

FUN!
FIFTH FEB!

RED RAG FREE!

FORTNIGHTLY!

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EVENTS 666681. GOING OUT 663083.
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ORTO SUE CLARKE, FLAT 7, 66 WOKINGHAM ROAD
READING'S ONLY NEWSPAPER. NEXT COPY DEADLINE
THURSDAY FEB 17TH.

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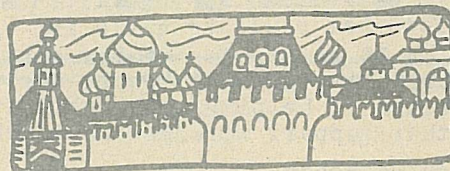
GUIDE.

PAGE 6: EVERYTHING ELSE

HOMES NOT OFFICES

In case you thought we have totally disappeared, we haven't. The reason is due to the police support- it seems that they're not just satisfied with justice and peacekeeping but stretch their boxing-glove - tipped tentacles to heavy harassment. One previous address, 113 Castle Hill, was raided five times. The doors were kicked in and everybody was arrested and strip searched - to no avail. Only on one occasion was anything discovered: about a joint's worth of cannabis resin in the kitchen. I was forced into admitting ownership of this under carefully worded threats from the police as to what would happen to my girlfriend if I didn't. One policeman laughed at the amount and said I should have eaten it: believe me I would have if I had known it existed. I attend court on the 10th February, so if you fancy tasting a bit of injustice come and watch. It's at 10.30, roughly. Also in the police station a pacifist squatter was pulled pinched and beaten for no reason at all except for his vocal attempts to convert the pigs into Christians. He failed; and they failed to beat him psychologically, so they turned to violence. I didn't believe in police brutality until I saw with my own eyes the bruises on his body... Harassment has continued: they turned the electrical power off and refused to connect the water supply. We had a free gig sussed out for the squatters and CND, but our power and 3 hour-worked-on prototype billboard poster mysteriously disappeared. We have eight bands now and five squats and will play as soon as a generator turns up. Get off your arses and squat!

Xen



SAG

SQUATTERS' ACTION GROUP

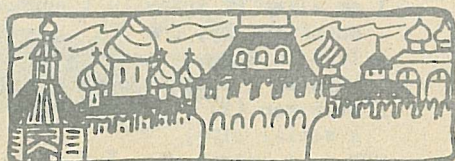
In my personal opinion, squatters should be allowed to occupy premises that have been left empty for more than 6 months (council or private) especially if they have been forced to live in APPALLING conditions with children by councils! For example;

In my case, myself, husband and 14 month old child had to live in one room, with no drainage no heating, one window missing and mice running around, for over a year. Although we had health inspectors round they did not feel this was bad enough for rehousing, so we decided to make our stand for justice. My husband has just recovered from a mental breakdown and is on the verge of another, due to the appalling conditions. We squatted in a council flat on the Dee Rd. Estate that had been left empty for over 10mths in PERFECT condition. When we approached the council to explain that we were willing to pay rent, they told us they would get an eviction order against us. They were not interested in our reasons for squatting, they just wanted us out!

They now have an eviction order and we must leave the flat. When asked what would happen to the flat after we were gone, they replied quote "we don't know"!

Also the council have told us they will not re-house us because we have made ourselves intentionally homeless, although we never really had a home. Is this British Justice? The council say they didn't even know the flat was empty. Why should councils be allowed to leave homes empty when there are so many homeless people around who would accept anything to live in?

Tracey



July 9th 1982. Somewhere "THEY" are using - 2
a tapped telephone.....

"Bad news, sir. At Greenham, could become big."
"****"
"No, sir. Not the women this time: it's those hippies. The, uh, 'Cosmic Counter-Cruise Carnival', they've smashed the fence down."
"****"
"Not a lot we could do, sir: there's rather a lot of them."
"****"
"The report is a bit garbled...uh, 'hordes of savages, whooping and running around, smiling and ...and laughing, sir, knocking fence-posts down with sledgehammers, kids jumping on the wire mesh singing and dancing...having a real jamboree'."
"No, we've kept it quiet - no press are onto it."
"****"
"Uh? Remember, sir. We couldn't identify any leaders at all."
"****"
"Ok sir. We'll just grab a few likely ones at random."

During the day eight men were arrested. One was released without charge. Others appeared before Newbury Magistrates on charges of criminal damage (£7,000+), assault, and possessing an offensive weapon (a catapult). They were committed for trial at Crown Court and have had to wait ever since, signing on daily at their local police stations as a condition of bail. At last that particular punishment is coming to an end: the cases come up, in Reading, on Feb 28th.

