

"HOW CAN A PUBLICATION WHICH WILL NOT EVEN NAME ITS EDITOR AND WHICH ACTS LIKE A SECRET SOCIETY, BE REGARDED SERIOUSLY...?" "I HAVE NO TIME, INDEED ONLY CONTEMPT, FOR A PUBLICATION THAT PERSISTS IN HIDING BEHIND A CLOAK OF ANONYMITY"

So wrote Mr Victor P. Gorringe, editor-in-chief of the Evening Argus, in reply to the local NUJ when they asked him why the Argus had not carried the story of Andrew Bowden's attempt to restrict our circulation (see Issue 33), something which received wide coverage both on Radio Brighton and in the National Press.

Well, first things first. We don't have an editor so we can't name him/her. It may be beyond Mr Gorringe's comprehension but the Voice works as a collective. That means that we all have an equal say and the opportunity to do any job connected with the paper. Secondly, we do not hide behind a "cloak of anonymity". If Mr Gorringe cared to look on the inside back page of any issue he could have found out when and where we meet. We'll make it easy for him this time, and give our address below. He's welcome to come along. So is anyone who feels they have something to contribute towards making Brighton a better place to live in.

WHO WE ARE

WHY DO WE THINK THE VOICE IS NECESSARY? Because everything that affects our lives seems to be run by groups acting mostly in their own interests. For instance, property speculators, aided and abetted by the Council, estate agents,

landlords and builders, are ripping Brighton apart. And because in lots of other ways all the decisions which affect us are made by such people. All the local media are controlled by those same established interests, people who want to keep 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.



THE VOICE IS YOUR PAPER
COME AND JOIN US
We meet on Sundays at 8-8.30pm
at Open Cafe, 7 Victoria Rd
Brighton.

BRIGHTON VOICE

Decisions about the Voice are made by those of the collective who are present at the open Sunday meetings held every week. At these meetings we plan the coming issue, discussing articles, arranging for articles to be researched and written and planning the preparation of the "paste-up sheets" from which the Voice is printed. We also plough through more mundane matters such as how many copies we should print (about 1500 at present), whether we can afford to buy a second typewriter, etc. No votes are taken and no one imposes his or her will on others. If we can't reach agreement about something we leave it and discuss it again at a later meeting.



PEOPLE BEFORE PROFITS

NEW CAR PARK FOR BRIGHTON!

The Tories' overriding concern for the town's prosperity was revealed yet again at the last meeting of Brighton Council. Following a decision to increase local bus fares "to make public transport pay its way", they condemned the Labour Party's proposals to reduce traffic congestion in central Brighton.

During a debate on car parks, the question of whether a shoppers' car park at the back of Johnson's and Woolworths in Western Rd. should be given the go-ahead was discussed. In spite of Cllr Jermy's account of Brighton's generous parking facilities, he and other Tory councillors spoke in favour of allowing yet another N.C.P. monstrosity to be built.

As the voting took an inevitable course on the side of the Tories, it seemed that Brighton as a place to live had been forgotten. Committed to the idea of a prosperous town centre, our cllrs had rejected the idea of a positive traffic policy which might frighten off the wealthy car-owners and on this basis they were bound to favour an additional car park. And bus fares will continue to rise as public transport cannot be profitable in a system which favours the car-owner.

Homosexuals and the Law

The law concerning homosexual men in England and Wales was changed in 1967—but certain kinds of homosexual behaviour are still illegal. In Scotland, although it is official policy not to prosecute for private homosexual activity between two men of 21 and over, and in N. Ireland, homosexual activity between men remains illegal.

Homosexual Women.

Except in the Armed Forces, lesbian behaviour is usually ignored by the law. However, women can technically be charged with indecent or insulting behaviour, or with indecent assault and although there is no age of consent for lesbianism, a woman committing an 'act of gross indecency' with a girl under the age of 14 would be committing an offence. Nevertheless, charges of this kind are seldom if ever brought.

Homosexuals.

In England and Wales, homosexual behaviour between two men is lawful providing that it takes place in private between consenting parties of 21 and over. It is not lawful if either man is mentally defective, if either man is a member of the Armed Forces or if, both men being merchant seamen, it occurs on board a merchant ship.



'In Private'.

The main problem with the law on homosexual behaviour is that the Act gives a very narrow meaning to the words 'in private'. Sex between homosexual men is never in private if there are more than two people in the room or if the place can be used by the public (this applies to a public lavatory even though there are only two people inside and the door is locked). In other cases, it will depend on all the circumstances and whether the Court decides that a particular place is, in these circumstances, 'in private'.

'Importuning'.

If you try to pick up another man in the street or any public place, you may be charged with 'persistently importuning for an immoral purpose'. 'Importuning' can be nothing more than smiling at a man, 'persistently' can mean trying repeatedly to pick people up, or it can mean trying to pick up the same person more than once. In practice the police tend only to arrest people for this offence in public lavatories or in places which are well-known for pickups.

'Indecent Assault'.

'Indecent assault' is a term used to describe a wide range of sexual acts with people under the age of consent. This can cover light touching to forcible buggery. The term is also used to cover sexual acts with a person of the same sex above the age of consent who did not consent.

'Gross Indecency'.

This term is not fully defined in law, but it can be any sexual act other than buggery. Actual physical contact does not need to take place, but it has to be shown that a grossly indecent exhibition between men was occurring.

Men under 21

If one or both men is under 21, a prosecution can take place once the case has been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions and he has decided to proceed. However, this does not mean that the police do not arrest, charge or detain people in this position. A boy under 14 is presumed in law to be incapable of sexual intercourse, so he cannot be convicted of rape or buggery. But he can be convicted of aiding and abetting these offences, or of other offences such as indecent assault. A boy under 16 cannot in law consent to being the victim

of an indecent assault, which means that he cannot be convicted of it. Aged over 16 a man is presumed to be capable of consenting to an indecent assault, so both he and his partner can be convicted of gross indecency.

Entrapment.

