

March 6 - 20  
1983

Fortnightly

Free

# Red Rag

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READING'S

ONLY

NEWSPAPER!

## Vernon Paxford - 'Mafia' boss!

Vernon Paxford is a landlord who preys on the down and outs and the homeless of Reading. He exploits people who are living rough and have nowhere to go. He charges high prices (the Council has to pay for bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless people) for very basic accommodation.

A number of unemployed in Reading hand over their giro (€60 per week) to him, and he gives them a few pounds (£2 per day) in return. Their humiliation of being forced to hand over their cheques in the street was the subject of a recent 'Post' article (3.3.83). They co-operate - but they have no choice. Paxford sends his strong-arm boys round to force them if they do not hand the money over.

### Violence is used:

At Christmas a man turned up at the Night Shelter in Brock Barracks with broken ribs and a battered face. He had run foul of Mr Paxton's thugs.

Another man who wanted to cash his own giro was beaten up and had to leave Reading. He had a broken arm.

Two months ago, a woman staying at one of Paxford's bed and breakfasts had to go into hospital for two weeks. Paxford had her cases dumped at the hospital. Afterwards she found a room for herself and her family at another b&b - with Paxford's henchmen after her for rent for the time she was in hospital. She took legal advice. She had to seek help from members of the public to get to the Post Office to cash her giro - Paxford's boys standing menacingly behind them in the queue as the cheque was cashed. Later, for her own safety, she was helped to leave Reading and find accommodation in Swindon.

Vernon Paxford, working from his office in Baker Street, also takes part in the common practice among Reading landlords of selling a letter stating that a homeless person is staying at one of his addresses so that person can claim money from the DHSS which they otherwise couldn't.

Someone living rough in Reading gets a mere £2.94 per day, and has to present themselves to the DHSS every day. In the 'Operation Major' in Oxford it was these unfortunates who were taken to court and charged, not the landlords exploiting their plight. Young teenagers forced to use Paxford's accommodation are particularly at risk; women face the further threat of sexual assault.

People working with the homeless in Reading have been aware of these problems for some time, but only with the setting up of the Night Shelter at Brock Barracks, and other hostels (such as the Cyrenians and Walter Rodney) have the homeless had any alternative to such unpleasant and unscrupulous characters as Vernon Paxford. Even the chairman of the Council Housing Committee has described Reading's bed and breakfasts as "a rip-off". It remains to be seen whether the new Unified Housing Benefit will improve matters....

HOPE - Homeless People support group runs a drop-in centre once a week in Reading town centre, for the homeless and those living in poor accommodation. We provide food, clothing, medical attention and help with accommodation for those requiring it. We are self-funded and desperately need volunteers, food, clothing and money. If interested in helping or donating something, phone Diane on Reading 697967.

WE'RE STILL HERE The Night Shelter at Brock Barracks (571 Oxford Rd) is helping to alleviate the misery of those living on the streets of Reading. Since we opened on Dec 23, 1982 we've helped over 100 people find accommodation, medical attention, companionship. We still need three full-time workers (we've found one), plus volunteer workers, and any donations of money food or clothing. Contact 54020 for further details.

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## HOMELESS IN READING

There is only one place you can go to if you are homeless and on the dole, the Council. Here you will be treated with all the indifference they can muster. You will be made to wait, and to squirm, and to apologise and to plead; by the end of the day you will have had to trade in your self-respect for their help. Their help comes in the form of Bed and Breakfast lodgings somewhere in Reading. If you are lucky, the "Hell-Holes" will be full, as they only cost the council £54 per week per room (per family). If you get into one of the more expensive residences you can indeed be thankful, as you will almost certainly receive the one breakfast allocated to each room, and so you should, as the council will most certainly be paying around £60 to £70 to keep you there. Conditions are very poor in all the choices. The management take advantage of the fact that the council need them, and they abuse their authority in any way that enriches their own lives. Young unmarried mothers are the most vulnerable in many cases as landlords write in an extra clause of bed duty and who is to stop them? There is no Homeless Peoples Protection Society, and don't forget, many of these young girls have no family. Children suffer always, there are no facilities for them to be able to play. In fact in most cases the management order you out between the hours of 9am and 5pm, so then they are walking the streets with mum, or being pushed along in a push-chair. Taking away a child's right to play is as devastating to the child as taking a man's right to work is for him. Add the two together and you have a very bereaved family. Far from there being a body that protects the families, there is a clause in the council ruling that works constantly against them. It is aptly named "Expulsion" If you are in any way thought to be uncooperative, you can be expelled from your bed and breakfast room, taken off the council Homeless list and you are on your own. The council no longer have to do anything for you, and so they don't. You are always guilty until proven innocent, and who is there to prove you innocent?

The council have many tricks up their sleeves, all seem to be designed to make you suffer. They join forces with the social security on some occasions and send you phoney appointments which mean that you spend all day in Market Place having an appointment deferred that never existed in the first place. You have to go because the social have to give you money to take to the council offices to pay as your contribution to your keep. Why they make you cash a giro then take the cash to the council offices, I will never understand. It must be cheaper and simpler for them to pay out in one draft for all the families. It has occurred to me that this is one of the ways that the government proves how much they pay the unemployed. After all, if they pay you £134 and don't say that you actually have to give back £94 to another government department, then who is to see that we are underfinanced, only you. Have you ever tried to feed two children and an adult on £40 for a month, with only the use of cafes? I have, and it can't be done. I would buy one cooked meal a day and the children would have first bash at it. What was left. I would eat. I bought them milk at every opportunity and fruit. Good food was vital as we were on the streets every day. Our salvation came from our friends who were always ready and willing to help, and all of them were on the dole like us, but thankfully they were not homeless, as we were. Their kindness kept my children from being worn out and cold, they gave my children the right to play, without them we would have suffered much more than we did, but no more than young girls and similar families are still suffering today.

The end of your stay in Bed and Breakfast does not in any way make up for the discomfort the council have needlessly put you through. After a minimum of six months you will be offered a slum, or maybe a choice of two slums. However many, you must settle on one. The conditions of houses being offered during my stay in B&B were downright disgusting. Many had been empty for years and had been vandalised. Pipes may be burst, ceilings caved in, doors off hinges, windows broken. →

→ You name it, the houses had it wrong with them. One girl managed to get a Health Hazard Report done on the home the council expected her to move into, but still it did not help her. Here the versatility of the Expulsion clause is seen at its peak: by refusing the home, you are being unco-operative, and so you are expelled from the council's responsibility. End of story....

Why do the council pay upwards of £54 per week to temporarily house families in conditions that aren't worth £12.50 per week? Where is the money that should be paying for the repair work on the homes these people inevitably get moved to?

The managers of P&B's are making a financial killing, the council are making a grave mistake, and who suffers? NOT the managers, they are rich now. NOT the council. If there is one thing they are good at, it is covering up their mistakes. IT IS the people, people who have already suffered so much that they have lost their homes, their privacy, their self-respect, why keep taking from them? Isn't it about time somebody said "enough is enough!"

Who is there to help the young mother who has rejected a landlords advances and so became expelled? Who helps the young mother who endured all and still ended up with a slum? There is no-one, just no-one anywhere, who seems to have the power to change things for the Homeless, and to be honest, when you are homeless, you end up asking DOES ANYONE CARE!!