Artillery House, Tilehurst Rd. 10am.
For at least one, there appears to be no evidence, but all are in danger of major jail sentences. Come along for what could be quite an interesting occasion. If we can do nothing else, we can show our solidarity in that simple way.

Anybody interested in helping with publicity fundraising and other support work, get in touch.
Cliff. Box 17, Acorn Bookshop.

WORD AND ACTION

Word and Action (Dorset) is a community theatre group and writing service which was set up in December 1972 to serve the rural county of Dorset. The group has now expanded to such an extent that it tours regularly in 8 different European countries as well as in different parts of England, working with all ages and abilities from pre-school play groups to old people.

The main form of work which Word and Action does is Instant Theatre - a form of participatory theatre where total control of the contents of the play is handed to the audience, with the actors there merely to serve that audience. By a question-and-answer technique a story is built up by the audience (around a theme chosen by the venue beforehand). When there is enough information to act out a scene, two members of Word and Action take on parts and invite anyone from the audience to join them - with people taking on the role of 'props' as well as characters. The whole thing is voluntary - no-one is made to join in if they don't want to; but, because individual pressure is taken off people find themselves voluntarily getting involved. No judgements whatsoever are made in Instant Theatre - whatever is said, however seemingly bizarre or outrageous, is put into the story. Stories very soon, therefore, enter into the realms of folk tale, legends and symbols, archetypes and myths. The end result is a piece of theatre unique to that particular group of people at that particular time.

Word and Action are touring in the Reading area from 18th to 29th April. If you would like more details please write to or phone:

Word and Action (Dorset) Ltd., 23 Beaucroft Lane, Colehill, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 2PE. Tel 0202 383197.

PEACE JOBS FREEDOM : WHO ARE THEY KIDDING ?

On Wednesday evening I attended my first - and last - Labour Party meeting, advertised as a public meeting to hear Labour's programme for government: Peace; Jobs; Freedom. As was to be expected, it turned out to be an orgy of Tory-bashing interspersed with strict party line Labour propaganda. In fact, the speeches were not directed at the average member of the public, especially if she happened to be female; the whole affair seemed to be something of a masturbatory exercise for L.P. stalwarts. There were three speakers: Eric Heffer, M.P., and two prospective parliamentary candidates for Reading, Kevin Boyle and Richard Evans, all of whom raved on in the usual manner: reduce unemployment bring down inflation create a climate for investment the Tories will destroy everything if we don't get in blah blah blah. There were also a few vote-catching words for oppressed groups - promises to end discrimination against blacks, women, disabled people, one-parent families - spoken with all the sincerity one expects from crusading politicians.

The whole thing was very vague and wishy-washy, with an obvious reluctance to go into detail about anything. When I asked a question on a specific issue (provision of free child-care), I felt a definite hostility. I was made to feel privileged that I had been allowed to speak: the chairperson didn't "want to be accused of discriminating" (I was the only woman with a question) and when none of the speakers knew the answer, I was told that the L.P. has a lot of policy on a lot of issues and if I wanted to know the answers to specific problems I could buy the book on my way out.

I wasn't surprised to find that the L.P.'s main concerns are jobs, statistics and economics - little mention was made of either peace or freedom. If you really feel compelled to vote at the next election, I suppose Labour is preferable to Tory/SDP, but a better alternative is for everyone to soil their ballot papers, thereby beginning to take responsibility for clearing up the shit themselves. Politicians often appear to be nice, capable people, but then that's their job, isn't it?

Lynn Killmister.

IN DEFENCE OF APATHY - A LAMENT

I work in a changing world - so I must keep learning and adjusting,
I am an activist - so I must defend "the members" rights and interests (in and out of office hours),
I am a woman - so I should work for women's rights?
WHO do I betray when I fail to cope?

The monthly progress report is overdue, so are the Minutes-of-the-last-Meeting - and I haven't written them,
The boss wants a paper written, and I've got four others for comment,
Gordon Hopwood wants an article, and Gordon Lees wanted comments by last Friday,
WHO do I betray when I fail to cope?

"They" make nukes just down the road, and soon there'll be Cruise a little further on - I ought to care,
The RHA are underfunded and say they must abolish whole services - I ought to care,
Tebbit is law, Megaw has reported, and New Tech is creeping in - I ought to care,
WHO do I betray when I fail to cope?

I am alive (I think) - I suppose I should eat and sleep occasionally,
I live in a house and don't have a dependent wife - I suppose I should do some housework occasionally,
I am human (?) - I suppose I should have a private and a social life,
WHO do I betray when I fail to cope?

