

It's a well-known fact to any one who lives long in Brighton that cars are more important than people. Much more thought is given to the movement of cars around the town than to that of people; and when it comes to play-space for kids - well, obviously car-parks are more important.

The problem was high-lighted at the beginning of July when mothers living in Kingswood flats near the John Street Law Shop got together and barricaded the road outside the flats to stop through traffic and indiscriminate parking.

The immediate cause of the protest was an accident involving a 3 year-old girl from the flats who was injured after running out from behind a parked car. But the feeling had been building up for some time that the provision for kids playing near the flats was inadequate.

Neighbouring Milner Flats has a playspace of sorts - an expanse of concrete showing little imagination on the part of the designers. Perhaps the idea is that it makes the kids more imaginative deciding how to make something of the bare, hard surface.

But for Kingswood there's just the road and a steep bank of scrubby grass liberally sprinkled with dog shit. Over the last year Andy the Happy Anarchist has held three or four kids' parties there, but the bank is too steep and too near the road to be a good playground.

The Kingswood protesters have won a partial victory and in doing so have shown once again that direct action is much more effective than polite letters to councillors.

The Council Housing Committee agreed on July 4th. to put up signs outside the flats stating that parking is for residents only, and they say that if necessary they will consider other measures to cut down the amount of traffic.

So far, August 1st., no signs have appeared and the protester's barricade and placard - NO PARKING, CHILDREN BEFORE CARS

BARRICADE

is still needed. We hope to be able to report more progress next issue.

Even if the Council does act the facilities for kids will still be far from adequate. It's unbelievable that those who design these blocks of flats still rarely take into account the fact that kids need space to play in and that that space ought to be more than so many square yards of concrete.

It's obvious that Council Housing Committees have still not got beyond the idea of Council flats as ghettos for the masses, cramming as many people as possible into the smallest area possible and saving as much money as possible on luxuries like playgrounds.

Perhaps the newer tower blocks on Eastern Road are even worse in this respect as the short-sighted officials were reminded recently by reports of children suffering from nervous disorders in one of the blocks.

Who could expect any other attitude from a Housing Committee run by Estate Agents?

One final point. Notice that at last the Council has taken the sane step of banning private cars from Western Road for a trial period making things easier for pedestrians - and incidentally no doubt helping traders there - the Council knows where its priorities lie.

But where is the traffic to be re-routed? Along Upper North St. a largely residential area. The residents there are already threatening to barricade the street. Why not re-rout the traffic along the sea front - the roads much wider? Well, Brighton hoteliers are also well represented on the Council, especially by Councillor Feld who owns the Norfolk. And of course nothing must disturb the quiet of their privileged guests - bummer those of us who live here all the year.

To adapt the Kingswood flats slogan
PEOPLE BEFORE CARS!

BRIGHTON VOICE

NO. 5

VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS | P8.

RUMOURS

It is rumoured that Queens Park infants school will be unable to accept new children for September because the 'portable classroom' (to be erected in the school playground) has not yet been delivered. 25 children from Our Lady of Lourdes RC school in Rottingdean will have no school to move to in September. At St Lukes Terrace juniors the building of an extra room, staffroom and conversion of a cloakroom into a teaching area has been temporarily abandoned since builders estimates are £500 above the £1,000 allotted. (By the way the demolition of the Hartington Rd bridge is costing £34,000 and the slip road to the new Oakley Motor Showrooms (Tillstone Street) will cost £4,000 from our rates.) Brighton Voice asks HOW MANY MORE SCHOOLS IN BRIGHTON ARE AFFECTED? See next issue.

One teacher's view
See page 11.

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VOICE

● SQUATTING

In an editorial headed 'Sympathy what is Misplaced', the Evening Argus made a garbled attack on the actions of Mrs. Eugenia Griffin and her five year old son. Mrs. Griffin had simply used her commonsense. She was homeless, there are 2,000 or more empty houses in Brighton, so she moved into one of them she was squatting.

Yet according to another kind of sense she was an itinerant, acting illegally, jumping the queue. Mrs. Griffin has lived in Brighton for more than three years and, along with 1200 other families, has been waiting patiently for a council house. Yet Mrs. Griffin's impatience is all the more understandable in the light of the Argus's statement that 'the available housing does not, and will not ever anywhere meet the demand'. According to the Argus this is an immutable fact yet there are 2,000 empty houses in Brighton, enough homes for everybody on the waiting list.

What the Argus is really saying is that there will never be enough homes for people like Mrs. Griffin or the 1,200 other families on the waiting list because though their needs are great, they are not backed up by hard cash. They can never compete with property speculators, hotel owners or the rich 'itinerants' moving out of London. These are the people the Council represents, whether it be Labour, Conservative or goodness knows what. Mrs. Griffin had the commonsense to realise this and so should the 1200 other families on the housing list, and help themselves. Nobody else will.



"We Conservatives have always believed in home ownership — I personally own over a hundred and fifty!"

● SCHOOLS

In BRIGHTON VOICE No.3 on Education we pointed out how the changeover to comprehensive education in Brighton had been handicapped by penny-pinching at local and national level, broken promises by Local Education Authority hacks and by double-dealing generally.

Since then at least 2 of our predictions of further weakening of the system have come to pass.

A main plank in the comprehensive scheme was to be a purpose built High School — the Stanley Deason School — in Whitehawk which would enable the long-out-of-date Whitehawk School to close by 1980.

Now the Department of Education and Science have refused the money needed for the second stage building programme for that school. So until well into the 1980s Whitehawk kids will probably be attending a make-shift school whose buildings are some distance apart and the Whitehawk School part of which should have closed in the 1950s.

At the other end of the town the predicted move is underway to take the Brighton, Hove and Sussex Grammar School out of the planned comprehensive system, thus robbing the town of valuable space and resources for a Sixth Form College. The suggestion is that it should be used as a Special school for those of 'above average' ability. The old boy clique will back any crack pot scheme to prevent the doors of the BHS being opened to the jobs.

If the move is successful it leaves only one of the proposed 3 Sixth Form Colleges actually standing — that at Varndean — as the Westlain College does not even have the foundations laid yet.

