

BRIGHTON VOICE

Community Paper

No 23

6p

Evening Argus



JOURNALISTS FIGHT BACK

Publishing Co Ltd



OF JOURNALISTS

-Sussex Branch

NATIONAL UNION

Brighton and Mid

Robert Street
Brighton
Tel: P
Publishers & Printers
Brighton & Hove Gazette
Evening Argus

The Southern

The Brighton and Mid-Sussex Branch of the NUJ (National Union of Journalists) has lodged a formal complaint with the Press Council about the Evening Argus and, in particular, its Editor-in-Chief, Victor P. Gorringe, whom they accuse of 'blatant abuse of editorial freedom', 'an unbelievably hypocritical manner' and the suppression of views differing with his own.

That's what we've always said.

75% of the Argus' sixty staff are NUJ members. This normally sedate crew (they unanimously opposed the last strike recommended by the NUJ) are now so incensed that they have come out in open conflict with their paper.

The complete dossier about the dispute has been handed over to the Voice. But could there be another reason behind the dispute? It is well known that Gorringe, the iron man of the Argus, is fighting off retirement. Should he fall it might herald wide ranging changes in the Argus. See pages 2 & 3.

The squatting movement has hit Brighton, and this time it's here in a really big way. Within days of the determined squatters from the Crest Hotel moving into a new property on the seafront opposite the Metropole Hotel, 40 other squats had sprung up in Brighton and Hove. A week later, there were 6 and two more in Lewes.

As this issue of the Voice went to press late in April, there were around 80 squatters in town; and more are joining every day.

The quiet, determined way in which it has happened has taken Brighton's Establishment Mafia totally by surprise. Without grandiose political statements, homeless people have moved into houses speculatively

standing empty - and they're living in them!

Squatters have now joined forces under the umbrella of Brighton's Squatters Association - soon to be affiliated to the London & national organisations. Inside, (p12) are some

Squatting

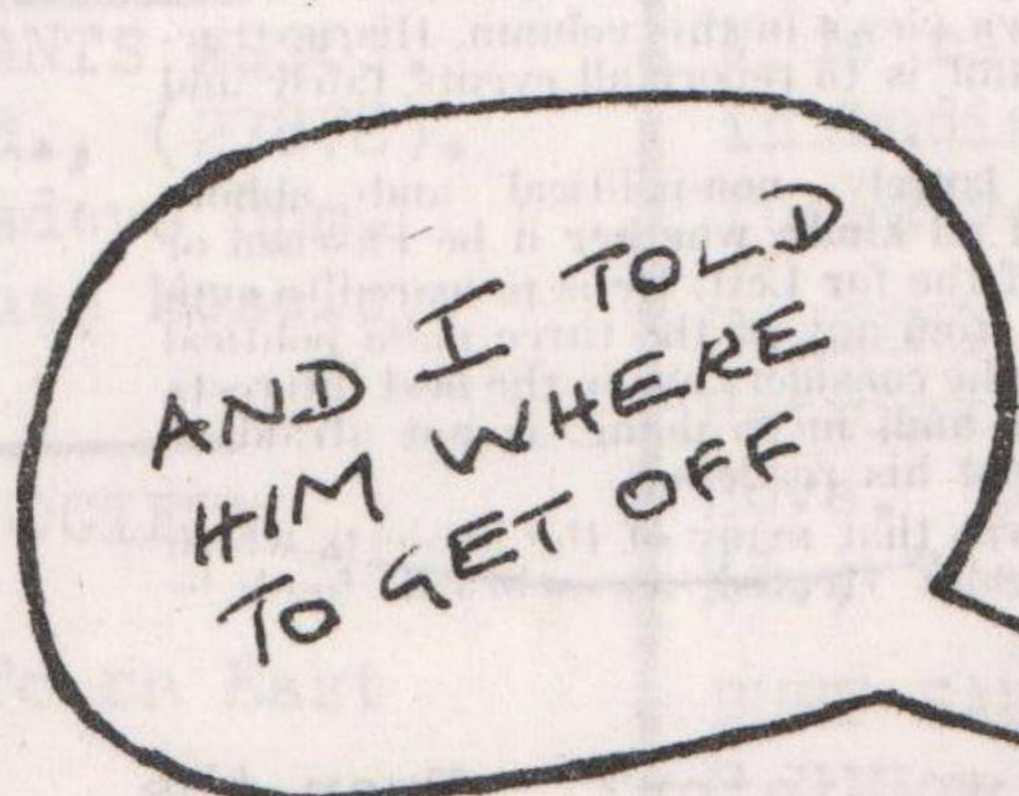
HERE TO STAY

of the stories from squats round Brighton. Without doubt, the movement will continue to grow in strength.

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Our eyes met at the Bus Stop



VOICE AGAINST SEXISM
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CLOCKWORK

WHY NUJ COMPLAINED

On the 11th February an Argus leader, purporting to come from the editor, lashed out at the NUJ and the Trade Union and Labour (Amendment) Bill which was to be debated in the Commons the following day.

The editor feared that this would lead to a closed shop situation which the NUJ (increasingly manipulated by left-wingers according to the leader) would exploit to destroy editorial freedom.

Feeling that this required a reply letters were sent the following day by Eric Tyson, NUJ local branch Chairman, and by Roy Greenslade, branch treasurer, writing with Noreen Taylor a local member.

These were ignored. Nor did anything else appear in which the NUJ or public expressed their views on the question.

On March 4th letters were sent to Gorringer asking whether the NUJ replies would be published. Six days later Gorringer replied to the effect that Tyson and Greenslade must be joking. He outlined the sort of letter he would publish - one without the same freedom of expression which he pleaded to be the divine right of editors. Then, to add insult to injury, the Argus ran a second leader on March 25th cheering those notorious upholders of people's freedom, the Lords, on the stand they took over the Bill. There was still no reply printed in the Argus.

This high-handed action so angered the NUJ that a decision to make the complaint was taken by the branch and reported to the Argus' NUJ chapel at the April meeting where it was noted without comment.

The editor-in-chief made it plain that he did not intend to publish his reply.

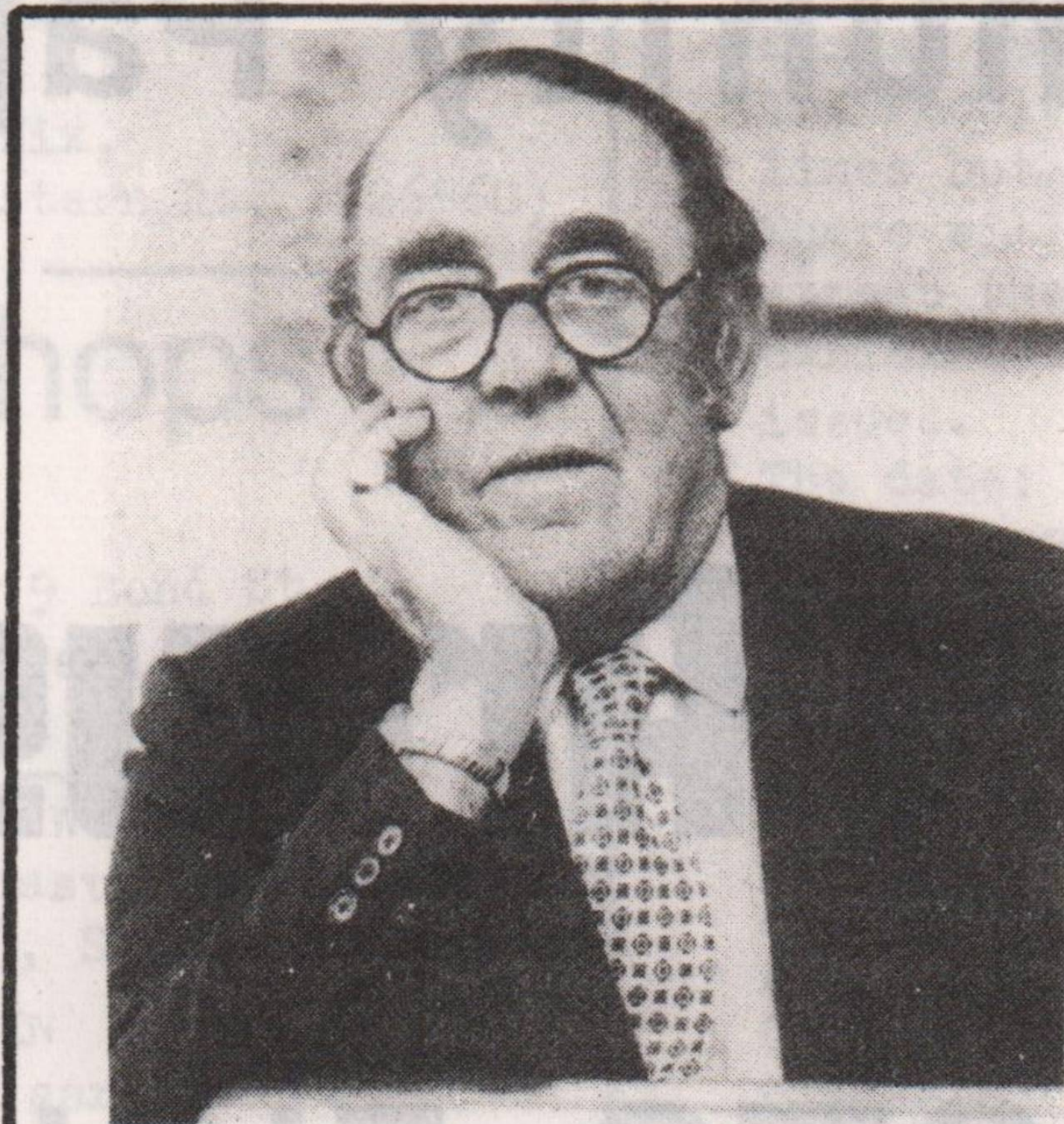
No letters on the subject, either from other organisations or members of the public, appeared in the evening Argus.

It is the contention of the branch that, in refusing to publish either my reply or that of my branch treasurer, the Editor-in-Chief of the evening Argus was guilty of a most blatant abuse of the editorial freedom he seeks to defend. In an almost unbelievably hypocritical manner, he champions the cause of freedom for editors while, at the same time, showing a cynical disregard for the freedom of those who do not share his views by denying them the right of reply. It would appear that the freedom for editors he seeks so jealously to maintain is the freedom to suppress the views of those who disagree with him.

It is undoubtedly significant that the Editor-in-Chief's polite and important offer of a reply on lines stipulated by him came only after he had received letters inquiring why he had not

Extract from the NUJ complaint

The complaint points out that the 'belated and impertinent offer' of an insipid, prescribed response



A big man with sensitive toes, as Tyson says. Reputedly the richest man in Britain he controls S. Pearson & Son Ltd. This conglomerate owns

Westminster Press who own Southern Publishing who own the Argus and the Gazette. S. Pearson also own the Financial Times, Economist, Penguin, Longman et al. Banking interests include Lazards, Whitehall Trust Ltd. Besides Doulton it has many industrial holdings. You can add to this American interests in real estate and oil. It has a grubby finger in North Sea Oil explorations; not to mention a vineyard and Chessington Zoo. Its activities spread over six continents and assets totalled £262M in 1973. They prefer the stability of a Greek Colonels Regime (there's a Greek holding company, the Societe Generale Hellenique) to any lurch leftwards.

How could anyone be independent of a fat cat like that, especially when that cat pays your food ticket?

LORD COWDRAY: biggie behind the Argus

only came after Gorringer was pressed about the original letters. It implies that there wouldn't have been an offer at all without this pressure. The complaint condemns the editorial efforts to dictate a reply and asks how Gorringer can equate this suppression of views with his plea for editorial freedom. It also exposes Gorringer's deceit in writing editorials calling for the editor's freedom. VICTOR P. GORRINGE IS NOT THE EDITOR OF THE ARGUS. He is Editor-in-Chief. The editor is Jim Barnard, a front man.

GORRINGE'S BAD JOKE

Here's what Gorringer wrote:-

Freedom for editors

THE editor of this newspaper decides its editorial policy. He is not influenced in any way by the proprietors and is free therefore to reflect his own views in this column. His instruction to his staff is to report all events fairly and accurately.

He is largely non-political and abhors extremism of all kinds, whether it be Fascism or the politics of the far Left. He is prepared to support policies from any of the three main political parties which he considers are in the best interests of the nation and, in so doing, is not afraid to upset or offend his readers.