Anon.

WELFARE STATE

Well, the justification of a police state is that it is for the good of the people. And a welfare state is one which gives out a meagre share of the collective wealth in order to appease otherwise rebellious elements.

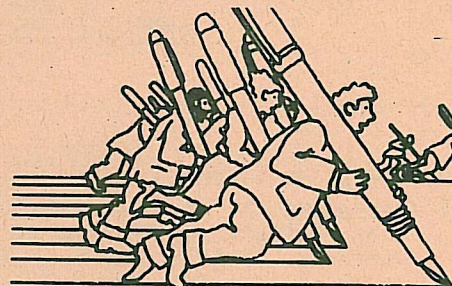
What prompts this is that today, yet again, the Thames Valley Police attended the DHSS offices in the Market Place, Reading, to rid them of ungrateful people who don't scrape and bow when told to go away and wait "a few days more" for their money.

The police are terribly tactful, though they do their best to persuade people to leave, with only veiled reference to arrest and things like that. They avoid promising to arrest people, especially since at least two people in the last couple of weeks have actually asked to be arrested. After all, they are committing no crime, so an arrest and charges will be infinitely more embarrassing for the police and the DHSS than for the hapless claimant. And as one said last week, "If you arrest me at least I will get a meal which is more than the DHSS are allowing me."

Unfortunately, these incidents are normally delayed until all other claimants have left: at 5pm one Monday there were only two of us left, both legitimately expecting an immediate payment. The other was eventually coaxed into leaving and then, once all witnesses were out of the way, I was given the simple choice of either walking out, or being thrown out, with a strong emphasis on "thrown". From our previous discussion it was quite clear that I was not being accused of any offence. To PC 1303 it was simply a question of assisting a Government Department, regardless of the law, as he quite cheerfully told me. After all, what could I, poor, jobless, homeless, do about it.

PJH

LETTER



Dear Red Rag,

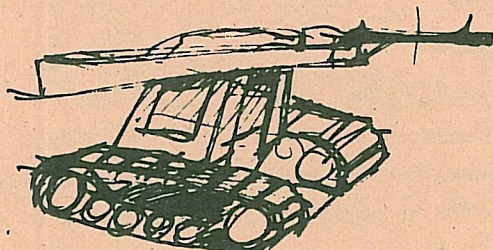
DHSS, and DE, have to administer laws as laid down by Parliament. Within that framework, there are priorities approved, or directly set, by Ministers. Benefit rates are set by Ministers and approved by Parliament. Staff are provided to do the work by the will of the Government. There are over 60,000 staff in DHSS offices up and down the country, and a whole lot more in DE's UBOs. Some are good, some are bad, and nearly all of them are grossly overworked and not very well-paid. After 5 years a counter clerk will earn about £5,500 gross, have 4½ weeks leave, for a 42-hour week, less lunch-breaks - assuming s/he was at least 21 when starting the job.

If the service is rotten it just might be because Maggie and her hench-persons won't provide the staff to do the work, and don't pay enough to keep the staff they have got.

So, please, when you are next bashing DHSS for its many shortcomings, try to remember that some of the staff are nearly human, and might even be legitimate too. I cannot say whether this is also true of Ministers. One of Them.

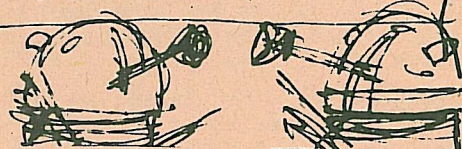
ROBOTS AT DOLE OFFICE SHOCK

The grim reality of a Nation at War with Terrorism finally struck home last Thursday (3 Feb) as a "suspect package" was found at 4 in the afternoon at the Unemployment Benefit Office in South St. Police at once evacuated the building; DHSS staff huddled in the cold outside together with passers-by and late signers to watch as police cars sealed off South St (astonishing how ready motorists were to accept that as normal). Then a big army bomb disposal van arrived; soldiers in camouflage jackets bustled around and finally produced a dinky little robot on caterpillar tracks, remote controlled, with portable TV, trailing a flex. It was at once christened "K9" by the spectators. A rifle (!) was fixed to its arm (imagine a miniature tower crane on a go-cart) and it set off. It trundled slowly across the road, stumbled a bit on the kerb, turned round awkwardly, hesitated, poked



WARNING

NON PRODUCTION OF
P45 MEANS
INSTANT EXTERMINATION
THIS MEANS YOU!



at the door with its gun. Here a soldier had to make a brave dash across the road to open the door for it. Then it took the steps with amazing confidence and style and disappeared inside. "It'll have to find its way through all the office doors - that's more than our cleaners can do." "If I leave my biscuits here, will you promise not to blow them up?" "Has your robot got a P45 and an N.I. number?"...