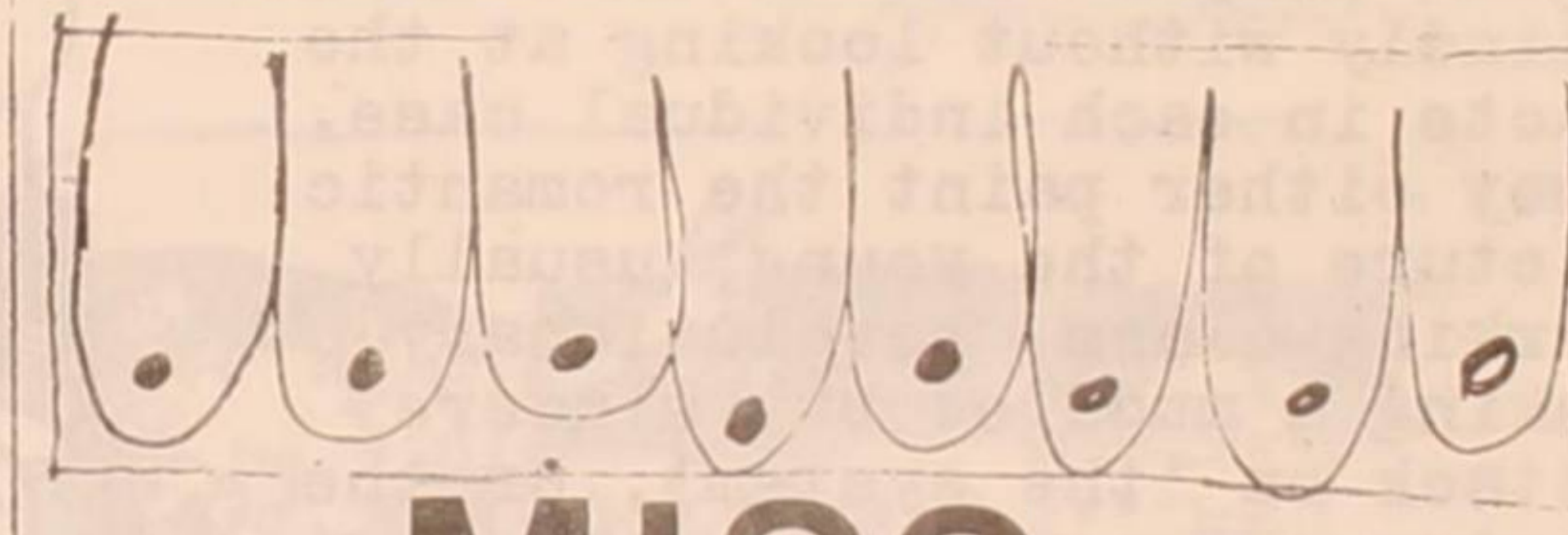
The ranks of the already privileged are forming up as usual to defend themselves against the rest of us. Take care.



'SABRINA'S AT THE BACK OF THE HALL — LET'S HAVE A BIG HAND FOR SABRINA — OH NO, TELL A LIE, IT'S 2 BALD HEADED MEN BENDING DOWN' quipped the compere setting the predictable tone of the Miss Brighton competition. 51 girls, from cheffettes to NCR 400 operators, walked like circus horses round the stage and you almost hoped that Vera Lynne (one of the judges) might suddenly launch into 'The White Cliffs of Dover' to relieve the tedium. Brighton's Womens Lib. had placed themselves in small groups among the audience.

Half way through the humiliating charade they distributed leaflets to the audience and judges saying 'WOMEN YOUR BODIES BELONG TO YOU — MEN ARE JUDGED BY ACTIONS, WOMEN BY THEIR APPEARANCE'. Officials of Brighton Lions Club began confiscating the leaflets and Loony Compere worried by the disturbance joked 'THOUGHT WE HAD WOMENS LIB IN HERE FOR A MINUTE.' — 'YOU'RE BLOODY RIGHT' they shouted back and in the disruption that followed 2 fuzz appeared and 4 Brighton Lions, armed with heavy torches, placed themselves at strategic points. The patter on stage continued, one aspiring Miss Brighton announced that her ambition was to be 'VERY VERY HAPPY' while another did a chimpanzee imitation. Loony Compere, having drivelled on all evening, muddled up the contestants and dried up 5 times, finally got the finalists parading round in a circle 'RIGHT' he shouted, 'NOW GET 'EM ALL OFF TO THE DUNGEONS BELOW WHERE THEY CAN ALL HAVE A GOOD WHIPPING'. At this point Womens Lib climbed onto the stage. 2 members of Gay Lib were hustled out of the Dome by Brighton Lions. Loony Compere, seizing a chance to liven up a boring show said 'NOW NOW FOLKS LET THE MISS FITS HAVE THEIR SAY' Taking the microphone 2 women explained that there were many Brighton women living alone or with small children in High Rise flats who need a womens centre and the Lions club would do better to assist with this scheme rather than organise an undignified

show like the Miss Brighton competition. The winner was a 23-year old PHOTOGRAPHIC MODEL. She received £25, because she is pretty, a new swimsuit and a pack of beauty products (WOW) and — surprise surprise — she's planning more beauty contests...



MISS BRIGHTON SPEAKS

'I was a teery bit nervous and I didn't fancy a soggy tomato thrown at me. But I didn't take much notice — they've got their things and we have got ours' (!).

The Argus printed a patronising Editorial following the Miss Brighton contest:-

MOST of us, if we're honest, have a sneaking regard for Women's Lib and equality and all that. But if those supporters who staged a demonstration during the Brighton Lions Carnival Queen contest are typical of their ilk then the cause is surely doomed.

It was not just their lack of good manners or their illogical line of argument. Most of them also lacked any sign of femininity and were scruffy in appearance. One woman wore a floppy black hat and looked as if she should have completed her outfit with a black eye patch—a sort of Gen. Dayan of Women's Lib. Combine all four ingredients and the end product is as negative and unendearing as it is possible to be.

Two of the six judges were women. In addition the contestants were not being judged on their sex appeal but on their general appearance, poise, speech and personality. Some wore long dresses and were not even displaying their legs.

The protesters also chose to ignore the fact that all the girls who entered the contest did so willingly. As for their complaint that the contest produced only one winner and 64 losers, is that not true of life, male or female? A pools winner is one in a million. There can never be more than one winner and most of us are destined to be losers somewhere along the line.

Spare the Child, Spoil the Rod

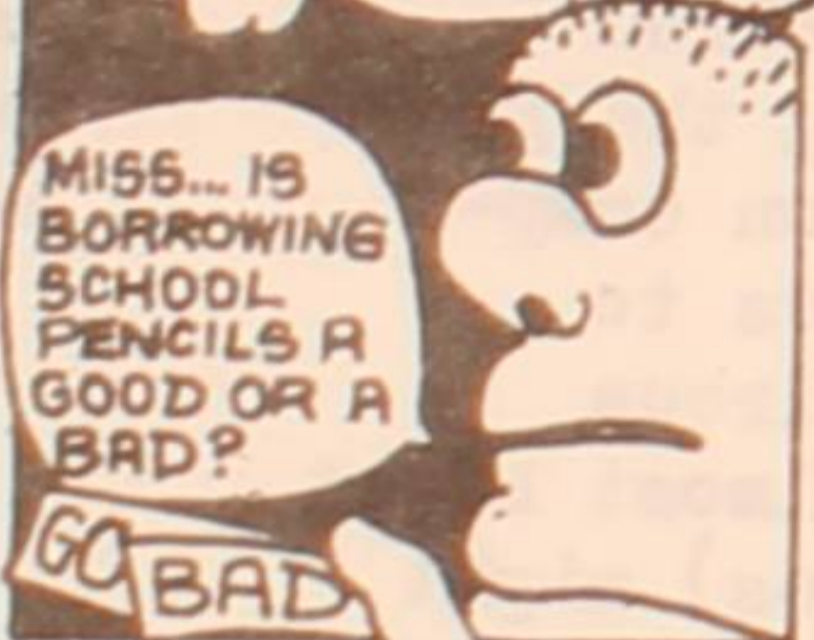
Violence in school is always a highly emotional issue in which people tend to take sides blindly without looking at the facts in each individual case. They either paint the romantic picture of the young, usually working-class, revolutionary making a muddled but sincere attack on 'the system', or the picture of young thugs threatening the always-correct representative of culture and law'n' order.