He believes that many of the subjects which are traditionally treated as political fourth

about the control exercised over the Argus that Tyson hits out at. (See previous Voices for Censored Labour Party ad, 'errors' in reporting the Terminus Rd. squat, the Marina, the West Pier and buses, not to mention blacklisting Local Aid (which we report next time). For a bit more about string-pulling, see the profile on Lord Cowdray the ultimate biggie behind the Argus.

It's not surprising the Argus didn't print the letters; besides being truthful they're a wee bit actionable (sigh). Perhaps the writers didn't expect them to publish the replies, after all, they know what the Argus is like.

NOT TAKEN IN

The Argus reporters aren't taken in by the guff about their 'editor's' freedom...Hear now the words of an ex-Argus journalist:-

"I found out only recently that there was actually someone with the title of Editor at the Argus, though I never knew of his existence when I worked there. As far as I knew, supreme power was held by Victor P. Clockwork Gorringer, as his staff affectionately call him. It is significant that the union people in the current dispute dealt with Victor P.- over an editorial matter that elsewhere would have been dealt with by a working editor.

Who is the editor of the Argus? There was a quiet man who wore a bow tie and I believe spent

Oh, really, Victor? Even the reporters think you fib a bit about that. We print Eric Tyson's letter and Gorringer's subsequent reply, though Voice readers already know

GORRINGE

who want responsible news reporting) have had to put up with one helluva lot from the big chief.

When asked to comment on the complaint Mr. Gorringe said:-

NOTHING

all day writing the next day's opinion column. Perhaps that was him...."

And about Gorringe, a one-armed bandit freak (he's even got one installed at his home) who's really part of the Argus management, he said:-

"Editors-in-Chief are notoriously remote from the lives of ordinary people. They are part of a very high elite circle and as such are totally out of touch. They are usually very sensitive about their objectivity and on occasion go to great lengths to obtain 'both sides of a story'. But their position in society, their isolation, results in a strange kind of objectivity. It is known as 'giving equal time to Judas Iscariot'."

Mr. Gorringe is certainly shocked that a complaint has been made against him. He never thought it would go that far (that's what King Charles 1st. said). He is now in his sixties and has been under increasing pressure to retire, which he has steadfastly resisted. But if the complaint is upheld he knows that he will be in a very embarrassing position. It isn't just the NUJ and Brightonians generally who might like to see him go. His bosses up in London might jump at a chance to get rid of him. His regime is felt to have held the Argus static for too long and though changes might not be for the better, any change would be welcome. This isn't to say the whole dispute might be a put up job, cos the galley slaves of the Evening Anus (as well as us Brightonians

he didn't want to talk to us.

On the other side, Michael Morden, father of the Argus NUJ Chapel, wished to make no comment about editorial policy, its effect on journalists if any, or about the complaint at this stage.

Also, the Argus reporters we tried to contact were always 'out'. They daren't say anything either as long as they depend on Gorringe for their dinner.

So far, the Press Council hasn't responded to the complaint. But we'll keep you informed all the way as we don't think there'll be much about it in the Argus.

LATEST: SEE STOP PRESS

EXHIBIT B

C O P Y

Brighton 415511

The Editor
Evening Argus
Brighton

FOR FAVOUR OF PUBLICATION

Dear Sir

Your leading article on Freedom for Editors (Feb. 11) seeks to perpetuate the myth that editors are free. Is the editor of the Evening Argus really free from the influence of his editor-in-chief? Is either of them really free from the influence of the board of the Southern Publishing Co., publishers of the Argus and the Brighton & Hove Gazette, or from the board of its parent company, Westminster Press?

Be honest with your readers; at whose direction was your leading article written- that of the editor or the editor-in-chief?

Would the Argus editor really have the freedom - or the courage - to write a scathing criticism of the Arts Council, knowing that the chairman of that body, newly-created life peer Patrick Gibson, is also chairman of Pearson Longman, the subsidiary companies of which include Westminster Press?

Is the Argus editor free to comment critically on the decision of Penguin to severely cut back their publication of educational books, knowing that Penguin is yet another subsidiary of Pearson Longman?

Would he not be inhibited in publishing any criticism of Royal Doulton pottery, knowing that Royal Doulton is part of Lord Cowdray's business empire, S. Pearson & Son, whose deputy chairman happens to be the same Patrick Gibson, and knowing that Patrick Gibson is married to a cousin of the 3rd Viscount Cowdray?

Would he be likely to support any government move to curb the enormous profits of the banks or to make them socially accountable, knowing that S. Pearson & Son owns Lazard, the leading merchant bank?

You maintain that "every democrat" will hope that the Trade Union and Labour Relations Bill will be amended to free editors from the closed shop. You might have added that every democrat might wonder at the sort of democracy that gives editors the absolute power to dictate editorial policies with which the vast majority of their staffs might disagree.

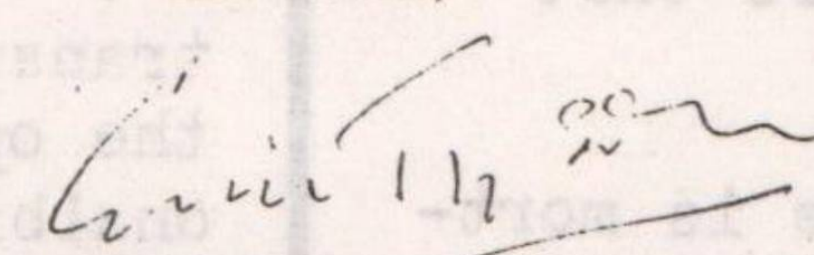
You assert that the Bill will have the effect of forcing editors working in a closed shop to join and be responsible to the National Union of Journalists or lose their jobs. That seems to me to be a blatant abuse of your freedom and a deliberate attempt to mislead your readers. It is simply not true.

You must know that the N.U.J. has already repeated that it is not its aim at national or chapel level to direct editors on editorial policy. The Union's view, often restated, is that pressures on the independence of editors are no more acceptable coming from a trade union than coming from proprietors, advertisers or governments. The Union's record on press freedom is second to none.

The N.U.J. welcomes editors to its membership and believes it is in their interests to join. They, as much as rank and file members, may need the protection of a union in maintaining and improving wages and conditions, preserving professional ethics and even their own jobs and, of course, in preserving press freedom.

Get the strength of the Union around you, Mr Editor. Only then will you know the meaning of real freedom.

Yours faithfully



Eric Tyson
Chairman
Brighton & Mid-Sussex Branch
National Union of Journalists

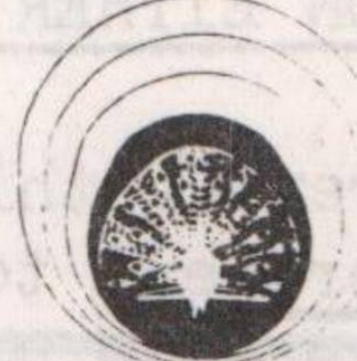
Tyson's first letter

EXHIBIT F

Evening Argus
Brighton & Hove Gazette
Publishers & Printers
Robert Street
Brighton BN1 4AU
Tel: Brighton 66799

The Southern Publishing Co Ltd

REG. OFFICE: 50 NORTH ST. BRIGHTON, SUSSEX. REG. No. 26678. ENGLAND



VIG/ML

March 10, 1975

Dear Mr. Tyson,

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of March 4. Your letter sent for favour of publication on February 4 was based on conjecture. I strongly object to be judged on what I might do. I am prepared to be judged on my record to date.

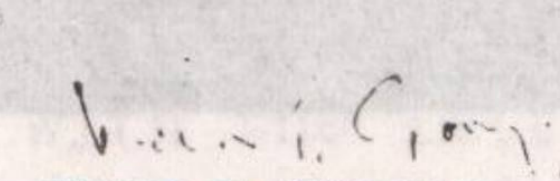
I did not regard your letter as a serious attempt to expound NUJ policy in relation to the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Amendment) Bill. Moreover, your last paragraph was in the nature of an appeal to me personally and of little interest to the average reader. May I ask if you consider this type of letter would be sent by the secretary of the NUJ to the editor of The Times? And if it was sent would you have expected The Times to publish it?

Come, Mr. Tyson, get down to relevances. Do you support the NUJ executive in deciding not to insist that newspaper editors should become members of the union (see photostat from the Sunday Times)? Or do you support the resolutions to go before the NUJ ADM that editors should be forced to join or lose their jobs (see photostat from U.K. Press Gazette)?

A reply from the chairman stating where the Brighton and Mid-Sussex branch of the NUJ stand in this controversy will be of interest to our readers and I look forward to receiving a further letter from you.

But, please, no more hypothetical questions.

Yours sincerely,


VICTOR P. GORRINGE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Mr. Eric Tyson,
Chairman,
Brighton and Mid-Sussex Branch,
National Union of Journalists,
12 Coleman Avenue,
HOVE, Sussex.
BN3 5NB.

Gorringe's offer

see p.4 for editorial on press freedom

When all is said and done in the argument about 'editorial freedom' we still end up with the fact that there'll never be a free press while ANYONE has absolute control over communications media that have a predominately professional, and relatively small, staff. News is coloured by opinion - e.g. the editor's personal opinion as to what constitutes news. And editors tend to ignore the news value of muck perpetrated by their owners. Usually the paper's opinion isn't even the editor's but even with honest editors, you can be sure they wouldn't get the job unless their views were acceptable to their bosses.

Papers like the Argus are mostly hack stuff and adverts (pap journalism as the Guardian puts it). They present the opinions of one man. No-one's totally impartial. If one man's opinion monopolises the media where people can express views, then that person must inevitably misrepresent people's views. Like the Argus, he can make 'largely false assertions' which can't be exposed. People might think there are no other views or facts and take the monopolist's view as being authoritative - just what he wants. Isn't it ludicrous that any editor's word should be final. He speaks for everyone on the paper - even when they disagree with him. He vaunts himself as the sole judge of views and information available for 300,000 people who didn't choose him for that role - all based on his 'personal' opinion. Then he's got the gall to repudiate the right for anyone else to have a say unless they agree with him - and he does it in the name of democracy.

THIS DESIRE FOR ABSOLUTE POWER IS EXACTLY WHAT HE IS ACCUSING THE NUJ OF DESIRING FOR THEMSELVES - despite their assurances to the contrary.

ON EITHER SIDE SUCH TOTAL CONTROL IS CRIMINAL

To prevent this we need an alternative press. We don't pretend to be impartial and universally representative - we make no bones about our point of view - but our columns are open for people to write in and have their views presented the way they write them or not at all. We can't kow-tow to editors,

advertisers, owners because we don't have any. EVERYONE associated with the paper has an equal say on what goes in. Consequently, we speak for more people directly than the Argus where one 'free' man's opinion tells everyone else what they ought to think. From our bias and our structure we are far more open about affairs that the Argus has to conceal or lie about.

The Voice serves to break down the Argus' monopoly on what information is made available to this town.

Even the journalists recognise that they'll get a fair hearing in the alternative press. This, as well as their anger with the Argus, is demonstrated by their handing over the complete dossier on the complaint without trying to make conditions about how we present the material. Could anything better justify the necessity for an alternative press than professional journalists using its columns to get a fairer public hearing than they can get on the papers they have worked on for years. How many Argus readers are ever aware of the complaint? The Argus certainly doesn't mention it.

(Actually, Radio Brighton did mention it but they couldn't say much because their News Editor, Tony Talmage, is a friend of Victor P. Gorringe.)

It is also an object lesson in that the Voice has repeatedly lambasted blatant suppression in the Argus but the NUJ have never been particularly bothered. Only when misreporting and suppression hits them do they utilise the freedom the alternative press offers to non-authoritarian groups, the true bodies of organised labour and every individual exploited and stomped on by the 'free', impersonal and pernicious system we live in: to all of whom the Argus is closed.

Right, the NUJ is using the Voice to get publicity. But whether it's the NUJ, a squat or someone wrongfully arrested, the Voice is there to be used. It's columns are open for publicising the cases and actions of any cause in the struggle against fat-cats, bureaucracy & authoritarianism - whenever that cause wants to use the Voice.

AND THEY WILL GET A FAIRER HEARING IN THIS PAPER THAN IN THE SELF-STYLED 'IMPARTIAL' PRESS. ASK THE JOURNALISTS.