Maybe the system as it stands can't be changed in any great hurry but improvements can be made. Play centres could be opened at very little cost so that families could go there. The children could be warm, and play, the mother could rest her weary feet. A canteen should be opened somewhere in the town so that those needing to get a meal on the dole could do it at a subsidised price. Just two small steps would help alleviate the pressures on the homeless.

Something must be done.

This article was written by somebody no longer in the area, who was homeless in Reading last winter ('81-'82). It is only out of date in trivial details. Apologies to the writer for losing it - that's why it didn't appear sooner.

## READING CLAIMANTS ACTION GROUP

....is a group of unemployed + claimants who are sick of being labelled 'scroungers' and who wish to improve conditions on the dole. At the moment we are worried about:

The new means test form which replaces the old interview with the DHSS as from April 1983 - its full of hidden traps... make sure (especially women) that you answer YES to qu.2 - you are still allowed to put some restrictions on the hours, type of work & how far you will travel, despite what it says.

Unified Housing Scheme-confusion reigns. From 1st April 1983 the DHSS will no longer be responsible for paying rent to claimants. Instead, payments for rent will be made by the Reading Borough Council - but as yet no one seems to know whether they will pay the money to claimants as before, or direct to landlords!

A member of CAG (claimants action group) says "It looks like April could be a busy month" If you claim benefit, it is possible that you may experience some delay in receiving your payments after this date, while the changeover is made.

Eligibility- the DHSS is going to discriminate against women even further by demanding that mothers prove that they are available for work & that their children will be properly looked after if they ever get a job. Answer YES to qu.2 even if you find p/t work eventually - its your right.

The new visual monitoring of ethnic minorities - why should the DHSS be interested in the colour of claimants?

IF THESE NEW MOVES DISTURB YOU, COME ALONG ON THURSDAY 2-4pm READING CENTRE



ooh! Splodge guk!

## BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING February 22

Outside the Civic Offices was a demonstration by "200 banner-waving protesters" in support of the Berks Anti-Nuclear Campaign / Labour Party petition for a Nuclear Free Reading. A good chance to meet friends and distribute some Rags. The sight of Brian Revell organising things with such enthusiasm that a policeman proffered him his helmet gave some amusement. There were Councilor-spotters there to identify and target those who on arrival had to run the gauntlet of peaceniks chanting, "Nuclear Free in Eighty Three". A slogan of singular inanity - no wonder none of the Councillors seemed able to talk sense for the next six hours. I tried to vary things a bit with "Nuclear War in Eighty Four", but it didn't catch on. Oh, the petition was presented at the start of the meeting and now disappears until the Environment Committee considers it at its next meeting.

Well. Business. It's nearly election time - and it shows. The search for votes makes both main parties do all sorts of things you would expect the other one to do. Thus the Conservatives support the plan to be submitted to the Boundary Commission to enlarge Reading's Borough boundaries, using Labour-type arguments. Simon Coombs (Con) went on about "rational progression" whereby the town expands and the boundary with it; free transport for the elderly now outside the Borough; and new land becoming available for housing development. Labour were all for the poor rich souls who would lose out by paying rates for practically nothing - "they don't want it, for very good selfish reasons," as Tony Page put it; the whole thing is a "bit of petty land grabbing." Well, ask yourself: which way are the residents of Reading's suburbs going to vote, given the chance? Things are different for Tory MP Tony Durant - he opposes the changes because he might lose his seat. Labour claimed they wanted a total reorganisation of local government (so did everyone), and couldn't possibly support piecemeal reform. It would just antagonise everyone. But the Liberals (who hold the balance of power) could see no reason not to support the boundaries (Tilehurst is Liberal territory and the further the town goes Westwards the better?) and voted with the Tories, as they usually do.

### Fulcrum

When it comes to car parks and buses things are more predictable. First a debate on car-park charges in which the Tories wanted to reduce them; "There is no justification for anyone to say we need the money - we don't," said Simon Coombs. "The gesture will be appreciated by the business community." "Reading ought to act as a fulcrum of activity" (!). Labour retorted that there was no evidence whatever for consumer resistance, and that charges had to go up to protect the bus service. As for the Libs, well, "I want to speak on behalf of the ratepayers, Mr Mayor," began Leader Jim Day, supporting Labour in this case. Simon Coombs tried to counter this by saying the Council "lose rateable income if we kill the heart of this town" (!), but realised that "a majority of closed minds" were against him (i.e. the Libs and Lab. These set-piece debates on party lines are purely for show as they merely repeat on a larger scale debates in Committee.)

### Circles

Next the bus fares debate, equally familiar, with Labour wanting to freeze them. Since July 1979 fares have more than doubled, though retail prices have gone up only 60%. Helen Kayes pointed out that most people have no access to cars. Simon Coombs began by saying he "obviously had a lot of sympathy - but not enough" with "the socialist group - and I say the socialist group because they are learning from South Yorkshire all the time, with empty buses going round in circles in the middle of the night." (Sic) The Tories "will not allow the ratepayers to be pilloried in this way." Time for Jim Day again, this time supporting the Tories: "These two debates show how well the Liberals look after the ratepayers." He did point out maliciously that "if by some dreadful mischance the Labour group was in control, no such proposal would see the light of day. So: car-park charges go up, so do fares. ↗

(Note how in the Chronicle report the car park charges are the main story, with the accidental-on-purpose error in the headline of a 50p rise instead of 5p...) 3

Housing is a stick for Labour to beat the Tories with. Some facts brought out: by May 5 about 750 Council houses will have been sold off. The Council will make £9½million from this - over the next 30 years. A grand total of 8 new houses will have been built by the end of the 82-3 financial year. Is this, June Orton asked, the lowest on record? "Yes," replied Ron Jewitt, the Housing chairman. "That," declared Lib leader Day in triumph, "is because so much has had to be spent refurbishing buildings put up by the Labour council." Certainly, Labour seem strangely uninterested in the refurbishment of empty houses, only in the building of new ones.

### Suspicious

There was a proposal to investigate the need for the "Multi-Racial Areas Working Party" - the Tories and Libs on which had decided it was a waste of time. Much earnest concern displayed here by Labour. Sandy Scaife on how the Council is not fulfilling its role as an equal opportunities employer; how "racism is not always deliberate, on the surface"; she painted a moving picture of honest Councillors slaving away for people who just "say you're all out to line your own pockets - I won't vote for any of you." Geoff Mander said party leaders were not the best people to make decisions on this (!); "For God, society is not a complex thing"; and he knew talented black kids on the dole. John Silverthorne's well-intentioned waffle as usual did his side no good at all ("...Even if it is just a talking-shop...") Much smooth complacency from the Tories: Cllr Jewitt: "I hate to see Working Parties existing for their own right"; race relations are better practised than talked about, or councillor Horton: "all people are treated equally by this council." Janet Bond (Lib) said outright that the Working Party was "a waste of ratepayers money" - and Ron Jewitt referred mysteriously to "the suspicious, not to say suspect, involvement of the Labour Party in the black community of Reading" (!) He also said: "If I were an ordinary black, I wouldn't go within a mile of Caversham Rd (where the council for racial equality office is) or this place (i.e. the Council)." To which Margaret Singh replied that the ordinary white has nothing to do with the council either - but the councillors still go on working for them. Dear noble councillors - I'd vote for all of you if only I could - love for now,



Diogenes XXX

+ E → + E → + E → + E →  
Magistrate scowls and dismisses charges,

On Monday, Feb 28th, ten people again appeared at Guildhall Magistrates Court on charges of threatening behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace. Five and a half months previously, they had been arrested at the Falklands War Victory Parade in the City of London, before they had an opportunity to carry out their intention to chain themselves across the route of the soldiers, tanks, and missile-carriers. Three times since then, they had had to come before Magistrates. Now, after all the contradictory police evidence had been heard, defence witnesses been called, and expensive lawyers' speeches made, the Magistrate acquitted all defendants with obvious reluctance. He had managed to send one, defending herself, down to the cells for a while for contempt of court; when instructed to stop eating a sweet, she swallowed it instead of placing it in the ash-tray provided!