What the machine did when it reached the package I don't know - I suppose it shot it! - but in any case the "bomb" was only a brown paper parcel with two milk bottles, stuck up with lots of tape.

James

GOING OUT



Mon 7 Hex-Relatively speaking 7.30
£2.50-£4

The Horn-Jazz 8p.m. free

Fives-Doris & The Dots

Silks, Thatcham- Crossfire 8ish £?

The Bull-Nettlebed- folk 8p.m. free

South Hill Park-Womens Media Workshop
(cinema) 7.30 free

Tue 8 Fives- Year of the French 8ish free

Tudor Arms-Gay Disco 8p.m. free

University S.U.-Disco 8-1a.m. £?

South Hill Park-7.30 Diva(AA) £1.90

plus concessions.8p.m. Kitty Grimes Trio
(modern jazz) £1.80/£2.20

Apollo Theatre Oxford-London Contemporary
Dance Theatre 7.30p.m. £3-£6 + conc
program 1 on 8th & 9th, program 2 on
10,11,12th

Oxford Playhouse Beaumont St-ORFEO ED
EURIDICE (opera) 8p.m. £3 sat £3.50
also 9th,11th & 12th.

Wed 9 Hex-Scotlands for Me 2p.m. free(films,
talk,etc)

Reading Film Theatre University-Rough
Cut and Ready Dubbed(AA) + Shine so
Hard 8p.m. £1 + 1.50

Uni, Faculty of Letters-Die Chinesische
Mauer(its in german!) 2.30+7.30 £1
also 10th and 11th at 7.30 only.

South Hill Park, Bracknell-7.30p.m.
Diva(AA) £1.90 + conc. up to 13th.

7.45p.m. David Glass Mime £1.90/2.20

Apollo Oxford-London Contemp. Special
introductory Matinee 2p.m. £1.50

Thurs 10 Bulmershe College, Bridges Hall-Graeae
Theatre co. 7.30 £1.50, £1 unwaged.

RFT-La Ronde(AA) 8p.m. £1/1.50

Uni Great Hall, London Rd-Luis 7ea
(guitar recital) 8p.m. £2 + conc.

S.H.P.-Park Theatre Workshop Club
Night 8p.m. £?

Angie's- Count let loose 9p.m. £1-2.

Playhouse Oxford- Monteverdi Concert
8p.m. £3 also Sat 4p.m. £2.50

Fri 11 Hex-Folk Ceilidh with the Riversiders
10.30-1a.m. £1.50, £1.75 on door.

Caribbean Club, London St-So What
10.30ish £1.50

Central Club, London St- Melody Rocka's
+ Marco's sounds + Aureliuf Crispin
(comedian) disco etc £2 8 till late.

Tudor Arms- Gay Disco 8p.m. free

University-Animal Nightlife + others
+ Disco 8p.m. £2 (start of Rags Week
so beware, also best to buy tickets
in advance or you wont get in).

S.H.P.-8p.m. Equale Brass(recital) £2.25
-2.50. 8.15p.m. Tony Allen+A.B.A +
Equale Brass £2.50/2.75, £2.75/3 on door.
11p.m. Outland(AA) £1.90 + conc, also
on 12th.

Angies- The retractors 9p.m. £1-2.

Sat 12 Hex-wayland smithy(Folk) 12.15p.m. free

Southcote Youth & Community Centre-
St Valentines disco 8-12p.m. £?

SHP- 10a.m.-4p.m. Weekend Dance Course
£? 7.45 The life & crimes of Mr Runch
(puppets) £1.90/2.20

8p.m. Keith Kendrick & Barry Coope (folk,
£1.20/1.50

Angies-Motley Crew 9p.m. £1-2.

Sun 13 Hex- The dubliners 7.30 £3-4

Fives- The Signals Lunchtime free.

SHP- 12.15p.m. Peril for the Guy+Shots
+Serial 75p, 8p.m. Ken Tudor
Masterclass (opera) £1-1.40,

11a.m. Weekend Dance Course £?

Angies- A Bigger Splash 9p.m. £1-2

Mon 14 Bulmershe Collage, Bridges Hall-

Doolaly Days 7.30 £1.50 £1 unwaged.