AND NOW FOR THE LATEST ON

H
A
R
E



Brian Hare, the money-grabbing Poly lecturer whose ruthless eviction of B&B tenants was covered in Voice No. 19, has changed his address once more. He has now moved to 34, Adelaide Crescent, Hove, (top flat), in an attempt to avoid overdue tax on his profits, as well as Brighton Council's Enforcement Officer, an irate ex-employee and his beloved 'guests'.

Readers who disapprove of this latest flit can phone Btn. 730512 to make their views known. After the success of the Brighton Council prosecution of Hare for the unhealthy conditions of his seafront Mermaid Hotel, he has moved to avoid obeying court orders and to avoid turning up at yet another case to be held at the end of April.

There is another reason too why Hare is hiding. At 82, Whippingham Rd Road, near Brighton's Elm Grove, Hare rents a house to girl students, pretending that it's B&B, since one girl pays reduced rent and supposedly cooks breakfast. But the tenants have been given strict instructions to tell any official callers that Hare lives there. WHY?

The Whippingham Rd. house is mortgaged - by Brighton Council! They have lent him public money so he could buy himself a home, they thought. This money which could otherwise have helped a needy family to buy their own home has been used by Hare to make more profits for himself.

We've sent a copy of this issue to Brighton Treasurer's Dept; we'll tell you what happens.

STRUCTURE PLAN PUBLIC JOKE

The Hove Town Hall public meeting about the Structure Plan turned out to be a rather bad joke in the name of 'public participation'. We witnessed the rubber-stamping of Ministry decisions to tear down homes in Portslade to make way for a link road to Shoreham Harbour. WE OBJECTED BUT THEY WERE TOO BUSY CONGRATULATING EACH OTHER TO TAKE NOTE OF THIS. We also objected to a plan that was supposed to encourage buses and discourage private transport which has ended up doing the opposite. "It's not our responsibility," says Gnarlock. "We can't tell people what to do with their cars."

This generally was the attitude the planners took over houses, amenities - everything. And as long as only sixty people turn up to these meetings the planners will keep on getting away with it. (Who said that about lack of publicity by the planners?)

'we're only here for the pier'

With dark clouds threatening to dampen proceedings, an assorted bunch of around 300 conservationists gathered at the Palace Pier on the Sunday before Easter and accompanied by a few policemen and two 5ft cadet policewomen, made their way to the West Pier. There in between sessions by Harry Strutter's Hot Rhythm Orchestra, a couple of speeches were made by Maureen Colquhoun M.P. and John Lloyd, but without the advantage of loudspeakers, their words were almost lost amid the roar of passing traffic and the sound of Bob Dylan emanating from the Mermaid "Hotel".

After the speeches the marchers drifted away, watched by the occupants of the Mermaid and the squat next door. John Mills disappeared in the direction of the Metropole. "I'm so glad I bought a Voice from you" said a lady to the Voice reporter, "or else I'd have had no paper for John Mills' autograph."

The whole performance was a bit of a damp squib. Given the mixed politics of the protesters it's not surprising that the march lacked concrete ideas on how the pier can be saved. The fact that AVF, as owners, can legally be made to pay for the renovation (see Voice No 21) was seemingly passed over by the march organisers in favour of vague assertions that the money could be raised by donations.

Labour pathetic

A few hours before she was due to speak, Maureen Colquhoun, who lives at Shoreham, received a phone call from a Labour party official who "suggested" to her that she shouldn't speak at the end of the march as support for the Save the Pier campaign was not official party policy. Needless to say, she took no notice. Such a pathetic action by the local Labour party only serves to underline their differences over the issue. On one hand some members support the retention of the pier as long as housing and other amenities are not sacrificed to save it. On the other hand, there are those who don't care if the pier falls into the sea tomorrow and regard the pier campaign as run by a bunch of middle class intellectuals who should be avoided at all costs. The idea that money not spent on the pier would actually be spent on housing is naive in the extreme. Those that control the council have no real intention of doing anything about housing anyway; it would encourage too many plebs to come and live in Brighton.



5
SPA
SPUDS
FOR
O.A.P.s

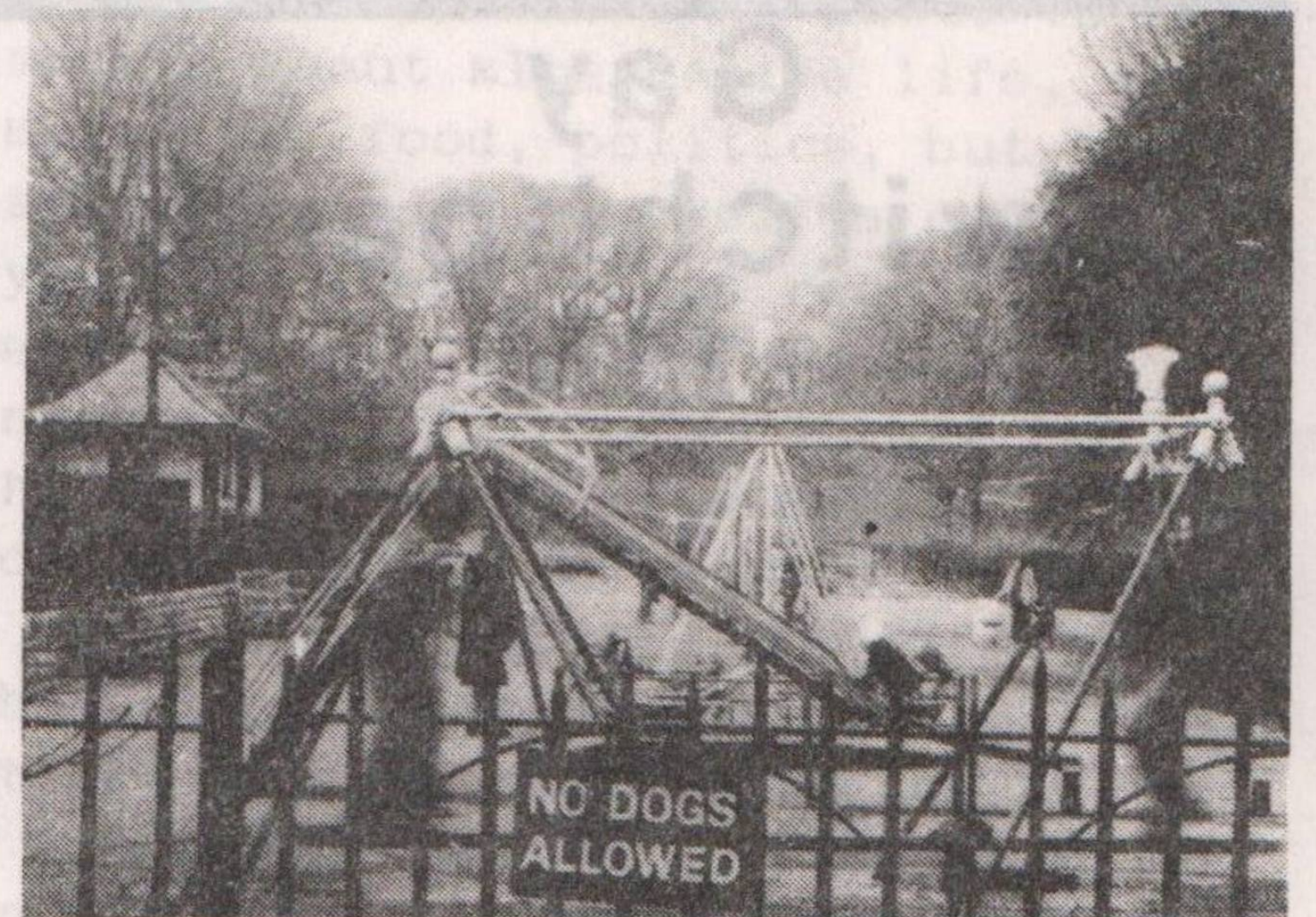
action day in Queen's Park

FAIR PLAY FOR KIDS

On Monday 24th. of March, a large and somewhat chaotic group of local people involved in children's projects met to launch the Brighton Play Council. They have the general aim of improving facilities for kids in Brighton by running holiday playschemes and adventure playgrounds.

Most of the people were representatives of organisations already active, such as the Working Association of Mothers, the Pre-school Playgroups Association and the Moulsecoomb Adventure Playground. Many ideas were floated around, for holiday playschemes, a playbus to bring playschemes to areas where there was no organisation, and a children's fair on the level. There was also a proposal to establish a central resources bank which would own and loan out such things as air bags (and presumably, other equipment) and provide a centralised inform-

ation service. It seemed to many people that this was rather premature and bureaucratic and the idea was shelved. Much of the discussion revolved around getting money out of the local authority. Most of the ideas were still along the lines of, "Getting the Authorities to do something,"



In the view of Brighton Voice, this is not what is needed. What we do need is to enable and encourage people to get together and do things for themselves. The less involvement by the State (local or national) the better. Its role should be limited to preventing exploitation, for example by stopping wealthy interest groups from monopolising facilities. Action vis-a-vis the State should consist of persuading, or forcing it to permit, or not prevent, such things as closing off streets for street parties, or play streets. It is debilitating and demoralising for people to have things done for them. The Fair Play Group should enable and encourage people to do things, acting with them rather than for them, this includes kids.

The meeting ended with the appointment of a committee to do the real work of organising the play of Brighton kids in general, and a summer fair in the first instance.



BIT BY BIT 24 hour emergency phone service.

After a short delay, a result of a piece of incompetence by the GPO, Brighton's much needed 24 hour alternative information/help service is now fully operational. Called Bit by Bit, it is working from the Open Cafe (7 Victoria Rd; phone 27878) where there will always be someone to answer the phone.

The service is modelled on Bit in London and on Brighton's now defunct Line. However, the collective which runs Bit by Bit hopes that being at the Open will enable it to become not only an information service but also a community centre.

Bit by Bit will help with legal info, pregnancy problems, social security advice, etc., but

NOT, as some people seem to think, with news about what's on at the cinema. If you're getting hassle from your landlord call in at the Open, if you want to plan your night out look in the Argus.

The collective plans to work in liason with Brighton Rights Centre, the Women's Centre and other local community groups. While its function to some extent overlaps with that of the Rights Centre, the members of the collective see themselves more as alternative social workers than do the Rights Centre people.

Bit by Bit depends mainly on donations for its survival and is hoping to be registered as an independent charity. Helpers are urgently needed. The collective

meets every Thursday (8pm at the Open) and new members will be very welcome. If you can't play an active role, you can still help by providing money, equipment, etc. At the moment, office equipment is wanted.

The collective is setting up a Crash Pad service. Anyone prepared to offer a floor (for use no more than one night a week) should send their phone number to Open.

Brighton 27878

Bit by Bit is determined not to get into the financial difficulties that have plagued other such organisations. So if you write to them and want a reply--please send a stamped self-addressed envelope. And if you phone--please don't try to reverse the charges. It's not much fun having to refuse.

Busts?—Crash Pads?—Freaked Out? Evicted?

**Gay
Switchboard
27878**

April 25th. sees the opening of the Lavender Peoples Gay Community Switchboard at the Bit by Bit Community Centre at 7 Victoria Rd., Brighton. Gay Switchboards have been operating for sometime in London, Manchester and Bristol and have proved an important asset to the Gay Community.

Initially Lavender People will operate their switchboard from 9pm to 1am every Friday and Saturday. The Lavender Gay Group was formed because it was felt there was a need for a telephone answering service which would provide info and advice for homosexual women and men in the Brighton area. It will provide details of Gay groups, pubs, clubs, accomodation, dances, etc., and will be co-ordinating with the local Gay Liberation Front and Campaign for Homosexual Equality groups.

Additionally, Lavender people will be working with Bit by Bit to provide information on problems that Gay people share with heterosexuals, e.g. housing, medical, legal problems, etc.

Any Gay persons who are interested in helping to run the Switchboard are invited to come along to the Group's weekly meeting which is held on Sundays 8-10pm at Open Cafe, 7 Victoria Rd.

Alternative Info Boom

Legal and Welfare.

The imbalance in both access to and exercise of legal and welfare rights in our society has been a matter of concern to all shades of opinion for a considerable time. The Brighton Rights centre has been set up to try to correct this situation by means of providing information on, encouraging the exercise of and fighting for the extension of such rights.

The creation of similar centres has developed steadily over the past six years and there are now nearly a hundred around the country, operating on a variety of models. Drawing on this accumulated experience the Brighton Centre has formulated certain broad intents as follows :

- * it will provide free information and advise upon a broad spectrum of legal and welfare problems, putting any legal advice in a social context.
- * it will encourage the idea of helping oneself, particularly by working through and encouraging the use of existing or new organisations, and only providing full legal follow up in special cases.
- * it will operate a limited shop-front day time service plus a phone in service, run by a weekly meeting where decisions are made by everyone concerned.