It was a lot of hassle for those involved, but nothing too terrifying. While the laws defend the things we oppose, we will carry on defying the law. And that magistrate knew it.

CLIFF





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Wed  
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Contd

Thurs  
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## EVENTS

Mon  
7

Caversham BANC public meeting: Helen Caldicott video show (medicine & nuclear war). 8pm Church House, Church St, Caversham.

Ecology Party meeting, 25, de Beauvoir Road. Ring Maria Callies 663195 for details.

A

Anarchists Open Meeting "The Benefits of a Nuclear Holocaust". Ring 666631 for venue. Held over from last week.

Union Movement through Independent Film Mondays till March 28 at South Hill Park Bracknell. This week "Why we boycott", "For 20 cents a day" and "A time to rise". free. 7:30pm

Young National Trust Talk with slides on the life and work of William Morris. All talks are held at the Palmer Building, University. Further details contact Robert Fisher, tel: 371939.

Women Only Disco at the Horse and Barge, Duke Street. 50p. 9pm.-11pm Wear Red.

Berkshire Anti-Nuclear Campaign Labour and Trade Union Group meeting. Ring Andrew Harrison 665332 for details.

Tues  
8

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International Women's Day. Woman Poet Pat van Twest 3pm Coffee Lounge, Students' Union, Whiteknights Park.

Film "Awake from Mourning" about women in Soweto. 6pm. Palmer Building, Whiteknights. Also speaker from El Salvador at some time in the afternoon in Palmer Building Room 103.

Berkshire Anti-Nuclear Campaign General Meeting 8pm Friends Meeting House, Church St off London St. Evening of workshops and small group discussion.

Wed  
9

Guild of Co-operators: Mike Orton (leader of Labour Borough Councillors) on "Social Services and the rates" + open discussion. 9pm St. Mary's Centre, Chain St.

Socialist Workers Party: weekly meeting. 8pm Red Lion, Southampton St.

Rape: Showing of the infamous "Police" TV programme dealing with rape, + discussion afterwards. Women only. 7.30 pm Women's Centre, basement Old Shire Hall, Abbey St. All women interested in training for the Rape Crisis Line are invited; all women interested in seeing the video welcome.

Women's Meeting: 10.30am at Newtown Community House, Cumberland Rd. Find out about your rights to Unemployment Benefit. All women and kids welcome.

Fun Fun Fun: "We are organising a day of non-competitive games for the end of April in one of Reading's parks. If you are interested in helping organise it or have useful skills (theatre, juggling, food etc etc) come to 5, Field Road Thursday 10th March 8pm. Meal provided. Or phone 530563.

Massage: (in Thames Valley Natural Health Centre series "Help Yourself To Health") Informal talk 3pm Friends' Meeting House, Denton Rd, Wokingham. 50p. Details from Solo on Crowthorne 2061, Ian Bracknell 25343.

La Leche League: "good mothering through breastfeeding" meeting 10am. Details Alison Harris 752153.

East Reading Rights Group: Business/Training meeting to examine the future of the group and encourage new members (No previous knowledge required). All Welcome. The group currently operates a regular Saturday Stall at Cemetery Junction. Tel Sarah del Tufo 666134.

Amnesty International: Monthly Meeting. Starting a British Section Campaign on "Murder by Government". 8pm St Mary's Centre, Chain St.

Fri  
11

Ecology Party: National Conference in Malvern. Details Maria 663195

"Lead Pollution": Talk by Prof. Derek Bryce-Smith organised by Conservation Soc at their Resource Bank & Study Centre, c/o George Palmer School, Northumberland Ave. 7.00 - 9.00

Sat  
12

East Reading Rights Group: Regular stall at Cemetery Junction. Morning.

Amnesty International: Jumble Sale 10am United Reform Church, Broad Street.

Red Rag/Peace Week: Jumble Sale. 2.00pm at the Fairview Community Centre, George Street. Offers of jumble, help, transport, anti-panic devices to 367955 or 537331.

Reading Vegans: joint meeting with Reading Vegetarian and Food Reform Society. 8pm 4 Derby Road, Caversham.

Anti Seal Hunting Rally: Trafalgar Square (London) 2pm. March to Norwegian Embassy. Details from Friends of the Earth 363260.

Sun  
13

Red Rag: Collective Meeting 4pm at 7, Manchester Rd, Come along.

Mon  
14

Screen Printing Class: Women only at the Centre for the Unemployed, East St. Contact Sue Blake 367355 if interested.

Anarchists: Weekly meeting. 8pm Contact 666631 for venue.

Gaysoc Film Night: (their last event till April) Montreal Main - Rarely seen Canadian film about man-boy love and the response to it. Come Together - Early gay lib. When drag queens called themselves radical feminists. Palmer Building Rm 109. 7.30pm. 50p members/70p guests.



**Tues 15**  
Woodley Peace Group: Discussion led by Brian Revell of BANC/CND 8pm at 15(or 16?) Warren Rd. Tel: Sue Watts 690813.

**Wed 16**  
BANC Daytime group meeting: at 6, Randolph Rd Caversham 1.45pm. Remember the Greenham Fence decorations? This group is making a collage of pictures and possessions to give to the US & Russian Embassies. Materials and help wanted. Ring Marissa 22824; Caroline 25916.

**Wed 16**  
Socialist Workers Party: weekly meeting 8pm Red Lion, Southampton St.

**Wed 16**  
Animal Welfare Meeting: To set up co-ordination between all the groups and individuals involved (e.g. Hunt Sabs, Animal Aid, Vegans....) Back room of the Crown, Crown St 8pm. Tel Alan Clayson 4777790

**Wed 16**  
Friends of the Earth: Public Meeting at the Sun in Castle St 8pm. General Discussion.

**Wed 16**  
BANC Committee Meeting: at the Jury Rooms, Old Shire Hall, near the Forbury Gardens. 8pm.

**Wed 16**  
Norfolk Farm Labourers' Strike of 1923: Talk by R.D. Brigden, 2.30pm. Institute Seminar Room somewhere in the University. Try phoning the Agriculture Dept for details.

**Wed 16**  
NHS: Meeting to discuss action programme following WEA teach-in. Contact VSC, 38 Caversham Rd. Tel 54123.

**Thurs 17**  
History of Reading Soc. A.G.M. with speakers. Abbey Gateway 7.30pm. (Meets here 3rd Thursday every month.)

