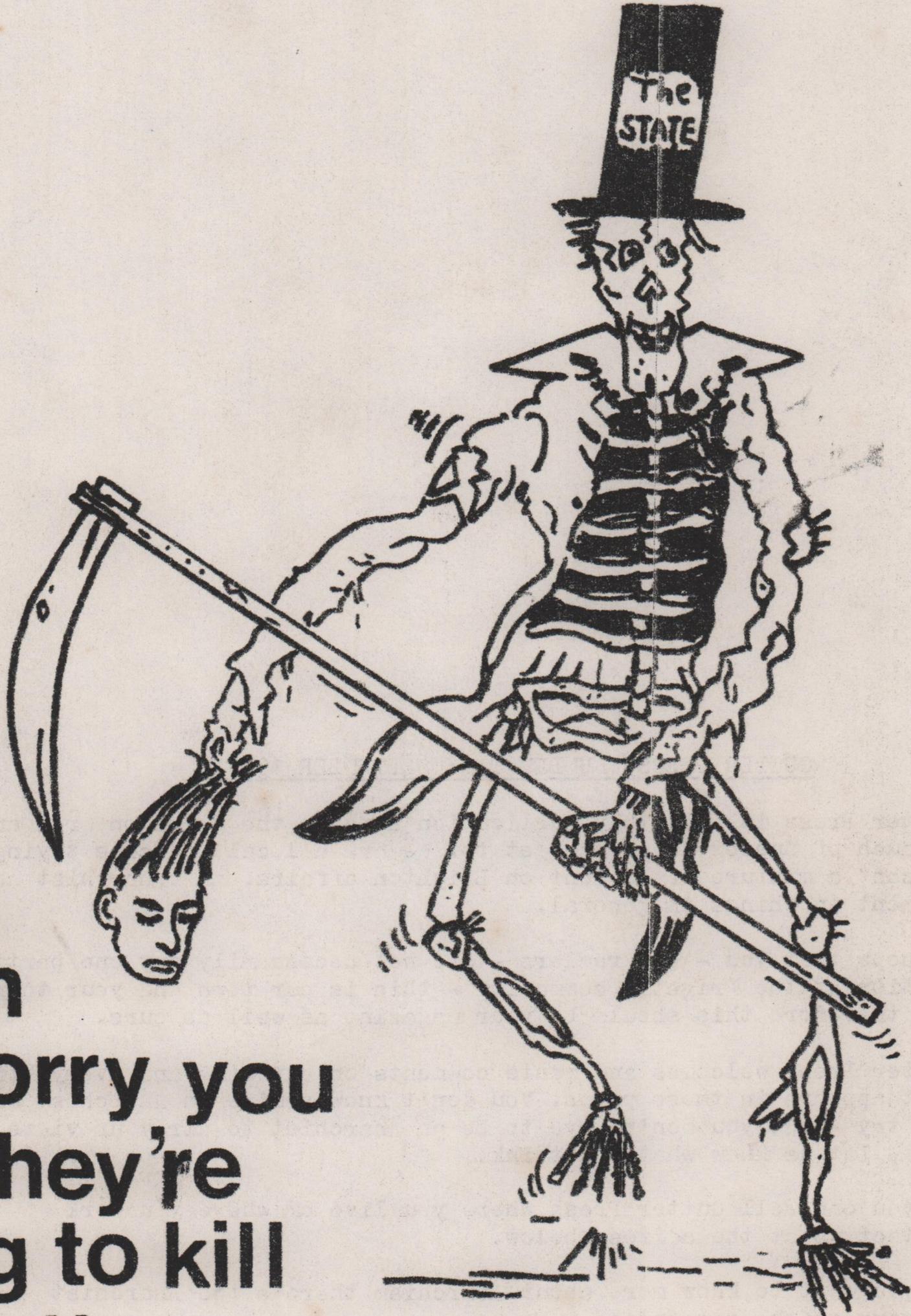


GUTTER PRESS



i
don't
mean
to worry you
but they're
going to kill
us all.

GUTTER PRESS: NUMBER TWO: SEPTEMBER 1971

Gutter Press is a monthly publication serving the Brighton Area and as much of Sussex as we can get to. We are a local magazine trying to present a mixture of comment on Brighton affairs. and Anarchist comment on things in general.

We hope that you - our readers - are not necessarily any one particular section of the Brighton community - this is our town and your town and therefore this should be your magazine as well as ours.

