

A LESSON FOR ALL

A young mother, through her own strength and guts, has stood up to Hove Housing Department. And she has won.

After three months barricaded in her home in Lower Market Street the Hove Council have agreed to Tracy Horgan's demand that she be re-housed. After months of desperate tension and strain Tracy and her two daughters now look forward to Christmas in a new home.

Tracy's fight began when she was given notice to quit to make way for luxury flats. In such cases it is the duty of the Housing Department to rehouse. But Hove Housing Dept. thought otherwise, and refused to help Tracy - though she had been on the Housing List for five years. Tracy was justifiably aggrieved. She had waited five years for nothing. But she put her anger into action. If the Council wouldn't rehouse her, she was damn sure she wasn't going to leave without a fight.

If the only alternative was to rot in bed-and-breakfast accommodation, then it was time to fight the bailiffs. The barricades went up; and she has held firm behind them for thirteen weeks.

Her friends and neighbours who live in the shabby apartments around the area - and who helped Tracy in her struggle very much - now know that something can be done. They too live in overcrowded conditions, patiently hoping that one day they will get a Council house. They now know what they can do to make that hope a reality.

We would like to print stories of people like Tracy - or the Flynns of Terminus Road. They are making power to the people a reality. AND THAT IS WHAT THE VOICE IS ALL ABOUT.

In the next issue Tracy tells her own story of how she won her fight.

We regret to announce that you can no longer buy your Voice from 'Uncle Sam's'. Unfortunately a small fracas broke out in our favourite Hamburger Bar and in the ensuing punch up someone bashed someone else over the head with the Brighton Voice Collection Box and fled from the brawl with our much needed Voice money scattering Ketchup-spattered copies of the Voice all along Montpelier St.

Owing to an editorial error the point of the piece in the last Issue about the Marina Enquiry may not have been clear.

The transcript, which is so necessary to the small organisations and general public, was refused by the Inspector as being too expensive. It would have cost £800 (not £4000 as reported).

This contrasts with the £15,000 that Boydell, the Company's lawyer, is getting - and with the total cost of the Enquiry which is of the order of £150,000.

late info

URGENT- The Furnished Tenants Assn needs more help. With stories like those on p. 3 this is important. Contact Russ Moseley at 683348.

SOS help desperately needed with transport, Tue. afternoon + volunteers for playscheme for handicapped children Dec. 30-Jan. 3rd, transport provided---phone Judy (557554)

Disabled graduate needs helpers to assist him write thesis-John Williams, Lancaster House, UofS (66744 or 67247)

Friends Centre, Ship St-wide range classes inc. planning (Tue. 7-30)-tel. 27835

PUBLIC ENQUIRY ON MARINA CONTINUES- council chamber, Town Hall, Mon-Fri. (days) come along.

A. S. Neill Trust-local branch for alt. education projects (691712)

Aardvaark -radical comic still on sale. help to (553607)

SUPPORT CLAP (Community Levy for Alternative Projects. Details in Clap catalogue. Send your Clap Tax to: BIT 146, Great Western Rd. W. 11.

Research

Research-VOICE groups are examining the problems, needs, characteristics of Montpelier/Kemp Town/Whitehawk for features as that on Preston Area (No. 20) Anyone/everyone invited to submit material **WRITE TO BRIGHTON VOICE 7 VICTORIA RD.** Reproduction of BRIGHTON VOICE articles, in whole or in part, is welcomed, as a contribution to spreading of information and development of Public debate but all rights are reserved with respect to the publication as a whole. No part of this or any other publication by Pendkarn Ltd. may be microfilmed without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

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BRIGHTON VOICE

No 20

Community Paper

5p



WORKING BRIGHTON

WITH AN ISSUE ABOUT WORKING BRIGHTON IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT WE start with a description of what it is really like to work in the town. "I felt very dizzy and faint as I leant over the tank of chemical. There was even an open container of it left on the bench. I knew from previous experience that 'Trich' causes dizziness, nightmares, vomiting and diarrhoea." That is from a letter sent to the Voice by an employee of a Hove plating firm. 'Trich' is short for Trichloroethylene, a chemical for which the safety limit is one hundred parts in a million of air. In addition to the symptoms listed it also causes liver cancer and is addictive.

Another worker had to go to hospital with severe stomach pains and stiffening of the joints. But on his first night out of the hospital he was eagerly back on the job - indicating addiction. For these sort of risks the workers were being paid about 50p an hour.

Brighton Voice alerted the Factory Inspectorate to the situation, and we are pleased to say that the factory has been visited and tests are in hand. But is that good enough? Every day that there are men exposed to that sort of danger is a condemnation of the slowness of the Factory Inspector. And every day that men are exposed to that sort of danger and for that sort of pay is a condemnation of our society. Built right into our system is the circle of profit-making for survival of the firm, and of screwing the workers for that profit-making. The sooner we break out of this vicious circle the better.

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groups/gatherings

B'TON ENVIROMENTAL COMM. Mellish, 54, Queens Park road.

TRADES COUNCIL: Keith Orange. 22, Whippingham rd.

UPPER NORTH STREET RESIDENTS. Robert Gregory 97 Upp. North St. (26749).

WHITEHAWK ACTION COMM. Brian Mitchell. (687792)

Transport 2000 for sane & intregated trana intergrated transport policy Kevin McNulty, 75 Uppr. Lewes Rd

politics

COMMUNIST PARTY BRIT MARXIST-LENINIST. meet 1st Fri. of month. (684404 for details).

ANDREW BOWDEN: TORY M. P. FOR KEMP TOWN.... If you wish to meet or contact - Tory H. Q. 51, Preston rd. (67747) Home -(62855)

LABOUR PARTY: Kemp Town 179, Lewes road (62592) Pavilion: 90 sedgewick road. (557944)

LIBERAL PARTY: Pav. Frances Hix, 143a Western rd. (26560) Office (27960).

B'TON PAV. & KEMP T'N LAB. PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS: Meet Tu. 8p. m. 179, Lewes rd. John Balance 54 Coleman st. (23996)

COMMUNIST PARTY: Sec: M. Chaplin, 83 Edburton Ave..

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS The Sec. 33 Ventnor Villas, Hove.

SOC. ANGLO-CHINESE UNDERSTANDING. John Lloyd 5 Belle Vue Gdns. (63705)

RANK & FILE I.S. Based group teachers within N. U. T. (735925).

BRIT. SOVIET FRIENDSHIP SOC. (62794).

ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP Adrian King 60b Trafalgar Rd, Portslade.

The Voice needs more people on the collective. Why not help produce as well as read the paper?

editorial

BRIGHTON IS NOT AN INDUSTRIAL TOWN but what industry it has, it tries to sweep under the carpet. Coming into Brighton on the London line you might look across at the bunched roofs of the terraced housing and think how similar they looked to a midland town. But that's deceptive. Those houses do not contain a working class population. Brighton has tried to isolate its factories and the workers who work in them well away from public view. You have to be a determined visitor to find Hollingbury, Hollingdean, Moulscombe or Whitehawk, let alone Southwick and Portslade. You also have to be a determined local councillor, a dedicated social worker or a committed alternative newspaper like Brighton Voice to see that factory life and factory people get any recognition or even the barest of hearings in this rich and privileged town, whose axis runs from the Marina along the front to Dyke Road passing through the Corporation Offices and the Law Courts on the way.

What do the Tory Council, the big Hoteliers, the Property magnates, the City commuters who live in Brighton either know or care about the Unionised workers in this town? Or those whose jobs would be at risk if they thought of joining a Union? Nothing! They approach them, if they have to, with a set of totally outdated, pompous proposals based on the expectation that workers should 'know their place'. Underneath they are small, frightened men who know that in the end the people who work and the people who produce have the strength. We in Brighton Voice take up an old cry that the working men and women should unite and show their

strength through militant union action, strikes and grass-roots pressure. In this issue we have 5 pages specifically on WORKING BRIGHTON, the Brighton which the official tourist guide doesn't mention and whose wages and rights are continuously under attack from local employers. And we have the first of our studies of community areas in Brighton which are demanding more facilities, more control over their own lives and a greater collective identity. In both sections we have asked people to write for themselves and in all cases they enthusiastically accepted the opportunity. Where real people and real working situations are concerned you will find in these pages the free and authentic Voice of Brighton.

appealing

The Voice—to everyone's amazement—continues to come out, and even increase circulation. If numbers sold is any indicator — and we recognize it is a big if — we are a success. We've grown to three times the size over the last year, but our print bills have grown four times.

We have never wholly covered our costs, but we have always found friendly donors to help us out. Over the past 3 months we have received 11 donations, big and small, and we thank all those involved.

But we need to raise £200 over a 12 month period at our present expenditures. So please —

SEND IN YOUR DONATIONS OF ANY SIZE. Another way of helping us is to take out a subscription: it costs £1 for 12 issues, all delivered to your door.

So please —

TAKE OUT A SUBSCRIPTION.

All cheques should be made out to Brighton Voice and sent to 7, Victoria Rd. Brighton.

But still the best way of helping is to BUY THE VOICE, get others to buy the Voice and to join us and SELL THE VOICE.

As the MARINA ENQUIRY grinds on, inevitably some people are asking—Is it worth it? And those opposed to public participation anyway are suggesting that it is all a waste of time—'leave it to the architects and engineers' they say. The Gazette carried a piece last week saying that it was just a matter of a few peoples' legalistic whims; written by the resident reactionary at the Enquiry—the local correspondent of that well-known supporter of peoples' democracy, the Daily Telegraph. But this sort of argument has got itself ass about front. True, the Enquiry is a boring and expensive farce, but who's fault is that? If there had been proper public participation and adequate information given out, as in the B.U.S.P. plan, there would have been no necessity at all for the Enquiry. Far from showing the obstinacy of local objectors and the weakness of too much democracy, the Enquiry is a product of the gerry-mandering of the town that has gone on over this massive project—the sly bending of the laws, and principles of public participation, to get it through at any cost. And that came about because of the 'cooperation' of a secretive private Company, the supine Brighton Town Council and Wiggler Reg Morgan, our disastrous Chief Executive.

who we are

BRIGHTON VOICE is produced monthly (just about) by a collective of around 40 people living in Brighton and area.

We all do different jobs and have different viewpoints but we are united in the common purpose of producing a newspaper in which ordinary people can put forward their views.

We call ourselves a collective because we share out and rotate the various jobs, and we take all decisions collectively. There is no editor.

Every month about 1500 copies are printed and sold. This means that about 4500 people actually read it. We don't make money — the price you pay doesn't cover our costs (see 'APPEALING' — this page). Nor is it our intention to make money, which is where we fundamentally differ from the Argus and Gazette.

WHY IS THE VOICE NECESSARY? Because everything that affects our lives seems to be run by groups acting mostly in their own interests. For instance, property speculation, aided and abetted by the Council, estate agents, landlords and builders, are ripping our town apart. And because in lots of other ways all the decisions which affect us are made by such people. Don't forget that all the local media are controlled by those same established interests. The Argus, Gazette and Radio Brighton, are run by people with an interest in keeping things much as they are. So how can anything be changed for the better if they control how we find out, and if, in consequence, there's no way of hitting back.

We want to take one means of communication out of the hands of the 'experts' and the propertied class and give it over to the people of Brighton.

WRITE AND DRAW FOR THE VOICE. BUY THE VOICE, SELL THE VOICE, JOIN THE COLLECTIVE — IT'S YOUR PAPER.

Meetings: Sundays at 8 p.m.
Open Cafe
Victoria Road
(The food's good too!)

