

BLACK FLAME



Rupert turns to Billy Goat
And tells him what the anarchists wrote.

Rupert the Revolutionary.

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Brighton and Hove
Anarchists.
Fortnightly Broadsheet.

Comprehension Test

Under the Labour Government Brighton Council did its best to kill any plan for comprehensive schools in the area. ^{It never happened 1961-72} Always it managed either to refuse approval for plans or to approve plans which the Department of Education and Science found unacceptable. But ~~at its~~ February meeting this year the council approved a plan which some councillors saw as giving the comprehensive system its first foothold in the town.

The plan basically is this: in order to accommodate the growing secondary school population and to cope with the introduction of Middle Schools, Westlain Grammar and Stanmer Secondary Modern, which occupy adjacent sites on the edge of Moulescoomb, will merge to form a mixed High School for 12-16 year-olds. A similar High School will be built at Wilson Avenue and the Dorothy Stringer School will form a third. On the Westlain-Stanmer site a Sixth Form College will be built either to form part of the High School or to operate as a separate unit. The Moulescoomb, Whitehawk and Queens Park Schools will become primary/middle schools. The High Schools will, like comprehensives, have a non-selective entry - that is, entry will not be by means of passing or failing an exam.

It was on this point that the anti-comprehensive lobby, especially councillor Ron Shrive, opposed the plan. To them this seemed an attempt to introduce comprehensivism 'by the back door'. The fear is that this is the beginning of the end for the 'real' grammar schools - Brighton Hove and Sussex and the Varndean, and the traditions they uphold. The Labour group on the Council seemed to believe the same, and for that reason supported the plan initially.

It seems to us that both groups are wrong. The rumour is that the architect of the scheme, Director of Education Antcliff, is pro-comprehensive and, in the 'best' tradition of liberal reformers, thinks this is a way of introducing comprehensives piecemeal. If this is so then, like most liberals, he is well-meaning but misguided, for if this scheme is established the most likely long-term outcome will be a strengthening of the older, conservative grammar schools. A feature of the scheme which at first was not given much publicity is that parents of 12-year-olds will have the choice of either sending their children to the non-selective High Schools or allowing them to take a selection test which, if passed, would secure the child a grammar school place. Those who fail this test may go to the High Schools. There is just a chance the parents of a majority of the more 'able' children will forgo a grammar school place and thus ensure healthy support for the High Schools, but the chance is a bit slim. It's much more likely that the Highs will become glorified secondary mods. taking those rejected by the grammar schools.

One of the basic tenets of comprehensivism is the breaking down of strict barriers between those labelled 'able' and 'less able' in the belief that these labels are to a great extent meaningless, as once a child is categorized 'less able' he will continue to be 'less able' because that's how everyone treats him. There's not much chance for a dissolving of ability groups here. There is also a good chance that the Highs will become neighbourhood schools with little opportunity for those of different social backgrounds to mix. Another of the comprehensive ideals vanishes. In fact, Antcliff has been known to say that the scheme's nothing more than a building programme. He seems to describe it different ways depending on who he's talking to.

Plans for the Sixth-form college are vague at the moment. It will, presumably, be able to offer a much wider range of courses than the

grammar school sixth-form, in more congenial surroundings. But there's a real possibility that having creamed-off the supposedly more intelligent at 12 the grammar schools will be able to persuade the pick of this lot to stay on for another two years for the added prestige a grammar school gives to university applications. The new College will probably become another vocational centre.

It certainly looks as though the formidable Brighton, Hove and Sussex Grammar School lobby which has virtually succeeded in maintaining the conservative class structure of our educational system has nothing to fear. The Old Boy Network will not fail. As with most things in this town those who have will continue to get more, while those who have not can get lost. The grammar schools will continue to have the prestige and the new schools won't be allowed to take any of it. The plan was introduced with a maximum of secrecy without consultation with parents, teachers or headmasters, let alone pupils. One can only suppose that Antcliff, Sam Taylor and the Education Committee wanted to get the measure through before anyone had a chance to look at its implications. It's only 3 months later that Labour Councillors have woken up to the fact that we will have a town neatly divided in two. Working class Moulsecoomb, Whitehawk etc. will have their high schools; Middle-class west Brighton will have its grammars.