The police have been known to act as 'agents provocateurs' in plain clothes by trying to lure homosexual men into committing an offence. This process is known as entrapment of an offender. It most commonly happens in a public lavatory. It is not a sufficient defence to say that you were tricked into committing an offence but, if you are charged with indecent assault, you may be able to argue that the policeman invited you to touch him and that he was a willing partner—in which case no assault could have taken place. If you are entrapped by a policeman, try to get the names and addresses of any witnesses.

Transvestites

Although there is no law against wearing clothes traditionally worn by the opposite sex, the police sometimes charge male transvestites with insulting or indecent behaviour, or behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace.

NCCLNCCLNCCLNCCLNCCLNCCLNCCLNCC

The above has been reproduced from Volume 1 Number 2 of the NCCL magazine "Rights!"

MARC 1

West Pier wizz-kid Marc Turner unveiled his £2m for the pier at a public meeting held at the Friends Centre on March 31st. The plans were, as people in the audience were not slow to point out, vulgar. But then we live in vulgar times and, as Cough John Smith said, when the original pier was first built people considered that vulgar.

Still, Mr Turner does have some good ideas. But, and he would be the first to admit it, he's out to make money and when profits are at stake good ideas voiced in the early stages of a scheme tend to be forgotten later. You only have to look at the latest plans for the Marina! So we hope that when the new, vulgar West Pier eventually gets built, the promised free creche, free children's playground, and easy access for people in wheelchairs, plus other good things, won't just have disappeared out to sea.

BITS & PIECES

FRIENDS AND FOES

Andrew Bowden is once more in the limelight—not content with having a go at the primary school teachers (see last issue)—he's now directing his attack against the Friends' Centre, where he claims adults learning to read and write are being subjected to left-wing political indoctrination. What does he base his absurd claims on?—eight out of a possible eighty examples of reading material!

Just who or what does Andrew Bowden think he is? (Perhaps we could offer him a few suggestions). Does he really think that because a person can't read or write then he/she is incapable of forming any political opinions of his/her own? You don't need to be able to read to be subjected to the right-wing indoctrination and bias of TV.

Would he rather they read nothing but middle-class sexist propaganda like "Janet and John"—the usual type of indoctrination that we were all subjected to? No doubt Bowden was brought up on nothing but "Janet and John" and absorbed every bit of it—and it shows.

Just because a person hasn't learnt to read or write does not mean that he/she is an imbecile incapable of thinking for him/herself—it's a pity the same can't be said for certain MPs. Those learning at the Friends' Centre and those helping, are quite capable of choosing their own reading material—they don't need headmaster Bowden to tell them what they can or cannot read. We suggest Mr Bowden looks up the word "freedom" in the dictionary and writes it out one hundred times. We wonder if he'll ever learn what it means.



Make a note in your diaries. On April 26th at the Dome the Sussex Police Male Voice Choir presents "Coppers in Concert"! And next time? "Pigs at the Piano"? "Rozzers Recital"? or the "Phuzz Philharmonics"? At least it keeps them off the street.

PIGEON HOLE

Infinity Foods are unquestionably one of the great exponents of "alternative" food retailing in the town. It also appears that they are involved in alternative forms of postal communication. When a Voice reporter called with a letter recently, out of shop hours, he was unable to find any trace of a letter box, despite searching for some five minutes. Perhaps they're using pigeons?



OVERTIME BAN?

Despite instructions from a special conference that an overtime ban should be enforced by all NALGO members as from April 1st, we will have to wait a bit longer to see if the County Council services are to be affected.

A Special General Meeting of the East Sussex NALGO branch, held on March 22nd, voted to ballot members on the ban and also on a proposed one-day strike and demonstration designed to highlight the effects of the next round of cuts in public expenditure. This has put the branch in breach of national policy, and laid members open to disciplinary action—though it is unlikely that any will be taken.

While some members called for strong action against further cuts, the executive took a weaker line and eventually those who "want to keep the union out of politics" carried the day. The most effective actions called for were withdrawn before a vote had been taken; they would, among other things, have suspended member's work on the preparation of redundancy notices and prevented the payment of Councillor's expenses.

The blinkered and forelock-touching attitude of most NALGO members will undoubtedly defeat both matters up for ballot, and the next National Conference (in May) will probably reverse the Union's policy anyway. We ~~can~~ then return to our normal posture making threatening noises without actually having to do anything.

A Social Worker.

TAKEN TO TASK

Following the publication of the Performance Review Task Group report on the Social Services (see Voice 36), NALGO has now produced its initial response.

This condemns the report as "unsatisfactory" and "ill-conceived" and makes it clear that no case has been made out for the sweeping changes—including many redundancies—it proposes. Unless evidence can be produced to back up the report's conclusions, the Union states that members "will not tolerate or implement" any changes in organisation. It also states that NALGO "will not be prepared to participate in any further exercise of this kind" without detailed consultation in advance.