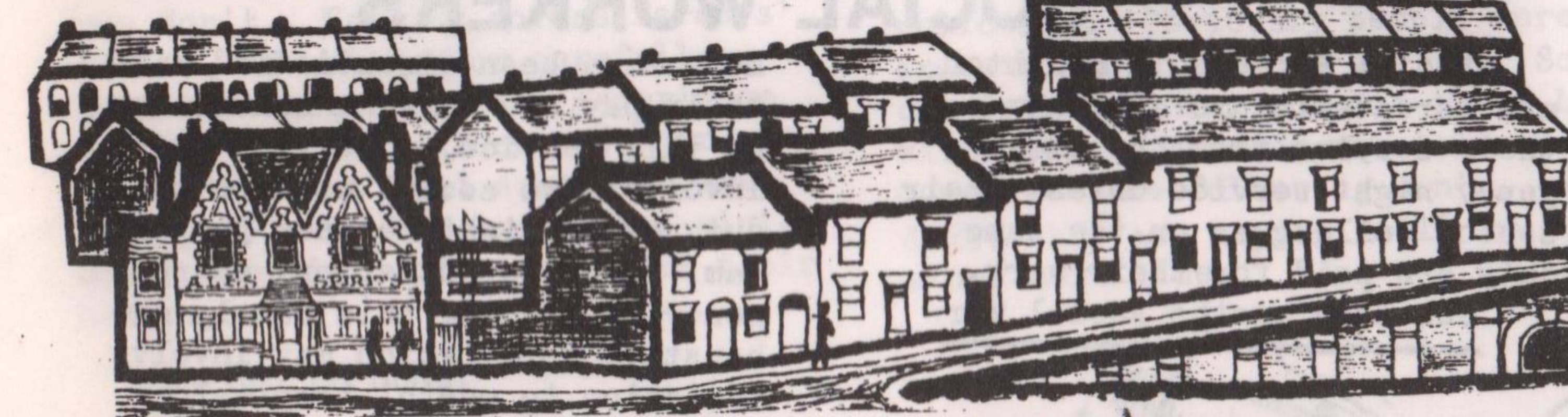
marina

landlords must not get away with it!

HOOGSTRAATEN

Here in Brighton a woman gets beaten up on a street and is left lying on the pavement. The Police do nothing. Fiction? NO, FACT! If you are a tenant of Nicholas Hoogstraaten that could well be your fate. It was for one young woman this month.

"No Jews, no coloureds, no sociology students, no children in my properties" — that's the sort of man Hoogstraaten is. Known to his tenants as 'Hoogsy Baby', he is notorious locally as a vicious landlord and fascist. He is quite undeterred by a recent conviction for illegal eviction, which had strong overtones of brutality, and the fine of £2,000 was paltry to the money he is making. He is making so much he recently transferred his domicile to Liechtenstein.



Right now Hoogstraaten and his crony Rodney Marksworth, alias Hamilton, are intimidating the tenants of 70 Clyde Rd. And they are succeeding. By their tactics over the past month they have managed to get most of them out. HOW MUCH LONGER IS THIS BULLYING GOING TO BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE?

Their basic aim was to break up a 4-bedroomed unfurnished house with sitting tenants into six bed-sits, thus raising the income from £21 to £30 a week. Though a rent book was denied the tenants the C.A.B. advised them to refuse to quit or allow the locks to be changed.

On Monday evening Marksworth came round to change the locks. It was whilst he was doing this that the fight took place which led to Marksworth being charged with causing Actual Bodily Harm; he was remanded in custody until the next day. He told police when he was arrested that he was acting as Hoogstraaten's agent.

On Wednesday 27th November the tenants went to Hoogstraaten's office in Palmeira Square to offer their rent. He refused it. During the course of the conversation he said that if he wanted them out, 'he would get them out any way he wanted; he didn't need a court order.'

He said to one of the tenants, "I won't hit you in the office, but if you are not careful you may find yourself down an alley way with a sack over your head".

Obviously Hoogsy and his friends still find it worthwhile to pursue ruthless campaigns of harassment outside the law. And they have done so again in Clyde Road. The one tenant who has fought back, a girl, was attacked by two thugs outside the house and left bleeding on the ground. It is now clear that HOOGSTRAATEN MUST BE STOPPED. FOR GOOD.



PARTICIPATE!

EAST STREET PLAN

Brighton is at last thinking about doing something about its traffic problem. And it is doing the right thing — getting rid of the cars. The Old Town Scheme is going to pedestrianise part of East Street and Market Street in the Lanes, and actually increase the public parking locally too. A small enough contribution, but it needs your vote if you want it. Ken Fines, the Planning Officer, has had an exhibition in the Town Hall which has attracted some forty people a day, but you can still get a leaflet explaining the scheme at the Public Library or Borough Planning Dept., with a returnable form for your comments, AND THESE ARE IMPORTANT. The VOICE believes in participation and urges you to make your views known. Otherwise the local traders (who prefer cars) will have most say in the scheme's future.

As an ironical addendum: The solicitor, Tony Allen, who is acting for the conservationists at the Marina Enquiry is acting against them over the pedestrianisation scheme.

HARE PIE

In mid-October 21 people were thrown out of their B&B accommodation by landlord Brian Hare. This was covered in Brighton Voice 19 in November. Much more has happened since then.

At Brighton Polytechnic, where Hare lectures in the Business Studies Annexe in Preston Road, the students called a special meeting to deal with him. However motions which would have supported boycotts of his lectures were undermined by a few part-time students from Hare's course and the large Conservative student contingent. The only result was a letter to the Principal of the College which was largely ignored, and a rather wet demonstration against Hare. Members of the Poly. staff have apparently chosen to ignore Hare's deliberate exploitation of students.

In Brighton, Hare, an active vegetarian, has been blacked by vegetarian shops and restaurants and may have to look further afield. Mike Cotton, who was arrested outside Regency Sq. for obstruction, was granted an absolute discharge by Brighton magistrates on 15 Nov. This showed clearly what even magistrates think of the behaviour of arresting officer, Inspector Cyril Roberts. It should also influence the police enquiry.

So far Hare, who lives at 62, Lansdowne St. has not accepted any new tenants for 63 Regency Sq. Instead he has offered the place to Brighton Social Services for the housing of homeless families. This ironical gesture is quite typical; he will get money direct from the Soc. Services at full rate, the tenants will have little chance to complain and he will not have to deal with them as individuals. And homeless families have little choice where to go. Hare knows that well enough. However when the Soc. Services have read the 5 or 6 different reports on Hare they are not likely to send him any tenants.

DIRTY TRICKS

We understand that the Tories are up to a new trick these days. At least it is new in local government. Under the recent local reorganisation the ward boundaries may be altered by recommendations from the local Council, but with no clearly defined criteria for making such changes. So the Brighton Tories last month 'suggested' a whole load of changes to Council — whereupon the Labour Group at last woke up! They did some rapid calculations and found that under the proposed alterations they stood a strong chance of losing 9 seats on the Council!

MARINA LAY-OFFS

The public enquiry into the present plan for the Marina at Black Rock continues, with the lawyers and 'experts' arguing about the £100m. 'City in the Sea'. Meanwhile, back on the Marina, Taylor Woodrow are still struggling valiantly to complete the harbour wall.

Things haven't been the same since the big storm. The damage to the caissons (see VOICE No 18) was much more serious than the Company ever admitted, and the big crane was stranded for weeks before they patched things up enough to get it back to shore.

Problems still remained, however. The first caisson they tried to drop after the storm landed on four feet of silt, so they had to lift it up and take it back to shore again. At last, in early November they managed to drop a caisson into the sea, the first for three months. The following week, the storm knocked the 40-ton 'nose' off their precious crane. This large lump of steel now sits uncomfortably rusting in twenty feet of water while the engineers try to figure out a way to lift it and fix it back on the crane.

All of which means that Taylor

Woodrow must be getting fairly desperate. For the harbour construction, they get paid for results -- about £50,000 per caisson dropped, of which £30,000 is labour costs plus profit. Since they've only dropped one caisson in the past three and a half months, they are losing a lot of money.

Last week, predictably, came the

first layoffs, and unless they strike a lucky break soon, things may get worse. The firm's financial position isn't helped by its high overheads--the phone bill for the period July-September, for example, was £1700!

With things going badly down at the Enquiry as well, Taylor Woodrow must be wondering if they are ever going to make any money out of this particular bit of speculative construction work.

(Information for this article from the Voice's old friend - Klondyke Kate!

STRIKES

SOCIAL WORKERS

Social Workers in Brighton are threatening to withdraw their service from the emergency night service unless their senior colleagues on the same duty are paid for their work.

For some months social wor-

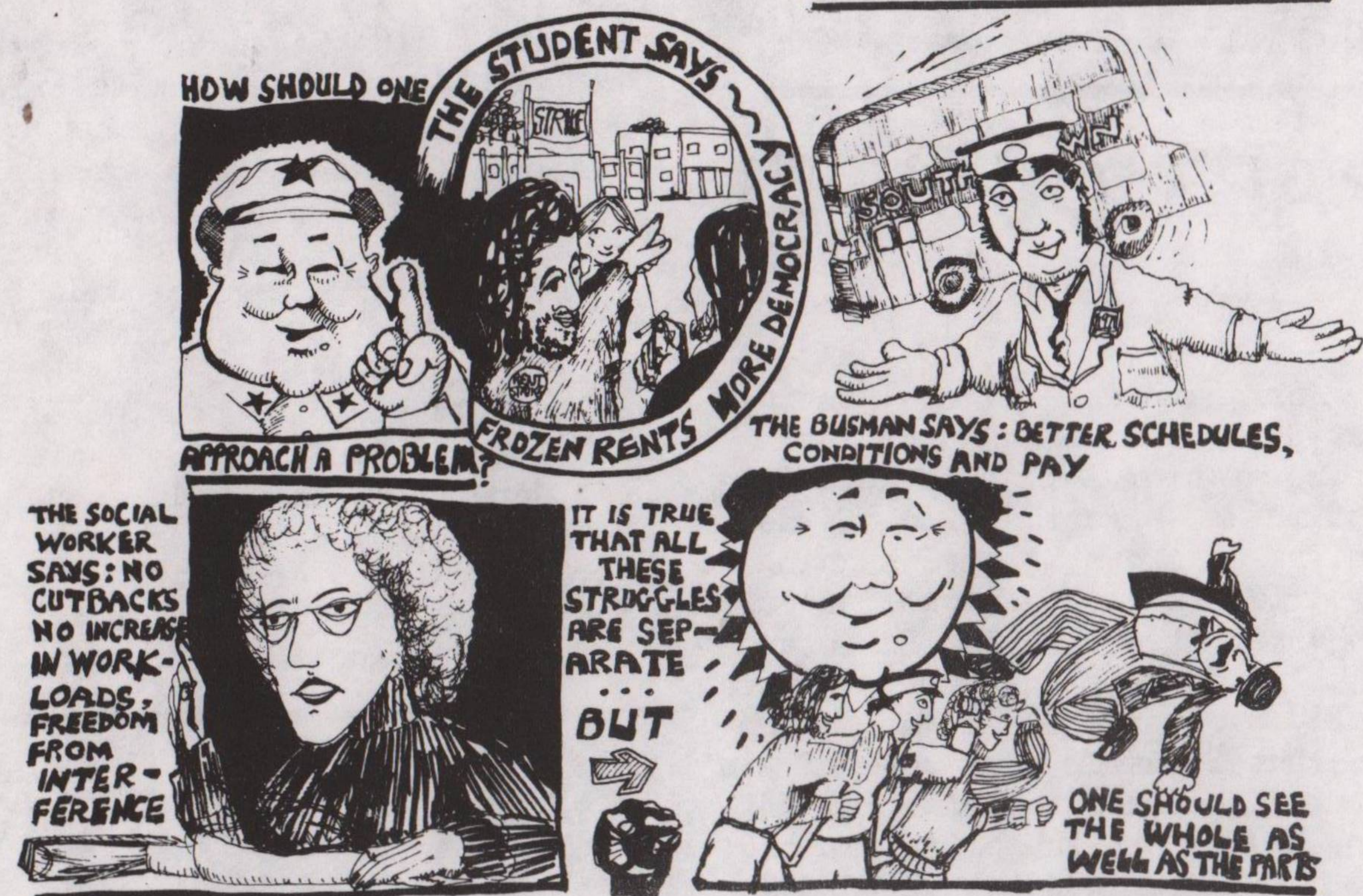
kers have been dissatisfied with their pay and working conditions on this service, a service which involves two social workers on duty every night between 5pm and 8am, ready to answer any emergency. For doing this fairly exhaustive work, which may involve admission to mental hospital, abandoned children, or elderly people unable to cope, they were receiving £3 a night and their seniors were getting nothing.

In July social workers made several demands including: (1) a flat rate pay of £3.50, (2) overtime pay for any call requiring a visit, (3) senior back-up to receive £3.50, (4) training for inexperienced workers, these also receiving £3.50. The first and last demands have been met, but County Hall is refusing to pay seniors, arguing that it is unnecessary for them to be on duty, despite the fact that if certain actions are to be taken social workers must get their seniors to confirm the decision.