The issue has become important locally with a recent case at Stanmer school in which the mother of a pupil, Doreen Heath, brought a legal action for assault against a teacher, Erica Prosser, and lost.

When the court announced the verdict Mr. Wills, the acting headmaster of Stanmer, chose that moment to talk to the press about the frequent outbreaks of violence in the school and the National Association of Schoolmasters jumped on the bandwagon with stories of attacks on anonymous teachers in anonymous local schools.

That there is a certain amount of violence in Stanmer is not altogether surprising. Until last year that school had been run for some years (17 in fact) by a headmaster who was, to say the least, rigid in his attitude to discipline - not only in his dealings with the pupils but also with the staff. For years the school remained virtually closed to new ideas.

In a letter which the ex-headmaster wrote recently to the Evening Argus something of his 'philosophy' can be seen when he writes of teachers going on strike as 'appalling examples' to children - it's strange how the image remains of teachers as dedicated beings who should be above trivial things like striking, even if their conditions of work, and therefore the conditions in which the pupils work, are terrible. He does not pause to consider



that some strikes just might be caused by specific grievances rather than mischief-making on the part of red agitators.

He writes that the 'Disciplines of life are being steadily eroded by subtle and indeed naive incursions, from so many quarters - the usual mush churned out by frightened aging conservatives who see nasty conspirators everywhere sapping the nations moral fibre.

Unfortunately, although people like this would hardly get a hearing in any other occupation, teaching always seemed to attract those personalities who flock to such 'tough' leaders and so for years, and to some extent still today, dictatorial headmaster were able to rule without question.

Now that this man Williams has gone it's not surprising that there should seem to be some back-lash for a time from some kids. But it's a pity that the backlash hits indiscriminately those who might deserve it and those who don't.

It seems clear that Mrs. Prosser is one of the new brand of teachers who are thankfully replacing the old grey men of the day before yesterday; who still linger on. By all accounts she was popular with the kids and did imaginative work in the school.

We can only guess at the motives of the girl who, it was alleged in court, was involved in a scuffle with Mrs. Prosser during which she received the blow of push or whatever it was that led to the court case.

If there is a reason for this kind of apparently pointless violence it's probably that anonymous housing estates breed soulless schools like Stanmer and the two environments together breed this kind of violence. It's much more than a question of repressive schoolteachers or pampered thugs.

Now Stanmer is changing - from September it will be amalgamated with the neighbouring Westlain Grammar School as the first Brighton Comprehensive and will form the new Falmer High school. But how much a school can change the community in which

it works is another matter.

One thing does emerge clearly from all this. When the acting head of Stanmer spoke to the press so dramatically he made it clear that he did so because of the lack of concern which the relevant authorities seemed to be showing for the problems faced by himself and his staff.

As always, the Local Education Authority had tried to hush up such a controversial matter. All Director of Education Kenneth Antcliffe has had to say publicly on the matter is 'The handling of bullies is a problem with which teachers have always had to contend and in my experience they know how to do so.' It's so simple to label people as bullies and then sweep the matter under the carpet - it doesn't matter why they are bullies of course!

In the Doreen Heath case the Director of Education and the Education Committee behaved with their usual heavy-handed insensitivity.

Allowing a couple of weeks for discussion to die down they first ordered Mrs. Heath to send Doreen back to Stanmer and then wrote to the headmaster of the new Falmer school telling him to take the girl back, using the fact that Mrs. Prosser moves to another school in September as the excuse for this.

Antcliffe certainly didn't expect the firm raspberry which he got from the Heath family and the entire Falmer school staff in return - the former saying that they would rather go to prison than send Doreen back, the latter saying that under no circumstances would they take Doreen back. 'A fresh start in a new school seems to all of us... the only constructive way of trying to help this unfortunate girl' they are quoted in the Argus as saying in their letter to Antcliffe.

It would seem to us that whatever the rights and wrongs of this case, whether it's a question of the girl now being victimised by staff or other pupils, or of her victimising others or encouraging others, it would be the height of

stupidity to send the girl back to the same school.

That neither the girl nor the parents nor the school staff were consulted before a decision was made is typical of the sneaky way the Education Authorities are always trying to act in this town. They are too fond of making decisions which can deeply affect peoples' lives with the minimum of consultation with the people most closely involved.

What is needed in this case is a genuine investigation into what it is about Stanmer school and the home and social circumstances of this girl which causes incidents like this. Then we might see real changes being made in the ways in which people are educated and the communities in which people live.

To conjure up images of police patrolling classrooms as in New York or to talk blandly about 'the permissive society' (as if such a thing ever existed) as do the Argus and the National Assoc. of Schoolmasters, is, in the long run, no better than Antcliffe's tactic of sweeping everything nasty under the carpet in case it spoils some mythical image.

The sensation mongers are no help because their violent language is part of the same problem. And they usually assume that teacher is always right and call for a return to the birch or whatever. (It goes without saying that the greatest amount of violence in school is that committed by 'mature' ladies and gents with canes and straps on the bums and nands of young people.)

There will be no investigation because the way the Education Committee operates is also part of the problem. The impersonal system of committees making far-reaching decisions about how people will live is in itself a cause of this kind of violence. Not the only cause - Doreen was not a martyr hitting at the system. Antcliffe will find a diplomatic way of backing down, Doreen will go to another school, the staff will be satisfied and we will continue to build communities and turn a blind eye to the mess-ed up systems of personal relationships which make actions like Doreen's inevitable.

Antoine Doinel.

Cramming

The government is refusing to pay for the new-planned Stanley Deason school in Wilson Avenue. The reason for this cut-back is that although East Brighton schools are overcrowded, they are not by government standards, BADLY overcrowded. I teach in an East Brighton junior school where, because of lack of space, the teachers have decided that the staff room can be used for 'television programme lessons'. This means we spend our free periods sitting in draughty corridors to mark our books and prepare lessons. There is 1 lavatory for 15 women (1 for 3 men and his own personal one for the headmaster - a hint of male chauvinism here?!) At this school we have no art room, no music room and no space for a regular drama or dancing club.

I am employed at the school to teach small groups of children requiring 'special' attention. These children can be coping with sad home situations and need more than anything to learn how to build up some sort of meaningful relationship with an adult who CARES. They need to learn how to COMMUNICATE and they need someone who will simply sit and TALK to them and LISTEN to what they have to say and maybe bring some kind of excitement into their dreary telly-watching lives. Because we have no spare classrooms the only possible place for me to do my work

is a balcony full of discarded items of P.E. apparatus and school furniture overlooking the school hall. I've cleared it out and organised a load of 'Nature' and 'discovery' material arranged on improvised shelves and desks - gerbils, scrabble, goldfish gasp, cress seeds, wilt, tiny insects multiply in midwey birdsnests and runner beans sprout out of jam-jars. It could be a lovely

experiment but the conditions are impossible. Imagine trying to hold a conversation with a small group of children or trying to read them a story with all the shrieks and screams of the P.E. lesson going on below and the odd beanbag crashing over the balcony straight into the tadpoles tank. Or else I have crowds of children rushing through my part of the balcony, knocking over my fossil displays and fiddling with the caterpillars as they make their way to the library part of the balcony. My job is almost impossible. In spite of this hopeless overcrowding we are considered an excellent school. Whenever a foreign delegation arrives wanting to see a 'good English School' they are usually sent along to ours. We have a headmaster who really CARES about the children, the teachers work well together, we all have a laugh and the children are HAPPY - but if this school is popularly considered to be one of the BEST think what the others are lacking...

heath's one nation?