Gutter Press welcomes and wants comments on anything and everything that appears in these pages. You don't know you're an Anarchist until you try - but you don't have to be an Anarchist to air your views here. Let us know what you think.

If you can sell Gutter Press where you live or where you work contact us at the address below.

If you want to know more about Anarchism there's the Anarchist Library at the same place.

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21 LITTLE PRESTON
STREET

Know Your Enemy.

All over Britain new movements and organizations are springing up. The formation of these bodies should give revolutionaries great encouragement. Where four years ago there was little happening outside the universities (where action was for the most part sterile and looking towards the struggle in the Third World rather than to the struggle at home) there are now Claimants Unions, tenants associations, rank and file workers groups, ecology action groups, Gay liberation, Women's liberation, and various bodies working inside the hip community. As has been said, this should give encouragement to every true revolutionary. However, we must remember that for the most part, the activities and perspectives of these groups are limited and divided.

To Anarchists it is plain that these groups are fighting the same enemies, - the State and the Employers.

Applying this to Claimant's Unions, we can see that unemployment is caused by the system ~~which makes~~ the unemployed feel guilty because they can't get a job ! The same applies to Tenants and Workers groups where people are fighting the bad conditions, high rents and low wages, and in some cases attempting to gain control of their places of work or housing estate. Everything these people fight against is caused by the system, which robs them of any say in the running of their own lives. The same too for Gay Lib. and Women's Lib. This society forces sexual conformity on people and makes them afraid of their sexuality, because it knows that a sexually repressed person is also a meek person - a meek subject. By turning people against a minority - in this case homosexuals - the state can apply the old Divide and Rule game. The same applies to the way in which women are reduced to a secondary role in this society.

Divide and Rule. A structure in which one sex dominates over another - instead of sexual co-operation as in a free society - reinforces the idea of Authority and of a society where a ruling class bleeds dry the majority whom it keeps in subjection.

Going on to anti-pollution groups, we see that pollution is only one of many symptoms of a sick society. The irresponsibility of governments and bosses, engendered by greed, leads to the wide-scale pollution we are now experiencing. Many products are manufactured only because there is an induced need for them. If the profit motive was destroyed industry would be cut to a great extent, with a resulting decrease in pollution.

While many of these groups are very active, much of their work is wasted. This is because they, for the most part, see no further than their own particular problem. Thus, much energy is channelled into purely reformist issues.

As Anarchists, we should help to unite these groups and increase co-operation between them, trying to impress upon them that their problem is the same, and only the overthrow of the State can really end the injustices they are fighting. The next few years may be crucial in the creation of a united, consciously revolutionary, popular movement intent on the destruction of the State and the building of a free society.

Full Frontal.

'You know, I was down the Labour Exchange today and it was full of them blacks. They come over 'ere and it's straight on the Dole, and they get more money than us. None of 'em work.'

'I know. It's the same up the factory where I work. It's full of 'em. They come straight over 'ere and get the best jobs. They're turning white blokes away now you know 'cos of the Race Relations Act. Soon won't be able to get a job because of them'.

'You know, down our road some of them blacks are living fifteen in a room.'

'I know - and they've all got a house each.'

'Yer, my mate sold his house to 'em. Got £6,000. It was only worth £4,000' . . .'

'Yer and when they move in they bring down the price of property, you know.'

The inarguable logic of the National Front overheard in conversations every day.

Prestige and People.

Talking of plans to hold future party conferences in their exhibition hall, the Director of the Metropole Hotel Group said recently, 'We could now lose 4,000 delegates in the whole complex.' Here's to that, comrade. You lose them and it's an unwise man who'll join the search parties.

Hoteliers, the Chamber of Commerce etc. are wringing their hands and casting envious glances at Bournemouth and Blackpool with the prospect of those towns capturing completely the lucrative Party Conference trade. (Watch for them in October) After 1973 there will not be enough room in any of the town's halls for the Big Parties - we share with Blackpool the dubious honour of Being Big Enough this year. But soon Bournemouth may have a 10,000 seater hall which will hog the trade.

Well, unless you're the Mayor or have shares in A.V.P. Properties this shouldn't worry you too much. It's at times like this that we hear about the vast amounts of money which the conferences bring 'into the town' - but when did you ever see any of it? For town read the Grand, Metropole, Norfolk, a few boarding houses and restaurants and the Rank Organization (what a well chosen name that is). The money comes in, but then where does it go. All the conferences do practically is help to maintain a large submerged group of underpaid, overworked, institutionalized but unorganized hotel staff.