**Thurs 17**  
Red Rag Planning Meeting for the next issue. Tel 61257.

**Thurs 17**  
West Reading CND: Meeting at 19, Hollins Walk (off Parkside Rd) 7.45pm. To discuss 1) The case for disarmament. 2) Preparations for Easter action 3) Peace Canvass.

**Thurs 17**  
BANC East Reading Neighbourhood Group: meeting at 71 Hamilton Rd to work on preparations for the Easter Action.

**Fri 18**  
Vegetarian Dining: Fairview Community Centre 8pm. see article elsewhere this issue. £2 for 3-course meal. Tickets in advance (by Wednesday) from Acorn Bookshop.

**Sat 19**  
East Reading Rights Group: Regular stall at Cemetery Junction. Morning.

**Sat 19**  
Basingstoke CND: Leafletting on Civil Defence followed by demo. Meet at Sports Centre 10am Support Welcome.

**Sat 19**  
Red Rag Production Day- so you can read all about it next fortnight too. Help welcome.

**Sun 20**  
Coley Nurseries open day 2.30-4.30pm. Wensley Rd.

**Sun 20**  
Friends of Shehnaz Sheikh Campaign: "Come to a social at the Central Club, London St at 4.30pm to catch up on what the Campaign has achieved so far and to be involved in future activity. The next step will be a court hearing in the near future and we still need your support to continue to fight Shehnaz's case."

**Sun 20**  
Red Rag Collation Day- so you can read all about it in the right order. Help welcome.

**Sun 20**  
BANC Benefit: Funk group + disco at Fives Bar, Queens Walk, in the side of the Butts Centre. 8pm - ? £1ish + concessions.

**Mon 21**  
Ecology Party: Regular meeting. 38 Longbarn Lane. 8pm Ring Maria 663195.

**Mon 21**  
Anarchists: Weekly Meeting. Tel 666681 for details.

**Mon 21**  
**contd**

**Tues 22**

**Wed 23**

**Thurs 24**



**Mon 21**  
Union Movement through Independent Film "Courage of the people". A dramatised reconstruction of the historic massacre of Bolivian tin miners and their families by government troops in June 1967. At South Hill Park, Bracknell. 7.30 pm, free.

**Tues 22**  
Berkshire Organic Gardeners: Talk on Bio-Dynamic Methods of Gardening by Karen Herne. 7.30pm St Mary's Centre, Chain St. Coffee and bookstall.

**Wed 23**  
Civic Society: A.G.M. Dr. John Punter, chairman, will review the major developments and proposals as they are likely to affect Reading. 8pm Vachel Room, Hexagon. Free. All welcome.

**Wed 23**  
Socialist Workers Party: weekly meeting 8pm Red Lion, Southampton St.

**Thurs 24**  
Exercise and Movement: (in Thames Valley Natural Health Centre series "Help yourself to health") Informal talk at 8pm Friends' Meeting House, Denton Rd, Wokingham. 50p. Details Solo on Crowthorne 2061; Ian on Bracknell 25343.

**Thurs 24**  
Henley Peace Group: Speaker from Medical Campaign against Nuclear Weapons. "The only treatment is prevention." Henley Town Hall 8pm.

**Thurs 24**  
United Nations Ass. "United Nations Clean Water and Sanitation Decade" (?) Talk by Brian Jackson. 84, Waverley Rd. 7.30pm.

## Events Extra - Wed 16th .....

The Community Action Group meets on this and every other Wednesday at the Fairview Community Centre, George Street at 7.30pm to discuss and act on ideas concerning Veggie Dining, Mutual Aid, Wholefood Co-op, CND/Peace Activities and more.... Anyone welcome - you don't have to live in that part of town.

## Seal Rally

27 Instow Road,  
 Earley,  
 3rd March 1983.

Dear Red Rag,

Please publicise the Save the Seals Demo in Trafalgar Square on Saturday 12th March at 2.00pm.

The annual Canadian seal hunt is due to start soon, and the British Government has refused to support an EEC ban on the import of seal products, preferring to make do with a voluntary ban. Fortunately consumers seem to have been voting with their wallets, and there is reduced demand for seal skins, so 'only' about 50,000 cubs are likely to be clubbed to death this year instead of the usual 200,000.

The only way of stopping this trade is to have a complete ban on the import of all seal products, which would be most effective, since the U.K. is a major centre of the trade.

Best wishes,

Anne and John Booth.



I devote this, the first appearance of Clown Court, to a case with which I have come to feel a great personal involvement. It was the trial here of 5 men accused of criminal damage to a piece of fencing at Greenham Common, property of the MoD. It was a trial in which there was unmistakable doctoring of evidence, one which ultimately led to wrongful verdict, and one which convinced me that the so-called random selection of jury is a positive vetting in favour of authoritarian views. But I'm not going to shout Pig. I offer facts instead.

#### Introducing The Defendants

In this case I shall name names. The defendants deserve, I believe, respect and support.

One was Kevin Hutton; he is not involved in the greater part of the trial; his principles sanctioned what he did; he pleaded guilty.

Another was Richard Bond. He is a buddhist; an artist; he lives in a multicoloured bus and follows the festival circuit.

There was Jeremy Barford, a printer of t-shirts, a pacifist and an anarchist.

There was Sheaffer, a trader, making his living following the circuit.

And there was Conway, whom I'm unable to label, but who probably had the best line.

#### The 1st Day

The scene is this: the four defendants sit in the dock, flanked by prison officers, facing the judge; before them, crouched like beetles at their desk, the counsels for Prosecution and Defence. To one side is the witness box; to the other sit the 12 jury. The charges are read; Prosecution begins his case.

Firstly he cautions the jury. Only if 10 of them are totally certain, may they return a verdict of guilty. Otherwise they must return a verdict of not guilty, or ask to be released of their duty.

Then he describes the crime. On 9<sup>th</sup> July last year 250 metres of MoD fence was demolished. At the time people were shouting and throwing stones. One policeman was threatened with a sledgehammer. An articulated lorry, on leaving the air base, had its windscreen wipers torn off (I am told the lorry actually hit the protestor involved and smashed his camera). A man was using a catapult to shoot at a bulldozer driver. And so on. But none of the defendants were accused of any of this. The Prosecution was simply setting the scene.

Then the Prosecution described other aspects of the day. The peace-campers claimed, he said, to have been provoked. In the preceding night about 70 metres of fence had been demolished. There was a stretch of young woodland inside this. To provide the police with a better view a bulldozer was brought out. The woodland was removed. This was 9-10 o'clock. At the destruction of the trees the campers were incensed. Within half-an-hour posts were coming down. Shortly after mid-day 250 metres of fence was down, and a gate had been ripped from its hinges and thrown into the road.

These facts were mostly true. What was questionable was the involvement of the 4 defendants.

Then the evidence.

A PC White saw Jerry Barford smashing a post with a sledge. Later on he saw him again, pulling down fencing from a flat-bed lorry.

There was a police photo of Barford crouched down, near a damaged post, with a sledgehammer in his hands.

A PC Balcomb saw Steve Sheaffer cutting chain-link with wire-cutters.

PCs White and Balcomb saw Bond smashing posts with a sledge. White also saw Sheaffer with wire-cutters.

C. Conway asked to be arrested. "Come on, I did it. We all did it. Arrest me. I cut the fence." This admission was the sole evidence against Conway. They were arrested around 5.30 that day.