TWO ARGUS CUTTINGS.....

Antiques worth £1m —and all for sale

ANTIQUA DEALERS from Europe and America visiting the Brighton Antiques Fair at the Corn Exchange gave it the best opening days trade in the 15 years' history of the fair.

It is estimated that £1m. worth of exhibits are on show, and massive security precautions are being taken until the fair ends next Saturday.

All the exhibits are for sale. Prices range from under £5 to thousands. All the antiques, with the exception of jewellery and pictures, are guaranteed to be at least 100 years old.

A spokesman for the organisers said: "People can buy with safety because of this guarantee of

authenticity and quality. A panel of experts vets everything which goes on the 50 stands. Goods cannot be sold without being vetted." The public are admitted daily, except Sunday, from 11-8. Admission is 33p.

The organisers of the show, Cultural Exhibitions Ltd. of London, claim this is the best fair they have staged in Brighton

Meals on wheels may be dearer

GOLD PLATED JUNK

FOR SOME

.... AND DEARER FOOD

FOR OTHERS

BRIGHTON'S Social Services Committee is to consider increasing the price of meals-on-wheels from 61p to 71p.

This is the second time this year the proposal has been before the committee. In January, after criticism and charge of behaving like Scrooge no action was taken.

Mr Eric Causey, Director of Social Services, had reported that the council was spending £17,000 a year on providing the service, which brought in only £5,000 a year. The committee is to think again on July 9.

that the Queen, whose pay went up from £475,000 to £980,000 recently, and the other members of the Royal Family receive more from the State than the total Family Income Supplement for the nation.

that while in 1972 food prices rose by 11%, food companies have been able to pay their top men enormous salaries, e.g.

- Chairman of Unilever - £47,000
- Chairman of Rank/Hovis/McDougall - £41,700.
- Chairman of Unigate - £30,844.
- Chairman of Tate & Lyle £30,245.



C.H.E.

Before the district elections in June The Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) distributed a very simple questionnaire to each candidate. Questions included:

- a) aiding homosexual groups to find places for private meetings (would help/would not/uncertain).
- b) Taking up alleged instances of discrimination against homosexuals in employment (would help/would not/uncertain).
- c) Taking up alleged instances of police harassment of homosexuals. (would help/would not/uncertain).

Roland Stringer from CHE reports that only 4 candidates bothered to reply/return the questionnaire.

CHE is organising a 600-delegate conference in Brighton next year and the council have agreed to a civic welcome BUT it has refused a request from the Sussex GLF that they should be allowed to hire the Corn Exchange for a dance. Councillor Arthur Harman, Tory chairman of the Social Services Committee urged the council 'DON'T GIVE THESE PEOPLE THE STAMP OF RESPECTABILITY' Twelve Conservative councillors wanted to ban the conference.

'These Conservatives say they will continue to vote for the good of Brighton, even if this does sometimes mean voting for Labour proposals' Argus.

POWELL'S POPULISM SPREADS

Conservative party leaders yesterday maintained a chilly and disdainful silence in the face of the extraordinary speech at Stockport in which he appeared to say that a Labour vote would be justified if it was the only way of opposing Britain's involvement in Europe' Guardian June 8th.



ON THE BEACH

Last week I decided to take some children from the school where I teach to 'Nature Walk'. We shall explore Brighton beach. I said, 'study the rock pools and see how many interesting objects we can discover. Please wear your wellingtons because your shoes are likely to get covered with oil and possibly dogs mess. All the interesting objects we find will be displayed in the corridor with a collage on the wall and TREASURES FROM BRIGHTON BEACH written in sea shells'. We found 20 plastic bottles, 4 broken flip-flap sandals, 2 spent condoms, 3 rusty buckets, 1 bed, 1 dead cat, a pile of rotting fish heads, 7 yogurt cartons, 1 sanitary towel, 1 dead sea gull, a fragment of sea lettuce and 1 abandoned pram. The 'TREASURES FROM BRIGHTON BEACH' project has been abandoned.



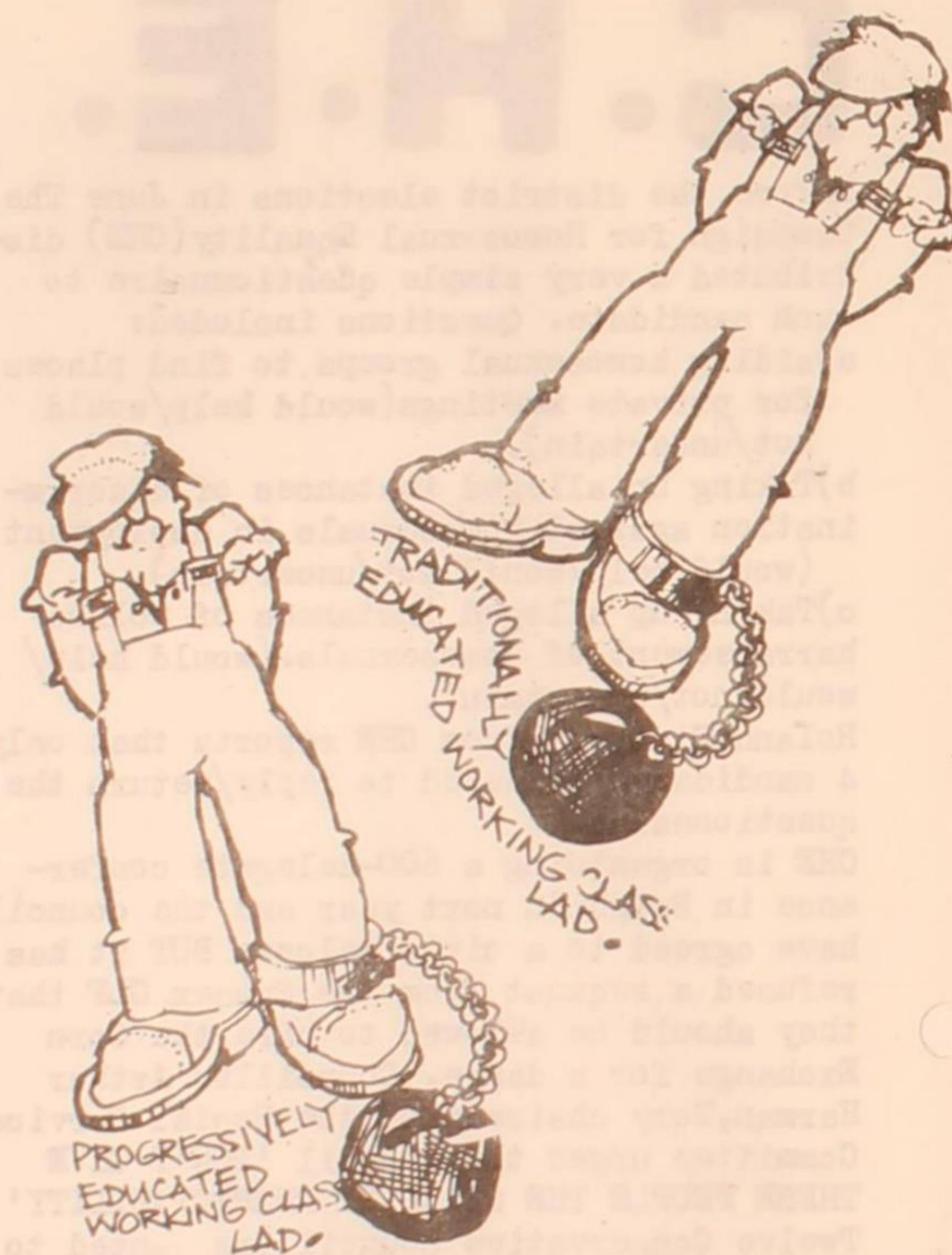
I found my patch on Brighton beach and stretched out on my towel. A few moments later a party of 60 Asians arrived and made their patch next to mine. Within seconds at least 15 sunbathers had picked up their transistors/sunloungers/windshields/Daily Mirrors and kids. Muttering racist sentiments and remarks about curry powder they moved well away. Few of the Asians wore swimsuits and the men dashed into the sea fully dressed while the women sat together feeding their babies. Having bathed in the sea themselves the men decided it was the women's turn and they carried each woman across the beach and flung them into the sea fully clothed. One of the Daily Mirror readers shouted 'WHAT D'YA THINK THIS IS, THE BLOODY GANGS' and another quipped 'THEY'LL ALL BE SQUATTING ALONG THE WATER LINE DOING THEIR BUISNESS NEXT' Meanwhile 50 yards away a party of coach trippers are paddling in the sea, wearing smiley-badge straw hats, trousers rolled up, skirts hoisted to reveal varicose calves. They mutter hostilities and shake their heads staring uncomprehendingly at their commonwealth brothers.