The Conference clamour is part of the whole Prestige Principle on which this town functions. Put on a show, build bigger and better conference halls, literally whitewash over the cracks in crumbling Regency facades, lots of flowers, lots of lights where the tourists go and let's hope nobody notices, for instance, the rats, blocked drains and fungus in St. Michaels Place or the dog-shitty slope of

grass that's the main play-space for kids in Kingswood and Milner Flats. We are told the Marina will bring new prosperity to the town and increased leisure facilities. It'll certainly bring the former to the financial speculators and the latter to those who can afford an evening at the casino when they have moored their yachts. At the moment the project isn't even providing much in the way of work for the town. Most of the labour force seems to have been brought in from outside and many of the workers are Spanish. Anarchists are the last people to throw up barriers against workers from other countries, but there is surely something incongruous about this when the unemployment figures for Brighton and Sussex are at about their highest for years. That is if one believes that work is good as THEY always claim.

Prestige, prestige, prestige. I'm not arguing that it's bad to have a colourful seafront, well set-out parks even flood-lights on the Pavilion, but in Brighton the balance is too heavily in favour of things like this. Allowing speculators to provide 'luxury' accommodation at inflated rents in Sussex Heights, Bedford Towers and Chartwell Court seems more important than providing good basic housing people can afford. Housing which doesn't cut neighbour off from neighbour in tower blocks and which recognizes the fact that kids are noisy and, surprise, surprise, like space to play in. Keep the visitors happy, entice those with wealth and good luck to the rest of us. I'm sure those who rule in our name would give a more affable welcome at one of their monthly meetings to a deputation of Hoteliers worried about the loss of the conference trade than they did to the petitioners deploring the housing situation in 1969 or the residents who this year had the nerve to express their views on the town's education system.

We can afford to lose the conference delegates and we can certainly afford to lose our councillors. But for the moment we're stuck with them, even though only a minority of us often vote for any of them. Until no one votes they won't go away. Meanwhile - what to do about them? Perhaps wherever possible just pretend they don't exist. Does your area have a tenants association to work for fair housing? Do you think it would be a good idea to have a place in Brighton where anyone can have a public meeting or play music or have a party without paying someone who already has too much money or crawling to the council? Think about what is wrong with your town, talk to other people and get to work. Don't wait for the Anarchists to do it for you - you see Anarchists are strange people - they don't like telling other people what to do about their own lives. Maybe these things won't bring the revolution, but they may help us all to see that the place we live in is ours - the Theobald Gang doesn't have some Divine Right. We have to learn how much we can do without leaning on or hiding behind authority at all levels - then we'll be that bit nearer losing councillors, conferences and all the other trappings of power and prestige politics.

Devil's Dictionary.

Compulsion, n. the eloquence of power.

Conservative, n. a statesman who is enamoured of existing evils, as distinguished from the liberal, who wishes to replace them with others.

Disobedience, n. the silver lining to the cloud of servitude.

Disobey, v.t. to celebrate with an appropriate ceremony the maturity of command.

From 'The Devil's Dictionary' by Ambrose Bierce.



"UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL
COME ON NOW PEOPLE LET'S GET ON THE BALL
AND WORK TOGETHER
C'MON C'MON LET'S WORK TOGETHER..."



Workers Control.

'The Bolsheviks and Worker's Control 1917 to 1921 - the State and Counter-Revolution' by Maurice Brinton. pp xv 90. price 25p. published by Solidarity.

This is the first book, as opposed to duplicated pamphlets, by Solidarity, the rank-and-file libertarian organization. Its author also wrote another Solidarity pamphlet - 'The Irrational in politics', an excellent analysis of sexual repression and its link-up with the production of authoritarian attitudes. The book under discussion has two aims - to contribute new factual material to the current discussion on 'workers control' and to attempt a new kind of analysis of the fate of the Russian revolution. As the author states, 'people as different as Young Liberals' and Labour 'lefts', tired trade union officials and Trotskyists of one kind or another - not to mention anarcho-syndicalists and 'libertarian Marxists' all talk about 'workers control'. Either these people have common objectives - which seems unlikely - or the words serve to mask as much as they convey.'

The book's look back into history is not prompted by a love of archivism. On the contrary 'without a clear understanding of objectives and of the forces impeding advance - in short, without a sense of history - the revolutionary struggle tends to become 'all movement and no direction' '.