The Horn- Jazz 8p.m. free

Progress Theatre, the Mount- 'The
Insect Play' 7.45 £1.80, to 19th.

St Marks Church Hall, Cranbury Rd-

Kids Adventure week(7-11years) 9.30-
noon, 2-4p.m. 20p. to the 18th.

Uni- Bakers Dozen 8p.m. £?

The Bull-nettlebed- Folk 8p.m. £?

SHP-2.30 Clash of the Titans(A) 75p

to 19th. 7.30 The not One(AA) £1.90+conc.

Tues 15 Hex-The Rutter family (Yodelling) 7.30
£2.50-3.50.

Fives- Warm Snorkel 8ish free.

Tudor Arms-Gay Disco 8p.m. free

Uni-The Bluebells + John Cooper Clarke
8p.m. £2

Palmer Building-Musik for Baroque
Ensamble 1.10p.m. 15p

SHP- Polish Season starts. 7.30 The
Constant factor(A) + Camera buff(A)

£1.90+conc, till 17th. 8p.m.- Sammey
Rimington Band(Jazz) £2/2.20.

Playhouse Oxford- As you like it 8p.m.
£2.50 also 16,17,21,22th. Matinee 16th
2p.m. £1.25 Satmatinee 4p.m. £2.

wed 16 Hex-reading Civic Society Talk
8p.m. free

RFT- Montenegro(X) 7.30+10p.m. £1/1.50

Uni-Bavarian Stompers 8p.m. £1 (Beware
it's Beer Mace day!)

Thurs 17 Hex-Robin Hill(guitar) 1.10p.m. silver
collection. The Return of Pollocks

Peepshow 7.30 £1.50-2.50

RFT-Impostors(AA) 8p.m. £1/1.50

Uni-Jazz Festival 8p.m. £?

Angies-Travellin Shoes 9p.m. £1-2

KEY!

Hex = the Hexagon, Queen's Walk

SHP = South Hill Park, Arts Centre in

Bracknell

Uni = University, Whiteknights

RFT = Reading Film Theatre, which
shows films in Palmer Bldg, Whiteknights

The Horn - St Mary's Butts

Fives - Queen's Walk, side of Butts Centre

Tudor Arms - Greyfriars Road

Angies - somewhere in Wokingham!

MONEY MATTERS

This is a small issue; the last one was duplicated. The main reason for this is economy - though we have before this issue a fairly healthy financial position (about £150 in credit!!), we can't go on in quite the extravagant way to which we've been accustomed. Another reason is lack of good copy. Another reason is that yet again the production has mainly been done by two people. (Several non-newsy items have been held over.) To continue, the Rag needs new keen people with new ideas; it still needs money. This issue will cost c£30 - 40. Send money to us (p.o.s, cheques to 'Red Rag') c/o Sue Clarke, Flat 7, 66 Wokingham Road. To get involved, why not come to the Collective meeting on Sun Feb 13? (Flat 6, 117 Kendrick Rd); or ring 61257 or 662302 to help with the next issue.

Red Rag Outlets

You could have picked this Rag up at:

Acorn Bookshop, under the Chatham St car park

Pop Records, 172 King's Road

Centre for the Unemployed, 4-6 East Street

Brets, Friar Street

The Emporium, Merchants' Place (off Friar St)

Our Price Records, Butts Centre (downstairs)

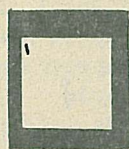
Lazer Records, Butts Centre (upstairs)

Ken's Shop, Students' Union, Whiteknights

Central Club, bottom of London Street

...that is, if you don't get it delivered to your door by our stupendous distribution system. Ring 61257 in that case. Do let us know if the system isn't quite so stupendous in your area (i.e. if you don't get your copy); if you'd like to help with distribution; if you move...

ANARCHIST CROSSWORD.



1 Across - The Infinite article.

1 Down - First Letter of the alphabet.

BRING A RECORD TO - MUSIC

A RED RAG SOCIAL

FUN!

ENTRY £1 OR FILL IN A STANDING ORDER

DO IT YOURSELF DISCO

FUNDS

LIGHTS

AT THE CROWN, CROWN STREET.

WED. 16TH FEB

8p.m. till late....

ALL WELCOME!

Questionnaire: so far we've only had five replies to this - apparently some people thought it wasn't serious. Some interesting ideas have come up, but we'd like more! We asked for age, sex, occupation, what you read the Rag for; where you get your copy from; what issues, campaigns, activities you're particularly interested in; any ideas for improvement and any criticisms; how many people read your copy; what could you contribute to the Rag?

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