Since late June the Evening Argus has been giving prominence to the issue of increasing violence in Brighton schools and the ways in which headteachers, councillors and the Director of Education feel it should be solved. Whilst the paper clearly stated in a recent leader "that the town's teachers have not offered one word of criticism", it is not very clear that the paper is not prepared to print the comments of teachers who question views of the so-called educationalists in the town. Recently, 4 teachers (2 from the Free School and 2 from Stanmer) gave an interview to the Argus trying to put over alternative interpretations of the recent hysteria and trying to correct an otherwise very unbalanced account. Despite the leader (quoted above) it has not printed any of the interview. The official reason is that it is the school holidays.

The background to the Argus hysteria seems to be that there have been a few acts of violence in Brighton schools; that there are about 20 children who seem to be beyond the control of the teachers (Councillor Burton); that some Secondary Schools here have 40 children or more per class; that there is a rapid turnover of staff in some of these schools; that it is difficult for individual teachers to initiate any changes because the whole machinery of such schools is repressive for children and teachers alike.

Some things have not been gone into for example, why almost all the thuggies (Burton's word) are girls.

Other factors which the Argus has not talked about is that the secondary schools that have received most notoriety are in council estates urban ghettos with very few amenities and no cultural or historical continuity (unlike ghetto areas in industrial towns eg. Scotland Rd.). The teachers are mostly middle-class living in different parts of Brighton and out of touch with problems of the estates. There is bound to be confrontation; the values and expectations of teachers and children are very different. This becomes apparent if one looks at the letter of Stanmer (Argus July 26th) where he talks of the high record of exam success at all levels "bearing testimony to the excellent quality of the pupils". Presumably, Mr. Williams grades his children, like their work, so children who do not achieve academic success are "not excellent"



WORKING CLASS LAD EDUCATED FOR LIBERATION



VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Mr. Williams statements unlike some of those in the Argus, conveys some measure of sympathy for the "unwilling captives, ... unwilling pupils to whom school is understandably one long bore." But having gone this far, he insists on seeing any alternatives to the exam system as "time filling gimmicks." The central point emerging from underneath all the drama, is that school is no longer appropriate or adequate to the needs of many secondary school-aged pupils.

This point has been missed by the headteachers and councillors engaged in the Argus debate so it is not surprising that the solution seems equally irrelevant. One solution was the suggestion that "our little thuggies" (Burton again) should be isolated in special units. (Actually this was tried at Stanmer for the last two terms, by employing a teacher especially for difficult children. He proved so popular that he had to turn children away from his class, and as presumably a threat to other

teachers in the school, since several forbade their children to come to his class). This kind of sympathetic person was not what Brighton Education Committee had on its mind when it talked of hand-picked people. We should not be alive when we see reference to "special treatment rooms".

The only other solution has been seen in terms of increased corporal punishment (suspension does not work; they are only too glad to have a few days off - Headmaster Wills) What is disturbing about the emphasis on corporal punishment is: =1) it is always humiliating; it never solves underlying problems and it demonstrates the very issue which headteachers are condemning in the outside world i.e. violence. Alderman FitzGerald is unaware of this contradiction when he says "I would like to see the cane used, not for bullying or frightening children, but as a deterrent".

=2) It shows that Brighton headteachers and councillors are moving in totally the opposite direction from those in many other local authorities. This can be seen by the way in which, eg. many boroughs in London are giving support to more flexible ways of containing the same kinds of problems...Islington, Camden and Nottinghill all give support to their free schools, and also to community projects. Social Services departments in these areas are releasing money for this kind of "preventive" work. Education departments are encouraging parental involvement in many areas. In some schools in London there are class rooms set aside for children to go to when they don't want to work. These rooms are always available and are manned by parents. Liverpool has acknowledged its problems and its own schools' failure to cope by giving its free school an old school building. The city of Oxford banned the cane last week. Brighton, having at last come to talk of comprehensive education, 20 years behind some counties, and having made glowing recommendations for its first and middle schools, seems to find this move compatible with an entirely retrogressive analysis of and solution to its secondary school problems.

At the end of Headmaster Wills letter he talks of the phoenix that will arise from the ashes of Stanmer and Westlane. He makes me think of Isinghill which was born in a similar way. I think the parallel must be unintentional since the first thing that Duane did when he took over the school was to abolish corporal punishment. Whilst the figure for children on probation (something that is a worry to headmaster Wills of Stanmer) stood at 98 when Duane began, it had dropped to 9 by the time the school had closed. In fact there have been several studies which show a direct correlation between corporal punishment and criminal acts amongst school children.

Finally, one of the most serious implications of the recent publicity is the attempt to dissuade parents from supporting their children if they are in trouble at school. This is a large rift to be causing between school, parents and children at a time when, as the acting head of Stanmer acknowledges "I and my teachers have to spend so much time solving the social problems".

If teachers and parents are not on the kids' side, then who is?

64243



THE LINE

Brighton new advice service on legal rights was a bit slow in starting this month, but last weekend for example, of 18 arrested in drug raids on Saturday night, 11 were put in touch with the Line. The Line is by no means simply a haven for drug arrests; altogether there have been 39 enquiries this month, about drug arrests, general arrests, accommodation, overdoses, police harassment, mental health, social security and general legal advice.