What interest is there in all this for Anarchists? After all, even ideal comprehensives must be based on compulsion and an authority structure, state schools being what they are. The difference between a comprehensive and a rigid sec.mod. or grammar is rather like the difference between house arrest and the maximum-security wing. Well, firstly, here's a prime example of petty officials and so-called representatives of the people trying to pull a fast one on those they 'serve'. Secondly, and more surprisingly, here is also an example of people refusing to take it. Organized and effective opposition has come not from a Labour councillor in shining armour angling for votes but from the parents of pupils involved. Presumably Antcliff etc. thought people living in Moulsecoomb and Coldean would be too thick to see the inequalities of the system which was being forced on them. They were wrong. Parents of students at Westlain have organized to ensure that the necessary Government approval for the scheme is not obtained and to make the council reconsider. Councillors have been forced to take notice and so has Bowden. Thirdly, although the impetus comes from the Westlain Grammar School Association we understand that its main criticism is not that their kids will lose the prestige of a grammar school education, but that this scheme is no substitute for a real comprehensive plan. And with all the reservations we may have about their aims it's good to see people refusing to accept meekly what their 'masters' say is good for them, and trying and succeeding in deciding what they want for their families.

Bombs Away!

Recently there has been a wave of bomb outrages against various institutions with a resulting outcry in the yellow press - these terrible Anarchists! What an evil and criminal thing to do!

But the point to be noticed is that none of these bombings has hurt a single person, whereas day after day we are faced with violence of the state directed against all of us. Governments instigate wars - for their own ends - in which millions are killed and maimed. Everyday men and women are being killed by the system - look at Vietnam, look at Pakistan, look at Northern Ireland. This is not all, for everyday in factories, schools, prisons, mental hospitals, people are being brutalized and humiliated. The State has many ways

in which it can kill, us, either by imperialist wars, or by the daily round of boredom, poverty and misery - physical death or spiritual death, is there really much to choose between them? Who are the evil doers, the States of the world or the people who decide to resist tyranny with violence?

As Anarchists, it comes as no surprise to us that the authorities put a higher value on property than on human life.

THE VIOLENCE OF THE OPPRESSOR BEGETS THE VIOLENCE OF THE OPPRESSED.

It's as Pierre-Joseph (Property is Theft) Proudhon said: 'To be governed is to be watched over, inspected, spied upon, directed, legislated at, regulated, docketed, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, assessed, weighed, censored ordered about, by men who have neither the right nor the knowledge nor the virtue. To be governed means to be, at each operation, at each transaction, at each movement, noted, registered, controlled, taxed, stamped, measured, valued, assessed, patented, licensed, authorised, endorsed, admonished, hampered, reformed, rebuked, arrested. It is to be, on the pretext of the general interest, taxed, drilled, held to ransom, exploited, monopolized, extorted, squeezed, hoaxed, robbed; then, at the first word of complaint, to be repressed, fined, abused, annoyed, followed, bullied, beaten, disarmed, garrotted, imprisoned, machine-gunned, judged, condemned, deported, flayed, sold, betrayed, and finally mocked, ridiculed, insulted, dishonoured. Such is government, such is justice, such is morality.'

(The above quote from Proudhon is available as a sticker from - ANARCHY 95 West Green Road, London. N.15 - publishers of the monthly mag. 'Anarchy'-write for details)

ANARQUIP - No.1 'Rights are things you haven't got: did it ever occur to you that whenever somebody says 'I know my rights' they are in the process of being screwed.....'

Community Spirit ?

Ray has been trying to get a drugs advisory service off the ground - to help bad trippers, anyone with drug problems, to provide a crash pad service, etc. The response from the head community has been practically nil - the only help of any description came from four communal households (all of whom do it anyway). If this reflects the degree of co-operation from the head 'community' then, to quote a well-worn phrase, YOU have not got much chance of getting it together.

DIVIDED WE STAND

- DIVIDED WE FALL.

The Sussex University 'Revolutionary' Festival was a long wank - with Roy Harper it was a nice wank and at least he wanted it to become real. How many other people there wanted that? But we shouldn't be bothered - the students seem to like it that way.