Then the 1st witness for Prosecution was called up.

#### Inept Collusion

The 1st witness was an unimportant MoD policeman. He estimated that at the time of demolition about 2-300 people had been milling about. The 2nd witness was more significant.

This was PC Balcomb, a fairly stout man, with a square face and the trim 1/2 inch beard that these types affect. The campers knew him as 'Bob', he announced proudly.

'Bob' fraternised with the campers. (I believe now that his job was to get to know faces: this was 'Liaison'.) He came to know Bond quite well. They had cups of tea

together. "I would like to say at this point that I, ah, found him very nice. And also his American girlfriend, who was also, ahem, very nice." He gave an embarrassed smile. He knew the others less well.

He explained how he had seen Bond smashing posts. Bond wore a red beret. He wore it all day, said 'Bob'. This is what identified him.

He saw Sheaffer cutting wire.

He saw Barford pulling at the fence, bare-handed, from the top of the flat-bed lorry.

The 4th witness also was significant. This was PC White; he had been on patrol with 'Bob'. He had seen Barford smashing posts with a hammer in the morning, and pulling fencing down from the lorry in the afternoon. He had also seen Bond smashing posts with a hammer. All this allegedly. He claimed that Bond had been wearing a striking red beret throughout the event.

Now, I will summarise the facts high-lighted by the counsels for Defence (there were three counsels, one being employed by two of the defendants).

The two policemen were very slap-happy. Neither had had watches or notebooks on them. One said there had been 40 campers watching the demolition, the other said 200. 'Bob' insisted that Bond wore heavy boots all day (and waistcoat and beret) - even when he was shown an inventory taken on arrest listing plimsols. They claimed they were together throughout the events, but Balcomb said they were several metres inside the fence, and White said several metres outside. But more importantly: 'Bob' Balcomb said he was there at the beginning, but did not see Bond until later; White said he saw Bond smashing posts at the very beginning, something Balcomb 'could not have missed'. Also, there was a police photo taken at a time during the events where Bond is sitting drinking without waistcoat or beret. As for Jerry Barford: he was sitting on the cab of the lorry, he said, as it moved slowly along a narrow track beside the fence, playing protest songs at the policemen and MoD staff. Occasionally he shouted slogans such as "Go home Americans." At points, where the fence was cut, but not down, it billowed out over the track. Barford said he was pushing the wire up, away from the lorry. (And I ask you, Who tears down chain-link fence with their bare hands?) Said Defence: "Mr White, when you give this evidence aren't you being completely wrong about the matter?"

And now I come to the most damning inconsistency of all. White, when he made out his statement that evening, didn't mention Barford's alleged fence-pulling or use of a sledgehammer. Next day he went on holiday, and only in a second statement made some time later did he mention these things, in corroboration of the statement made by Bobbie Balcomb. Now, this may be breezed over, on the grounds that the information is actually contained in White's notebook, filled in shortly before he made out the 1st statement. But does this hold up?

I suggest to you, the reader, that White falsified evidence. I suggest that White, after a hard day's work, made out only his 1st statement, then hurried home. I suggest that when White returned from his holiday he met up with Balcomb, made out his second statement in corroboration of Balcomb's, and only then filled in his note-book, and ante-dated it to the day of the arrests.

Not only were these men in collusion - they were in inept collusion; their ineptitude was repeatedly shown. By the end of the 2nd morning I was certain the case would be dismissed.

#### An Inspiration

Conway, who claimed to have been washing clothes at the stream at the time of fence-demolition, on seeing Bond being taken away by the police hurried after them, saying "We all did it, we were all involved." He asked to be arrested. At first he was ignored, then a PC North turned to him.

"OK, then, what did you do?"

"Oh I - I cut the fence."

"What did you do it with?"

Conway, in his testimony to the court, said, "At first I said a penknife, but that didn't work."

Later he said, "A sledgehammer," - and was arrested.

Interviewing White, Conway's Defence asked, "But didn't that strike you as odd?"

"No," said White, resentfully.



"Perhaps I might rephrase my question. Didn't it strike you as odd that he cut the fence with a blunt instrument?"

Later, the Prosecution asked Conway whether he approved of the destruction which had taken place. Conway attempted to avoid the issue.

"No," said the Prosecution, "That is not what I meant. Did you approve of the smashing down of the fence when you eventually saw it?"

"Well, in that context," said Conway, looking directly at the Jury, "Yes. Yes: I was inspired."

#### A Question

At this point I would like to ask our readership a question. Can you imagine the pleasure of bringing down an MoD fence? Of demolishing this symbol of the impervious political strength which threatens our very existence? Can you imagine the blood flooding your veins as you hammer at the 10ft concrete posts, as they splinter and crack - as you push, push at the fence until it crashes down to the sterilised soil beyond?

#### The Ringleader

And now I speak of Barford. You recall the evidence against him: a photo as he crouches with the sledgehammer in his hands (at a place where the damage had been done much earlier in the day); the weak testimony of White and Balcomb. Barford claimed that the hammer had been passed to him as some one made a rapid departure. He had been looking for its owner. This is evidence, yes, but when the defendant must be proven guilty is it really enough?

I need only say that when Barford was cross-examined he spoke so well, and with such resolve, that even the Prosecution became confused. Barford said he was playing music to the Allies. He was taking children for a joy-ride on the truck. He was an anarchist, but he believed in peaceful expression, with music and song. He did not approve of smashing the fence, but when he was arrested he expressed his solidarity with the participants, and with the others arrested. He told an amusing story. In late afternoon he arrived at a near-by gate to find the area swamped by police, milling around said wiper-less truck. Immediately he saw a man lying on the ground, being kicked by several policemen. "I flung up my hands in horror!" said Barford, flinging up his hands.

"What? What?" mumbled the judge. "Why haven't we heard any of this before?"

"Because it's not relevant to the case," said the Defence.

"Then why are we hearing it now?"

"He is explaining how he came to be at the gate when he was arrested."

"I flung up my hands!" repeated Barford. "'What are you doing?' I cried. 'What has this man done?' Suddenly I was attacked by a large dog. When I had beaten off the dog I was flung to the ground by two policemen. Lying there I looked up. There was Bob, PC Bob, pointing at me. 'We'll have that one!' he cried."

I am proud of Barford. I think he is a man of principle; but a conservative jury likes least those who stand up for themselves the most, and the judge was looking for a ring-leader. It must be a long time since he pulled an anarchist.

#### The Verdict

I have hardly mentioned Bond. Did I tell you how he swore by a buddhist testament; how he had spent the time in question erecting a sign which said 'Why work for your own destruction?' facing our American friends? Did I tell you how he talked Satsang - the word of truth - to judge, jury and prosecution? I was over-joyed when both he and Conway were found Not Guilty.

As for Sheaffer - he too was a fine person. This was truly a trial of individuals by twelve shadows of conformity. Weak-willed, they were unable to find him Not Guilty, and unable to agree; he is presently free, and may or may not be re-tried, depending on the police.

But 6 of the jury found Barford guilty of criminal damage, and 6 found him guilty of encouraging this. He was therefore found Guilty unanimously. He sat through the remainder of the trial with a quiet and a dignity that all the officials of the court could not have mustered between them. The judge refused him bail, mumbling that it was worse to encourage violence than to do it yourself; but he was prevented from passing

immediate sentence by the defence. I think Barford must be in some grey cell now, wondering if he'll get 2 years.