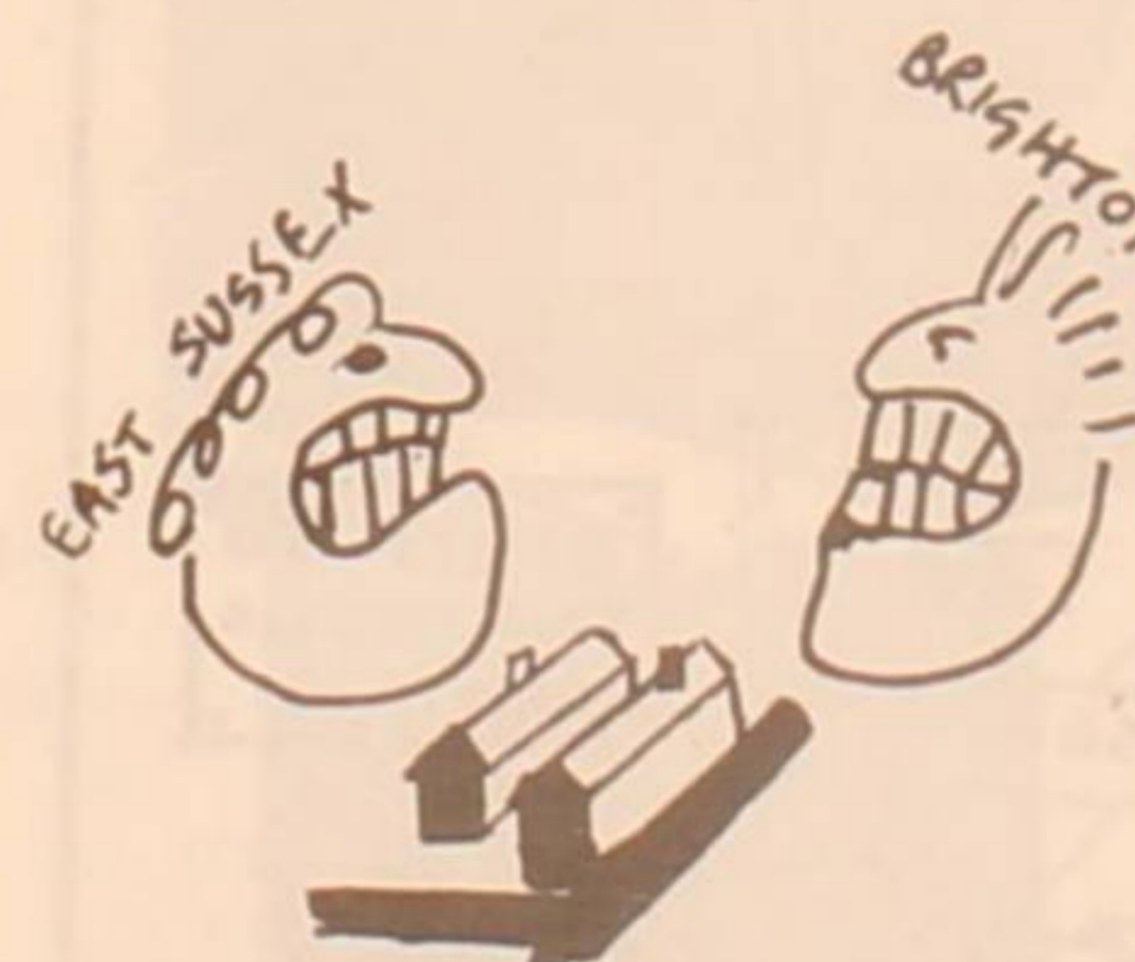
The Voice applauds NALGO's stand against the Creeping Cuts—because this is what the Task Group is all about. Amid spurious cries of "efficiency" and "rationalisation" they hope to lop substantial quantities off various departmental budgets. We don't know who will be next for the chop, but you can bet there won't be a Performance Review Task Group investigation into Councillor expenses.



A few weeks ago Councillor Dudley Baker, leader of the Tory group on Brighton Council, was strolling through Churchill Square when he saw a Dog going, as the Americans would put it, to the bathroom. He chased after the animal's owner and made the man clear up the mess. Good for Councillor Baker! But we only wish that he could recognise crap when it's spoken almost daily by him and his Conservative colleagues.



The people of George St. and lower St James St. Brighton, who have been battling for the last nine months to prevent an enormous office block and supermarket complex from destroying their intimate residential and small trader area, now find themselves caught up in the middle of war between Brighton Planning Ctee and their E.Sussex counterparts.



Brighton councillors have always resented their demotion from county borough status and are using the George St. affair as a way of attacking E.Sussex. When the Green Elms Property Co., (a subsidiary of J. Lyons and Co.) first proposed their ambitious scheme last summer the Brighton Ctee rightly decided that because of the large area of office space the matter was a county responsibility and accordingly referred it to County hall. At this point an alternative plan was introduced by the Save George St. Committee and was presented to E.Sussex along with the Green Elms proposal. The E.Sussex Ctee was far more interested in the alternative plan and threw out the Green Elms proposal on the grounds that the proposed offices went against the County structure plan. Green Elms lodged an appeal with the minister which is still pending, and so the matter rested for a while.

This March Green Elms have decided to try a different tactic. They have resubmitted their original plan to Brighton accompanied by an eight page letter complaining in great detail about the way in which their application was handled by E.Sussex i.e. the informal consideration of the alternative plan. This letter greatly incensed some Brighton councillors who jumped up and down

waving their copies, thoughtfully provided by council officials who did not see fit to do the same with any of the 90 plus letters of objection to the plan. These self-important councillors felt that the action of E.Sussex was a snub against them, and, anxious to assert their independence the Committee declared that after all it was a local matter and gave formal approval to Green Elms - supermarket, offices, car-park, the lot.

In doing this not only have Brighton Planning Ctee acted beyond their powers, they have also acted in bad faith by approving a matter on which they decided the opposite way last year and which was still pending appeal to the ministry.

The planning implications of the committee decision to give this plan the go-ahead will be wide reaching. If Brighton gets away with it this time, the £86,000 County Structure Plan will be so much waste paper.

East Sussex has so far made no response to the insult Brighton has paid them, and the Save George Street Committee has accused them of sitting on the fence. It remains to be seen, however, if the issue is raised at the County Planning Committee meeting on April 13th. In the mean time, both the Save George Street Committee and Brighton Society are investigating the possibility of getting a High Court ruling against the decision. And they are complaining to the Ombudsman and requesting an interview with a senior legal advisor in the Dept. of the Environment.

Footnote:

As an illustration of the deviousness of the whole plan, it looks as though the supermarket, which is put forward as the 'reviver of St James St' may prove a white elephant. Serious doubts about its feasibility were expressed by Coun. Ian McGill, who at a public meeting on April 6th, stated that several large supermarket chains were definitely not interested. One had told him that the site was the wrong shape for effective merchandising and that access for delivery trucks was not good enough.

"I have a complaint about Islington Council"



This leaflet explains how you go about it.

This is one of the many public documents produced by Islington Council to help local people cope with the increasing bureaucracy of council business and politics. They also produce a regular newspaper called Info which is open to alternative groups in the area including tenants' associations and various co-ops, they publish updated sheets on how to claim every conceivable kind of benefit, updated addresses and telephone numbers of local councillors and 'action sheets' which tell you how to paste-up, print and distribute community newspapers etc.etc.

What does Brighton or East Sussex provide us with ??? No need to answer that.