The Centre is presently manned on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5 to 7p.m.

BRIGHTON RIGHTS CENTRE

2, PRINCE ALBERT STREET, BRIGHTON, 202492.

Abortion Act Threatened

British women are now facing an attempt to change our abortion law, turning the clock back to the situation existing before the 1967 Act, making most abortions illegal.

On February 7th 1975, a Private Members Bill sponsored by James White M.P. was given a second reading by the House of Commons and was referred to a Select Committee. This Bill does far more than merely deal with 'abuses', as its sponsors allege. It is out to do more than prevent private clinics from exploiting patients. The Bill, if passed, would make it extremely difficult for women to get a legal abortion.

As the law stands now, women can usually get an abortion on social grounds, e.g. where housing conditions are poor, the family is large, or the mother's career is at stake. If the amendment becomes law, these grounds will become much stricter, with very few abortions being permitted on grounds of social hardship. Abortion will only be allowed if to continue the pregnancy would pose a "grave risk" to the woman's life or if there is a risk of "serious injury" to the woman's mental or physical health, or to that of the existing children.

'criminal' doctors

As at present a woman wanting an abortion will need to get two doctors to support her case, but the Bill will make it much more difficult to find doctors who will be willing to give their consent. They must be doctors who have been practising for 5 years, and they must not be employed in the same practice. This will obviously delay, if not prevent, the whole procedure, with the added problem that abortions become less safe as the pregnancy progresses. The Bill would change the law so that in a prosecution for a 'criminal' abortion the doctor and his assistants would have to prove that the abortion was justified, instead of, as now, where the prosecution must prove that the abortion was illegal. Guilty, until proven innocent! If convicted of performing an illegal abortion, the doctor would be liable to up to 5 years imprisonment or an unlimited fine. This

means that many doctors will be very reluctant to give their consent, faced with this increased risk of prosecution. Doctors may even start restricting abortions to those with very clear cut medical grounds now, because they fear prosecution in future if the Bill is passed.

The implications of this Bill are quite horrific. The need for abortions will be the same as ever, so if the Bill becomes law it will force most women to either go to back-street abortionists, and risk their own health, or have an unwanted child, with the effect this might have on the mother, child, and others for the rest of their lives.



Here in Brighton the Women's Liberation Group have started a local abortion campaign linked to the National Abortion Campaign. Other groups all over the country are doing the same things, coordinating through London NAC. We are concentrating on defending the 1967 Abortion Act at present, since this is under such a serious threat, but our ultimate aim is for free abortion on demand, so that women have the right to choose.

petition

We have a petition going round, which simply states "We the undersigned, deplore the attempt to restrict access to abortion, by James White's amendment to the 1967 Abortion Act." We are trying to keep the Kemptown constituency signatures separate, because Andrew Bowden, their M.P., is a member of S.P.U.C. (Society for the Protection

of the Unborn Child), the anti-abortion pressure group, and also on the Select Committee. If we can get a large number of Kemptown constituents to sign the petition this will show that Bowden is not representing their views on abortion. In fact he is giving his own personal views, which are anti-abortion, and is therefore going against the wishes of his constituents, whom he is supposed to serve!

write to mp's

We must write to M.P.'s and send in evidence to the Select Committee. The anti-abortionists have been very well organised on things like this, so that all M.P.'s have received 70 letters opposing the Abortion Act as it stands, and supporting White's Bill. S.P.U.C. have been making a lot of noise, but they are only a small minority, and we must not let them appear to be the voice of public opinion on this issue. If you have had an abortion and think your experience demonstrates the need for medically safe legal abortion on the NHS, write to one of the members of the Select Committee (preferably one in favour of abortion, so your letter does not get 'lost').

The Select Committee:

Leo Abse (anti) Labour
John Biggs-Davidson (anti) Tory
Betty Boothroyd (pro) Labour
Andrew Bowden (anti) Tory
Bernard Braine (anti) Tory
Joyce Butler (pro) Labour
Anthony Fell (anti) Tory
Helene Hayman (pro) Labour
Elaine Kellett-Bowman (unknown) Tory
Kevin McNamara (anti) Labour
Maurice Mill (mixed) Labour
Sir George Sinclair (pro) Tory
David Steel (pro) Liberal
James White (anti) Labour
Fred Willey (anti) Labour

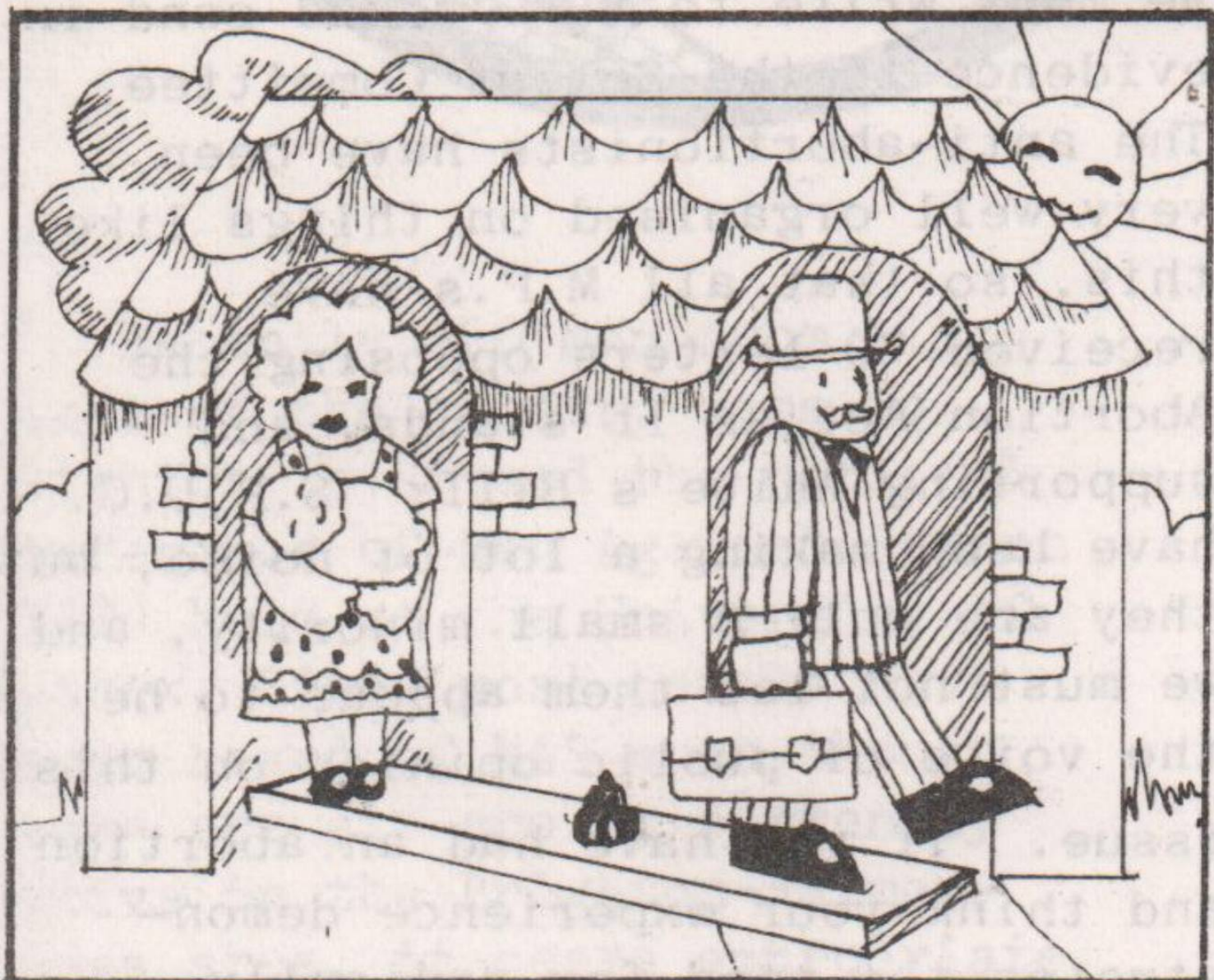
Women are greatly underrepresented on the Committee - it is a hopeful sign that a group of women M.P.'s, headed by Maureen Colquhoun, have been making a lot of fuss about this. There is no clear split along party lines on this issue - so much for Labour support for women's rights!

We will be holding a public meeting in the Friends Centre, Monday April 28th, at 7 p.m., where we will have speakers and discussion afterwards. Please encourage lots of people to come and bring ideas for further action. If we fail in this campaign to defend our rights, it will only be because we have not made enough noise.

If you are interested in this vital campaign ring the Women's Centre, 79 Buckingham Road, Brighton, Tel: 27612.

A woman's place is...?

brighter at the Women's Centre



It is International Women's Year and the women of Brighton are invited to use the Women's Centre to organise activities to make this a really momentous year!

The Women's Centre was set up because many women feel themselves to be denied a sense of identity and independence in this male-dominated society. This kind of oppression manifests itself in day to day activities e.g. women who are denied contraceptive advice by a doctor who believes a woman's function is to have children and housekeep.

Women need to fight against any discrimination, assert their rights as equal citizens and maximise opportunities for personal growth. In order to do this the Women's Centre provides services and support which are often denied them elsewhere.

The Women's Centre has now been open since November 1974 and has been given to us for at least one year by the Dept of Social Services. The following activities have been particularly successful. The information service, staffed by volunteers, provides anything on women in their daily lives, e.g. legal, financial and medical matters. Many women have found this service very useful. Together with the information there is also assistance in making use of information, e.g. accompanying a woman to Social Security or the Abortion Clinic.

A pregnancy testing service is provided at the following times:-

Mondays 6 - 7.30pm.

Wednesdays 3 - 5pm.

Thursdays 8 - 9.30pm.

This service is free but contributions are always welcome. So far this has been used by many women who find that the sympathetic and warm atmosphere in the Centre gives them support at a time when they may be particularly vulnerable..

There is a playgroup and a creche for children under five. These are available from 9.30 - 12 every weekday morning. Anyone wishing to help with the playgroup or creche is very welcome.

If you feel like a chat and a cup of coffee, the Centre also has a social room and a coffee bar. Women are able to come in and sit quietly or talk with others in a relaxed atmosphere. The coffee bar serves coffee, tea and snacks and it is hoped that the coffee bar will become an important part of the Centre's activities. In order to do this we need lots of volunteers, so please come and help us.

Besides the social room there are other rooms which are used by different groups: On Wednesdays, 1 - 3pm there is a Women in Psychiatry, where women can discuss problems etc. On Fridays 6.30 - 8pm a group called "Our bodies, ourselves" meets to do relaxation exercises, massage etc. These groups are run on a self-help basis and other groups are invited to use the Centre.

A Gay Women's Club has just been formed and it would be good if other clubs were established in the Centre. Any girls who would like a place to meet where you can talk, play records, be on your own, come to the Women's Centre.

At the moment the Centre is run entirely by volunteers and has no financial support. So, we are short of money! Any offers of help, contributions, grants or ideas for fund raising would be gratefully received. We are planning a jumble sale at the beginning of May. If you have any jumble please contact the Centre.

The Women's Centre is a place where women can get together on their own ground. Gradually through mutual support and exploration of our experiences we are finding ways of fighting injustices, of being ourselves and, above all, of having fun. So, we hope you will visit us at the Women's Centre and have a look round, perhaps have a cup of coffee, paint a wall or play with the kids. There is always someone here to welcome you.

Women's Centre,
79 Buckingham Rd.,
Btn 27612.

All Women Welcome!

WHY ARE MEN NOT WELCOME ?

Why are men not welcome in the Centre?

Originally in an attempt to break down the sex roles it was felt that men could be involved in the playgroup and in the childbirth classes. It has always been a woman's job to look after children. Thus a playgroup run by men seems a good opportunity to release women from their traditional role and allow them to pursue their own interests, careers, jobs etc. It would give men the opportunity to work in an area which, due to cultural and social pressures, is generally denied them.



Football is not one of her strong points.

But you wouldn't have her any other way. Because she's special. She's your future wife.

BARCLAYS

a good bank to get behind you.