We still need anyone who is willing to distribute publicity, posters, stickers, cards etc. so phone and get in touch.

And although 22 different people have each stayed by the telephone for a night (6 pm. - 9 am.) or weekends during the day as well, we still need more volunteers. The Co-ordinator for August is Roy Carr-Hill (at the Line 64243 or University of Sussex, 66755 Ext. 725). Another training session will be organised towards the end of August for other volunteers. So if you are interested please contact The Line 64243.

this BRIGHTON

A GOVERNMENT GRANT OF £15,000 HAS BEEN OFFERED TO THE KEMPTOWN ENCLOSURE COMMITTEE TOWARDS THE COST OF NEW RAILINGS to enclose the Sussex Square gardens. Kemptown poodles get a nice safe garden to foul while children from the Milner and Kingswood flats read comics on their concrete balconies. WHERE ARE THESE CHILDREN SUPPOSED TO PLAY?



A new stage in self-examination is that all women should examine their breasts once a month. Cancer of the breast attacks many women - 10,000 women die of it every year - but with a little bit of self-help it can be detected in the less malignant stage when a cure is possible.

First, sit in front of a mirror and look to see if your breasts are regular and symmetrical, or if there is any visible swelling or puckering of the skin.

Secondly, draw your hand over your breast, pressing it gently with the end of your fingers against your ribs. Do this covering your entire breast area looking for any unusual swellings or lumps. Then squeeze under your arms and try to find any glands. Finally press your nipples to see if there is any discharge.

If anything seems wrong or irregular, go immediately to your GP.

And you men who may be grinning at all this, remember that cancer of the breast is not only found in women, you too can get it - so be careful.

Please write with any problems or queries you may have to this column.



STOP PRESS... (pant, pant)
Princess Alexandra to open new
Whitehawk community centre...

10

REPORT ON THE JULY T.G.W.U. BRIGHTON CONFERENCE.

The proceedings of the Biennial Delegate Conference of the Transport & General Workers Union, which took place in Brighton during the second week of July, were a further confirmation of the growing leftward swing in the British labour movement.

The T.G.W.U. is the largest union in the country with a membership of 1,700,000. The conference was attended by 945 delegates and 566 resolutions were submitted.

Meeting in the wake of the A.V.E.W. conference, at which the left-wing won a significant victory; the most topical question was whether or not Jack Jones would be forced to withdraw from the Downing Street talks between the Govt. and the TUC. Although, in fact, the motion calling for Jones' withdrawal was defeated, it should not be overlooked that one third of the delegates supported it. And, again, the issue is not yet closed, for in September it will come at the TUC

come up at the TUC Annual Conference in Blackpool at which the demand will be for the complete withdrawal of the TUC from the Downing Street talks.

The TUC must not be tied to any policies pursued by the Tory Government and thereby compromise its bargaining power. On the contrary, the Unions must at all times preserve their independence from the capitalist state. As George Cooper, Chairman of the Brighton Trades Council put it in his fraternal greetings to the delegates, it was 'not the task of the Union to negotiate with a capitalist Government because they have nothing to offer us'.

Muriel Browning, delegate to the Conference, wrote in 'Militants' (6.7.73) that; 'What strikes you about this year's agenda is its essentially political nature. Most of the resolutions are political, as much as industrial. How could it be otherwise, when the Tories have brought politics into every little shop-floor dispute?' and the Conference debates bore this out.

Delegate after delegate acknowledged that the record of the Tory Govt. with its attacks on the standard of living of the working class through wage freezes, rent increases

sanctioned price increases, the Industrial Relations Act etc., demanded a political response. Disillusion with the last Labour Govt. is turning into a hard resolve to bring the Tory's down and to return Labour to power pledged to socialist policies and answerable to the working class.

The successfully carried resolution, Composite 17, urged the Union General Council to wage a vigorous campaign to encourage T.G.W.U. members to join the Labour Party and to play an active role in it. But, further, it called for the establishment of factory branches of the Labour Party with the same status as the Ward Party.

The T.G.W.U. is now committed to fighting for a national minimum wage of £35 for a 35 hour week. Such a minimum is indeed necessary today, but it will never be conceded by a Tory Government. But this Autumn will no doubt see great strides made in the direction of the further radicalisation of the British working class. At the Annual Conferences of the Labour Party and TUC, militants will be fighting for the adoption of truly socialist policies, namely the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy; and more and more workers will come to realise that their future lies with their class, and their class united solidly behind a party answerable to them and committed to socialism.

John Ballance.
Brighton Pavilion Labour Party
Young Socialist.

OPEN ARE SWAMPED!

Open, Brighton's well-known vegetarian restaurant cum advice service is having trouble coping with the flood of problems. It may need to ease off for a while to take a breather. If you can help, PLEASE DO. They need more crash pads - so if you have a spare floor, let Open know. But particularly they need crash pads plus supportive advice and help for those crashing. So if you have a floor and a kind heart, you'll be particularly welcome. Open's phone number is 27878.

Kids Party
outside Milner Flats
Saturday 22nd Aug
All Kids Welcome!
Admission by Kid only!

FREE SCHOOL CRISIS

The Free School summer term opened on May 7th in All Saints Hall Compton Avenue with 8 kids and almost as many 'teachers'. The advantages of extra space and being able to provide meals as well as having more full-time helpers and a bit more money seemed to outweigh the disadvantages of having to share the hall with a scout group and the general untogetherness of the move from Farm Road. As a result we approached the term as one of expansion.

In the event this served to amplify many problems which it had been possible to overlook in the smaller set-up at Farm Road: take the simple example of meals. Buying food, paying for it, getting people to cook, serving it on time, hasseling with health inspectors when they complained about insanitary conditions and laid down regulations which involved installing 3 sinks, laying on hot water, providing disposable drying up towels etc. etc. In the end these things were never sorted out and continued to weigh on the full-timers when they should have been free to get on with teaching and being with the kids.

At the same time many good things happened. The school attracted a number of kids from the local area and expanded to 18 altogether. The number of people involved generally grew. Whereas in Farm Road the set-up had frequently been very inward-looking and this had tended to make the kids over demanding and attention seeking, in Compton Avenue things were on the whole more positive and many of the really exciting sides of a Free School were able to come through. Drama for instance by the end of had become the natural centre for much of what went on at the school, simply because the children wanted it that way and found in it an obvious extension of their games and ideas. Playing to an audience, dressing up and inventing stories all came easily in a situation which the kids had created largely themselves.

The term ended on July 20th and now the hall is cleared and empty. The close neighbours are happy again in the knowledge that their privileged privacy is not going to be disturbed - and Brighton has no Free School.

Articles in the Argus and the Gazette have produced little response and ads' for money and premises in the national press have produced nothing. The local council, though willing now to acknowledge the presence of the school, refuses any substantial help. Councillor Burton's 'admission' that there is a 'place' for the Free School means effectively just that. The support of the social services department it seems is dependent on the school having established premises and a degree of backing from the education department.

In the face of mounting problems in Brighton schools the council appears determined to turn a blind eye to alternatives which might force a confrontation with the realities of the inhuman situation in which kids and teachers are frequently placed.