Kevin, the 19 year old who pleaded guilty, now faces 3 months in a detention centre. 3 months may not sound a long time, but under the ministrations of sadists even a week is too long.

#### The Jury

Mostly they were middle-aging. There were only 2 women. Considering the uncertainty of the evidence, that they did not pass a verdict of Not Guilty for every one of the defendants I consider scandalous. I hope that one day they learn the true meaning of 'Guilty'.

#### Round Up

I can only sum up by saying all quotations are approximate; that I've left out many details - but I'm not writing a book; that the judge compared anti-muke feelings to vegetarianism; that if Barford has not been sentenced by the time you read this, I hope you will be there to picket the court.

- Luke



#### EVENING POST: INACCURACY AND BIAS

In our society, an accused person is innocent until proven guilty. Sections of the press however tend to forget this little nicety in their reporting of criminal cases. The Reading Evening Post is just one paper consistently guilty of distortion and inaccuracy in this respect.

Its reporting of the case against four men accused of criminal damage to a fence at Greenham Common airbase during last years anti-cruise Festival was a case in point. Sensationally headlined 'Peace Men Threatened Police With Hammers', it went on to describe the first day's proceedings in a totally biased and factually inaccurate manner.

Detailing only prosecution evidence, and presenting it in such a fashion as to invite the reader to presume the defendants guilt; moreover: neglecting to mention for example, that defending Counsel had that day exposed important inconsistencies in the police evidence - described by someone in the public gallery as 'a laughably bad orchestrated litany of lies'.

Such obvious psychological ploys as always referring to the defendants by their Surnames only, whilst other witnesses are afforded the courtesy of a Mr, or whatever may apply, are part of the Evening Post style.

Tactics such as these are clearly designed to prejudice the defendants' case in the eyes of the reader, and to promote public resentment in the event of an acquittal.

The Post reported that:

'Concrete posts were uprooted'. It takes more than a sledgehammer to uproot a concrete post. The posts were fractured at the base, and then pushed over.

That a lorry was used as a platform for more effective attack on fencing and concrete posts, was also false. The posts were attacked at the base(!); and it was only 'charged' that one defendant pulled wire down from on top of the lorry.

The Post also failed to mention that the damage was done in an angry response to the M.O.D. bulldozing a small wood out of existence in order to get a better view of the Festival campsite.

Misrepresentation of cases by the Evening Post and other establishment mouthpieces is distressing not only to the accused person but also to their family and friends, and it particularly reprehensible when the case is in an ongoing situation.

- Mick



8

GO OUT

ring 663083

with details  
for next issue7<sup>TH</sup>  
Monday

The Refusal • Hexagon • 7.30, £2.50 + TILL SAT 12<sup>TH</sup>  
Sat 5+8PM; 2 seats for 1 on Mon 7<sup>TH</sup>.  
Folk Club • Bull Hotel, Nettlebed • 8, £?  
Union Movement thru Independent Film • SHP • 7.30  
'Why we boycott' + 'For 20c a day' + 'A time to  
Rise' Free  
The Birds of SHP • SHP • TALK, 8 PM, Free.  
Circus • Hills Meadow Car Park, 5+7.30 (Sat 2+5)  
£2-4 TILL 12<sup>TH</sup>.

8<sup>TH</sup>  
Tuesday

Toucan Strollers • Fives • 8PM Free  
Gay Disco • Tudor Arms • 8PM Free  
The Good Doctor • Progress Theatre • 7.45 £1.90/2.20  
Stravinsky Concert • Palmer Building University • 8PM  
An evening of Music for brass • Great Hall London Rd.  
8PM £1 + conc.  
Kevin Turvey + The Young Ones • Students Union • SOLD OUT  
Bedroom Force • Woodley Playhouse • 7.45 £1.25  
TILL 12<sup>TH</sup>  
The Ecstasy of Woodcarver Steiner (U) + The  
Enigma of Kasper Hauser • SHP • 7.30 £1.90 + conc.  
Lennie Best Quartet + Tommy Whittle (jazz) • SHP • 8PM  
£1.90/2.10  
The Oedipus Trilogy • Playhouse Cogen • 7.45  
Sat 4PM+8PM, £1.50-4.90 TILL 12<sup>TH</sup> (Tues 8<sup>TH</sup> ALL)  
SEATS £1.50

9<sup>TH</sup>  
Wednesday

Fitzcarraldo • RFT • ALSO 10<sup>TH</sup>, 8PM £1/1.50  
Organ Recital by Malcolm Rudland • Town Hall • Blythe St.  
7.45 PM, £2.50.  
JAZZ • Grosvenor House, Kidmore Rd, Caversham • 8PM, Free  
Privileged + The Gentleman Factor • SHP • 7.30 £1.90 TILL 12<sup>TH</sup>

10<sup>TH</sup>  
Thursday

G.T Moore + The Outsiders • Angies, Milton Rd, Wokingham •  
9PM £1-2  
Festival Concert • Town Hall • 7.15, Free presented  
by National Children's homes.  
The Significant Zeros + The Great Mistakes • RUSU •  
Reading CND Benefit gig, £1.25, 8-12 PM

11<sup>TH</sup>  
Friday

G.T Moore + The Outsiders • Caribbean Club • London St  
10.30 PM, £2.  
Gay Disco • Tudor Arms • 8PM, Free.  
The Betrayal • SHP • 7.45, £1.90/2.20 ALSO 12<sup>TH</sup>  
THX 1138 • SHP • 11PM £1.90 + conc. ALSO 12<sup>TH</sup>  
The Vetoos • Angies Wokingham • 9PM £1-2

12<sup>TH</sup>  
Saturday

Disco • Caribbean Club • 10ish £1.50  
The Creation (Haydn) • Great hall, Univ, London Rd •  
7.30, £2  
Spring Concert for Wind Orchestra • St Andrews Church  
London Rd • 7.30 £1.30 Kids 70p  
Brothers of Beat • Britannia Tap • 10ish free  
Nasty Thoughts + Potentially Disastrous • Angies  
Wokingham • 9PM £1-2  
Elizabethan Evening • SHP • 7.30 includes food  
+ recital £6/6.50  
Keith Marsden + Cockersdale (folk) • SHP • 8PM £1.20/  
1.50

13<sup>TH</sup>  
Sunday

Taxi • Fives • Lunch time, free  
Chamber Music • St Lawrence Hall, Abbey Sq •  
7.30 £1.50  
Whats Next? + shorts + serial • SHP • 12.15 PM - 75p  
Even Dwarfs started Small • SHP • 7.30 PM £1.90 + conc  
Johnny Rondo Duo • SHP • 8.15 £2 to 2.50

14<sup>TH</sup>  
Monday

Exhibition: Recent works by J.V Kelly • Hexagon •  
Folk Club • Bull hotel, Nettlebed • 8PM £?  
Independent Film, Vabank • SHP • 7.30 Free

15<sup>TH</sup>  
Tuesday

Iolanthe • Hexagon • 7.30 £2-3 TILL 17<sup>TH</sup>  
Sat Mat. 2.30  
The Undertones • RUSU • 8PM, £3 3.50 on door  
tickets going fast.