Although we feel that it is essential that men become equally responsible in the spheres of housework, child care etc, the Women's Centre in Brighton sees itself as a refuge. It was decided to exclude men, even in these areas, as it seems more important that women can have a place where we can organise and learn to work together without feeling dependent on men's approval and direction. By organising around issues which directly concern us, for example, free abortion and contraception, equal pay and educational opportunities, 24 hour child care, women can discover our own strengths and weaknesses and thus gain confidence as people in our own right.

In a Centre for women only we can talk to others who are not only sympathetic but may also have been through the same experiences. And finally there's the fact that it's really great being with other women.

ave a

children being offered a whole new sphere of literature? Hope is growing with the publication of such books as Mrs Gonkwonk and The Post Office by Timothy Hudson and Aunt Fan by Peggy Blakely. Both stories are examples of a new breed of woman let loose from the kitchen sink, leaving a perhaps welcome vacancy for the sometimes less aggressive male.

Anyone interested in following up this subject should contact The Children's Book Study Group, c/o Spare Rib, 9 Newburgh St, London W1A 4XS and start asking for more non-sexist books at their local library.

KIDS' BOOKS: Where boys have ALL the fun

A beautiful girl with three ugly step-sisters and a wicked step-mother finally manages, with the assistance of a benevolent fairy god-mother, to escape their lecherous grasp and fall into the waiting arms of a handsome prince. All ends well and everyone lives happily ever after - unless, of course, Cinderella one day wakes up to the fact that there might be more to life than preparing her prince's dinner every night. Then her real problems will begin and she won't find many sympathetic fairy god-mothers willing to 'wave a wand'. Neither will the little girl who wants to pretend at sailing to lost lands or fighting pirates find much encouragement - at least not in the pages of children's literature. A recent visit to the Brighton Children's Library turned up lots of books like Simon and the Dinosaur, Tim to the Rescue, Tom, Tom the Piper's Son, The Gingerbread Man etc; but with the exception of one 'naughty little girl' called Madeline the world of literary adventure seems to be firmly shut to curious females.

The importance of books and their influence on children has been largely accepted since 1964 when the Plowden Commission reported that kids were much more aware of their surroundings when stimulated by books. Kids who have access to books, particularly stories, have a lot more material with which their imagination can play. Instead of just reading about the hero the kid actually becomes Little Red Riding Hood or Peter Rabbit. By feeling what it's like to be some-one (or thing) else the kid should, in theory, come to understand him or herself better.

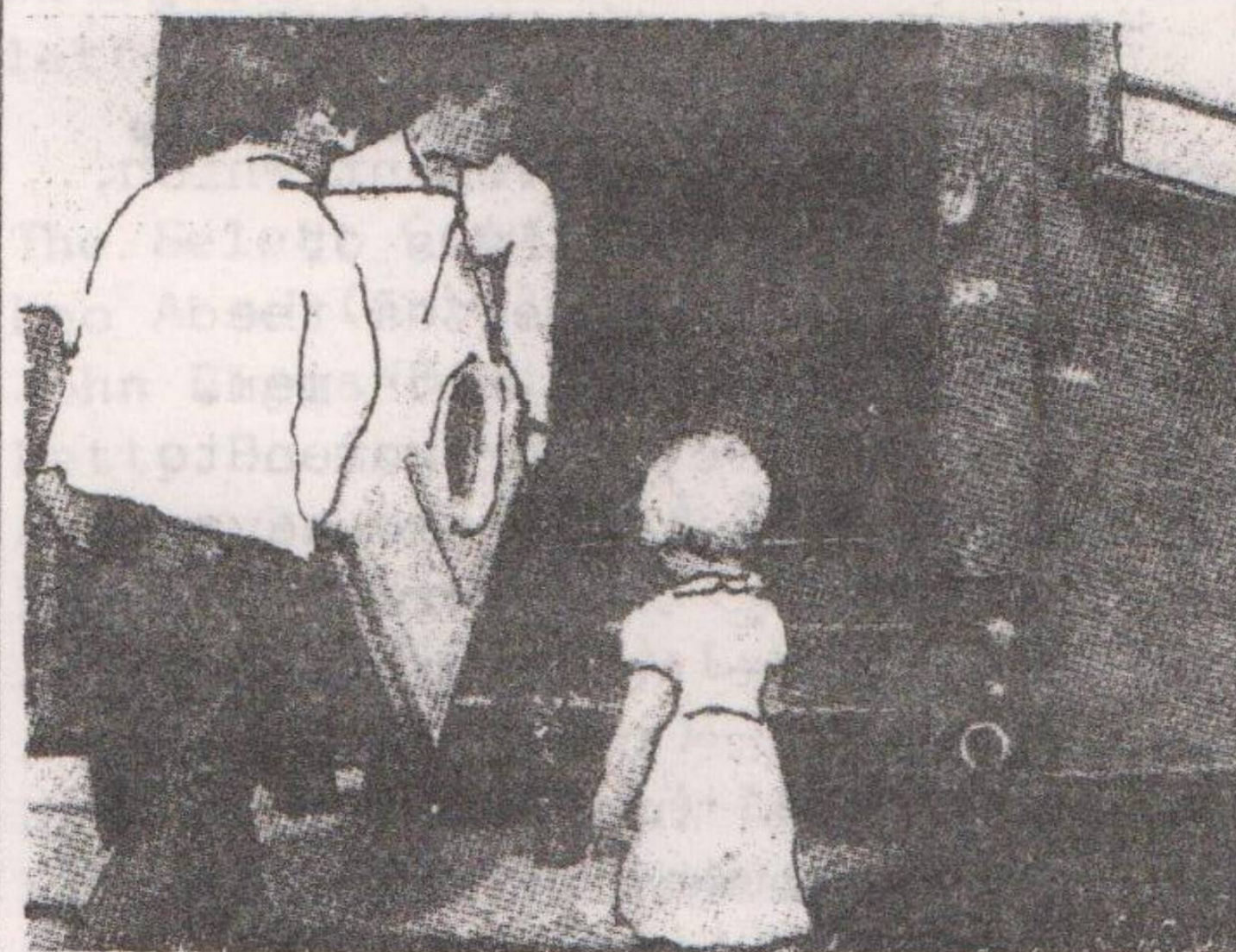
But what seems to be happening in a lot of children's literature to-

day is that a group of values are being put across which, rather than helping the kid to find out about her or himself, lay down the roles which must be assumed according to the sex. Kids are being provided with a sense of values that show them which behaviour will be admired and respected and which will be looked down on and rejected. Take, for example, a well thumbed book in Brighton Library called Farmer Barnes Goes Fishing. The farmer is presented as a nice sort of guy with a wife, a son and a daughter. One bright sunny morning the farmer and son decide to go fishing. However, when the daughter says she wants to 'tag along' the farmer is quite firm that her place is 'helping mother'. And so the same old scene of father and son vanishing over the horizon while mother and daughter wave from the doorway. And from then on the males take over doing all sorts of good deeds in the world etc. until it's time to go home for tea when we learn-guess what-mother and daughter have been busy all day making cakes for the occasion. It's the same old story of stereotyping the female and male into feminine and masculine. Femininity requires passivity and self-sacrifice, masculinity requires aggression and virility. Little Red Riding Hood must wait to be rescued by the able bodied hunter while Little White Hen-the perfect housewife-'busies herself keeping the house neat and clean' and Snow White sits tight while catered to by her dwarves until Prince Charming puts in an appearance.

As long as these stereotypes are maintained, both sexes are going to be restricted by what society says they should be-shouldn't the first step towards liberation really begin at the beginning with

EVAN COOK household removals

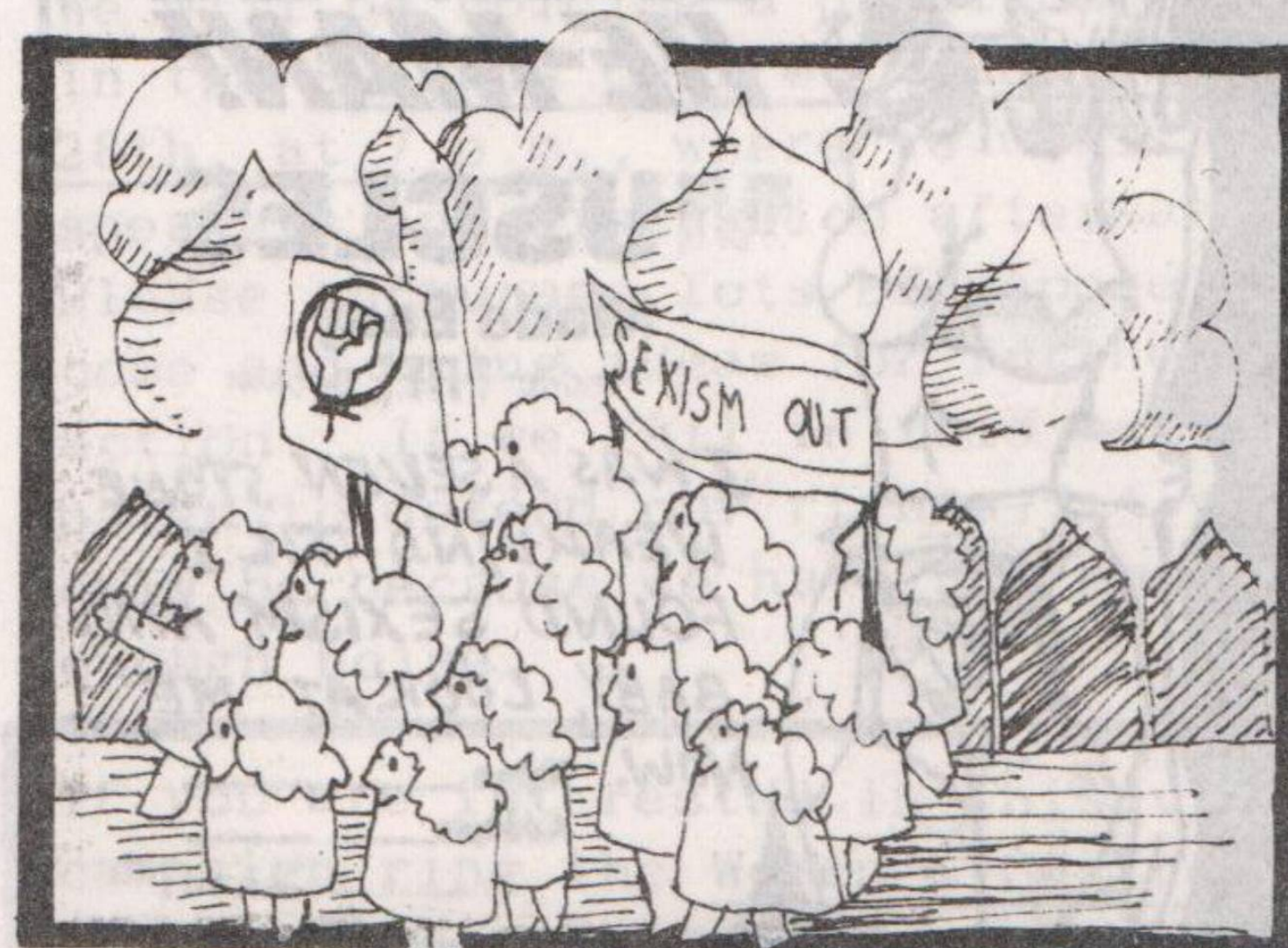
furniture, domestic appliances and personal possessions



Miss Future Housewife supervises the loading of her Mummy's washing machine.