That problems exist is an unavoidable fact. That these should be identified in the press with certain 'problem' children is typical of the escapism of people who do not hold any genuine interest in kids. That the 'solutions' advocated are repressive (re-introduction of corporal punishment etc.) exposes the underlying fear in the system and the genuine danger of the situation getting out of hand.

Brighton needs a Free School, that much is evident from the number of kids and parents who came forward as a result of the distribution of 4,000 leaflets about the school last term. It needs a Free School because it is only through having one that Brighton council will be made aware of the positive alternative to its retrogressive decisions.

It needs a Free School because that is the most effective way of focussing the energy and ideas of people who want to see changes in education generally. Lastly the Free School is important because it is one of only a few in existence in this country and as such has a vital pioneering role to play.

The smallness of the school and the fact that it has no premises provides a multitude of excuses for people to remain on the sidelines and observe rather than come forward and offer support and in the past the failure of those involved full-time to give outsiders a firm impression of what it is that is being attempted has added to this atmosphere of hesitancy and lack of direction. We feel now that if the school is to work it must change. It must become larger and be able to take 30 kids, or more. It must be more organised at all levels and generally more stable. It must also become more firmly planted as a part of an identifiable community. This will only become possible if people who have stood back up till now can see the overall importance of the situation and come forward with energy and ideas to make the change possible.

In particular the school needs the kind of stability which could only be provided by one or two people committed to being involved for a much longer period of time than anyone has been so far. These people would need to be qualified and preferably able to drive as well as having the relevant experience of working with kids and adults on a fairly open project of this kind. The help of someone who has experience in fund-raising would also be very useful.

The alternative if this kind of support is not forthcoming is for us to continue on a reduced scale. Running a tutorial group for the small number of kids who cannot or will not go back to state schools. Having an office which will be open as often as we can man it where



there will be an information service and also running as many activities for children as we can outside school hours based on a van and hiring church halls etc. It seems that in any case we shall have to adopt this alternative temporarily, but none of us feels that it is in any sense a solution and we do not feel that the only Free School at present in existence in Brighton should function solely on this basis.

If you want the Free School to continue and expand, your support is needed. If you don't like the way it's being run it's up to you to say so and try to change it.

Lastly, the school is not an exclusive preserve. It is open to suggestions, enquiries, interest, help on any level and moral support will always be willingly exchanged.

Please 'phone:
721268 - Rhiannon
680170 - Sean and Brian

LETTERS

SELF EXAMINATION



Despite this 'permissive age' we are supposed to live in, when I went along to the Women's Lib meeting where Karen gave an illustrated talk on self-examination, I was amazed to discover how little I knew about my own body and how it works.

The writer of the anonymous article criticising the meeting, published in Brighton Voice 4, asks if we can imagine sixty men meeting to talk about their penises. I only wish they could meet to talk in the same sensible and non-competitive way that we talked about our bodies at the women's meeting. Our concern is more healthy than the 'boring preoccupation' the writer imputes to Women's Liberation. We believe that introverted preoccupations are the result of fears caused by myths stemming from ignorance. It is one of our concerns to demolish such myths, which reinforce women's feelings of helplessness in our male oriented society.

The talk took place as part of a general meeting of the Brighton and Hove Women's Lib Group, at which all women are welcome and are free to voice their opinions. Why didn't the writer say what she thought then, rather than misrepresenting the tone of our meeting in a sensationalist anonymous article?

Diana Burgess Jen Murray
Melany J. Jovic Penny Summerfield
Narelle Kelly
Members of Brighton and Hove Women's Liberation. Next general meeting Tuesday August 7th 8.00pm Prince George Pub, Trafalgar St. If you want to hear more of the opinions of members of Women's Lib - and voice your own - get A Woman's Place 3p. Back numbers of issues 2 & 3 are available from Linda White, Holland House, Holland Road, Hove. 737217 or 8.

REACTIONS TO LAST MONTH'S LETTER ABOUT WOMENS LIB.

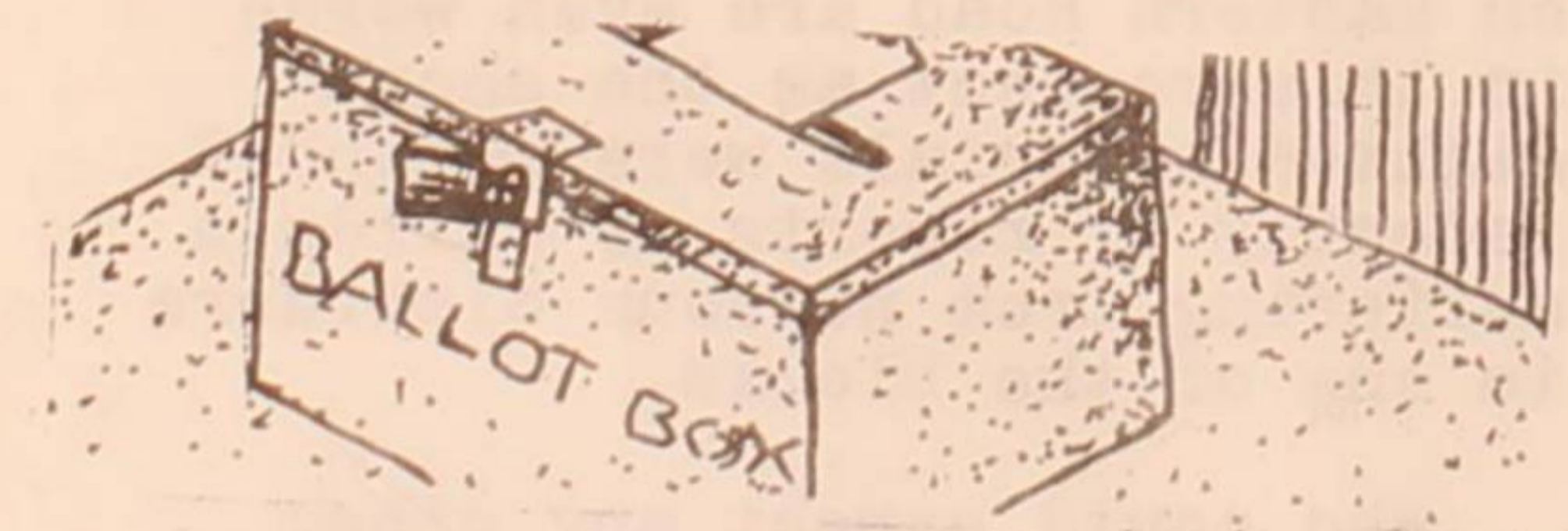


Dear Brighton Voice,
I agree with every word, whoever wrote the item on Women's Lib in your last issue. Of course the 4 main aims of Women's Lib are important, and I'm all for pushing them at a local level through local groups and local alternative media.
But why drive the active members further out on the men/women limb by spending 2 hours discussing female physical problems? Couldn't a local clinic (or anything concerned with preventive medicine) have done this? Let's keep working at people not having a fair deal, but please, please don't aggravate the men v women thing. Isn't that part of the sick attitude women's Lib is trying to change.
PEACE.
Val Collett.