The position at the moment is that if seniors are not paid by Dec. 1st they will withdraw their services. Social workers are threatening to withdraw in support. At present the decision is unofficial, although the union, 'NALGO' is 'negotiating' to have seniors paid.

THE NEXT ISSUE WILL BE BASED ON THE IDEA OF - UTOPIAN BRIGHTON HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE TOWN IN THE IDEAL SOCIALIST SOCIETY? WRITE IN AND TELL US. DEADLINE DECEMBER 20th.

The University will sink or swim but it will not do so at the cost of its students. 2) The student success was considerably aided by the level of commitment and determination of those who manned the occupation and the thousand and so who attended meetings. Moreover, despite certain differences over means, all the campus unions supported the objects of the student action. In fact several national newspapers did not cover the occupation because they were afraid the student case against inflated rents and prices would meet too much sympathy among the ordinary public.



STUDENTS

The occupation of the Admin. building at the University is over. It was a success. By their action students have shown two things: 1) that even a group with little bargaining power can obtain concessions if it adopts the right tactics. Following the sit-in and the blocking of the telephone exchange the University authorities have agreed to subsidise the high rents paid by students in Brighton guest houses and to reconsider accommodation and catering finances at students will not have to the whole cost of inflation.

five pages on

WORKING BRIGHTON

This month the Voice features a four-page insert on the local Trade Unions, and a bonus page on the Labour Party in the town. These areas of working life get such a notoriously bad treatment from the Argus that we felt a look at them was long overdue. And besides, some very curious things emerge. For example, you find that George Parkes, the Engineer's local secretary, is a pillar of reaction in the town. You find Trade Union magistrates being the scourge of their own working class. You find out how low are the wages paid by local factories and bus companies. You find out how T.U. branch life is dying except where there is militant action. You find how curiously non-political unions see themselves and how shallow the roots of the Trades Council are. You also discover that the evangelical strain is still strong in the Labour Party.

In collecting the material we felt it important that as far as possible working people should write it themselves; hence every article in the Union section has been written by an active unionist. And we hope that other workers and trade unionists will continue to use the pages of the Voice to express their point of view. We may sometimes be critical but we are sympathetic. And we do print your stuff.

THE UNIONS - WHAT IS WRONG?

Every trade union is a different animal; procedures and practices of each can vary so much that one must be cautious of generalisations. What they do all have in common is the problem of member-participation. In most cases it is minimal, and even in the best instances it is at a dangerously low level. There are several explanations for this situation but probably the most compelling is the attitude of the average person who joins a trade union.

The hard fact must be faced that most people join a union for selfish reasons or, at most, for the advancement and protection of one's own particular group of workers. In this passive consumer society the bulk of union members regard their membership as a form of insurance only. The concept of trade unions as democratic instruments requiring mass participation has failed to get across.

And far too many trade union leaders see a positive advantage in an apathetic rank-and-file. It is one sure way of preserving bureaucratic control with relatively little opposition. It is this massive apathy which not only has turned the trade unions into elitist organisations; it has also ensured that trade unions have played only a fraction of the role which they could serve in the struggle for a more humane society. Relatively few trade unionists have any conception of the social role of a trade union movement.

THE SOCIAL ROLE.

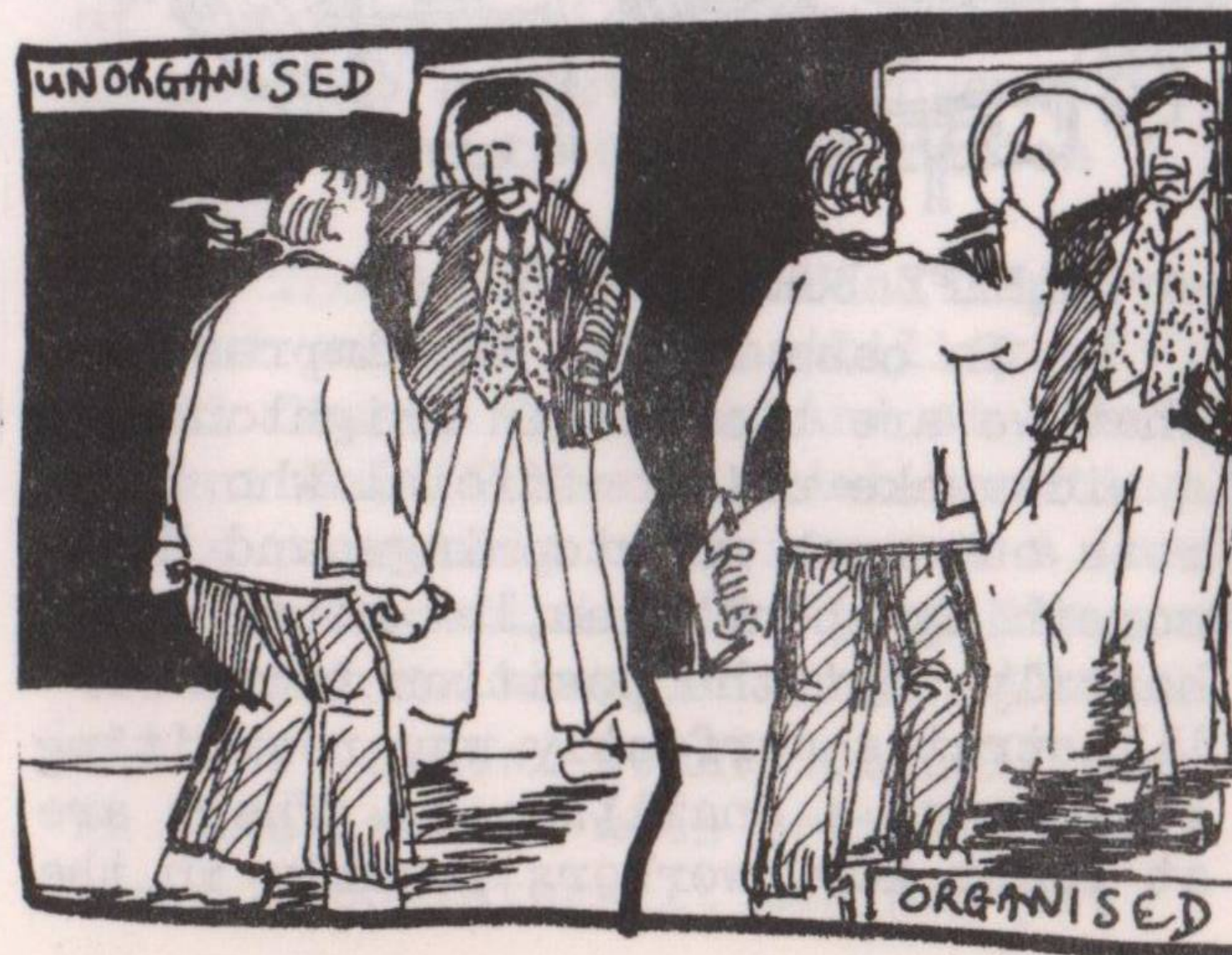
It is perfectly true that trade unions are not in business primarily to change the social system--a point often overlooked by some radicals. The job of a union is to secure the best possible terms within a given system. But this includes not merely specific questions of pay and working conditions--it also includes looking after the interests of the whole man (and his family) in a wide range of other matters. Such as education for his children, decent housing for his family, town planning for his environment, welfare services if he is old or sick, etc.

The trade union movement is potentially the greatest pressure group of all. But no single union can hope to act in this way; which is precisely why we need such bodies as a TUC or the local Trades Council.

But Trades Councils will only function properly if they are really representative of the T.U. branches of the area. And when branches are attended by a mere handful of their members it is not surprising if the danger arises that political militants may adopt policies far ahead of the level of understanding of the mass of the rank and file. So low participation not only gives a clear field to officialdom within each separate union, it also reduces the effectiveness of the overall social role of trade unions, as expressed through a local Trades Council.

ORGANIZATION PROBLEMS.

Whilst the biggest single reason for non-participation is the sheer indifference of a great proportion of dues-paying members, there are organisational factors which explain part of the problem. In many unions the branch is based on area and it may have no necessary connection with the particular workplace of the member concerned. It therefore happens that when a stray member turns up for his first (and last?) branch meeting, he is not only bewildered by unfamiliar procedures, but he may also find that the matters discussed have no relevance to his own work situation.



The most striking feature of modern trade unionism is the way in which workplace organisation has largely replaced the branch. For a great many members, 'the union' is their shop steward committee, whereas the branch is an unknown and unfamiliar creature which may meet miles away and certainly long after working hours. The obvious conclusion is that a major restructuring of the basic units of many unions is long overdue. For while shop stewards do very necessary work, it is of a parochial kind. It is the branch which alone can decide local and national policies, which is represented at national conferences, which votes for national and local leaders, etc.

THE FUTURE NEED.

Such a restructuring would be a major step forward and would also, incidentally, enormously strengthen the representative base of Trades Councils. Yet it does not provide the complete answer. There are a number of unions in which the branch already corresponds with the place of work, and while this does usually result in better attendances, it is quite frequent to find that the branch becomes obsessed with parochial matters, and is largely indifferent to the wider questions of trade unionism and to general community problems. Immediate self-interest is too often the keynote.

What is required is a gigantic and continuing effort to raise the consciousness of the ordinary member. Our politically-committed colleagues could render inestimable service if they saw this as their objective, rather than seeking the short-cut of using the movement as a platform for doctrinal views and doubtfully supported super-militant resolutions. The ritualistic passing of resolutions has become something of a fetish with too many radicals. Resolutions in themselves have no magical properties. What counts is the extent to which we win the minds of men.

Denis Hill

NO MILITANCY?

It seems to be a characteristic of the age in which we live that different words in common use mean different things to different people. Take the word 'militant' for example. Few people, and especially the 'respectable' and better off sections of society, have any objection to such terms as 'The Church Militant', a 'militant member of the RSPCA' or a 'militant anti-smoking campaign', but as soon as the phrase 'Militant Trade Unionist' is heard it often becomes a term of abuse. The very existence of the privileges and rights of the capitalist establishment depends on the willingness of 10 or 11 million organised workers to go on clocking in day in and day out for wages often little better than subsistence level. These millions are regarded as perfectly admirable as long as they accept a continual rise in their cost of living without using their great organisations in a MILITANT way. If they do, they become the "big, greedy battalions of labour".

In Brighton, Hove and Sussex generally, this objection to Militant Trade Unionism is strongly expressed. The industrial workers in this area have themselves been influenced by the upper middle-class environment in which they live. There has been no very strong tradition of militant union activity in this area at least since the turn of the century. The 1926 general strike was an exception.

NON-MILITANT ENGINEERS.

Today the ENGINEERING workers in local factories do not have a very militant reputation. Most of their official representatives have advocated a theory of NON-MILITANCY. In the past, comfortably off full-time officials have argued that better results could be obtained without a militant line and without strike action etc. LOOK AT THE RESULTS OF THIS POLICY. Replies given by local AUEW members in a recent questionnaire show the following figures for 4 representative factories:

Weekly wages for 40 hours before any deductions, insurance, Tax, Union dues, travel etc.

