in a structural way. The school is effectively run by the oldest children and because girls are so quick to mature they usually have a leading role in running the school.

The international student body ensures that kids will grow up in an extended family that is actually an inter-racial group. At the moment over a third of the school is Japanese.

I agree with Nigel Wright that new theoretical work needs to be done. Summerhill is a small residential community off in the English countryside and cannot provide all the answers.

At the same time many of the troubles encountered at White Lion would not have occurred if some of the workers had done two years or so at Summerhill - no longer after all than at teacher training college.

Part of the trouble is that people think freedom is easy. It is not. It is a complex thing needing understanding of the adult/child relationship in order to get it right. It also needs democratic structures that can help reduce the wear and tear on everyone concerned.

Finally Freedom needs to be given a kind of ultimate respect or some new movement will inevitably come along and seem more important. When that happens children's real control over their destiny is always the first thing to go.

Radical theoreticians could do worse than take another look at what is going on Summerhill now that Neill's daughter Zoe, who is herself an ex-Summerhillian, is looking after the old place and helping keep the flame alive.

Here is an open invitation to all to come and visit us and witness the school in action, you may love it, you may hate it, but at least do please acknowledge our existence and make the effort to find out.

Yours sincerely,

Albert Lamb

The next issue of *Lib ED* will include a major feature on the system of self-government at Summerhill. To avoid missing this, turn to page 21 and take out a subscription now!