The book discusses at length the various definitions of workers control and distinguishes between workers control and workers management. 'To manage is to initiate the decisions oneself, as a sovereign person or collectivity, in full knowledge of all the relevant facts. To control is to supervise, inspect or check decisions initiated by others. Control implies a limitation of sovereignty, or at best, a state of duality of power, wherein some people determine the objectives while others see that the appropriate means are used to achieve them. Historically, controversies about workers control have tended to break out precisely in such conditions of economic dual power.'

The book describes in detail the formation of the factory committees, their relationship to the Soviets and the Trade Unions and the development of the Bolshevik bureaucracy and why this bureaucracy developed. It is a major work in the current attack on Leninist vanguard organization, and should be read by all libertarians who wish to develop their case against Marxism, and by all Marxists if they wish to see where centralism leads. It is also a crucial document in the development of libertarian theory and for Anarchists to miss reading it - unless they wish forever to speak in the language of 60 years ago - would be a grave mistake.

Sabotage, this dark, invincible, terrible Damocles sword that hangs over the head of the master class, will replace all the confiscated arms and ammunition of the army of toilers. There can be no injunction against it. No policeman's club, no rifle, no prison bars. It cannot be starved into submission. It cannot be discharged. It cannot be blacklisted. It is present everywhere.

SABOTAGE

Kill to 'Cure'.

A recently published book by Edith Sitwell is called 'The English Eccentrics'. Naturally, all the people therein are aristocrats or wealthy bourgeoisie. As the poor know full well, if you're 'mentally disturbed' and rich you're eccentric; and if you're 'mentally' disturbed and poor you're mad.

A question often asked of Anarchists is 'what are you going to do with the lunatics?' To start with the Mental Health Act (1959) recognized lunacy was an illness in the same category as tuberculosis and that sufferers should be treated in a similar fashion. 47% of hospital beds are filled by the mentally sick - although 11% of the N.H.S. expenditure is spent on them. (First wreck a person's sanity in the factory, and at home, and then throw him on the rubbish heap.)

Because of this low expenditure, conditions in mental hospitals are usually pretty squalid and overcrowded. (I've spoken to two Anarchists, both former mental nurses, about this.) Because of the low pay, the prevailing attitude to mental illness, and the selection of mental nurses, a good deal of brutality takes place. There have been many recent reports of brutality by nurses towards the patients, and, as many ex-nurses say, for every one instance investigated there are ten which do not even get reported.

Thanks to this society's attitude to 'lunatics', many are wrecked for life by electro-convulsive therapy, deep insulin treatment, and monstrous doses of tranquillisers which reduce people to the level of vegetables, sometimes permanently. If you do not adhere to a rigid norm, you are regarded as mad, and you are spiritually butchered in these psychiatric Belsen.

Some of these cases arise out of guilt feelings - e.g. one man had uncontrollable guilt feelings about his homosexuality - the death doctor got to work, put him through deep insulin treatment and reduced him to the level of a zombie. In a healthy society where one's sexual preferences were regarded as no different than one's preferences for tea or coffee this would never take place. Many other people, as a recent report shows, suffer nervous breakdowns from the repetition work they have to put up with in factories. Others suffer a mental crisis as a result of the family system - a woman no longer feels needed after her children have grown up and left home. Many develop schizoid tendencies as a result of leading a double life in bourgeois society - the real self breaks with the false self, the face with which one meets the world, one's 'friends and other strangers'. For this alone, for making people react artificially to each other, rather than behaving as their desires tell them to, and for starving their real needs society must be condemned.

Other people, who in the Middle Ages would have been regarded as saints, are labelled as schizophrenics. In the opinion of Laing and Cooper, some people have a mystical experience which, if allowed to run its natural course, would bring the individual out on the other side as a new and healed person. Instead of help on this 'journey', these people are taken to institutions, pumped full of tranquillisers and are 'frozen' and trapped within this 'trip'.

The problem of mental illness will only be solved in a free society, where most of the causes of breakdown will, hopefully, have vanished, and any who are mentally 'sick' will be treated in a compassionate and humane way.

Counterweight.

The writer of an article called 'The Weight' in last month's GUTTER PRESS described conditions inside a Detention Centre and suggested that the system would be made more worthwhile if the present repressive army-style 'training' were replaced by a system based on group psycho-therapy. This, he suggested, would 'take the problems' by their roots and find out the cause of certain anti-social acts'. It seems to me that this view cannot appear in an anarchist magazine without comment.