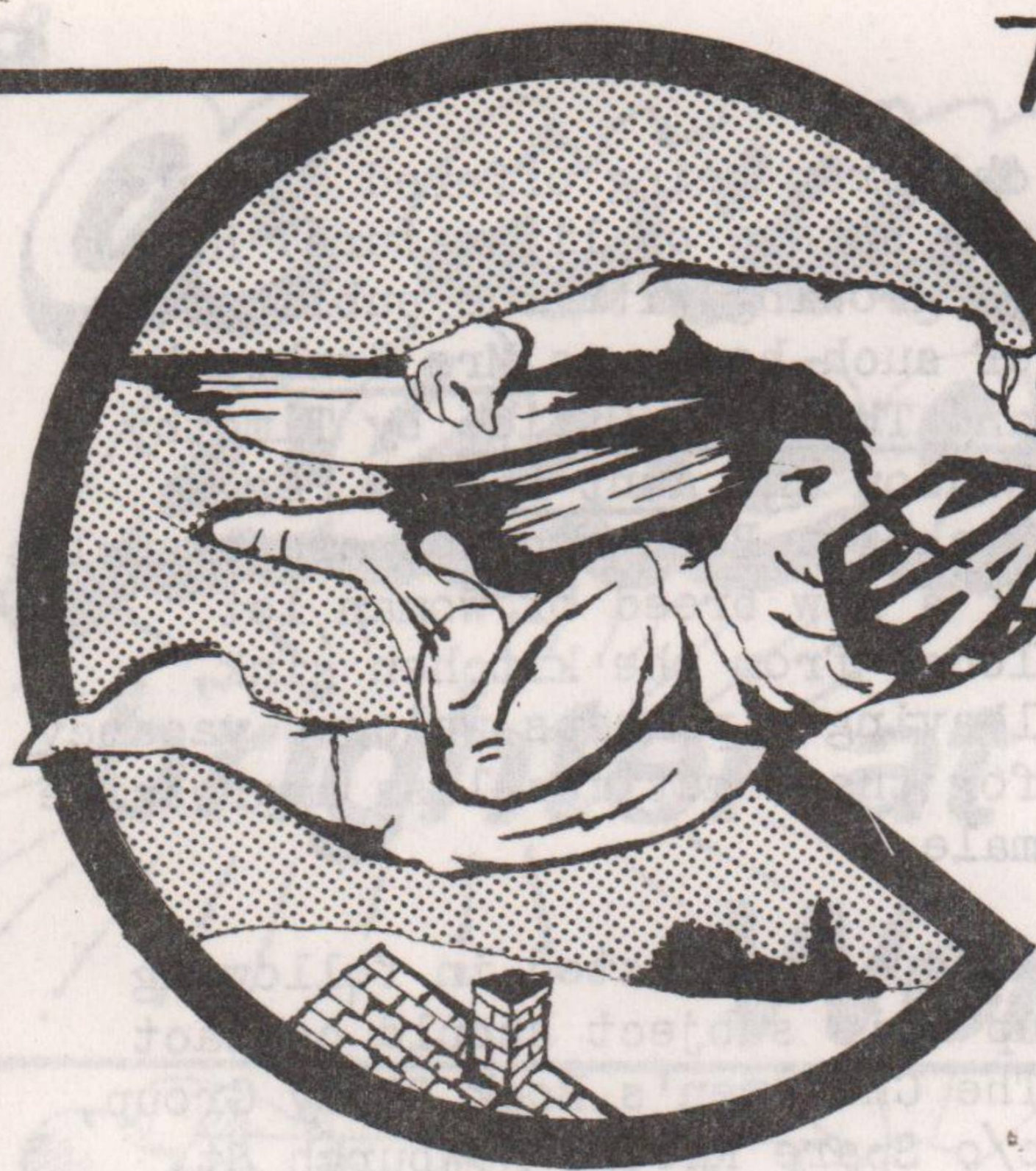
WOMEN'S DAY IN BRIGHTON
May 10th 10am - 4.30pm
Friend's Centre, Ship Street

Events to include films, theatre, exhibition, bookstall and jumble sale. Creche and refreshments too. Two aspects- women internationally and women in Brighton -what's been done to them and what they're doing in response.



Everyone Welcome

Jumble needed - if you've got some for collection please phone Carol Brighton 686259.



THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

The Other Side

Recently 200 men from all parts of the country came to Brighton to attend the national conference of Men Against Sexism (MAS) held at the University of Sussex. Since most people have never heard of MAS even though there are six groups currently active in the Brighton-Falmer-Lewes area, it seems appropriate to ask what are the origins of the movement, what are its aims, and what are the people in it doing?

For many men, the origins of Men Against Sexism lie in the Women's Liberation Movement which, by radicalising the lives of women, inevitably affected the women's relationships with men. It didn't take long for women to make it clear that the old ways of men following their traditional roles were no longer acceptable. At the same time, some men were aware that they had for years been cast in masculine roles in which they felt oppressed. In fact they discovered that they had very positive things to gain by making changes in their lives. Not that changes come easy, recognising that as a man, no matter how enlightened, radical, revolutionary or whatever, you are inevitably an oppressor of women. Similarly, by being competitive, insensitive to other people's feelings, ego-centric, etc., we oppress our fellow men. Another of the roots of Men Against Sexism

stems from the Gay Liberation Front, since this group represents the other main sector of society in which people are discriminated against in a sexist way.

In dealing with this situation men have again learned from Women's Liberation by forming consciousness raising groups which are now the principal activity of MAS. Typically, the groups have about six members, who meet at each others houses for three or four hours each week. The commitment is often remarkably high in that these groups may continue for more than a year with members rarely ever missing meetings.

Such a group will often start with each person describing his life history. To begin with, men often find it hard to talk about personal matters, their feelings, and to show emotions, but they find it easy to intellectualise and talk in abstract terms. After some time the group may come round to talking about the present situation of its members, but only when a good deal of trust has developed within the group are men able to really discuss very personal issues, especially their feelings about each other. Naturally the discussions contain a strong element of therapy. Explaining one's own feelings, becoming aware of the reality of one's relationships with men and women, is an experience that men rarely go through. And yet, it is by no means simply a psychotherapy group experience, for sexism provides the focus for much of our discussion. Indeed, sexism is the mirror through which we see ourselves.

Most men come to join MAS groups by knowing friends, lovers, or wives in Women's Lib who provide the contact, or through men already in groups. An open meeting at the University recently led to the setting up of two new groups. Generally groups have little contact with each other and by their very nature are limited and fixed in size and do not recruit new members. This presents some problems for interested people who want to become involved. However, by contacting existing groups, new ones can easily be started.

MAS and Women's Lib

The relationship of MAS to Women's Liberation is a curious one. Whilst supporting the basic aims of Women's Lib, many men feel that it is their problem first and foremost to sort out their own position with regard to sexism. Some mixed, i.e. male/female, groups do exist but it appears that men have a great need to work out their problems on their own.

The broader aims of Men Against Sexism as a movement are harder to define. In fact one can argue that there is no real movement in terms of national organisation. Many of the people do come from the Left and in local groups there is a surprising number of scientists and engineers. There is considerable distrust of macho-revolutionaries, and of the organisations of the left. Nevertheless, most people feel that their activities are politically valid for discussions that go on inside the groups do affect changes in oneself outside that group.

Changing in ones relationships with women is seen to be very important. Equally important is in dealing with men in, say, work situations or political groups or in any sphere where it is possible to alter other people's perspectives, attitudes and actions. Working with children, instead of leaving it all to women, brings one face to face with the earliest stages of socialisation in a sexist society.

From this article it may be possible to obtain some idea of MAS and the kind of meeting that took place at the national conference. The workshops covered a variety of topics ranging from exploitation in bed to sexuality, sexism and the class struggle. In conclusion, MAS is an amorphous movement and people in it are reluctant to have their views interpreted as representing a consensus, so this article should be regarded as a personal statement. However, any person interested in becoming involved in a local group can telephone me at Leves 5809.

Ted Lilley



YOU CAN BE A REAL HE-MAN!

MUSCLES

Made Easy
Send for FREE Booklet

I WAS A SEVEN STONE WEAKLING TIL I FOUND SEXISM AND BABY, LOOK AT ME NOW.

Name _____
Address _____
Age _____

BRUNSWICK GROUP

A working party of the group met at 'The Temple Bar' on Thursday 6th March to sort out some practical details about its activities in the area. It was agreed that to begin with we would focus on two main problems, play facilities and housing (as was pointed out in last month's 'voice' Brunswick is one of the worst places in the country in these aspects, despite its elegant facade).

These two things would provide a launching point for the group's activities. We hope that setting up playschemes will help reduce the pressures on the many one parent families living in grotty accommodation in the vicinity. Often we are all suffering the same problems alone and getting nowhere - maybe when we get together as a group things will start happening! As usual with community groups one of the main hassles is to find a base. This would keep us really in touch with what's going on; being accessible is vital. We want to get a short-term lease on a shop (ideally in Western Road) so we can put these plans into action. People will be able to drop in for a chat and cup of coffee etc. There are plenty of suitable properties lying around empty (surprise, surprise!) We are at the present moment involved in finding out the names of the owners/estate agents. If you know details of any empty shop in Western Road let us know!



Where would YOU like to see a dead policeman? In North Road or Trafalgar Street? In Gloucester Road or St James' Street? Write in and tell us. We've had a lot of suggestions already. They are much more popular than we thought. Better than a 20 mph limit most people think



We could certainly do with one in North Road. You come out of the market on a Saturday morning with two kids pulling at your clothes and a bag full of shopping and a lorry goes thundering down North Road an inch away from your right elbow, just missing the kids who take a while to realise you can't walk on this road. Out of a pedestrian precinct into

The long term aim of the group hasn't really been worked out yet and any ideas would be welcome. We don't want to restrict ourselves to playschemes/housing problems. Welfare rights information and a care group for the elderly are other ideas being explored. As soon as we get the premises, we are in action; quite a few of us will give up some time each week to be in the shop although the more people involved the better. If you want to get into doing something about the problems of Brunswick or just want to find out more, ring Brighton 737217 or 737218 and ask for Pete or Heather (room 109).

SS EASTER DELAY

The week after Easter saw a huge balls-up at the local Social Security office and a lot of people ended up not receiving payments.

We're told that it's not due to the compulsory inefficiency course which all the officials are given during training but that lots of students signing on for the Easter vacation overwhelmed the short staffed SS in paper work. An enquiry is to be made into the business.

It's a funny story except that living on SS is so tight that payments a few days late is just no joke. If the payment doesn't come at all, it's bloody serious.

read all about it . . .

Some of Brighton's best shops are tucked away down small side streets. They aren't very profitable sites but money's not the name of the game.

One of these is the Public House Bookshop hidden down Little Preston Street. It started three years ago when Richard Cupidi - a confirmed book freak - took over a derelict factory that nobody wanted. They removed pools of mould and charred timber converting the upstairs into a rambling flat which, if you dreamed it up, would have given Freud a field day. The groundfloor became book display and the first landing a quiet alcove. The basement has housed among other things, a printing workshop and a rock n' roll band.

Public House is more than just a fine bookshop. It's a place to go for good books, magazines, hard to get imports about alternative life, art, literature, Eastern Culture, magic, myth, SF, food, politics, but that's only part of it. Go into the back, sit down, pour yourself a coffee and rap to all sorts of friendly people you find there. Good records, info about books and Brighton. Stay longer, give a hand: that means do practically anything you want to or nothing. It's reckoned that about 100 people have lived/worked/stayed at the Public House, flowing in and out changing the place, enriching its growth. There is always room to take part and share in the place. That's why it's called the Public House.

At the moment they're fixing up the basement (hopefully for early May) for small workshops and maybe more stock, but essentially to 'expand the vision of connectedness by providing a comprehensive and creative range of possibilities...'. Drop in for an afternoon.

READ FOR POWER... A BOOK SHOULD BE A BALL OF LIGHT IN YOUR HANDS

helpers needed

a street full of fast moving or irritable motorists, and no time to adapt. A few dead policemen across the road would force the cars to slow to a reasonable speed and make the transition a bit easier - especially for old people and kids. At least there should be a zebra crossing there. Why not combine the two and have a raised pedestrian crossing on the level of the pavement so that the crowds of shoppers have a double advantage over the motorist. It sounds like a good idea to us.

Feet before wheels

Though we keep on asking for people to join the collective, it seems that they just can't believe we mean it. They say, "It seems to be doing so well," or "I couldn't do anything like that." They think we're just paying lip-service to the idea of an open collective. WE'RE NOT. The workload is tremendous, we need more people to share it. As for the rest, none of us have worked on newspapers before the Voice either - it doesn't take much time to learn.

This issue took seven weeks, the next one might even take longer if a few more people don't come along.

1

ONE to provide instant accommodation for homeless people in Brighton.

They have got off to a flying start. In one squat they started two weeks ago, four people originally moved in, now there are twenty two people in the house. Housing this quickly is something Social Services cannot do except through Bed and Breakfast at enormous expense, and then only if you have young kids.

The landlords and Council of Brighton have up to now had an easy time of it. Squatters groups in the past have always split up after the initial surge has died down. They have usually consisted of single isolated squats who have nowhere to fall back on when evicted.

"WE DO NOT INTEND THIS TO HAPPEN TO US. We are organised and have powerful co-ordination from squat to squat", said a spokesman at one house. "If evicted from one house we always have at least one other lined up ready to move into!"

The Brighton and Hove Squatters association is organised to do two things.