But here from the Islington pamphlet are two addresses which the local community of any area ought to know:

If you think you have suffered because of the way the Council's decisions have been carried out and you are dissatisfied with the Council's explanations to you, you can take up the matter with:

The Commission for Local Administration
21 Queen Anne's Gate, London, SW1H 9BU.
Telephone 930 3333.

You may know the Commissioners better as the 'Ombudsman'. Get the leaflet 'Your Local Ombudsman'. It will explain exactly what the 'Ombudsman' can and cannot investigate.

If you are having trouble because of unfair discrimination on such grounds as race or sex you can take this up with the Equal Rights Commission, Overseas House, Quay Street, Manchester M3 3HN. (Telephone: 061-833 9244).

D.H.S.S. - the facts behind the myth.

This article has been written to publicise the views of officials in the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) which were expressed in informal chats with the authors.

1. Social Security Abuse

According to research by the CPAG (Child Poverty Action Group) the extent of social security abuse is a little less than £2m, hence for each £2 wrongly claimed, £11,000 is paid out to claimants who are fully entitled to the benefits they receive. In comparison with tax abuse, social security abuse is definitely a non-problem. If tax-abuse ceased there could be a 5p reduction in the standard rate of tax. However a 150 fold increase in social security abuse would only make a 1p difference rate of tax.

The Brighton DHSS officials we spoke to appeared to be very deceptive in their attitudes to social security abuse. On the one hand they agreed that abuse was at a very low level, and emphasised that this was due to their vigilance in preventing abuse: on the other hand they constantly used examples of people abusing the system as a defence against our suggestion that the DHSS is often unhelpful to claimants. For example, we challenged the DHSS officials with the assertion that many old people didn't claim supplementary benefit, although entitled to it, because they felt frightened by the complicated and daunting procedure necessary to claim it. They replied that in ten out of fifteen cases they had investigated it was found that these old people had savings of thousands of pounds that they had

not declared. On this basis they felt that the issue of non-claiming of benefits was pure fiction, or amounted to no more than 20 or 30 pence a week. Thus from a sample of 15 people they dismissed the issue which affects thousands of people.

We also raised the question of their bitterly-experienced reluctance to act swiftly in providing financial assistance in cases where families are deserted by their breadwinner. They defended the DHSS by explaining that delay was unavoidable because they had to be sure that the break-up was permanent because they asserted that 'it has been known, although we admit not often, that the man disappears and leaves the DHSS to settle all his arrears and then returns to the family having evaded paying his debts.'

2. Discretionary Powers

Initially when we asked about the discretionary powers allowed to DHSS officials in the supplementary benefit scheme, they were keen to point out that they were impartial civil servants trying to implement the Social Security Act, and that, although there were some discretionary elements they were 'very small'. We then pointed out some of the 'very small' powers they have:-

- whether a claimant is a householder or a non-householder.
- whether a claimant is cohabiting
- whether a claimant needs an exceptional needs payment
- whether a claimant has become 'voluntarily unemployed'.

In response to these points they agreed that of course visiting officers 'exercised common sense discretion in the granting of exceptional needs payments and in deciding whether a person is, or is not, a householder'. No doubt the mother of 3 children aged 16, 15 and 10, who asked for an exceptional needs payment to buy her children shoes, and who was given £8.50 will wonder how much common sense her visiting officer possessed.



One high-ranking DHSS official expressed the view that the number of applications for emergency needs grants had risen dramatically because people 'squander' their money. Another official backed him up by saying 'we are not here to support squanderers and alcoholics.' We pointed out that the rise in applications was probably due to an increase in need because of the low benefit levels which can only cover very basic needs. In fact, the majority of emergency needs payments go towards clothing, which is supposed to be provided for by the basic allowance. DHSS officials seem to see this as evidence of claimants being squanderers, we see it as evidence of the inadequacy of benefit levels. Supplementary benefit is supposed to represent the lowest possible income above the poverty line. In Nov. '76 the rates were raised by 15 per cent, but during 1976 there was a 22 per cent rise in the cost of food, so the rise was in fact a cut, and that means a cut below the poverty line.

3. Women and DHSS

The DHSS is excluded from the Sex Discrimination Act. However, over 2/3 of claimants are women and it is not too difficult to see that the areas in which they are most discriminated against are those in which they are challenging the sex-role norms of our society. Women receive a lower return on their national insurance contributions than do men, they cannot claim for dependents. A married woman, or a woman who is cohabiting cannot claim supplementary benefit in her own right, she is declared to be supported by a man. The DHSS deny the existence of role-reversal families for they will not allow a working wife to claim family income supplement for her husband and their children. In spite of the many instances of discrimination against women in the benefit scheme, a high ranking DHSS official said complacently, 'Well, if you want my opinion, I'll give it to you. I do not think women are discriminated against in the benefits they receive.'

BUS FARES UP

AGAIN

Once again B.A.T. bus users are suffering from the sick joke of 'revised' fares. Voice readers might like to ask BATMAN when it was that fares were last 'revised' downwards?



DHSS (Cont.)

ive." If officials who know the benefit system so well can be so complacent in the face of all the facts then one can hardly be surprised at their contravention of the Social Security Act in their attitudes towards cohabitation. We mentioned above that cohabitation was one of the areas in which DHSS officials have discretionary powers. According to the law a woman is only cohabiting if she shares two of the following with a man: purse, bed or table. The Supplementary Benefits Commission's policy document says explicitly that they do not wish to force women to stop having boyfriends -- therefore if a woman sleeps with her boyfriend but they do not cook together or share their money she should not be deemed to be cohabiting. However, CPAG have reported that in 18 out of 20 cases a woman's benefit was withdrawn completely on the basis of sharing her bed two night a week with her boyfriend.

Last week fares went up by an average of 12 per cent, the second major increase in 6 months. Fares have been increasing with a monotonous and unproductive regularity for some years now. We are forced to ask at what cost to both public and work force.

At each fares increase the number of bus users decreases by about 2 per cent. Over a number of years this enables BATMAN to justify the 'rationalisation' of services and the cutting of 'unnecessary' jobs. All this is needed, we are told, to balance the books because tax and ratepayers can no longer afford to subsidise public transport. A point which ignores the fact that there is a large proportion of the tax and ratepaying population which doesn't have access to private transport.