Two pieces in the last issue of Brighton Voice upset and angered me as a woman - and as a socialist. The one that pissed me off most was Anon's sneering report of a Brighton Womens Lib meeting where women were taught to inspect their own quints. It may well be that it is unwise and unuseful, as Dr Mole tells us, to try to diagnose our own gynaecological ailments after a brief lecture on the subject, but is it really 'introverted' to spend two whole hours on the physical apparatus that gives us so much trouble and pleasure throughout our lives? Isn't it a kind of snobbish, bluestocking Victorianism which tells us that 'knickers and ovaries' are BORING and liberated women think of other things... Do they also, one wonders, in Anon's view shut their eyes and think of England when they screw? Anyone who has suffered from recurrent vaginitis or related ailments like bladder infections know that they can be extraordinarily disabling as well as destructive of a happy sex life; they also know that most GPs prescribe for these 'minor' afflictions without an examination of any kind, and with very little interest in the discomfort of the sufferer. I've always thought that one of the really important things about Women's Lib was that one could talk freely in meetings

about specifically women's things that bored and embarrassed men, and which we were taught by our mum's to be embarrassed and ashamed of - like nasty drips and painful periods. Too many women are ignorant about the healthy processes of their own bodies never mind when things go wrong. One of the aims of Women's Liberation as expressed in the demands with which Anon sympathises like free abortion contraception and 24hour creches is control of their own bodies. Without knowledge of how they function and disfunction how can you or I confront our bored, male GP and make him take some notice? Surely if we know that other women are suffering similarly and getting the same offhand treatment we will be less timid in pressing individually and collectively for higher priorities on women's illnesses generally. Men don't have to meet to discuss non-specific urethrities because most male doctors are very concerned with curing their male patients of such an uncomfortable and visible complaint...

AND ON THE COUNCIL ELECTIONS...



ANOTHER piece in the BRIGHTON VOICE that got up my nose was Val Hennessy's personal saga of how a nice girl failed to win over the yobs and get elected town councillor.

What mystifies me is how she lost by only 8 votes, for the whole piece betrays a political naivete about and a callous lack of identification with the constituency she was campaigning to represent.

It is all very well to talk feelingly about the destruction of the 'Street Community' and desperate mothers who use the telly as a pacifier, if in your actual contact with these mothers and that street you begin to see how political apathy can resist even dishy would-be Labour Councillors with posh accents and Lady Bountiful manners.

Val claims her right to resist the male chauvinism of the other male councillors, but does not understand the passivity of broke working-class wives, dependant on their husbands for bed, board and approval.

Clearly she too regards the ordinary campaign activities - 'coach trips to Littlehampton Labour Club, jumble sales etc.' as slightly offensive drudgery. The question arises - Why should the women to

whom these are pleasurable social events vote for Val? They may lack all kinds of political and collective consciousness about day nurseries, but they can tell real solidarity from political ambition in as long as it takes to shut the door with a polite negative platitude.

She is more concerned in her article anyway with her own responses to and fantasies about her 'experience' than with any political or social lessons to be learned from it.

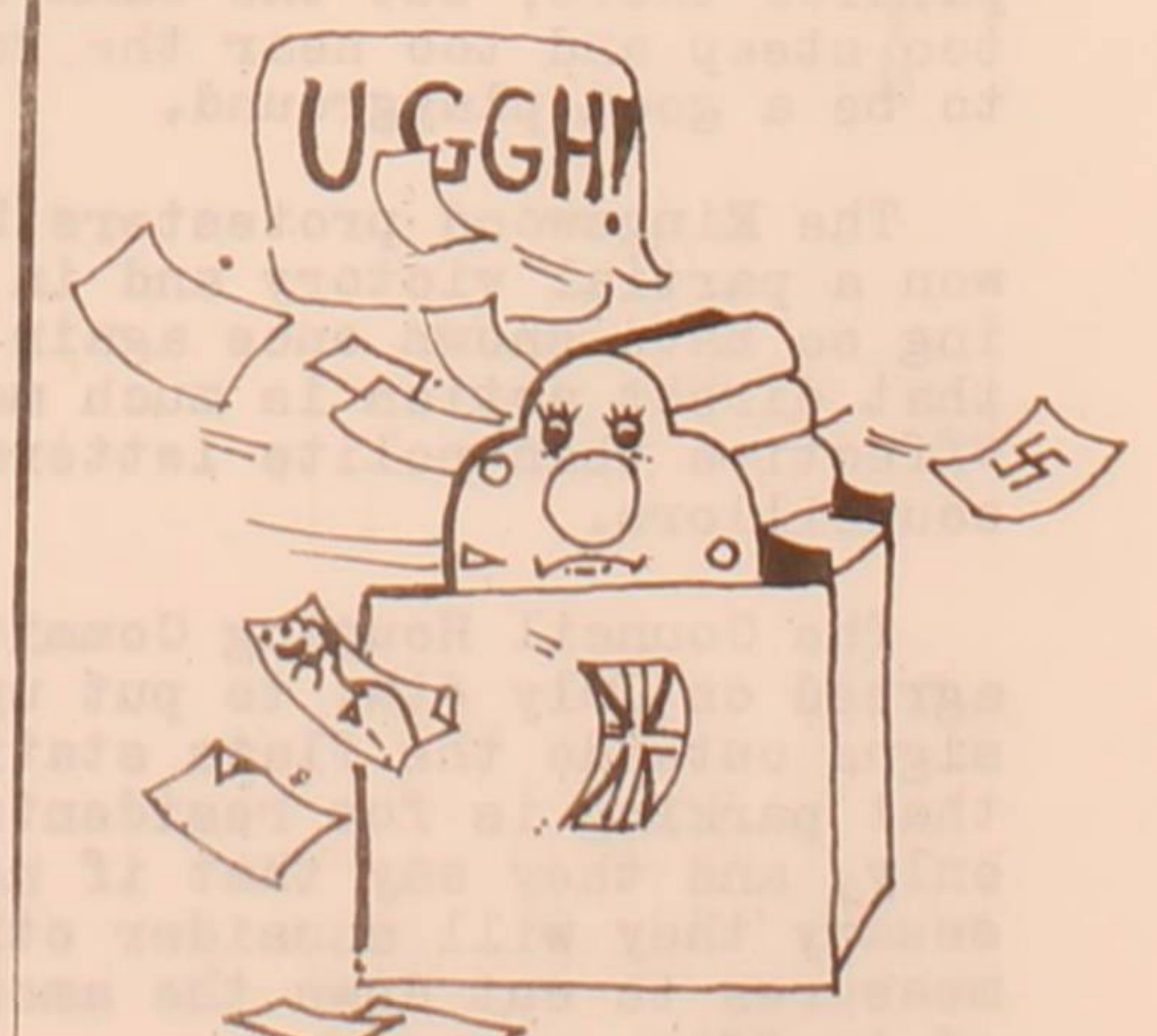
Instead of figuring out ways of getting through to apathetic women locked in with too many kids and Jimmy Young, she turns the task neatly over to Brighton Voice!

The office of Town Councillor ought to be held by someone who not only has the 'right' social concerns, but someone whose interests and activities are deeply rooted in the community they serve. Every sentence and sentiment of the article show that Val does not have these.

I am not nearly so despondent about Brighton women as Val is. If they stayed away from the polls in droves on this occasion, it proves they have some sense.

Cora Kaplan Lushington.

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