The writer has done time in a Detention Centre and I have not, so I can understand his desire, after a dose of the real thing, to make the system more tolerable - and what he suggests would certainly do that - but would it be better? From an Anarchist point of view, I think the answer must be 'no'. The present system seeks by its sheer harshness to deter and cower - the other system seeks to reform: to change the offender's behaviour so that he fits back into society. It starts from the premise that it's the offender - or at the most his immediate home background - which needs changing and not society. By a process of group confession and sympathy it leads to a desire to atone for one's sins: to convince the offender that all's right with the world, so long as he 'gets his mind right.' It's the oldest trick in the liberal book - all to do with velvet gloves and iron fists. If anything it's more dangerous than the present system because at least sheer physical repression and humiliation is likely to breed a hostile reaction whilst the therapist and counsellor seek to insinuate themselves into one's confidence and attack in that way - it's just as repressive and just as humiliating, but it doesn't show. Carried to its logical extreme the system last month's writer recommends is very like that under which so many 'intellectuals' suffer in Russia today.

As Anarchists we should be wary of all such 'liberal' methods, especially at a time like this with the right-wing back-lash following the Blackpool police murder and the nicely timed 'unofficial' comments from Scotland Yard calling for harsher treatment of criminals. It's tempting to react to this by rushing into the liberal camp. Sure, our prisons and penal system are doing little except help foster the fear and guilt which keep the system going. But the real answer is not to make them nicer - it's to empty them. This isn't a dream - it was done on a small scale and with success with prisons for the 'criminally insane' in France 200 years ago, so why not now? And we can make a start by asking whose acts are most 'anti-social' - the criminals or the politicians? And to accept that to be 'anti-social' in Authority's terms usually means wishing to establish a new society.

Neurotics build castles in the air.

Psychotics live in them.

Psychiatrists collect the rent

WHAT? WHERE ? WHY ? AND HOW MANY ?

W.A.M. Association of working mothers.

ns 20 Hangleton Road.

S.P.U.

Women

Releas

Bright

7s 8-9pm.

Citize

Rent

Bit info service

Crash Pad Service.

Bust Fund

Drugs Advisory Service.

Open Sect 7 Victoria Road 27878

Gay Liberation Front

Meetings Tuesdays 8pm. Stanford Arms Preston Circus.

National Council for Civil Liberties.

37 Park Crescent . 65706

Membership, 6 Bedford Square.

Hot M

Anar

4
ton Street.

EATS

Open Sect 7 Victoria Road. Good Vegetarian Food plus coffee

The Garden 22 Trafalgar Street. Vegetarian Food from lunchtime on.

Infinity Foods 54 Church Street. Macro. compost grown veg. etc.

BOOKS, MAGS. ETC.

Unicorn Bookshop, Gloucester Road. Open 10-10 Mon.-Sat. 12-10 Sun.

The Public House, 21 Little Preston Street. Books, mags. plus coffee.

CLOTHES AND THINGS

Raggle Taggle 27 George Street Brighton. Workshop space available.
Take stuff you make - they'll try to sell it.