The Nozes • Fives • 8PM Free.  
Gay Disco • Tudor Arms • 8PM Free

Aquirre Wrath of God + Burden of Dreams • SHP •  
7.30 PM £1.90 + conc TILL 17<sup>TH</sup>  
Once a Catholic • SHP • 7.45 £1.50/1.70 TILL 17<sup>TH</sup>  
5 LEAF CLOVER • SHP (JAZZ) 8PM £1.70/1.90

16<sup>TH</sup>  
Wednesday

Southern Comfort (X) • RFT • 8PM £1/1.50  
Jazz • Grosvenor house, Caversham • 8PM Free

17<sup>TH</sup>  
Thursday

The Art of Mystraslye • Hexagon • 1.10PM Silver  
collection  
Cristo E Fermato A Eboli (A) • RFT • 7.30 £1/1.50  
Much Ado about Nothing • Progress Theatre •  
7.45 £1.80 TILL 26<sup>TH</sup>  
MONO PACIFIC • Angies, Wokingham • 9PM £1-2

18<sup>TH</sup>  
Friday

The Nozes • Caribbean Club • 10PM £1.50  
Gay Disco • Tudor Arms • 8PM Free  
Marillion + Support • Top Rank • 7.30 £3 3.50  
on door  
The French Lieutenant's Woman • SHP • £1.90 + conc  
to 20<sup>TH</sup>  
Southwind (recital) • SHP • 8PM  
Panorama (JAZZ) • SHP • 8.15 £1.50 to 2  
La Cage Aux Folles • SHP • 11PM £1.90 + conc + 19<sup>TH</sup>  
London Apaches • Angies, Wokingham • 9PM £1-2

19<sup>TH</sup>  
Saturday

Poachers Moon • Hexagon • 12.15 PM Free  
Dominio Dance • Caribbean Club • 10PM £1.50  
Tony Williams (Radio London) + Melody Rocka's +  
Singing Competition + raffle • Central Club •  
£2.50 8- late  
Organ Recital • Holy Trinity Church • Oxford Rd  
6PM TICKETS on door "gifs before 10.30 free!"  
Eddie Upton (FOLK) • SHP • 8PM £1.20/1.50  
Jeep • Angies, Wokingham • 9PM £1-2

20<sup>TH</sup>  
Sunday

Albert Cruiser • Fives • lunchtime Free  
Buddy Rich • Hexagon • 8PM £4/5  
Daylight Robbery + shorts + serial • SHP • 12.15, 75p  
A bigger Splash • Angies, Wokingham • 9PM £1-2

RFT - READING FILM THEATRE. PALMER BLD  
WHITEKNIGHTS PARK  
FIVES - FIVES BAR : BUTTS CENTRE

SHP - SOUTH HILL PARK, BRACKNELL  
RUSU - READING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS UNION  
WHITEKNIGHTS PARK.



# Fun



**"The Blob"** A game of tag, only once you are touched you must hold hands with the person who caught you, until everyone is in one long chain. Alternatively, you are safe while your bum is on the ground, and your feet off it. Alternatively, you are safe while hugging another player.

Kids' games? Still very enjoyable to play, once you stop feeling self-conscious and let yourself get carried away. A great way to enjoy yourself, and other people's company, while keeping fit at the same time. And it puts you in an irresistibly good frame of mind.

So why aren't we all doing it?

A few of us descended on the Unemployment Centre last Saturday and had a great time. As soon as there are a few people, a few minutes, and a bit of space, play games. They can be energetic, very energetic, they can be soothing and relaxing. If the idea of fun appeals to you, try out some of these unskilled, not-particularly-competitive, but stretching and absorbing games.

Some of us would like to see an event based on non competitive games take place in Peace Week, just after Easter. Contact Paul, 587381. If the idea catches on well enough, a large open-air Tournament would be great for a Summer Bank Holiday!

**Circular Lap-sitting** All stand in a circle, close together facing inwards. All turn to face right. Move your feet so all the left feet make a circle, heel to toe. All sit down together, carefully. It has been done successfully with thousands of people at once. But if some day you see a crowd of idiots all falling over together in Palmer Park, you now know why.

## VEGETARIAN DINING. @a.

Hello vegetarian readers, and other interested parties! Some of you may remember the article on vegetarian dining that appeared in Red Rag 28 Nov-12 Dec, which was backed up by a meeting on Dec 2nd. About 15 or so people turned up - surely there's more than 15 vegetarians who read Red Rag? It wasn't a terribly constructive meeting, for various reasons the main one being that despite the enthusiasm shown about the project - especially the dozens of phone calls I received (thanks) there very few people who were prepared to tackle the nitty-gritty of actually getting a dining facility started. The general attitude has been "If you start something perhaps we'll join in later". Don't get me wrong now, I'm really grateful for all the general support, but the lack of action vibes really did my head in. Anyway, not being the sort who are easily discouraged, we have now got Vegetarian Dining off the ground; this could in no way have been achieved without the enthusiasm, great energy and efforts and sheer "joie de vivre" of certain persons, namely Lesley, Willy and Jean (Free Life Foods), Mike (Acorn), John and Mark. Thanks chaps, you were great - and I hope you will be again after this free publicity - no seriously though, Vegetarian Dining has happened twice now, the first time on Feb 4th and again on Feb 25th as sort of trial runs, and they seem to have been greeted by most people with warm approval (especially by Lentils Worthington - the fastest stomach on two wheels). Now please allow me to explain how we operate, so you can consider whether we are ideologically sound enough to warrant your patronage. Basically we aim to cover the cost of the food and napkins, tickets etc, the hire of the community centre. As incentive to the cooks, they eat free. Attending this dining "function" is possible by purchasing tickets beforehand. Any profits made are put into a sort of collective kitty, and the money is being saved up to buy equipment, because at the moment we use our own or borrow other people's. We just about manage, but it usually involves a mad

hectic dash around Reading about an hour before serving time to try and assemble 30 bowls and other assorted cutlery and crockery. Oh for some of our own!

Now about the food - it's mainly if not completely vegan (the eagle eye of our vegan chef has been a most valuable help). Here's what we all ate first time round - both times we catered for about 30 people:-

jerusalem artichoke soup - Mexican bean chilli, brown rice, pitta bread, green salad, coleslaw, (the work of the Yoghurt Freak), corn fritters, (vegan batter) and jalapenos (Mike has a strange sense of humour) - fresh fruit salad inc. pineapples, grapes etc - then a choice of lemon verbena tea, Earl Grey or Darjeeling. Last time the menu was as follows:- (completely vegan) French onion soup + croutons - pasta with tomato-vegetable sauce, green salad, bean

salad with fennel, tofu salad and freshly home-made onion bread. And afterwards, baked apples with sultanas and honey sauce, then either rose-hip or assam tea. A choice of soya or cow's milk is available for the teas. Fruit juice was provided at the first event, but most people seem to want to bring their own drinks.

If all this sounds interesting to you, why not come along to the next Vegetarian Dining on Friday 18th March at Fairview Community Centre George St. (off Oxford Rd., near the Central Swimming Baths) at 7-30pm. Tickets cover the 3 course meal and teas and cost £2-00 per person, and are available until 16th March at Acorn, (general inquiries - write a note to "Veggie Dining" and drop it in to Acorn Bookshop, 17 Chatham St. Rd.) For example, if you're into helping with the cooking sometime, or you want information, recipes etc contact us at the above address. If anyone would like to bring along their musical instrument/s to play after dinner, feel free so to do!