Brighton Voice believes it is high time BATMAN broke out of the spiral of increased prices necessitating further increases in prices and concentrated on developing a bus service which is cheap, efficient and fair on its operators. Ah! you might say, but that doesn't happen anywhere. Well, you'd be wrong!!

South Yorkshire Transport Authority decided two years ago to end the never successful attempt at book balancing and to provide a service for all. Since then there has been only one fare increase.

So in Sheffield you pay 6 pence for 2 miles, 8 pence for 3 miles and 9 pence for 4 miles. In Brighton you can pay as much as 16 pence for a one mile journey. The policy works. Last year, while every other transport authority lost custom. South Yorkshire attracted it. Its passenger numbers rose by over 3 per cent last year and this year it expects an even larger increase as motoring costs continue to go up. This is, in the words of the Labour controlled Council, an attempt at a 'redistribution' of income to the benefit of the non car-owning households'.

The scheme is, however, not without its enemies, foremost amongst them being William Rodgers (Min of Transport) and by implication the Labour Government. He has threatened to withhold part of the subsidy to the Transport Authority if they don't make the usual vain efforts to 'balance the books'. The message is clear. Labour Governments (like all) can damage your services.

FRONT MAN

NALGO members might be interested to know that amongst those offering themselves for election to the NEC from the South Coast District is a member of the Nazi National Front. He is Roland Hazell, a rebate assistant in the Treasurer's Dept. at Chichester District Council.

His electoral address is interesting for its contradictions. At the outset he states he is for a NALGO concentrating on 'Staff Association matters' and adds 'we must not allow a minority to use NALGO for political propaganda.' Unless, of course, it is NF propaganda. Political views, he says, can be expressed through the parliamentary vote. Which is obviously why in his address he goes on to:

- 1) question NALGO affiliation to the NCCL
- 2) question the Union's opposition to the Chile regime
- 3) urge the publication of the unnecessary NALGO special investigation into the NALGO Action Group
- 4) wonder why, when the outs are biting, a NALGO/NUPE committee was formed.
- 5) doubt Conference's right to call for industrial action.

Another gem from our NF friend is, 'Public Service Unions must be prepared to accept a fair share of cuts.' Doubtless the ill, the mentally and physically handicapped, children without nurseries, those without home help, meals on wheels, etc. will be the first to applaud.

His final gripe is about the NEC's support for a closed shop. This he says, is an 'oppressive measure' with 'no place in NALGO'. He should know all about oppression--after all, his party deals in it.

Amongst the rubbish is a demand from the politically ubiquitous Mr Hazell for a return to free collective bargaining. Surely a fine piece of populist opportunism. He concludes 'let us keep party politics out of NALGO.' NALGO must resolve to keep his brand of nasty vicious politics out. Voters, don't be conned.



REVIEWS

Shell and B.P.

"Shell and BP in South Africa" by Martin Bailey analyses the role of these companies in propping up apartheid. It examines the claim by both companies that, by remaining in South Africa—and encouraging reforms—they can do more to eliminate apartheid than they can by simply withdrawing their investment, but finds this argument little more than a convenient device to enable firms to profit from a system they claim to abhor. There is little evidence that British companies have ever used their influence to encourage majority rule in South Africa.

This pamphlet comes out at a time when BP has just announced that it will invest £267m in South Africa over the next five years. Sixty-eight per cent of the shares in BP are held by the Government and the Labour Party's manifesto has a commitment to "reduce Britain's unhealthy involvement with apartheid." Shell plans to invest £333m over the next decade and recent advertising campaigns show that the company is confident that apartheid will still be going strong, and bringing in the profits, in 10 years time.

*35pence plus postage from Anti-Apartheid, 89 Charlotte St London W1P 2DQ

VERBOTEN

"Verboten" which means forbidden is a bulletin providing information on the present political situation in West Germany and its historical background. The last few years have seen an increase in political and cultural repression in West Germany with a ban on employment of 'political radicals' in the public service, provisions relating to the exclusion of defence lawyers from trials, censorship laws and widespread and illegal use of telephone tapping.

"Verboten" costs 20p from the Campaign Against Repression in West Germany, 35 Wellington St London WC2. The Campaign is organising a Conference on repression in W. Germany to be held on May 7th at the North London Polytechnic. Details from the Campaign enclosing SAE and 40p.

link up

Since the appointment of the new LINK UP Co-ordinator last December (see Voice No 35) the group (Sussex University Action Group, of which LINK UP is their collective name) has continued to expand.

LINK UP, who in the past have been labled as patronising do-gooders, are working hard to change their emphasis from community service to community action. They continue to perform important community service; they paint the elderly's houses, visit the Adventure Playground at Moulsecoomb to name but two, but now it appears to recognise the position of such activity. There is something clearly wrong with students simply converging on an old lady's and shutting her up in the kitchen while they furiously decorate the living-room, and departing never to be seen again.

The formation of the Legal Action Group within LINK UP is highly representative of this changing feeling. In association with the C.A.B. and the Brighton Rights Centre, they have set up a legal advice stall in the Union Hall in Air Street every Saturday - a highly logical thing for law students to do.

Since the Occupation at Sussex University in early March, as part of the students' campaign against education cuts, CACTL - The Campaign Against the Criminal Trespass Law - has come under LINK UP's area of work, which is a highly significant step towards true community activism.

The aim to obtain premises in Brighton, mentioned in Voice No. 35, will soon be achieved. LINK UP will soon have an office in the Open Cafe in Victoria Road. Practicalities are being worked out at the moment, and more details will appear in future editions of the Voice.

Free Fair

Organisation for the Kid's Carnival and the Environmental Free Fair has begun. The Date to remember is June 11th, Friday. This firmly established event will again be held on the grass outside Falmer House, and any group who would like to have a stall, and haven't received an invite, do please contact LINK UP on Brighton 680380, and they'll send you more details.

Subscribe

£2 for 12 issues

7 Victoria Rd Brighton



Money down the drain at University.