Factory A.
Labourer £24 (Female £22.43)
Semi-skilled £28
Skilled £32 (basic)

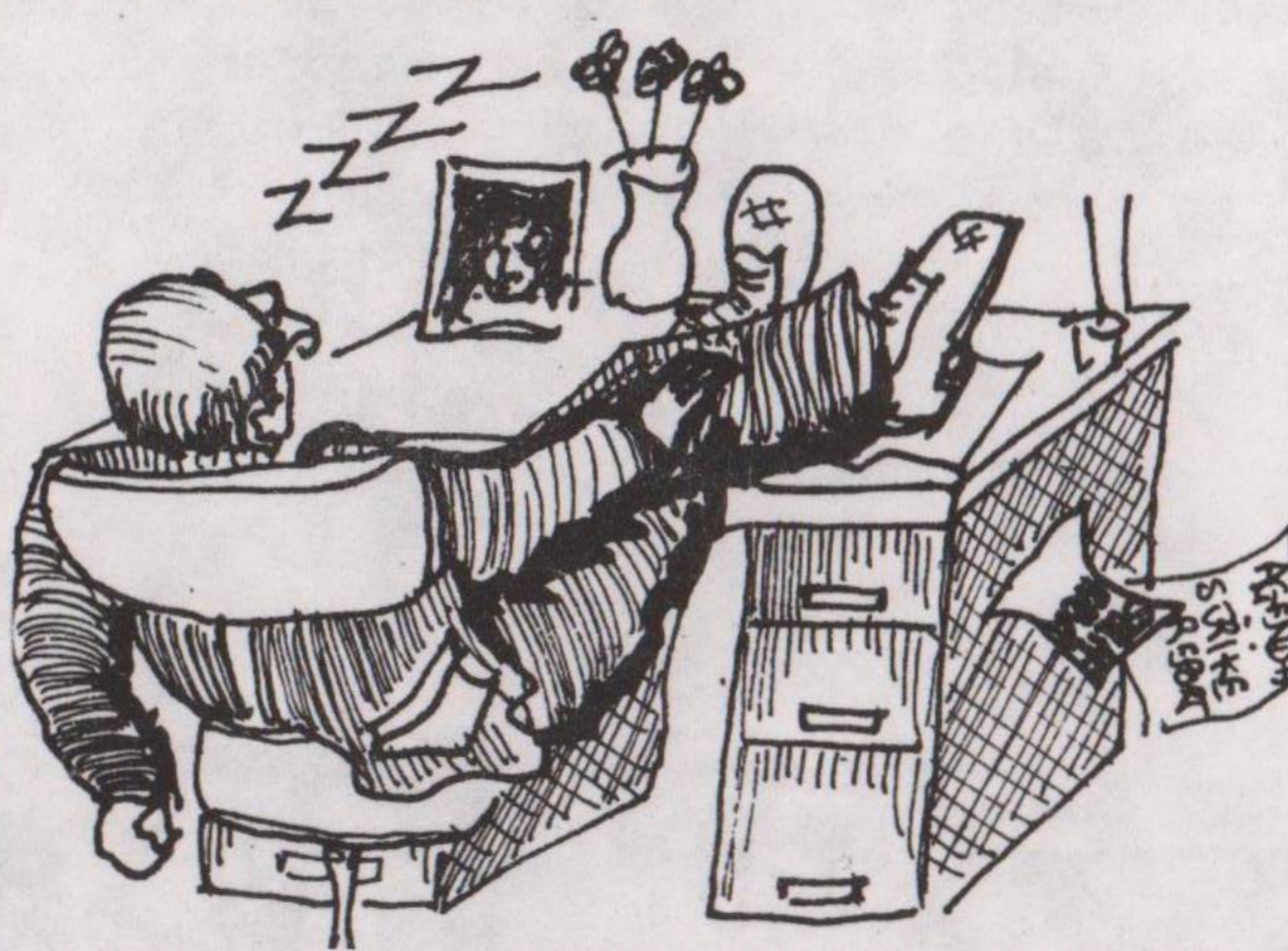
Factory B.
Labourer £28
Semi-skilled £35
Skilled £42

Factory C.
Labourer £27.50
Semi-skilled £29
Skilled £38

In only ONE case is the skilled rate above £40 and in this case a very high standard of press tool making was required. All the workers concerned are more than 50% organised in respective unions. By no stretch of the imagination can it be said that the non-militant line adopted by various committees in the past has paid off.

HIGHER WAGES ELSEWHERE.

Within a 50 mile radius of Brighton £50 and more is being paid to skilled engineering workers. In at least one plant this is being paid for a 37½ hour week. Such cases are found all over the South



SLEEPY BUREAUCRACY.

In case I give the impression that we are blessed in Brighton with a wideawake union official who ferrets out such shortcomings and does something about them, let me add hastily that the position here, illustrates perfectly why recruiting goes on at a snail's pace. There are at least 2000 workers locally in the

MILITANCY NEEDED.

It is time that local Trade Unionists stopped using the fatalistic argument so often heard, 'The Brighton Area always was a low-paid area, and always will be'. It is the industrial sections locally which have the strongest worker organisations, and it is the wages paid in these sections that provide the local employers with the excuse to pay even lower wages, mere pittance, to catering workers, shop assistants, and throughout the service industries.

It is only by the MILITANT ACTION of the organised, mainly factory, workers that the general standard of wages in the Brighton area can be raised to a self-respecting level. And what is more important, only in this way can the general attack on our standard of living be stopped.

Dudley Edwards.

POOR OFFICIALS?

There is a yawning gap in the Trade Union Movement today, 600,000 men and women wide. That is the number of catering employees still unorganised; the largest industrial group still outside the Trade Union Movement. To Unions struggling for greater membership this would seem like a heaven-sent opportunity to wade in with a first-class recruiting team, and practically double the membership overnight.

The hotel and catering industry is so far behind in the struggle for better wages and conditions that it's sometimes only a matter of pointing out to embarrassed management the unacceptable conditions of work. For example, we pointed out to the manager of our hotel that night porters had been working a 58 hour week for a 40 hour wage, and got a prompt adjustment. A similar situation occurred when we discovered one of the smaller hotels paying its female staff £8 for a six-day week.

hotel and catering industry eligible for membership. So why aren't they flooding into the local GMWU branch?

Eighteen months ago there were six hotels in Brighton organised, with a total membership of 160. Today the membership is halved, with only two hotels remaining organised. The fault lies entirely with the local official who looks upon the growing activity of the hotel workers as a pain in the neck, an upset to his cosy way of life. While the regional office does its best, the local branch secretary constantly washes his hands of any responsibility. Apart from collecting the dues he would rather the hotel workers did not exist. His sole initiative in relation to them remains the invoking of rule 17, which forbids members communicating with the press without the consent of the regional office.

SOLID SUCCESSES.

But the union survives in spite of inefficient and indolent officials. The past two years at the Royal Albion and Dudley hotels has proven that the union in this town is now firmly implanted. Successes may not have been spectacular but they are solid. The struggle for recognition of the Union at Trust House Forte, initiated at the Dudley Hotel in Hove last autumn, has now been won. And the growth of the rank and file movement amongst hotel workers which sprang out of that dispute now links hotel workers across the country and in various unions. As a result the initiative is increasingly passing into the hands of shop-floor activists.

Hotel workers are now being asked to imprint their character on the unions. We may be divided and allocated to six different unions, but we are learning to make use of the combined strength of all.

George Lambor

BUS CHAOS

The man who was the cause of bringing the buses to a halt in Brighton last month spoke to the Voice about the problems of the local bus service and the future possibilities of the bus industry. Brian Simmonds has been a busman for 9 years, drove a coach before that and is secretary of the busmen's branch of the TGWU.

What has galvanised the busmen's branch recently? During the past year their many grievances have been condensed into a CHARTER - a document of 25 points, most of which have been conceded by the Brighton, Hove & District Company, but would never have been at issue had there been an enlightened management. So what are they still striking for? Two things: the minor point that all the items conceded over the past year have yet to be implemented, and the major point that three crucial items have yet to be agreed. These are: 1) subsidised meals (lunch costs 50p. in their canteen) 2) £35 for a 35 hour week 3) a paid hour's break each day. All three items would cost the company money directly.

Is that all the busmen are after?

Not really. To understand their full grievances remember that a busman used to be one of the highest paid local trades in the late 1940's. Now he is near the bottom of the scale. Brighton conductor gets £22 basic, a driver £25 and a one-man operator £26. There are urban bonuses, 12½% shift bonuses and a 25% bonus for one-man buses. But all these make no more than a pretty poor take-home pay for a very demanding job. Busmen average a 53 hour week to make an adequate wage and the branch feels that 40 HOURS BEHIND THE WHEEL IS ENOUGH FOR ANY MAN. They believe driving a bus is an important and difficult job - and they want the Companies and people in general to recognise that.

But what makes things uniquely bad locally?

Why are conditions in the B.H. & D. worse than other companies?

The passive attitude of older union members has contributed to it, Brian feels, but so too have the higher wages offered by local industry. (But see the piece on p.6 by Dudley Edwards about local industry which shows that even their wages are lower than the Area average!) With lots of jobs available locally things have got steadily worse over the last two years since amalgamation, and the Conway Street Depot is now 20% below strength. Yet the branch welcomes all new recruits, including

women. Women get equal pay and equal rights (except on the number of free bus passes) and there are presently four women drivers and ten conductresses, all playing their part in the Union.

Why is the management so intransigent?

The busmen actually feel that the local management is not too bad, but the amalgamation with Southdown has not been entirely happy and the bigger amalgamation into the National Bus Co. has been a minor disaster. Neither Southdown nor the National have 'much idea of how to run a town service', and there are now long strings of bureaucracy back to Head Offices. Local management is scared to take decisions - 'their hands are tied from above'. It was this that caused the recent bogging down of negotiations, and hence the strike.

What about support for the strike?

The District Office of the TGWU are not supporting them and there are differences with the Southdown and Corporation busmen. The District Office feels the busmen took matters into their own hands and by-passed the normal channels. Relations with Southdown workers are only just starting to improve after 20 years of mutual distrust. And the Corporation men in the GMWU have "sold their souls", not daring to go on unofficial

strike in case they lose their bonuses. But the 300 workers in the local branch of the TGWU, spread between Conway St and Whitehawk, ARE SOLIDLY BEHIND THE STRIKE.

How does the local branch operate?

It meets every month, getting about 40-50 to each meeting. This is less than Brian would like but 'members tend to say 'we've got a good committee, leave it to them'. Is the branch very political? Brian sees himself as a middle-of-the-roader and the branch as moderate, 'militant only in determination to get what it wants, not in its action'. Newcomers with radical political ideas seem to soon get disillusioned. 'They get their ideas out of books, and not from real situations'. Brian was a delegate to the Trades Council once, but found it 'too political'. Nevertheless the branch does have broader social aims than just wage improvement, but it doesn't see these as political.

What can be done?

The branch has done a lot of thinking about the situation and doesn't see this as doing the management's job: 'It's our livelihood, and as much our business as theirs.' The aim is to get the 'dying bus industry back on its feet.' They recognize that it will have to be subsidised and are dismayed by government refusal to do so beyond present levels. But by re-structuring routes and fares, the present losses (and needed subsidy) can be reduced considerably. Local traders, who gain a lot from the buses, and the rate fund should also contribute more.

What else?

a) Representation of busmen on the Highway and other committees.
b) A National Busmen's Conference based upon stage busmen and not coach drivers, to exchange experiences.
c) A proper central bus station in Brighton.

And finally, an end to victimisation by petty managements.

If progress could be made on all these points then the busmen are optimistic about the future, both locally and for the whole industry.

Each week, acting as district secretary of the AUEW, Wolverhampton branch, Mr Frederick Griffiths of Walsall, Staffs, writes to himself as Midlands Divisional Organiser of the same union.

As Divisional Secretary he has to inform himself of the Wolverhampton district policy decisions.

"I post the letters in Birmingham and open them in Wolverhampton," he said. "Then I read my views and comments. Then I express my views and comments from the Wolverhampton end and post them back."

"I know it sounds confusing, but unless an exact record is kept how would we ever know where we are?"

BUS DATA BOX

In Brighton only 16% of the population own cars. The other 84% have to share a car or use the buses.

The Corporation are prepared to make a loss in the interests of public transportation. B.H.&D. are not.

The recent fare increase will not make Brighton's buses profitable - only reduce the losses from £1,200,000 to £630,000 per year.

Yet properly thought out routes can be profitable. For instance, the number 49 is a consistent money-spinner.

A good route for income is one that goes from one side of the urban area to the other, with a circular 'picking-up' route at each end and a fast run through the centre.

Speeding the buses saves money - since fewer buses are needed and passengers are attracted by a quick service. It is claimed one m.p.h. on average bus speed would save £240,000 locally.

So bus lanes and traffic restrictions really help.

...AND THEIR SOCIAL ROLE

The Trades Council is perhaps the most important single organ in the body of the local labour movement in any area, and particularly so in a low-wage area like Brighton. It is the one organisation that can bring together Trades Unionists from different industries and services, and serve not only as a forum for discussion but also as an active participant in struggles and campaigns.

Brighton Trades Council represents some 20,000 unionists in nearly 100 branches, and yet many people reading this will probably have only the vaguest notion of what it does or how it is organised, unless you saw the recent exhibition in the Arts College or noticed the May Day Parades (which it failed to organise this year). As the largest organisation of workers in the area its impact and influence should be far greater than it is. Any newcomer to the Trades Council must immediately begin to ask--'Why isn't it?'

LACK OF AUTHORITY.