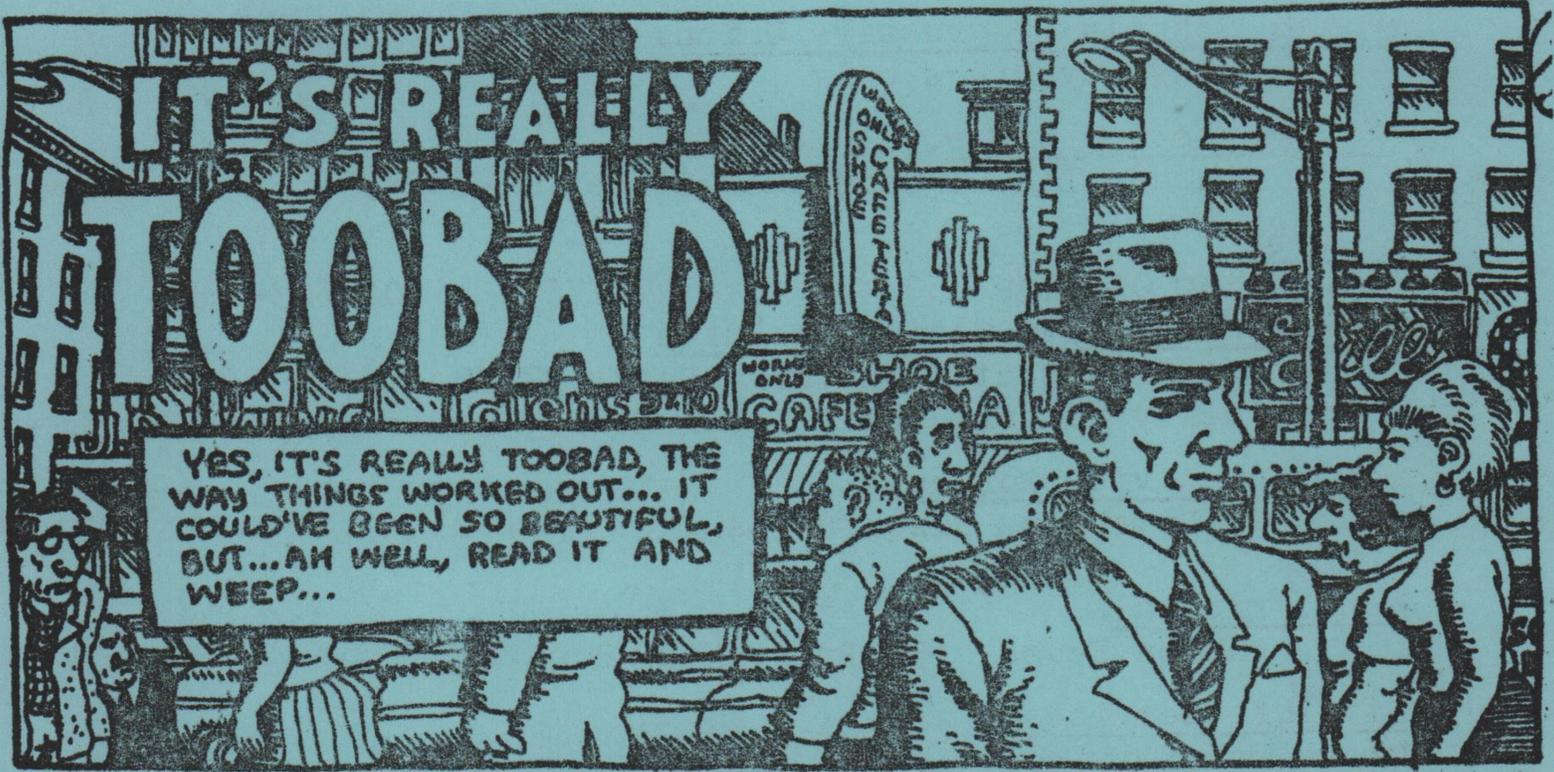
The New Dragon 111 Gloucester Road - bracelets, necklaces etc.

VERY SMALL ADS.

TWO grotty but not lousy mattresses (as advertised in Attila)

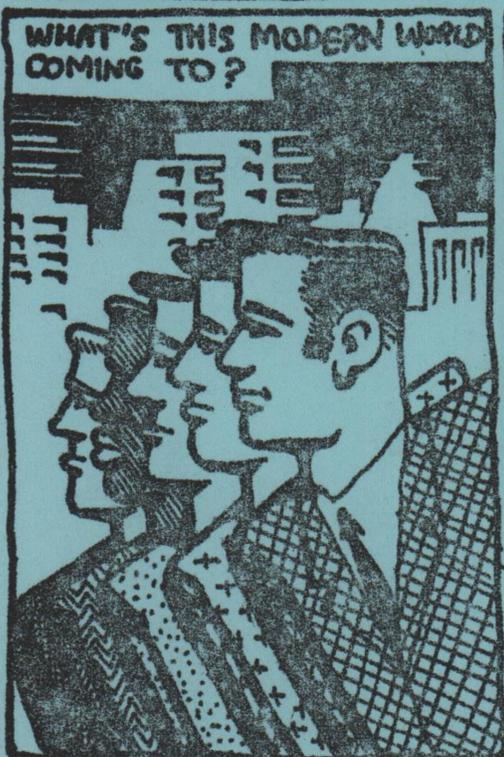
Yours if you take them away. Call after 6pm

Top Flat, 6 Bedford Square



IT'S REALLY TOOBAD

YES, IT'S REALLY TOOBAD, THE WAY THINGS WORKED OUT... IT COULD'VE BEEN SO BEAUTIFUL, BUT...AH WELL, READ IT AND WEEP...



WHAT'S THIS MODERN WORLD COMING TO?