Whitewash?

Just how much is East Sussex paying to their County Engineer, Mr Denys Charnock, to help pay for his forthcoming trip to Tokyo where he is to lecture an international read federation conference on the safety value of reflective white lines painted on the edges of roads? According to their press office, the county council is only paying a 'small sum' towards his expenses, but when pressed by the Voice they refused to say how much that small sum is.

We have it on the national grapevine that our luxurious universities are next in line for the cuts. Of course they won't go too far and upset the elite in their ivory towers, at least not to the point where they actually force the educated mandarins off their backsides.

We've been hearing a bit about our own local ivory tower lately - during a tour of the working people who service the luxurious offices and rooms in which the University's "life" goes on. It was quite an ear-opener. The plasterers and decorators were particularly jovial about it. According to them the amount of money poured down the drain at the University of Sussex in totally unnecessary redecoration and "upkeep" is scandalous. Time and time again they are sent to rooms to redecorate and they go in and find them in perfect condition. They ring up to check that they are in the right room. They are. So they get on with it. Money, money, money. "What's this place made of?" they ask, unable to believe the jobs they are told to do. "Ah" say the wise men of the University "It's all a question of separate budgets" O.K. ? Get it? In ordinary language that means you have to spend the money redecorating rooms in perfect condition whether you like it or not, because you can't spend the money on anything else. Certainly not on education; that would be a gross misuse of the money.

BOWDEN BUGS

NEW TAPPING DEVICE



Andrew Bowden sees them everywhere. Like his bosom pal Margaret Twitcher, the Tory MP for Kemp Town sees reds under, over and in the bed. After his attack on the Voice, his tirade against teachers who dare to eat lunches in the middle of the school day, and his farcical accusation against people who are teaching adults to read he has turned his attention to ante-natal care. According to reliable nurses he is planning to expose the left-wing indoctrination which goes on in ante-natal clinics in North Brighton. By means of stethoscopic taps on the stomachs of pregnant women it is possible to convey to the unborn child any propaganda which can be reduced to morse code. The trots and maoists in the North Brighton clinics are known by Andrew Bowden to be well-ahead of their right-wing rivals in this new means of political praxis. His question to the House on this issue was given through clenched teeth: his anger could hardly be controlled.

Apology

The author of the article "May Opposes Sale of Council Houses" (Voice 35) wishes us to state that he apologises to Mr. Tony Greenstein for incorrectly attributing certain remarks to him.

official secrets

Why not give MI5 or MI6 a ring? Their phone numbers are 01-930-6789 for MI5 and 01-928 5600 for MI6.

day of labour

Mayday is workers' day, and this year it is being celebrated in Brighton with a procession to a festive gathering on the Level.

The day's events, organised by the Brighton, Hove and District Trades Union Council, will start at 10.00 when the procession assembles at Regency Square. At 10.30 the trade unionists, their families, friends and supporters, will move off, going via the sea front and the Steine to the Level.

Awaiting them there will be Morris dancers, stalls, food, a jazz band, beer and many other forms of entertainment - including speeches from Andy Durr (President of Brighton TUC), Geoff Jones (Chairman of Brighton Labour Party), Owen Davis (NALGO) and Jim Terry (ASTMS). Everybody is welcome to join in the fun.



COMMUTERS GO OFF THE RAILS

The annual BR season ticket between Brighton and London has more than doubled in price over the last three years. So local commuters can hardly be blamed for getting upset, even though for most of them it is still cheaper to live in Brighton than it would be in London. However, the way they've been protesting about the increases in fares deserves little sympathy.

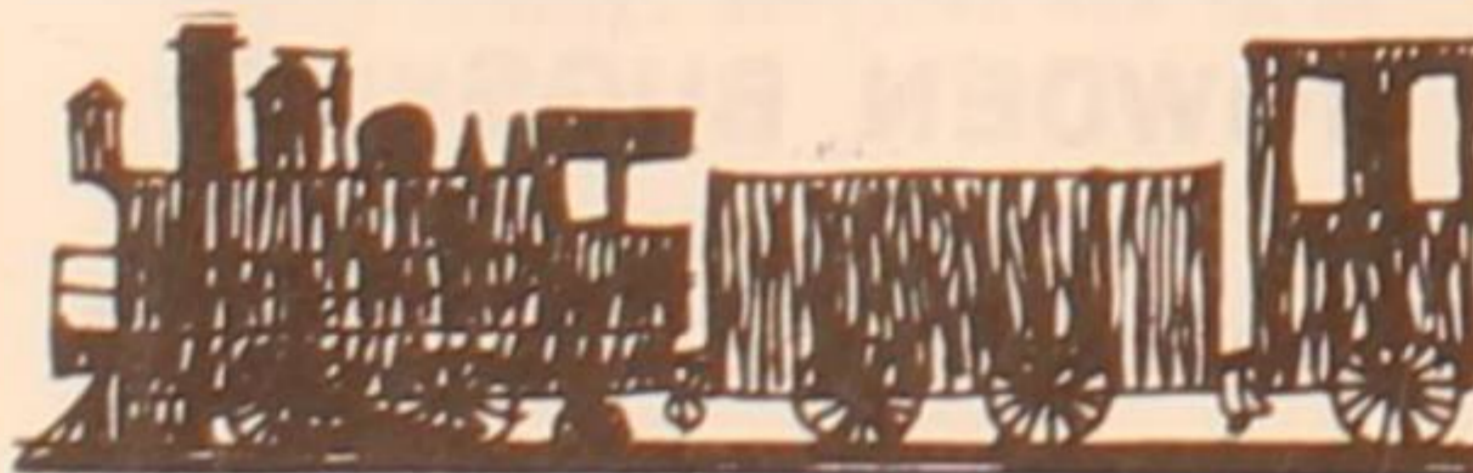
The price rises stem directly from the Government's insistence that nationalised industries should cover their costs and should not be subsidised. While a case for this can perhaps be made for some 'state capitalist' enterprises it is laughable when applied to British Rail. At the time when nationalisation took place after the 2nd World War few of the railway companies were operating at a profit. And if capitalists can't make money, why should the Government? If prices continue to rise at the present rate then thousands of people who commute daily into London will be forced to go by car, clogging the road system and making the lives of Londoners living close to the main roads even more miserable than they are at present. The railways are a sensible alternative to living in one great big traffic jam.