First there is the problem of its authority, which is slender. Why? Because in many ways it is not an independent body. "The Council is the

One of the main arguments voiced in favour of having J.P.s rather than stipendiary, i.e. paid professional magistrates, is that defendants are then judged and sentenced by their fellow men. But to be a JP you have to be free in the daytime. So in practice most JPs are wealthy and conservative. In an effort to appear to attain a kind of balance the secret committee which chooses JPs in Brighton is constantly attempting to woo members of the working class to become magistrates. As a result, there has always been a small but strong core of trade unionists sitting on the bench.

TOUGH-NUTS.

Many people would expect the working class magistrates to be lenient and anti-establishment. But in fact the union JPs are the toughest



local equivalent of the TUC and is concerned with those matters for which the separate unions need to combine, especially the wider questions affecting the local community. It is not a monthly gathering of individuals; it is an assembly of delegates from most of the union branches in the area."

TRADES COUNCIL

This is how the guide for new delegates describes the role of the Council. Thus its vitality, activity and even its existence depend upon the branches which send their delegates. Without active branches the Council is a meaningless body, just as without the participation of rank and file members a branch is an empty shell.

What about the Council members themselves and the way they go about their business? One of the first things I was struck by was the rather club-ish atmosphere in the monthly meetings. Delegates are supposed to introduce themselves when they speak, but this happens very rarely. A lot of delegates have served on the Council for years together and the newcomer can easily feel out of it.

est and most conservative of all.

For some years the chairman of all Brighton magistrates was Herbert Cushnie. He achieved nationwide notoriety for his severe sentences, particularly on 'mods' and 'rockers'. His successor as chairman

MAGISTRACY

was George Parkes, the Engineers local Secretary with a rasping voice and dominating presence. George chairs the main court on Fridays, and the court list is invariably full as many detectives like to get their defendants in front of him so that they will get severe sentences. But most frequently cases have to be moved to other courts because George is a slow worker. The proceedings are punctuated by retirements, officially to read social enquiry reports. In fact at least one of the retirements is a coffee break and the long delays are a source of constant annoyance to court officials.

The penalties for various offences are laid down in an unofficial bible so that there are not too many discrepancies. But George is definitely a hard-liner, particularly on bail applications. There is no doubt that he enjoys the kudos of being chairman of the magistrates, especially when he can play to a large audience such as at the licencing sessions. The police like him because he is an establishment figure.

EXECUTIVE CONTROL.

Another problem is the amount of business to get through and all the jobs to be done. The executive, which handles the routine business, is often criticised for taking decisions on behalf of the membership or for framing recommendations so vague as to leave them in real control of affairs. These are real problems which will only be overcome when more people become involved and every union branch fulfils its responsibility to support the council and help implement its policy and decisions. Both the decision making and the work falls on too few shoulders at the moment.

PROPOSALS.

So what can be done to make the role of the Trades Council more dynamic?

- (1) If you are not involved in the activity of your trade union then it is time you were.
- (2) Insist that your branch gets a regular report back from the Trades Council meetings.
- (3) When matters of general interest, or needing action on a wider scale than your own branch, come up, make sure that a motion is sent by your branch to the next meeting of the Council.

Ian Duncan.

BLACK JUSTICE.

Another unionist, Bert Black, is possibly the toughest JP in Brighton. And when he imposed ridiculously high fines on political bill-posters, even his union colleagues turned upon him in an attack in the ORGANISER. Then there is John Langley, a pious and elderly unionist who sits in court on Saturdays. It is easier to find a cheap unfurnished flat in Brighton than it is to win a bail application on Saturdays at Brighton Court! Most of the other trade union magistrates do not chair courts, so it is difficult to know their opinions. They are men such as Idwal Francis, a man who never puts his feet in his mouth because it is invariably tightly closed.

THE EXPLANATION?

Why are working-class JPs so harsh? Do they feel that because they have joined the establishment they have to prove that they are an essential part of it? The real answer appears to be that they feel that the majority of defendants in criminal cases, who tend to be working men, have let down the working class and should be punished. It is almost impossible to reform the law as a JP. Those who believe that present sentencing is often wrong at the Brighton Courts are hardly likely to become magistrates.

A.N. Usher

...AND THEIR PARTY

Ten years ago Nobby Clarke gave up his job as station foreman at Brighton Station after 40 years on the railways. Everyone knows what he did then. It has passed into Labour Party history. He became agent for Dennis Hobden in his successful bid to become the first Labour MP in Sussex. That does seem a long time ago. Now Nobby is on the County and Borough Councils representing Elm Grove and he talked to us about the Labour Group in local affairs. Because it's permanently in opposition it is unable to carry through any of its major policies though it did get the Tories to change their minds and start rating empty properties earlier this year. Some people think that because a ward is solidly Labour that their plans for that Ward can get through. On the contrary the Tory majority can veto the most local improvement, like a pedestrian crossing, if it wants to.

BREAD AND JAM POLITICS.

The Group, says Nobby, is responsive to community action politics but is pretty cautious about getting too involved. Labour Councillors have to look at all the issues, he said, not just the ones that small groups get obsessed by. But they did take up the Queens Park Spa and are right behind the pressure for comprehensive education in Brighton, which they themselves initiated. Where the group divides and has no clear policy is on conservation. Nobby himself thinks, for example, that the disused railway viaduct over the Lewes Rd. is an ugly and dangerous eyesore and should be pulled down, whereas others respond to its historical interest and say that it should be preserved. On this and other issues most of the Labour group are down-to-earth functional men. They think

that the average Brighton person is concerned with bread and jam politics, the state of their houses, good bus routes, emptying of dustbins and so on. Not much room for ideology here.

LABOUR AND THE MARINA.

What about the Labour group and the Marina? They supported the plan in 1966 and 1970 but not now in 1974. They originally believed that the Marina would bring jobs and money to Brighton and would push the town forwards after years of standstill and give people something new and worthwhile to enjoy. Brighton, they thought, had rested too long on its laurels as the queen of watering places and a new boost was needed. But in the light of changes in the Marina plan the Labour group has reconsidered its attitudes and are now arguing that the Marina must not become the playground of the rich.

On the reorganisation of local government the group argues strongly against the wasteful duplication, waste of money and growing power of bureaucratic officers which are involved. They would prefer something like a federation of local councils within the county to restore more immediacy and control to local areas.

THE VOICE.

'Does he actually read the Voice?' we asked him. Occasionally he said, though it wasn't read very much or quoted among Labour councillors generally. If the Voice and QueenSpark got together he thought we might produce a 'good' newspaper. What did he mean by 'good'? Something which gives lots of information and doesn't try too hard to persuade people.

What is wrong with the Labour Party? Let's look at four possible situations for the Party in Brighton:

- 1) Apathetic party supporters
Existing party policies.
- 2) Militant party supporters
Existing party policies.
- 3) Apathetic party supporters
New party policies.
- 4) Militant party supporters
New party policies.

Which of them in the light of your experience over the last few years most accurately represents where the party is now?

Which of them would you regard as best for the Labour party and the Labour movement in this town?

PRESENT SITUATION.

My assessment is that we're pretty obviously in Situation 1. Look at some of the indicators: apathetic support, low turn-out at the polls, voters not able to distinguish Labour paralysis from Tory decisions, little dialogue between many of the labour councillors and their electorate, the party cut off from the grassroots, ward meetings attended by three people, and them clutching their pension books. The predominant image is of a labour party content to accept the structure of government as it is now, drinking with Tories in the same boozers, even voting for Tories in key positions (e.g. Theobald, Leach, Sneldon) content to accept the relationship of party to people as it now is. If left to stew in this situation, apart from making feeble noises about municipalising car parks, it will disappear into its own navel.

FUTURE ALTERNATIVES.

Situation 2 is not much better, although there might be the beginning of a dialogue with the electorate and one or two ears closer to the ground. Situation 3 is the other side of this; the party less dependent on internal ideas, catching initiatives made outside the party so that new policies emerge (e.g. the slow and blundering realisation of what the Marina is all about). Situations 2 and 3 grow from a continuous political education programme, and the structure and relationships of the party begin to acknowledge the strength of a truly democratic base.

Situation 4 is possible when the party actually works out and implements its socialist 'Clause 4' on workers' control, and when it initiates ways of giving people more power to make their own decisions. Representative government runs parallel with other ways of people running their own affairs, the party begins to take risks, it.....
.....Fill in the rest yourself and send it to your local labour councillor, your constituency office, the Labour Party Research Dept etc.

'Unenthusiastic Labour Party Member.'

CBR 30th

Have you noticed this cryptic sign around Brighton? It is in the entrance to the Station. It is on a wall on the Preston Road. It is on the tunnel ventilators at the foot of Clayton Hill on the A23. Do you know what it means?

It is a memento of one of the bitterest labour struggles in Brighton. The CBR Woollen Mills nestle under the railway viaduct down on the Lewes Road. They are owned entirely by Cyril Rolfe, a bloody-minded gentleman who lives in Dyke Road. The Mill employs about 25.

Seven years ago the employees came out on strike for the right to join a Union and for better conditions. Things got heavy. Black-legs were brought in; the police punched a few women. Eventually, after 8½ months, the workers were sold down the river through a 'sweetheart contract' by the Hosiery Workers Union. It left a legacy of bitterness. The 30th refers to the date of a big 'demo'.

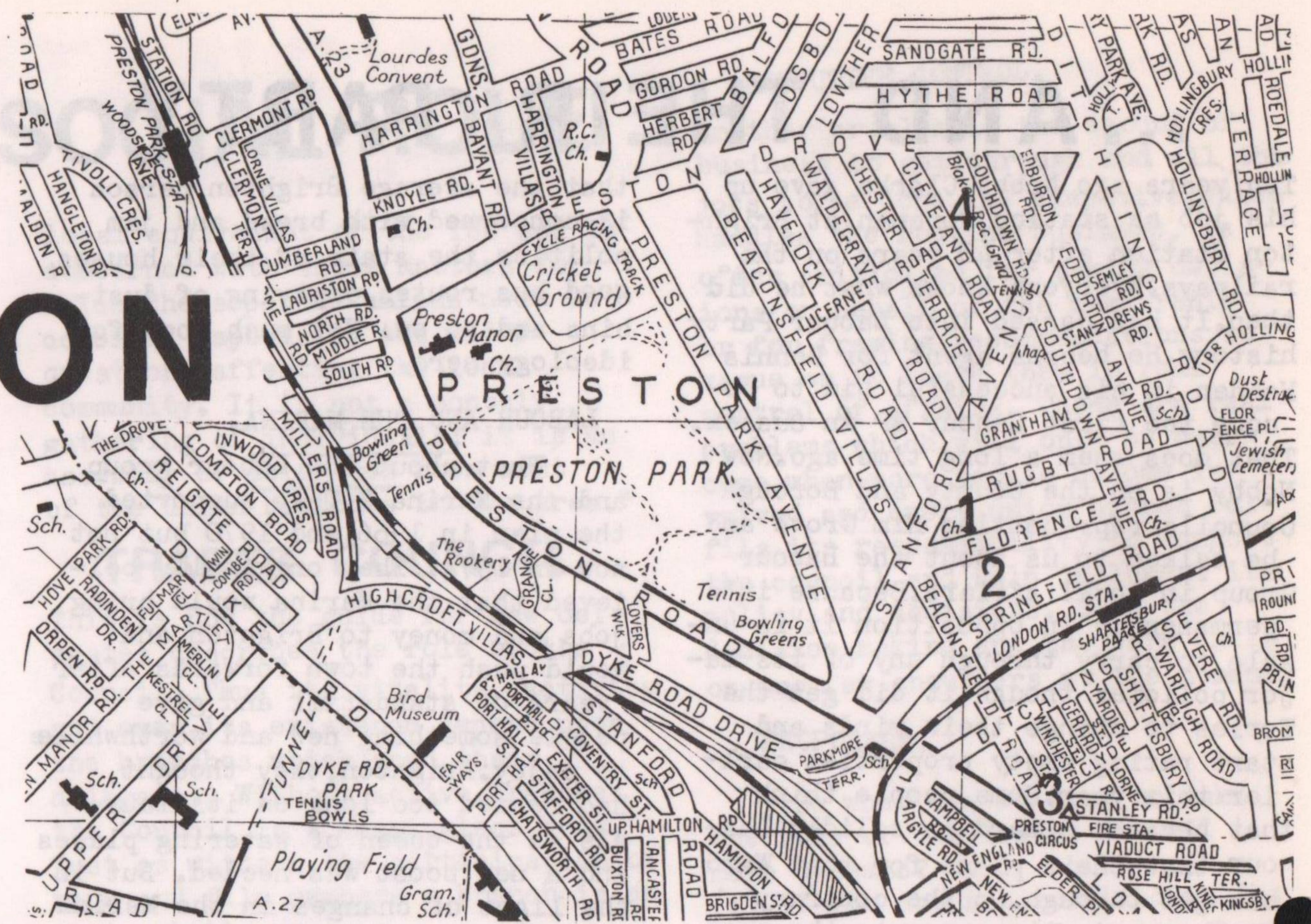
The Voice would like to print the story. If you were there please contact us.