They are not breaking the law but using it, (see 'Builders Knock Squat') and are most careful to keep to the letter of the law. For example, always inform the board and get them to turn on the gas and electricity; and pay for it.

If you do not have a decent place to live join the Squatters Association. Squat and solve the problem yourself. But do not think you are going to get an easy ride, you are not, it is a running battle against the property owners. The Squatters Association will help families in need of a bed or roof over their heads. They do have a few conditions for people to join them, no alcoholics or drug addicts - sorry, and people must be considerate to neighbours.

The association also needs material support in the form of pots and pans, bedding, carpets, etc.

2

TWO to publicise the property/housing situation.

The aim of the publicity is to make the general public aware, and the council unable to ignore, the reality of the housing/property situation in Brighton:

- * to explode the myth that there is not sufficient housing because of lack of building land, with 3000 + empty houses in Brighton there is plenty of space, it only needs the will to take it over
- * to show up the racket whereby investment companies buy up property and deliberately empty it, allowing it to fall into ruin in order to be allowed to pull it down and build offices or expensive luxury flats.

IF YOU CAN HELP, OR WANT TO JOIN CONTACT THE SQUATTERS ASSOCIATION THROUGH BIT BY BIT INFORMATION SERVICE 7 VICTORIA ROAD, BRIGHTON. 'phone 2 7 8 7 8.

SQUATTING NEWS

FOR
SALE
SQUAT

Regency Square

I have been living at the squat at 29 Regency Square for a week. Last night (15th April) I returned to find the place deserted and signs that the place had been ransacked, my clothing strewn all over the place.

The signs were that the police had been there. I phoned the police station and asked if they were holding Elizabeth Davies, one of the people living in the squat. I was told they were holding a Miss. Davies but they were not willing to give me information over the phone. They asked me if I would go to the police station where they would tell me why they were holding her.

At the station I was interviewed by two officers who asked me where I lived. When I told them, I was arrested on a charge of burglary under the Theft Act of 1968 for breaking into 29 Regency Square although the door was already open - this being the way the police had gained admittance to the premises. However, my own room was locked and the police broke into that.

At 10.30 next morning an additional charge was made, which was theft. In court the police offered no evidence on the burglary charge and asked the court to dismiss it. We had been told that if we admitted the theft charge the burglary one would be dropped and we had agreed to do this on the advice of our solicitor.

We received a ten pound fine each for stealing the gas we used for cooking and heating in the squat. The court was informed by our solicitor that we had been trying to contact the Gas Board to get a legal supply.

I hope that when we try to get the electricity turned on I won't have to go through the whole rigmarole again and buy another new door. One thing I have learned is not to go down to the police station next time if I receive another kind invitation.

Ken Jenkins

Brunswick Square

On Monday the 15th April some 'builders' arrived at 36 Brunswick Square. They entered the premises by the back door. We called the police! By the time they arrived the builders had knocked out a large window and two walls and generally fucked us about. At the police station Chief Inspector Hollis told the 'builders' to stop until legal council had been taken. They stopped work. Then the press arrived and took some notes and pictures.

The architect in charge of the builders said that they have got permission from a 'SUPER-PIG', we do not know who gave it, to enter the premises. After the press had departed he started getting abusive about the squat movement generally. The builders departed at about 4.30 without making good the damage they had caused (they were asked to do so).

We now have a 24 hour watch on the building. The owners are becoming indignant about the fact that we can use the law as well as them.

Resident,
36 Brunswick Sq.

HOUSING: more cut-backs more excuses

Only 170 old council houses in Brighton will be modernised this year instead of over 200. These figures were given to us when we phoned Brighton's Housing Manager, Mr May, and he blamed the government for the cut-back. £300,000 have been slashed from the local improvement budget and the government has made it clear that all councils are to slow down their modernisation programmes. WHY? They say that it is government policy to house the homeless before improving the houses of those who have already got homes. WHY CAN'T THEY DO BOTH? There are no good reasons why they can't. They just blame the 'economic situation'. We've heard that often enough before both from the government and the local authority, but you can't fool all the people all the time. Just go up to North Moulsecoomb and ask them why they haven't been modernised and why they won't be modernised this year or even next and what do they say? "They always start modernising where it shows, on the outside of the council estates, along the main roads so that everyone can say what lovely houses Brighton Council has. But by the time they get to the middle of the estates or into bits no one sees the money runs out."

And so the people who have been hoping for a decent kitchen and a bit of central heating, an end to damp and unplastered walls will have to go on waiting. And will more of the homeless be housed as a result? What do you think? Do you think that in Brighton there will be a sudden spurt in buying up empty properties, a sudden change in housing policy to permit squatters to take over disused houses or self-help housing associations to buy them up and renovate them? Those are the only changes which would dramatically reduce the list of homeless, but shall we see them in Brighton? NO. What we will see is just a BIG SLOW-DOWN IN MODERNISATION.

Should we at least be grateful that 170 houses will be modernised? Should we hell! The people who run our society would not be seen dead in a council house. In Brighton and all over the country those who are in charge of our 'economic situation' normally live as far away from council estates as they can and treat council tenants as an inferior species. All over the place you find the view that council tenants wouldn't know how to look after a decent house so there's no point in giving them one.

And people who say that sort of thing also treat the homeless as a new kind of vagrant. They have to be 'patient' and 'wait their turn' for one year, two years, perhaps ten. It is these attitudes and the structure of our society that breeds them which are responsible for sub-standard housing and, still worse, the mounting list of homeless.

DON'T BELIEVE THEM. The 'economic situation' is just a convenient excuse however much the housing manager may genuinely believe it. It is the whole nasty set-up of our society that's at fault and until we change that the struggle for housing will always be the class struggle it is at the moment. And that isn't socialist clap-trap, as many people try to pretend it is. It's the reality of today as of yesterday. If you don't agree ask yourself how many wealthy middle-class and upper-class people you know who live in sub-standard houses or who have no home at all. O.K. So where's the clap-trap?

FIGHT FOR A DECENT HOME!
FIGHT FOR A NEW SOCIETY!
IT'S THE SAME STRUGGLE.



Thank God I don't live in a dump like that

"Councillor visits 'fed-up' tenants"

Not much is known about the owners of the squat at 123 Kings Road, near the Metropole Hotel. But some evidence points to the well-known property company, the Twentieth Century Banking Corporation, which is involved in shady deals all over Brighton. In Voice 22, a long article revealed the way in which an entire block of town - Hove's Brunswick Terrace - had been taken over and allowed to fall waste. People living in the nearby Mermaid Hotel suggest that they may be involved - but the squatters look set for a long stay until the real owners come forward.

The personnel manager of East Sussex Library Services is well known for faux pas. A man with a (blown-up?) sense of his own importance, Mr Lunt surpassed himself during the recent outbreak of letter bombings. Some Lewes staff found on their desks a duplicated list of names and a letter informing them

that they had been designated bomb search officers. This they were told was voluntary, although the list of their names was included with the letter. Besides being on the look-out for packages and thick letters of suspicious nature (like all those packets of books piled up in the corridor?) their duties would include staying behind in the event of a bomb scare to search for the bugger. The police nearly had kittens when they heard about these 'voluntary' guinea pigs, the library staff exploded and a deflated Lunt sent round another letter rescinding his first one. That, we are told, often happens.

WHAT A BOMBER!

ALL TENANTS! Read this letter!

Dear Voice,

Being an ex resident of Brighton I read the 'Voice' but infrequently, however I have noticed that housing standards are a recurrent theme, and in particular the standards of what the Housing acts term "houses in multiple occupation". Therefore, I thought to myself, Voice readers would be interested to know what standards they have a right to expect under the Public Health and Housing Acts in this context.

A house in multiple occupation is one occupied by persons who do not form a single household (s58 Housing Act 1969). This includes houses divided into self-contained flats, lodgings, houses rented out to groups of people for sharing and it may include Guest Houses and Hotels, though this is a matter in legal dispute

The standards to be expected, as laid down by the various acts, are :-

OVERCROWDING s90 Housing Act 1957.

i) Single room lettings:-

all purpose (living eating sleeping etc)

1 person 150 sq ft.

2 persons 200 sq ft.

sleeping only (communal meals)
70 sq ft / person.

ii) two room lettings;

a) bedsitroom + separate kitchen
bedsit area,

1 person 135 sq ft

2 persons 180 sq ft

b) kitchen/ living room +
bedroom.

1 person 70 sq ft bed'rm

120 sq ft living

2 persons 120 sq ft bed

160 sq ft living

c) multi room lettings.

kitchen/living room

1 person 120 sq ft

2 persons or more

160 sq ft.

each bedroom

1 person 70 sq ft

2 persons 120 sq ft.

The local authority MAY serve notice under s90 to prevent any room being used for sleeping - this would be used for unsuitable rooms, kitchens and rooms providing common access to other parts of the house.

OVEROCCUPATION s19 Housing act 1961

If because of size or character a house is considered by the council to be unsuitable for multi-occupation then they may impose an upper limit on the number of people who may live there.

YOUR RIGHTS

FACILITIES s15 Housing Act 1961

All premises should be provided with :-

- A gas or electric point for cooking.
- Heating points in inhabitable rooms.
- A sink with hot and cold water.
- A ventilated food store.
- Adequate natural and artificial lighting: - Windows to be not less than 1/10 floor area. All rooms to have electric light point.
- Adequate ventilation; - openable parts of windows should be at least 1/20 floor area. (Mechanical ventilation acceptable in kitchens, bathrooms and wc compartments.) permanent ventilation (eg airbrick, window disc etc) in all rooms with gas appliances.
- Wholesome water supply :- a mains (i.e. the cold water at a sink should not come from a tank) supply of water
- Washing facilities :- one bathroom per 8 persons with hot and cold water
- One wc per 5 persons. (ministry of health and local gov't circular 16/62.)
- Refuse :- covered bins or approved sacks - one per family or two single person lettings.

FIRE ESCAPES s16 Housing act 1961.

The local authority MAY require provisions of fire escapes by means of a statutory notice. The standards will be set by the local fire authority. If this cannot be met at reasonable expense then the LA may accept an undertaking from the landlord not to let the part of the premises in question - if the undertaking is broken then a closing order may be made.

If any of the facilities above are not provided within a time specified by the council then they may step in, do the work, and reclaim the cost from the landlord.

Readers will note that these powers are used only at the discretion of the council - they may choose to bury their collective head in the sand! If they so choose it is up to tenants and interested bodies to fight for the implementation of these provisions where they are not being vigourously applied.

In the case of defective or substandard drainage (leaking gutters, broken downpipes, defective wc's, disused sewers, cesspits and the like) the council MUST serve notice on the owners requiring repairs or satisfactory provision to be made (s39 Public Health Act 1936).

In all respects the person to contact first, should you reckon that you are living in a substandard house, is the landlord. If no satisfaction is obtained then the Public Health Inspector (alias Environmental Health Officer) should be contacted.

Yours sincerely,
David Denton.



food co-op

The food co-op which has been experiencing problems in recent weeks has closed down due to lack of interest.

If anyone wants to start it up again they should contact Open, who have the info about the wholesale market and a 'phone (27878) that can be used to collect members orders.

Participation by more people is needed for a co-op to be a viable proposition. Cheap fruit and veg can be yours....the more people in the co-op the better it is.

info...

AGE-CONCERN.

57 Ditchling Rd., (683275).
Old people's welfare.

BIT-BY-BIT.

7 Victoria Rd., (27878).
Information service.

BPAS. Wistons,

138 Dyke Rd., (509726).
Pregnancy testing, abortions,
vasectomy.

BRIGHTON RIGHTS CENTRE.

2 Prince Albert St.
Advice on legal and
welfare problems.
Tues & Thurs 5-7pm.
(202492)

CANCER PREVENTION. (29801).

CITIZEN'S ADVICE BUREAU.
17 Ditchling Rise, (61664).
St. George's Place, 2.15
-4.15 daily.

Whitehawk Community Centre.
Thursdays 2-4pm, no appoint-
ment necessary.
Free, helpful advice.

FAMILY PLANNING CLINIC.

18-19 Western Rd. (734258).
Also c/o Health Centre,
University of Sussex.
Lewes Clinic, (Lewes 4403)

FRIEND.

Monday evenings (61664)
Weekdays, 10-6, (739729)

GAY SWITCHBOARD

Information and Advice
Brighton 27878, 7 Victoria
rd. Meet every Sunday at
above, 8-10.

HOUSING ADVICE CENTRE.