Increased fares are just another manifestation of the short-sighted cuts in Government expenditure that we've all been experiencing. The commuters' fight is, therefore, the fight of the unemployed, the poor, the homeless, the students, etc. Unfortunately the Brighton Line Commuters Association doesn't see it that way. By concentrating on their grievance and not relating it to the wider fight against the cuts, by thinking solely of their own pockets and not offering support to those fighting other battles, the members of the Association reveal themselves as little more than a self-interested middle class pressure group.

Their latest plan verges on the ridiculous. They intend to run a fleet of buses up to London for the benefit of those who don't want to pay the increased rail fares. Commuters are by nature a pretty crazy bunch of people—they have to be to put up with the ser-

vice offered by BR— but there can't be many mad enough to want to spend 1½-2 hours in a cramped coach twice a day when they could be going by train. And even if the Association finds its hoped for 500 or so masochists, and gets a licence to run a coach service, the exercise will be self-defeating. British Rail will lose yet more revenue which will give it an excuse to increase fares yet again and to make further inroads into an already heavily pruned timetable.

It would be wishful thinking to expect that commuters will come to their senses and join with other groups fighting the cuts. More likely they will continue to argue with British Rail, even though there is nothing BR can do, and continue to insist that their battle has nothing to do with 'politics'.

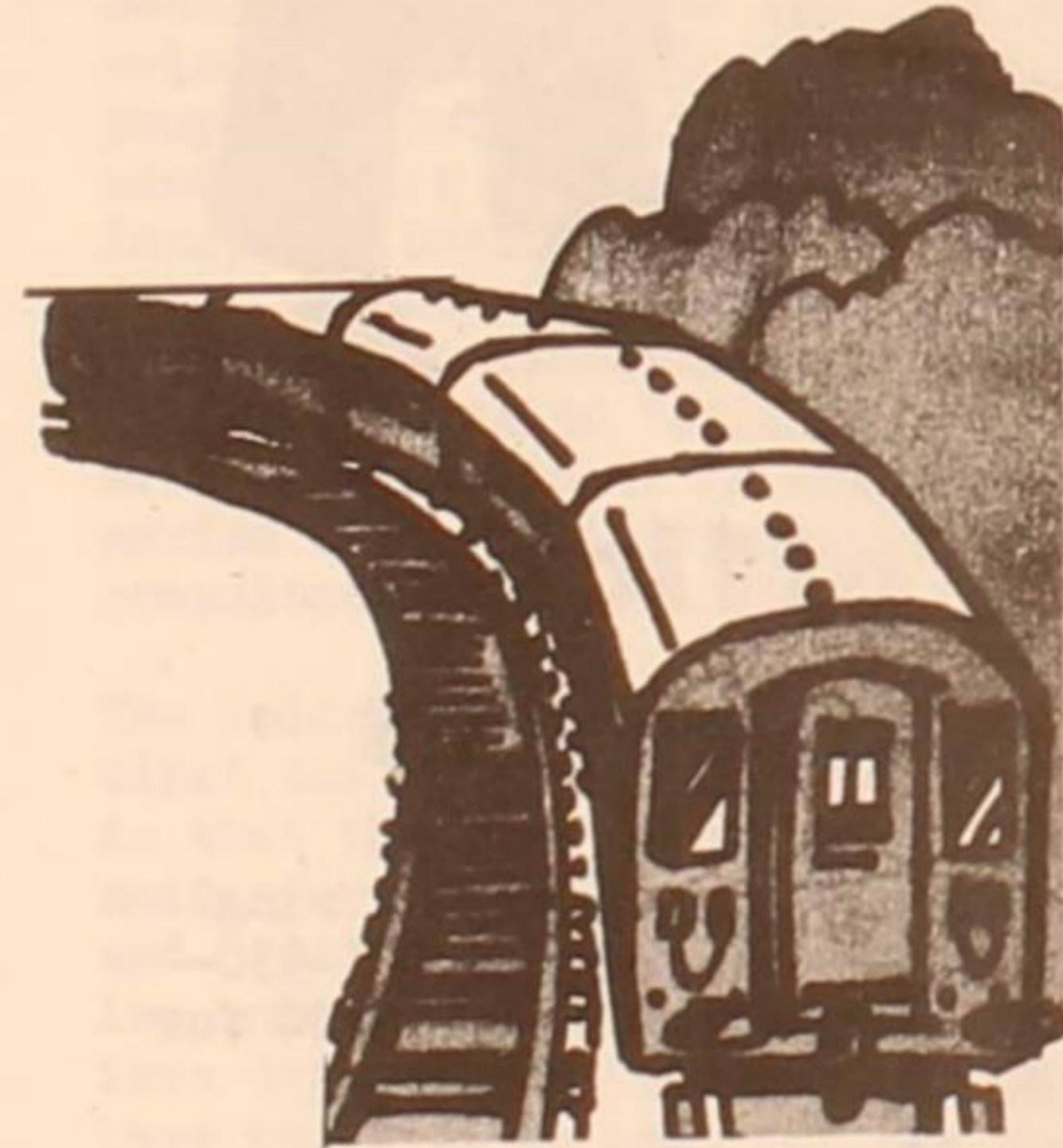


Footnote: The noticeboard in the ticket office at Brighton station which used to tell us how many trains arrived on time, has mysteriously disappeared. Presumably the truth just got to be too painful.

OVER TO YOU

On July 11th and 12th a visiting South African cricket team is due to play a match against a Sussex eleven at Worthing's Manor Sports Ground.

In May the Women's World Bowling Championships will be held in Worthing. It is intended that a South African team will take part.



Julian Amery Speaks.....

Since the entirely unsurprising revelation last December that "good old Jule" had done the least work of all but one of the M.P.s in the H of C during the previous year, an amazing change has taken place. He not only appeared in the House during Question Time, but actually asked a question!