THE SOCIAL CONTRACT.

THE PRESTON AREA

(3 pages)



THE PRESTON AREA is a triangle of land, with its apex at Preston Circus and bounded by Preston and Ditchling Roads, closely following the lines of the old Stanford Estate belonging to Preston Manor. The Estate was developed as a mixed middle class area in the '80s and '90s of the last century, but there has been some considerable infilling since then. The original owner, Villiers-Stanford, insisted on high standards, so the houses are all solidly built, mostly by jobbing builders who put up a few at a time. This means the terraces are varied within themselves, and coupled with the many trees and gardens, make it a good place to live.

LOST COMMUNITY

Rather different in tone is the old Railway Estate between the Circus and the inside of the curve of the great Viaduct. This is all of much earlier date--mid-Victorian artisan houses that are now falling to the builders. The left and right sides of the lower end of New England Road show how poor the 20th Century stands in comparison with the work of the 19th century.

HOUSE PRICES

Preston is also a very staid area. Changes come slowly, though some of the terraces are being spoiled by people falling prey to the insistent advertising of steel window manufacturers and 'rooms in the roof' firms. Families tend to stay on, though they originally came meaning to move to Dyke Road or Ovingdean when their fortunes rose. It used to be a good area to start home-ownership. The house prices, when initially built, were around £250 each, and 50 years later they were only £300. But World War 2 saw a leap to £1000 and by 1960 they were worth £2000. Today they are selling at £10-12000 so young families are no longer moving in.

But for those already there, it is a good place to bring up kids. Lots of parks-

Blaker's Park, Preston Park-and open spaces like the Hollingbury Links for greater adventuring, minimal traffic and a network of neighbour relationships.

CINEMA & CHURCH

The two polar points of the area used to be the Duke of York's cinema and St. Augustine's Church. The first is still there, at Preston Circus, having been a bingo hall for a while, but now reverted to its old role of showing good second-run films. It is owned by the corporation- no doubt with yet more of their 'development' in mind. St. Augustine's is the huge, brick church in Stanford Avenue which was never, and never will be, completed. Its whole west end is missing- just blanked off by a wall. It used to be a busy place, attracting congregations of 200 or more every week but now they are lucky to get 30. With the near-by development of Stanford Avenue and Florence Road going on apace the developers must be casting greedy eyes at the church site too.

It is an area which has changed little in appearance over the past 50 years, but like the rest of Brighton, if the locals aren't careful, it will be over-run by crude and expensive blocks of flats. They are already encroaching.

- 1 ST. AUGUSTINE'S CHURCH
- 2 FIVEWAYS PLAYGROUP SITE
- 3 DUKE OF YORK'S CINEMA
- 4 BLAKER'S PARK

KEY

CONSERVATION

The Preston Society was formed in the Spring of 1972 to conserve the character and amenities of the Preston Village, Preston Park and Preston Circus areas. This part of Brighton is at risk for the following reasons:

- 1) A possible major interchange between the A.23 and A27 at Preston Circus.
- 2) Preston Park is vulnerable to extensive widening plans for the London Road.
- 3) Developments in the grounds of old houses threaten mature trees and Victorian villas.

The Preston Society vigorously fought the Wilson Wormsley plan for central Brighton in the press, by letters to every councillor and by sending the town clerk a copy of Stephen Plowden's book 'Towns against Traffic'. We also opposed all the Dept. of Environment's A.27 proposals calling instead for a radical reform of the public transport system. (see article on Preston Circus Association.)

We also successfully campaigned for the re-siting of the blocks of flats in the grounds of Lourdes Convent by supplying coloured photographs of the trees to the planning committee, which saved them from the destruction intended by the previous plans.

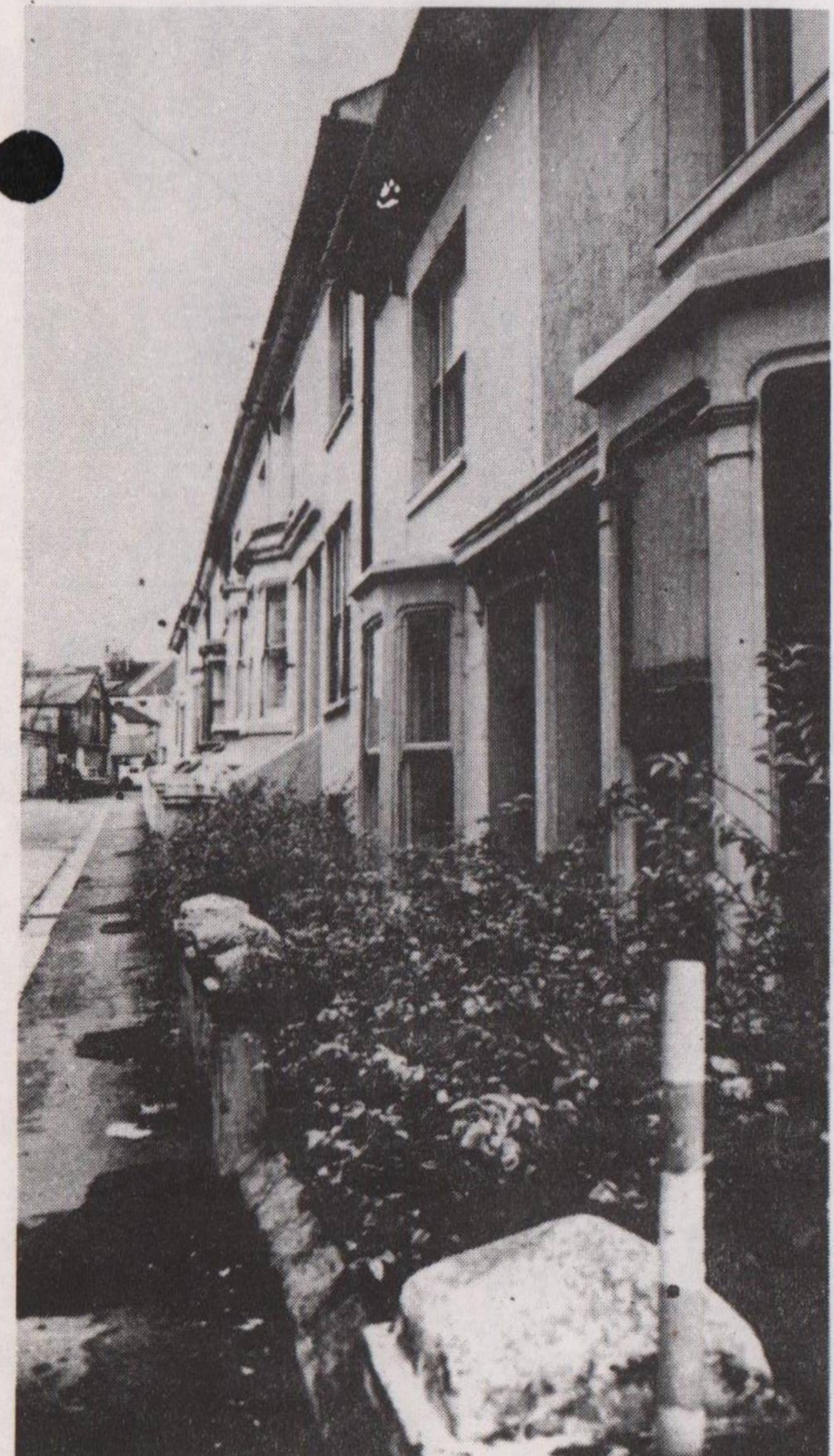
Furthermore in 1973 it was the Preston Society and 3 Labour Councillors who first alerted the press to the Brighton Station proposals.

We have consistently tried to extend the Preston Conservation areas to include the Victorian development south east of Preston Park, and the Society is firmly represented on the Conservation Area Advisory Committee which advises the planning committee.

SCANDAL BEHIND THE CO-OP

Dirty, drab curtains hang in the windows but you wouldn't know that all the houses were empty. Unless you asked the neighbours. THERE ARE 15 EMPTY HOUSES IN KINGSBURY RD. AND LONDON TERRACE behind the Co-op store in London Rd. And some of them have been empty for nearly two years. Who owns them? The Co-op does and it is planning some sort of development, the details of which they would not disclose to us. They are, they say, in the last stages of application for planning permission and they promise, over the phone, that housing needs have been well looked after in the plans. That could be true since the Co-op has

a pretty good record on accommodation issues. BUT the scandal of empty houses standing unused for so long is not so easily shaken off. Why didn't the Co-op offer the houses to the Council for short-term housing while plans were being made and permission sought? They say that the state of the premises was too bad and that they were afraid that short-term tenants would not agree to move when asked. Couldn't the Council have put up some repair money and given assurances on tenancies? Money down the drain, some people would say, but the fact that 15 or more families could have been housed in premises which were quite habitable until two years ago needs answering. Those



LONDON TERRACE.

houses would have been better for desperate people than no house at all.

But there's even more to it than that. It appears that the Co-op presented an initial development plan in February of this year and that it was turned down because there was not enough residential provision in it and because it would spoil the character of Kingsbury Rd. As we read it that means that the Co-op were told to keep the houses. If so why aren't they back in use or at least in a state of active repair? There is absolutely NO EXCUSE for further delay on these houses. People have a right to a home of their own and in Brighton the list of homeless is far too long to tolerate 15 empty houses for so long. If the Co-op wishes to retain the goodwill of ordinary Brighton people it must act fast and the Council must make it easy for them.

THE ROADS THREAT

Earlier this year, following what it called 'a public consultation exercise' and a feasibility study, the Department of the Environment announced its choice of an outer trunk road along the edge of the Downs as an east-west by-pass of Brighton.

At least the Preston Circus area will now be spared the massive destruction and wholesale rebuilding of the 'Spaghetti Junction' type that was originally threatened.

But the community cannot now relax on the assumption that it is now safe. Although there will not be any 'major' road works in the central area, the D of E's choice indicates 'associated 'large-scale' road improvements' in Brighton, and until official decisions are taken to the contrary, the Preston Circus area will continue to feel itself threatened.

The A27 is obviously inadequate for the volume of traffic it is expected to carry. Many of us hope that significant steps will be taken to reduce that volume- not only on the A27 but in other parts of the town as well, but road-widening schemes for the A27 in Portslade, Hove and Southwick are already under way. And unless a considerable portion of the traffic is syphoned off before it reaches Brighton, 'improvements' will have to be made at Preston Circus.

These non-trunk road 'improvements' are the responsibility of local County Councils, and at the moment East Sussex is deliberating. It is currently carrying out a Land-Use/Transportation Study of the greater Brighton area in conjunction with the West Sussex County Council and in consultation with British Rail & the Bus Operators. It has not yet



stated its terms of reference within which this study will be carried out and has not yet even decided whether its policies should be public transport oriented or geared to the needs of the motorist. They have said that social and environmental, as well as operational and economic aspects will be considered. WE INTEND TO SEE THAT THEY WILL BE. In no case should homes be demolished for roads, or local communities destroyed simply to accommodate an ever-increasing amount of traffic. People are more important than cars, and the Preston Circus Association is maintaining its vigilance to see that East Sussex doesn't forget it.

THINK AGAIN MR CHARNOCK!

The VOICE also welcomes the Department of the Environment's decision not to locate a large road junction in the Preston Circus area. The trouble is, if it doesn't go at Preston Circus, it'll probably have to go somewhere else. Unless, of course, our Planning and Engineering 'experts' on the County Council wake up at last to the fact that huge road schemes for the private motorists are just not acceptable any more.