ANARQUIP - No.2 'Be realistic, that is to say, don't wish, want hope, love or do anything fantastic because that's what THE MAN who owns you is doing and if you find out who YOU really are you'll find out who he really is and anything is possible.'

Doing it in the Road

Central Brighton is full of flats and houses packed together - you know that. It's also full of kids. Look for places they can play without (a) being run down by cars, buses, lorries, milk-floats, etc. (b) being put down by a man in a peaked cap. There aren't many. Maybe Brighton Environmental Committee will do something about making the streets safe for human beings again. (You can hardly cross the Steine for fear of being mugged by a motor)

Meanwhile there's a huge expanse of grass in the Steine - you can look but you'd better not touch. Lots of the squares have patches of it, fenced off and safe but officially not for ball-games. They don't all have the padlock and passport system of Sussex Square and Lewes Crescent but the laws are there. You can beat it if you try. Somebody repeatedly removed the 'no ball games' sign in one seafront square so often that council stopped replacing it, or doing anything about the prohibitory bye-law.

It's this situation partly that decided Andy and some others to throw free parties for the kids, outside whenever possible. The fact that they also wanted a good excuse for a feed helped. There have been three so far in the past year. One in a front garden which spilled into the street - 'Anarchist Party goes like a Bomb', gipped Eve. Argus. One in a Church Hall, and finally a real street party outside Kingswood and Milner Flats on a scrubby bit of grass covered with kids, food and free ice-cream. No restriction: dress optional. We all enjoyed it. There's also been a bus trip to the Downs for all who wanted to go.

More parties are planned for the future - so look for one in your street. Better still, make one in your street. All you need are plenty of kids, promises of food which come through, and enough energy to last the day. After all, who bought the streets if you didn't ?

THIS WEEK'S PULL-OUT SONG SUPPLEMENT - General Booth pinched all the best tunes from the Devil and gave them to God for the Salvation Army. Then the Industrial Workers of the World pinched them for the people. John F. Kendrick did this to 'Onward Christian Soldiers'. It's all in the I.W.W. Songbook.

Onward Christian Soldiers! Duty's way is plain;
Slay your Christian neighbours, or by them be slain.
Pulpiteers are spouting effervescent swill,
God above is calling you to rob and rape and kill,
All your acts are sanctified by the Lamb on high;
If you love the Holy Ghost, go murder, pray and die.

Onward Christian Soldiers! Blighting all you meet,
Trampling human freedom under pious feet.
Praise the Lord whose dollar sign dupes his favoured race!
Make the foreign trash respect your bullion brand of grace.
Trust in mock salvation, serve as tyrant's tools:
History will say of you: 'That pack of God damned Fools'.

(More revolutionary oddities next issue. Order yours now!!!)

A FINAL WORD. This issue of 'Black Flame' -Son of Fleabite- is bigger than the first. It is also late. We're sorry about the latter. The next one will be on time - we hope.

The End.....

WHAT ? WHERE ? WHEN ? WHO ? WHY ? AND HOW MUCH ?

RELEASE - legal advice and help on busts.

Emergency

OPEN SECT - 24 hour 'Release' service for local busts. Also Claimants Union. Vegetarian Restaurant - fine value.

HOT MANNA - Lewes Release service and Arts Lab. Planning a benefit festival for early August. Meetings - Mondays and Thursdays, St. Mary's Social Centre Annexe, Christie Road, Lewes
Contact -

W.A.M. - Association of working mothers: baby-minding, etc.

SCHOOLS PROGRESSIVE UNION - school students and teachers (and parents ?) for action in schools.

WOMEN'S ACTION GROUP - women's lib.

BRIGHTON AND HOVE CLAIMANTS UNION - Meetings every Monday.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES - legal advice, pressure group. Local watchdog.

Membership -

JOINT ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE - wants to make streets and people safe from the automobile and its attendant pollution.

WRAGGLE TAGGLE - if you make something...clothes, leather, candles, small furniture, take it there and they'll try to sell it for you.

MACROBIOTIC FOOD SHOP

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU - advice or how to get it on almost all kinds of problems. Free or nominal charge maybe.

RENT TRIBUNAL - register your rent: find out what's involved first: maybe get it lowered.

US - Black Flame, Brighton and Hove Anarchists.