And what, I hear you cry, was the subject of this question? Well, folks, sorry to disappoint you; it wasn't about housing the homeless, or about reducing defence expenditure, or even about increasing the tax on alcohol. He wanted to know what the Government was doing to improve relations with Ian Smith.

We just thought you'd like to know.

info...

***ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP** Contact Hugh Bayley, c/o (alge), 104 Queens Rd, B'ton

***A.S. SKILL TRUST** For alternative education projects 691712.

***B'TON & HOVE SQUATTERS UNION AND TENANTS ASSOC.** Meets 8.30, Tuesdays, at 7 Victoria Rd, B'ton.

***B'TON & HOVE TRADES COUNCIL** Co-ordinating group of local trade unions affiliated to TUC; Keith Orange 688777.

***TUC LABOUR HISTORY PROJECT** and LABOUR HISTORY PRESS 179 Lewes Rd, B'ton.

B'TON COMMUNITY ARTS WORKSHOP Dance on Mondays Juniors 6.30-7.30, Seniors 7.30-9.30 at Carlton Hill School. Drama, mime and music on Wednesdays, Juniors 6.30-7.30, Seniors 7.30-9.30. Call 691318 for details.

***B'TON FEDERATION OF TENANTS ASSOCS** Secretary, 72 Swanborough Pl, B'ton.

***B'TON FILM THEATRE** 64 North St, 29563. Support your local non-profitmaking cinema.

***B'TON HOSTEL** Soup-run 10.00-11.00 daily under the arches; meals 12.00-2.00 Sundays. Need clothes, food, Help! 686320; 105 Islingword Rd, B'ton.

***B'TON BUS USERS ACTION GROUP** Secretary, 78 Holmes Avenue, Hove. 722596.

***B'TON LESBIAN GROUP** 1st, 3rd & 5th Weds at Fl 1, 9 St Michaels Pl; info from Lee there.

***B'TON SHORT-LIFE HOUSING ACTION GROUP** 2 Prince Albert St. 202492.

***B'TON SOCIETY** Environmental group; Selma Montford, 10 Clermont Rd.

GROUPS

***B'TON TRADES & LABOUR CLUB** Meeting place for trade unionists; 16 Lewes Rd. 61101.

***BRITAIN/GDR SOCIETY** Facts and info on East Germany; 686259.

***CAMPAIGN AGAINST A CRIMINAL TRESPASS LAW** c/o 7 Victoria Rd, B'ton. Watch for developments, especially meetings.

***CAMPAIGN FOR HOMOSEXUAL EQUALITY** Details of regular meetings from 202930 8.00-10.00pm daily. Also CHE Women's Group.

***CONFERENCE OF SOCIALIST ECONOMISTS** Keith Smith, 10 Warleigh Rd, B'ton.

***FRIENDS CENTRE** Meeting place with educational classes; 16 Ship St, B'ton. 27835.

***FRIENDS OF THE WESTERN BUDDHIST ORDER** Meditation, classes, discussion and lectures; 19 George St, B'ton. 693971.

***GINGERBREAD** Self-help and pressure group for one-parent families; 774087

***MENTAL HEALTH GROUP** Bringing psychiatric patients into the community; c/o Open 27878.

***MOULESCOOMB ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND** Needs money, materials and help; c/o 67 Centre, off Hodshrove Rd.

***NATIONAL ABORTION CAMPAIGN** Contact Womens Centre.

***NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES** (Sussex Group) 689385 or write c/o Public House, 21 Little Preston St, B'ton.

POETRY AT OPEN Thursdays, 8p.m. 7 Victoria Rd.

GATHERINGS ETC

***PRIOR HOUSE** Youth and Community Centre; many activities, incl open creche; Carlton Hill. 681925.

***RANK AND FILE** Organisation of teachers with NUT. 689113 after 6.00pm.



***RIGHT TO READ** Mrs Prior 29801.

***RIGHT TO WORK CAMPAIGN** Organising trade unionists and the unemployed to fight for the Right to Work; 19 Elm Grove, B'ton. Messages 720891.

***SOCIALIST ENVIRONMENT & RESOURCES ASSOC** 236 The Wrekin, Lindfield, Haywards Heath; Lindfield 3760.

***SOCIETY FOR ANGLO-CHINESE UNDERSTANDING** Daniele Furci, 12 Berkeley Row, Lewes. Lewes 2412

***SUSSEX ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY GROUP** c/o 11 George St, B'ton. 691318

***TRANSPORT 2000** Kevin McNulty, 75 Upper Lewes Rd.

***WE WANT THE WEST PIER CAMPAIGN** John Lloyd, 5 Belle Vue Gdns, B'ton. 28578.

***WOMEN'S CENTRE** Open 10.00-1.00 Mon-Fri and 6.30-8.30 Weds eves at Resources Centre, Presbyterian Church Hall, North Rd. Tel 27612.

***WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE & FREEDOM** 684604.

WORKERS' MUSIC ASSOCIATION Meeting at Friends' Centre, Ship St. on 21st May 7.45 "Music and Song in Political Struggle." An illustrated talk.

***WORKING ASSOC OF MOTHERS** Linda Kinsella 55134. Baby sitting, creche, etc.

WORK HAZARDS GROUP. Information and resources (including Hazards Bulletin) on health and safety at work. 68 Compton Rd. Brighton.

PAPERS

***BRIGHTON FIGHTS BACK** Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) pamphlet on the cuts. 10p from 37 Gloucester Rd, B'ton.

***EDUCAT** Local teacher and education magazine; 42 Egremont Pl. 680258.

***QUEENSPARK** Paper for the Queens Park area. 14 Toronto Terr, B'ton.

***SQUATTERS HANDBOOK** Available from 2 St Pauls Rd, London N1, or Open Cafe. 10p + postage.

***WHOLE EARTH** Alternative technology, organic living, local environmental action. 20p from 11 George St, B'ton. 691318.

***WRAG QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER** available from Womens Centre, 174 Thorndean Rd, B'ton; 50p for 2 issues.

The Voice collective meets every Sunday at 8.30p.m. at Open Cafe, 7 Victoria Rd. **ALL ARE WELCOME**

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