These roads increase the traffic problem, because motorists flock to use them, they are expensive, and they often involve knocking down perfectly good houses. And yet Brighton is still plagued by large road schemes, even though the Preston Circus area has been reprieved, at least for the moment -- Estern Road Extension, Black Rock Interchange, Falmer Interchange, the East-West A27 Trunk Road proposal..... the list goes on and on.

Why is this? One reason is a man called Charnock, East Sussex County Council's Chief Engineer. A man for big roads is Mr Charnock. His reaction to the Marina at Black Rock is that it 'necessitates early construction of a TownCentre - Marina access road'. It's about time Charnock altered his priorities.

BRIGHTON NEEDS A PROPER OVER-ALL TRANSPORT POLICY BASED ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT USING EXISTING ROADS.

Mr Charnock please take note.

KIDS' HOSTEL
THREATENED
BY CUTS

Not far from Preston Circus along Beaconsfield Villas there is a hostel for handicapped children up to 16 years old -- the only one of its kind in the Brighton area. The hostel is hard to identify as it resembles any of the other houses in the road. You are greeted warmly on entering by the friendly staff, though they must be rushed off their feet considering there are only about four of them on duty at any one time, and they may have to cope with up to fifteen children.

The first child was admitted in 1967 to this hostel which was originally intended for short-term care. However they now have nine children in permanent care. These came in for short-term care pending a permanent place in a home or a residential school, but no such place was ever found. And there are still those that just come for holidays or weekends.



All the children attend Downsview School (for severely subnormal children), except one who attends Hamilton House (the Spastics Society school in Hove), and they are therefore absent during the day in term-time. The policy of the hostel staff is that the handicapped child should be integrated into the community as far as possible, and attempts to achieve this are made through taking the children shopping, inviting older schoolchildren into the hostel to play with the children, and by generally creating an atmosphere in which the children are respected as individual human beings who have rights of their own.

The hostel has its own minibus which was obtained by hard fund-raising (under the direction of Coun. Poole) from the Social Services Committee. The staff feel that while the local authority has been helpful, the hostel is going to suffer from the cutbacks in social services expenditure. What a shame our handicapped children are in danger of a raw deal once again!

Volunteers and donators should call in at 83 Beaconsfield Villas and offer their help!

playgroup
struggle

For eight years now Fiveways Pre-School Playgroup has been operating in a church hall in Stanford Avenue. Needless to say not in ideal conditions. Firstly the equipment has to be stored under the stage and is therefore limited. Everything has to be dragged out, arranged and put back every day between the hours of 9 a.m. and 12. We have very little outside space.

We decided therefore in 1969 to approach the Education Office and ask if we could build our own premises in the playingfield in Florence Rd. At this time the town had only two free nursery schools providing a total of 8 nursery classes. The Education Committee decided we could build our own premises if we agreed to hand them over after a certain period of time to be used as nursery accommodation for the town. Off we started. Grand fund raising campaigns; we had never done anything like this before. We applied for a licence to run a draw, we applied to the corporation for permission to collect in Churchill Sq., we made a guy to trundle round the town, we made our own clothes and had a fashion show, we ran bonfire night parties, we hired a hot-air balloon to float over Preston Park, we held a fete in the field etc. etc. We found we were capable of catering for several hundred people and worked as a team running a cafeteria at a book show run by Robinson's Bookshop for two years.

Then in 1973 we had the offer of three pre-fabricated sectional buildings and with the permission of the Education Office we stacked them on the site.

At that point we had £3,000 in the kitty, but when one of the playgroup dads, Stuart Fisher, worked out the costs for a building they came to £7,000. We realised that inflation was beating us and so we applied to the Corporation for some help towards the building. After several months of negotiation the Finance Committee agreed to give us a grant of £1,000 and lend us £2,000 at 11% interest. Within weeks we asked the Corporation if we could start building.

Blocked

To our astonishment they suddenly wouldn't confirm that we could have the land. This was going against all the promises which had been formally and informally given to us. With the aid of



solicitors and the help of Antcliffe, the Director of Education, and Labour Councillors Haines and Neves we fought for months to get the decision we had thought was no more than a formality. They said it was the change over to East Sussex which was holding them up, but several people suspected that there was still a lingering thought of using the land for property development.

At last in April of this year the chairman of the Finance Committee agreed to sign. The land and the loan were ours on the condition that we passed over the premises in 7 years. Any of the loan then outstanding would be waived. Since April therefore, WE HAVE BEEN BUILDING.

People's centre

When the building is finished we intend to run not just a pre-school playgroup but also an Opportunity Group for handicapped kids and regular holiday play schemes. We also hope to let the premises be used in the evening for worthy community causes. In short we hope to keep going on a community basis. At the moment we are paying £2 a session to the church for the playgroup and £5 a week mortgage on the building. Fortunately someone is kindly paying the mortgage for us for the next five months. At all times the playgroup people have offered everything free, their time, letters, duplicating, printing, telephone calls etc. but we couldn't have done it all if people around the town hadn't helped. In seven years maybe we will be strong enough to convince the authorities that the premises should be kept and expanded as the vital Community Centre which the Preston Area so badly needs. Meanwhile we're down on the site most weekends, so if anyone wants to help--just come along. And if you've any jumble, we're still collecting.

up against the

LAW

It is not just the way the law is administered by bumbling or vindictive magistrates that is wrong, but also the way it is initially created. A powerful group in this area is the Law Commission - a bunch of senior lawyers of average age 56. These now propose to make trespass a criminal offence. This is clearly aimed directly at squatters, but it has far wider ramifications. If you complain of short-change in a shop and the manager tells you to get out, you are making yourself liable to prosecution if you don't. Walking across farmers' fields, no matter how carefully, will be a nerve-racking experience in case you run across a farmer who knows the law. And squatters are only people trying to get the minimum human right of a roof over their heads.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

What is needed is a major campaign to stop this proposal, like the one against their other iniquitous suggestion - the Night Assemblies Bill against Pop Festivals. Such a campaign has started, the C.A.C.T.C. (Campaign against the Criminal Trespass Law), and its address is 119, Baiton Road, SE 24. Support it by writing for info, and forming groups. In Brighton, if you are interested in the Campaign, phone 684256.

AND A LAST PRESTON SNIPPET.....

BRITAIN NEEDS GOD NOT THE COMMON MARKET. Written in huge coloured letters this statement was hoisted over the office of the estate agents in Beaconsfield Rd. It was the answer of the late Mr. Dillistone to the campaign to get us into the EEC. And there's more advice inside the office. If you need a builder there is notice reading 'The Best Builder. Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it'. The whole office has a Victorian atmosphere, with stooping Partner and musty books - quite Dickensian. But Dillistone was no Sorooge. He not only fought the Common Market as if it were hell itself, he also tried to bring house prices down by refusing to deal in houses at over-inflated prices, and by advising his clients not too squeeze the last penny from a buyer. A rare thing in Brighton.

windsor court

Following our report (Voice 18) of the police attack on the Windsor Free Festival last August, you may be wondering what happened when the cases of some of those arrested came before the magistrates.

Under the careful scrutiny of some watchful guardians of the law the apprehensive accused collected outside the courtroom with friends and even parents. The police wasted little time before threatening to arrest one guy for possession of offensive weapons, i.e. two ornamental Indian rings.

One by one people were summoned into the court. Meanwhile, the pigs, anxious to go home, were trying to impress on those left the virtues of pleading guilty. That did one guy little good - he got 3 months for allegedly assaulting a policeman. Obviously people weren't expected to plead not guilty. Someone from Worthing who had taken 4 witnesses to Windsor was told to come back the following month. No doubt they are hoping he'll be alone next time.



Later there were several cases of the wrong officer claiming to have made an arrest. Then a mentally retarded girl from Liverpool got 9 months for assault. One magistrate, being asleep throughout

the case, was particularly well qualified to pass judgement.

Only one was acquitted on that day. Some were fined only a few pounds but they must now live with a criminal record. Others are in gaol. On no occasion did the 'benevolent' magistrates of Windsor choose to disbelieve the frequently conflicting police evidence. They are not unique. Magistrates throughout the country are usually reluctant to acquit for fear of diminishing the "authority" of the police, even where the weight of evidence is in the favour of the accused. This attitude has now branded lots of kids, who were enjoying a peaceful concert, as criminals.



Several of the defendants used McKenzie 'lawyers', friends who sat with them and advised them. These people came off no better but they put up a much better fight. If more had done this it might have been possible to break through the Home County skulls of the magistrates and their little coteris of barristers (prosecuting and defending), solicitors, clerks and police witnesses.

For McKenzie information locally phone 684256.

COUNCIL STICKS ONE ON TEACHERS

EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL - BRIGHTON AREA

Tel: Brighton 29801 Ext. 325

Ref: _____

Dear _____

I wrote to you earlier this year about your appointment at the above school from the 1st September, 1974.

As you know, your letter of appointment did not give any information concerning the actual period of your part-time appointment.

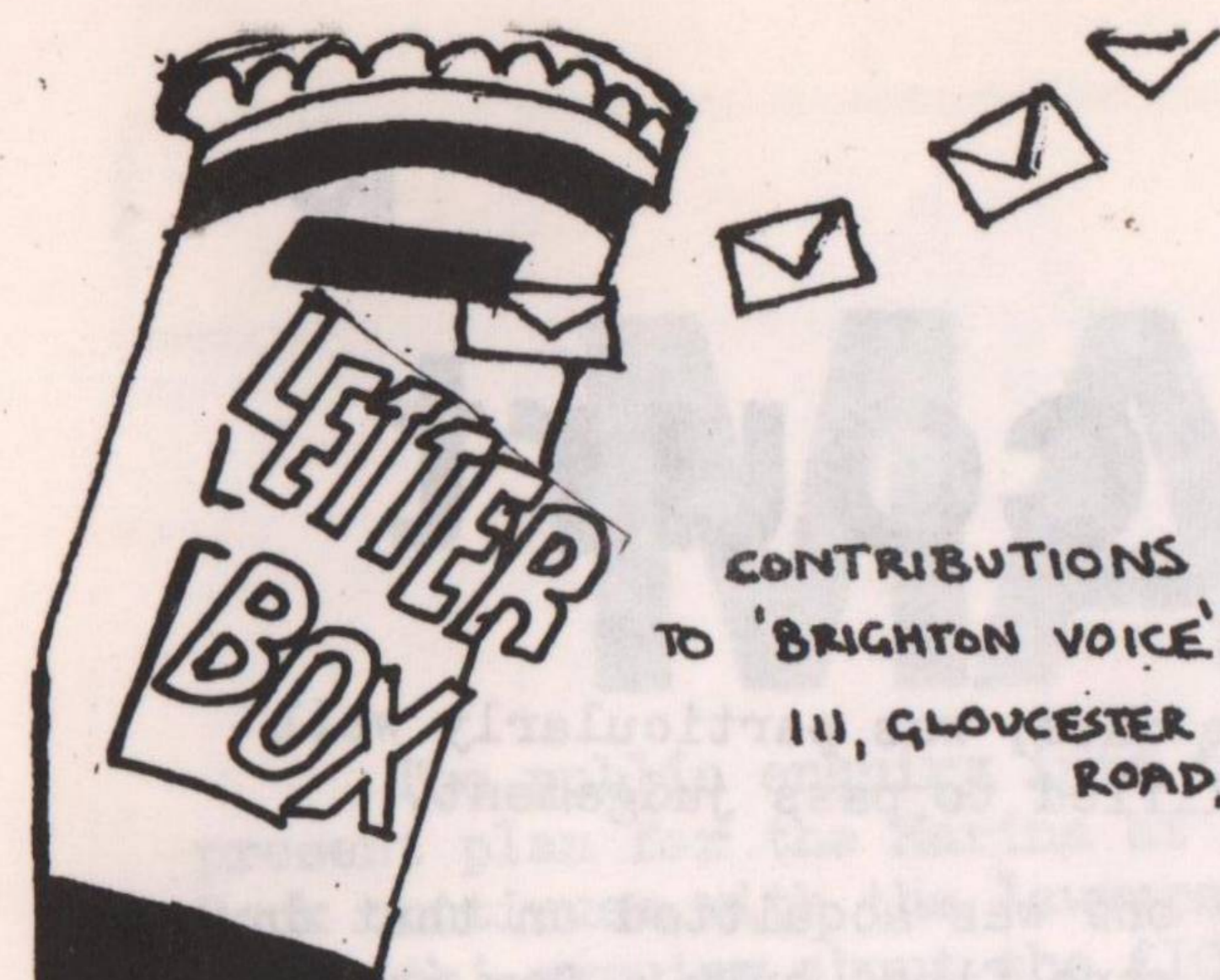
Your appointment will be dealt with on a termly/yearly basis and I am writing to offer you appointment as a tender for, at present approximately 6/11th of full-time for the Autumn Term, 1974.