7 Grand Parade.

MARRIAGE GUIDANCE COUNCIL.
46 Grand Parade, (681919).

NOCL.

Richard Moseley,
2 Gloucester St., (684256).

OFF THE RECORD.

(63080).
Monday-Friday, 8-10pm.
Youth Service. Help with sex
problems, loneliness etc.

RENT TRIBUNAL.

Anston House, 137 Preston Rd
(506381).
Rent disputes, security of
tenure etc.

SAMARITANS.

(733333), 24 hours a day.
VOLUNTARY SERVICE CENTRE.
17 Ditchling Rise (61664)

PLEASE

Please don't send mail
for us to Gloucester St.
as it will probably be
undelivered. We are now
at 7 Victoria Rd.

napers

EDUCAT.

42 Egremont Place, (680258).
Teacher and education mag.
No.2, out now, 15p (20p post)

BRIGHT TIMES.

7 Victoria Rd., (27878)
Literary and news. Altern-
ative community paper.

LITTLE DIGGER & BRIGHTON FOR KIDS.

117 Hartington Rd. and Public
House, 15p.
Magazine and guide for and
by kids.

POVERTY HARDSHIP BUT HAPPINESS.

First of a series in which
Brighton working people tell
their own stories. 25p.

QUEENSPARK.

14 Toronto Terrace.
62 Bentham Rd., (688380).
Local newspaper.

WHOLE EARTH PAPER.

7 Victoria Rd.
Out now, 10p.

groups/ gatherings

ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP.

Adrian King,
60 Tragalgar Rd., Portslade.

ANTI-RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN.

Tom, (684256).

A.S.NEILL TRUST.

(691712).
Local branch for alternat-
ive education projects.

BFT.

Support your local (non-
profitmaking) Film Theatre.

BRIGHTON HOSTEL.

105 Islingwood Rd.,
Meals Sun & Wed 2-5pm.
Tea, toast and stew at
other times if possible.
Needs clothes, food & HELP.

BRIGHTON SOCIETY ENVIRON- MENTAL GROUP.

Selma Montford,
10 Clermont Rd., (509209).
Against bad planning on
social and aesthetic grounds.

BRIGHTON TENANTS ASSOC.

7 Victoria Rd., (27878).
Meetings Tuesdays 8pm.
Or contact Russ Moseley,
(683348).

BRITAIN/GDR SOCIETY

(686259)
Facts and info on East
Germany.

BRITISH SOVIET FRIENDSHIP

SOCIETY.
(62794).

BUILDING CO-OP.

People interested in
getting one together
contact Ray & Stephan,
692766.

CENTRE FOR INVESTIGATION OF PROPERTY SPECULATION.

(691712).
C.H.E. (CAMPAIGN FOR
HOMOSEXUAL EQUALITY).
Marlborough Hotel (First
Floor Hall, Princes St,
2nd & 4th Tuesdays each
month, 8.30pm. Contact
Graham Wilkinson,
3a Montpelier Villas, or
Brian Hart, (28356).

CLAIMANT'S UNION.

7 Victoria Rd., (27878).
Meetings Mondsays 8pm.

CLAP (COMMUNITY LEVY FOR ALTERNATIVE PROJECTS).

Details in CLAP catalogue.
Send your CLAP TAX to:
BIT, 146 Great Western Rd.,
London, W.11.

EAST BRIGHTON RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION.

G.Andrews. 8 Twineham Rd.,
(687715).
Concerned with redevelop-
ment in Whitehawk.

FIVEWAYS PLAYGROUP.

Florence Rd., Field.
(near No.10)

FOOD CO-OP.

7 Victoria Rd., (27878)

See page 14

FOOTBALL CLUB in Holling-

dean, 80 boys, 30 train
Wednesdays 7-9pm. 4 teams
play Saturdays. Help
needed. Contact Peter
Carver (500232) or
Brian Webb (680522)

FREE ROOM FOR COMMUNITY

USE. Day or evening. For
community info a typewriter
and photocopier will be
available during the day.
Chris Miller. Social
Services Dept., 15 Prince's
St., (29801 ext. 674)

FREE VET: P.D.S.A.

6 Oxford St., (63606).
Donations welcomed.

FRIENDS CENTRE.

Snip St., (27835).
Wide range of classes
including planning.
Tuesdays 7.30.

HOUSING ACTION GROUP.

Patrick Cohen, 29 Addison Rd
Hove. Meets at 7 Victoria
Rd., Tuesdays 8pm.

HUNT SABOTEURS ASSOCIATION

P.O.Box 130, Kingston upon
Thames, Surrey. Produces
HOWL magazine.

MOTHER & TODDLER AFTERNOON.

Westdene Library. Tuesdays
2.30-3.15 (term time).
Coffee, toys, picture books
-meet other mums.

MOULESCOOMB ADVENTURE

PLAYGROUND. Needs money,
material and help to
rebuild the playground.
Arthur & Dave,
c/o 67 Centre, off
Hodshrove Rd., Moulescoomb
(682428).

NATIONAL UNION OF SCHOOL STUDENTS.

Ben, 13 Prince Edward's Rd.,
Lewes, (2731).
Power to the classroom.

PENSIONERS AND TRADE UNION ASSOCIATION.

Keith Orange,
22 Whippingham Rd.

PRE-SCHOOL HANDICAPPED

KIDS & MUMS OPPORTUNITY
GROUP. TUESDAYS 1.30-3.30.
Mrs. S. McCormick,
44 Inwood Cres., (509431).

PRIOR HOUSE.

Carlton Hill, (681925).
Youth & Community Centre.
Many activities including:
Old People's lunch,
Tuesdays 12.30-2.00, 20p.
Open Creche,
Thursdays 9.30-12.00, 10p.

RANK & FILE. (735925).

Group of teachers in N.U.T.
The RIGHT TO READ. Classes
at Connaught FE Centre,

Connaught Rd., Hove.

Evenings. Help for adults
who can't read or write.
Phone 720406 - evenings-
if you need help or know
anyone who can't read this.
All queries in strict
privacy.

SAVE THE PINK CAMPAIGN.

Enquiries to: John Lloyd
Forum Gallery,
16 Market St., (28578).

SUSSEX GAY LIBERATION FRONT.

Marlborough Hotel (Attic
Room) Prince's St., Brighton
1st & 3rd Tuesdays each
month 8.30. 5th Tuesdays
Alternate CHE & SGLF.
Saloon Bar, prior to meeting

TRADES COUNCIL

Keith Orange,
22 Whippingham Rd.

TRANSPORT 2000.

Kevin McNulty,
75 Upper Lewes Rd.

UPPER NORTH STREET RESIDENTS.

Robert Gregory,
97 Upper North St. (26749)

WHOLE EARTH GROUP.
7 Victoria Rd., (27878)
Wednesdays 8pm.
Sec, Alastair Nisbet,
54 Queens Park Rd.

WOMEN'S CENTRE.
79 Buckingham Rd., (27612)
Open daily. Come for
company, help, playgroup,
pregnancy testing, creche
facilities and coffee bar.

Women's Day In Brighton
May 10th. 10am-4.30pm
Friends Centre, Ship St.
Films, Bookstall,
Jumble Sale, Creche etc.

LOVE BETWEEN WOMEN.
Group forming. Exploring
all aspects of love between
women. Contact Women's
Centre.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION.
Jen de Winter,
154 Harbour Way,
Shoreham (87-61680).

**WORKING ASSOCIATION OF
MOTHERS**
Linda Kirsella (55134),
baby sitting, creche,
coffee mornings.

politics

**BRIGHTON PAVILION & KEMP TOWN
LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS**
John Balance,
54 Coleman St., (23996).
Meets Tuesdays 8pm at 179
Lewes Rd.

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

**COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN
(MARXIST-LENINIST).**
Meets 37 Gloucester Rd.
1st Friday each month.
(684404).

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS.
Sec: 33 Ventnor Villas, Hove.

LABOUR PARTY.
Kemp Town.
179 Lewes Rd., (62592)
Pavilion:
90 Sedgewick Rd., (557944).

LIBERAL PARTY.
Pavilion.
Francis Hix,
143a, Western Rd., (26560)

shops

ANANDA.
Now at 19 Bond St.
Odds and ends to make your
life good

BRIGHTON WORKERS BOOKSHOP.
37 Gloucester Rd., (684404)
CPB(M-L), Sats 9.30-6pm.

THE GARDEN
22 Trafalgar St.
Vegetarian cafe. Mon-Thurs
10-8pm. Fri-Sat 10-11pm.

GARUDAS.
17 Kensington Gdns. (662983)
crafts, coffee, pictures.

INFINITY FOODS.
25 North Rd.
Macrobiotic and organic
foods and vegetables.

OPEN CAFE.
7 Victoria Rd., (27878).
Sun-Thurs 12-8pm.
Fri-Sat 12-11pm. Cheap
vegetarian food.

PUBLIC HOUSE BOOKSHOP.
21 Little Preston St.,
(28357). Alternative,
radical books & mags. Lots
more coffee.

SYMPOSIUM BOOKSHOP
12 Market St., (28142)
Books, mags - the radical
stuff.

THREE ROOMS CAFE.
14 Blatchington Rd., Hove.
(779933). Vegetarian Cafe.
Lunches Mon-Sat 10-3pm.
3 course meal 45p.

People's Free Fair

This summer, Brighton is going to be host to a weekend People's Festival, to which groups and individuals from many parts of the country will be coming.

Following the success of last year's Environmental Fair organised by the Whole Earth Group, the People's Festival will be run on the same lines but with broader themes.

There will be visiting groups of musicians, street theatre, kids carnival, and stalls and exhibits on community action and environmental issues.

The date: Saturday, June 14th from 12 noon in the grounds of the University of Sussex at Falmer.

It is hoped that as many local groups as possible will organise something for the fair--a special event or a stall publicising their activities.

Joint organisers are Link-up (Student Community Action) and Whole Earth. Details from Fair Collective, 54 Queens Park Road, Brighton (s.a.e. please!).

... stop press ... stop press ...

Information has just come to light concerning property companies involved in some of the houses now being squatted. Behind the attack on the Brunswick Square squat (page 12) is Roderick Properties. There is a whole street - St. Michael's Place - which is a monument to their vandalism. The man originally behind this company - Decker - has a record the equal of Hoogstraten, including one near conviction after a student was thrown from a balcony in St. Michael's Place. The new boss is David Head - a businessman who lives in an enormous 'naval' style house on Shoreham Beach and who pushes round the few remaining tenants of St. Michael's Place from an office at No. 21. Head has applied for a writ, and the case comes up in the London High Court on May 9th.

late info

Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding presents "Freedom Railway" a new film about the Tan-Zam railway by Felix Greene. Friends Meeting House, Ship St. Brighton. 7-30pm May 10th. Admission 45p. OAPs 25p.

JOURNALISTS FIGHT BACK
The Trades Council has passed a resolution expressing extreme disquiet at the undemocratic editorship of the Evening Argus and they urge all union branches to discuss Gorrings's censorship and pass their own resolutions.

WHERE YOU CAN BUY THE VOICE

CENTRAL BRIGHTON
ANANDA: 19 Bond St.
ECCOTT'S: 52 Surrey St.
GARDEN CAFE: 22 Trafalgar St.
GARUDA'S: 17 Kensington Gdns.
INFINITY FOODS: 25 North Rd.
OPEN CAFE: 7 Victoria Rd.
STREET NEWS-STAND: N.E. corner
Churchill Square.
SYMPOSIUM BOOKS: 12 Market St.
UPPER GARDEN FR ST. MARKET.

WEST BRIGHTON & HOVE
CORDELL'S: 99 Western Rd., Hove.
PUBLIC HOUSE: 21 Little Preston St.
THREE ROOMS CAFE: 14 Blatchington Rd.

NORTH BRIGHTON
FRANKLIN'S: 93 Preston Drive.
GRIGG'S: 4 Clyde Rd.
SCHOFIELD'S: 44 Lewes Rd.
TOBIAS'S STORES: 167 Elm Grove.

KEMP TOWN
BOOKS: 80b St. James's St.
LUMLEY'S: 146 Edward St.
KEMP TOWN BOOKS: 91 St. George's Rd.
ST. JAMES'S NEWSAGENTS: 91 St. James's St.

UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY BOOKSHOP: Main counter.

Anyone/everyone invited to submit material
WRITE TO BRIGHTON VOICE 7 VICTORIA RD.
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Brighton.

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.