I accept this appointment in accordance with the conditions mentioned above.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

All part-time teachers in Brighton have received this document. If you sign it, it could be the kiss of death for your job. As nearly all part-time teachers are married

women with children, we see this nasty document as yet another form of discrimination against women. If you sign it you have absolutely no job security whatsoever - If you sign it, you will be even worse off than you are now; at least now you get 4 weeks notice and the chance to bring the Union in. One Brighton part-time teacher who didn't see eye to eye with a head-teacher has already lost her job. And the job was advertised on the same day as the head teacher said that East Sussex was cancelling the appointment. We advise all part-time teachers not to sign this contract and perhaps write to J.L. Jones and ask him how he would like it if his job was on a termly/yearly basis. STOP PRESS. We have heard that the N.U.T. is seeking legal advice about the above contract.



situated in such a position as to make its use practically worthless. Despite all these drawbacks, there are still a lot of people who wish to use the bath, and yet, even this dubious privilege is to be withdrawn for three months starting November 29th when the bath is due to close.

I am sure you will agree that for a town of Brighton's size, a much better swimming pool is called for. If you could possibly raise this issue in Brighton Voice, I and many others would be most grateful: and in the event of your publishing an article regarding this issue, then the address for any of your readers to write to asking for a new pool to be built, is as follows:
R.G. Morgan, Chief Executive,
Town Hall, Brighton.

R. Long.

The following letter comments on the Trades Council Pamphlet review in 'Voice' 16.

Dear Voice,
For 'a person who knows the Trades Council and its attitudes intimately' your reviewer of the pamphlet on its History must be a very odd intimate indeed. Knowing the Councils' business as intimately as is claimed he should also know the circumstances under which it was produced, typeset and financed. Also he should know the finances available to the Trades Council to cover all their work, and, knowing this, he should know enough not to have turned in such a trivial and ill-considered review.

Apart from the fact that, since the booklet comes from the Trades Council, he has no basis for considering that it "misinterprets the principles of Trades Council action," (presumably they know the principles upon which they act as well, if not better, than your correspondent), I would like to take issue with him on the comment that, "if one accepts that... the local economy is tourist based, then the interests of hoteliers and visitors are paramount and the local workers are seen as less enlightened and militant than elsewhere." This quote seems to me to exemplify perfectly the hectoring and irrelevant tone of your review. Why does your correspondent consider that if a local economy is tourist-based then the interests of hoteliers and visitors are paramount?

'Selection, as your correspondent, for once correctly, states must be necessary in any publication of the size of the History. What is selected is the choice of the producers and, I would have thought, more the subject of a review than what is not selected. Constructive criticism is always a good thing; the type of criticism included in the review could hardly be called that, despite the inclusion towards the end of the article that, almost as an afterthought, mentions that the booklet fills a long-felt need. Of course the book is not meant to be sufficient; it is an opening rather than a closing statement and should be treated as such. Omissions are thus inevitable and your correspondent should perhaps spend some time contributing information to your paper, rather than carping about the efforts of others.

Mistakes in this letter do not mean that I am illiterate, just as typo-graphical errors in a booklet do not reflect on the literacy of the Council. Perhaps what it does mean, at least in the Trades Council booklet, is that too many people spend their time criticising and too few helping. I am sure that the help of your correspondent in proof reading will be gratefully accepted by the Council's History sub-committee if and when offered.
ANON.

Reply by the reviewer,
Denis Hill
It is not my fault that my review was published without a by-line but your critic might have checked the position before writing his letter. The points I made were already publicly known, through the medium of 'The Organiser' and elsewhere.
The reviewer may be odd, certainly, but he also happens to have been a Trades Council officer for 14 years and is therefore in a position to say that lack of finance in no way explains the defects which were being criticised.
It is revealing that your correspondent admits that what was included in the book was "the choice of the producers." Indeed yes--isn't this what the argument is all about? That the Trades Council itself had no say in what went into the book.
"Omissions are inevitable," it is said. But are we arguing about tiny oversights? So Kropotkin never existed, Dennis Hobden never won Kemp Town, and 1066 never happened either.
I, and the other Trades Council officers, would have been delighted to read the proofs. But every request to see the draft material was ignored. We were presented with a finished product which we had not seen, which is often historically questionable, and which contains value-judgements that many of us would dispute. As if this is not enough, the book contains 120 silly errors of spelling, typography, etc. Your contributor may not care about publications appearing to be careless and illiterate but the B'ton Trades Council (as with most working class bodies) has always taken great pride in the standard of its literature.

Dear Voice,
I think your excellent little paper is doing a wonderful job in providing information about B'ton unobtainable in the local press, or indeed, in the mass-media generally.
However, there is one criticism I make, and that is the use of certain vulgar expressions, including some four-letter words, which can only antagonise many progressive people, and limit the circulation by some of us, of your paper.
I realise that some so-called 'quality' newspapers, such as the Guardian, also use such expressions, but they can get away with it.
I am aware that some people regard, mistakenly, in my opinion, it progressive and enlightened to make use of the words to which some of us object. Surely the best way to promote all progressive movements and ideas to the widest audience is to refrain from causing offence in a way which serves no really useful purpose? The exposure of types such as Brian Hare and Inspector Roberts is most effectively done by the bald statement of facts which are obscene enough in themselves and do not require the use of out-dated Anglo-Saxon verbal crudities to emphasise their obscenity.
I hope you will give careful and deliberate consideration to the opinion I have expressed, and also realise that it is the criticism of a friend in the progressive movement with much experience of life.
'Pertinax'

Dear Voice,
I am writing to you on behalf of some friends and relatives, concerning Brighton's swimming facilities. As you are no doubt aware, the North Road swimming bath is the only one in Brighton which is open to the public, and even so many people are put off from swimming their due to the woefully inadequate facilities.
For example: the bath is an extremely cold building in winter because of lack of proper heating arrangements. Also the deepest part of the pool is only six feet, consequently no diving boards are allowed. The hygiene arrangements are extremely poor, the footbath is

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info..	Brighton Hostel 105 Islingwood Rd Gives meals Sun. & Wed. 2-5pm. Tea, Toast & Stew at other times if poss. Needs clothes, food & HELP	Brighton Workers Bkshop 3 Gloucester Rd (684404) CPB(M-L) Sats 9.30-6pm The Garden 22 Trafalgar St Veg. Cafe Mon-Thur 10-11pm Fri, Sat 10am-11pm	-community info. Contact Chris Miller, Social Services Dept. 15 Princes St (29801 ext. 674) or write Campaign for Homosexual Equality -Graham Wilkinson 3a Montpelier Villas or Darrell (686140)
advice	F'ball club in Hollingdean 80 boys, 30 train Weds 7-9pm & 4 teams play Sats Help needed-Peter Carver (500232) Brian Webb (680522)	Three Rooms Cafe 14 Blatchington Rd Hove (779933) Veget. cafe. Lunches Mon-Sat 10-3pm OAP and students 25p+take-away	Womens Lib- Jen de Winter 154 Harbour Way, Shoreham (87-61680) Brighton Society Environmental Group. Against bad planning on social and aesthetic grounds. Selma Montford 10, Clermont Rd (509209) Pensioners & Trade Union Assoc'n-Keith Orange 22 Whippingham Rd East Brighton Residents Assoc'n. Concerned with the kind of redevt. that should be carried out in Whitehawk-G. Andrews 8 Twineham Rd (687715) Gay Liberation Front Tues. 8.30pm; Disco-1st & 2nd Fri. each month Marlborough Hotel (upstairs) Princes St. Centre for Investigation of Property Speculation (691712) Pre-School Handicapped Kids & Mums Opportunity Group Tu. 1.30-3.30p.m. Mrs S. McCormick 44, Inwood Cres. (509431) BRIGHTON MARINA WATCH COMM. Oscar Thompson, 20 Ridgeside Ave, Patcham. (502103) PRIOR HOUSE Carlton Hill - Youth and Community Centre many activities (681925) LOVE BETWEEN WOMEN meets Thurs. 8p.m. to explore all aspects of love between women. Nicky - (686363) FREE VET: P.D. S.A. 16, Oxford street (63606) Donations welcomed.
Housing Advice Centre, 73 Grand Parade	Rent Tribunal, Anston House 137 Preston Rd (506381) may give rent reductions, security of tenure etc.	Garudas 17 Kensington Gdns (682983) crafts coffee pictures Open Cafe 7 Victoria Rd Mon-Thur 12-8pm Fri, Sat 12-11pm cheap veget. food	
BPAS-abortions, pregnancy tests, vasectomy-Wistons 138 Dyke Rd (509726)	Voluntary Service Centre-family case-work & citizens advice bureau, 17 Ditchling Rise (61664) free, helpful C'zen's Advice also at 2 St. Georges Pl. 2.15-4.15 daily & Whitehawk Community Centre. 2-4 pm (no appts. nec) Samaritans 24 hrs. (733333)	Queenspark-v. good local newspaper-14 Toronto Tce. 62 Bentham Rd (688380) Little Digger Mag. & also Brighton for Kids-magazine & guide, for & by kids 15p Public House etc or contact 117 Hartington Rd Bright Times-literary+some news-alternative community paper-John Noyce Flat 2 82 Montpelier Rd Educat-local teachers/education mag. No. 2 out soon 15p/20p by post-42 Egremont Place (680258) Mother & Toddler afternoon Westdene Library Tue. 2.30-3-15pm (term-time) coffee, toys, picture books-meet other Mums. BFT. Support Your Local (non-profit-making) Film Theatre	papers
Marriage Guidance Council 46 Grand Parade (681919)	Family Planning Clinic 18/19 Western Rd (734258) also c/o Health Centre U.O.S. Cancer Prevention (29801) NCCL Richard Moseley 2 Gloucester St (684256)		groups/gatherings
Off the Record-helps with general problems-sex, loneliness etc Youth service Mon-Fri 8-10pm (63080)	Age-Concern 57 Ditchling RD (683275) old people's welfare Friend-Mon. evenings (61664) weekdays 10-6pm (739729)		
Our Schools Campaign primarily vs. botched infant school plans, Joe Taylor (67496)	Moulsecomb Adventure Play ground 10-8.30pm. offers of help to Dave Smith (686834)	Public House Bookshop 21 Little Preston St (28357) Alternative/Radical/Freak books & mags coffee Symposium 12 Market St (2 142) Radical/Art books mags Infinity Foods 25 North Rd macro/organic veg No rip-off Aranda 111 Gloucester Rd (67772)-odds-and-ends to make your life good Uncle Sam's Hamburger Express Montpellier Rd Everything-and-chips	
Old Newspapers wanted for playgroup in Elm Grove will collect (62284)			
etc.			

WHERE YOU CAN BUY THE VOICE.

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CENTRAL BRIGHTON. ANANDA: 111 Gloucester Road. ECCOTT'S: 52 Surrey Street. GARDEN CAFE: 22 Trafalgar Street. GARUDA'S: 17 Kensington Gardens. INFINITY FOODS: 25 North Road. OPEN CAFE: 7 Victoria Road. STREET NEWS-STAND: N.E. corner Churchill Square. SYMPOSIUM BOOKS: 12 Market Street. WILSON'S: 17 Prince Albert Street. WOOD'S: 29 Trafalgar Street.	WEST BRIGHTON AND HOVE. CORDELL'S: 99 Western Road, Hove. HIGGS': 3 Hove Street, Hove. JAMES'S: 17 George Street, Hove. PUBLIC HOUSE BOOKSHOP: 21 Little Preston Street. RUSSELL'S: 4 Westbourne Place (P.O.), Hove. UNCLE SAM'S HAMBURGER EXPRESS: 4a Montpelier Road. THREE ROOMS CAFE: 14 Blatchington Road, Hove. TOWNS OF HOVE: 99 Church Road, Hove.
UNIVERSITY UNIVERSITY BOOKSHOP: Main Counter.	

The Voice is also being sold on the streets now. You should find a seller - who will sell you a copy and listen to your comments