See you on the 18th!

Luv & happy munchies

ANSKI.

### BICYCLE '83

The Reading Cycle Campaign is still alive and well! We have had a minor success with British Rail who are to re-vamp the cycle parking at the station so that it is supervised during most of the day. Watch that space!

We shall also be attempting to get Borough Councillors to commit themselves to better provision for cyclists prior to elections in May. Does your councillor know how you feel about it? Last but not least are plans for an "event", probably a mass cycle through the town centre on Saturday June 25th to mark the start of National Bicycle Week (London to Brighton ride is June 26th)! Interested? Want to help organise it? Contact Simon Watkins, 5 Manchester Rd, or telephone 04868-7217 (office hours).

### MAYDAY FESTIVAL

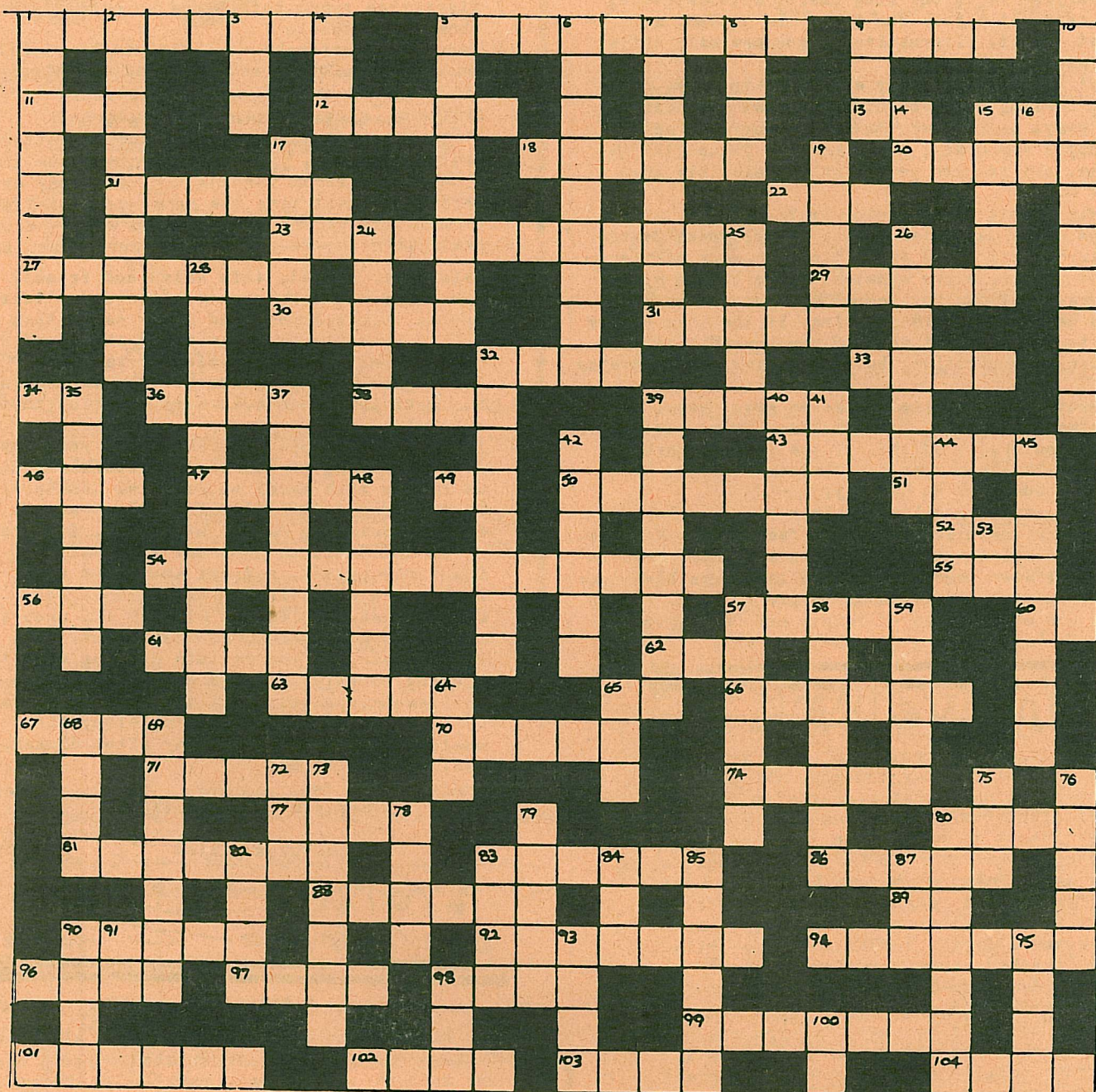
Stalls are available for this day-long festival in the Old Town Hall (on Saturday, 30th April). Not just Leninist bookstalls - last year's was quite good fun. £7.50 per stall. Phone Ray Parkes, 27781, after 6pm.



# \* MUSICAL CROBBLE-WORD \*

with prizes!!

\* A gallon of Homebrew is now waiting for the first correct entry drawn out of the hat on Thurs, 17th March. Second prize, a month's free subscription to RED RAG. Send your solutions to RED RAG, pronto.



clues:

## DOWN.

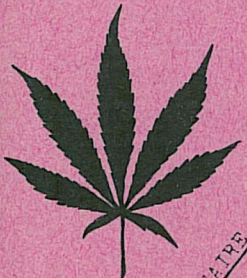
1. The lords were masters of it. (8)
2. Fruity dream? (9)
- 3 & 5d. Has a beautiful vision. (3.8)
4. Sounds like absolute bliss. (1.1.1)
5. See 3d.
- 6 & 42d. Fresians for tiny organ mummy? (4.5.6.)
7. Dionne passed the stranglers in Warwick. (4.2.2)
8. Irish blues cigarette company. (4)
9. See 98d.
10. P.H.P's originate from the... (6.4)
14. Initial Spielberg jaws follow up. (1.1)
- 15 & 95d. Local groups horror story. (5.4)
- 16 & 91d. Good-bye. (2.2)
17. Television music shows pipes. (5)
- 19 & 22a. Do-da's. (5.3)
24. Joni had big yellow ones! (5)
25. The grand rat elpee. (5)
26. Its dire making movies. (7)
28. Ex specials plus two. (3.3.5)
32. See 67 across.
35. Its the only way to be. (7)
37. Obscure graphic furry things. (3.5)
39. See 18 across.
40. Wild band of the 60's. (6)
41. 'Here comes the.... (3)
42. See 6 down.

44. Deceased drummers nickname. (4)
45. He's no slouch with his paws. (8)
48. Girls...sang with Motorhead. (6)
53. Negative. (2)
57. Sheer heart. (6)
58. Anti-nuke compilation album. (7)
59. Illicit fun. (5)
64. A negative no. (3)
65. Flute playing forrester. (3)
- 68 & 81a. Some think God lives at 461. (4.7)
69. If you are'n't one, how can they come true. (7)
72. Ambient electronics supplier. (3)
73. Del Shannon come back. (7)
75. Steve Winwoods vision of a diver. (3)
76. Quick little yellow pills? (5)
78. Money. (4)
79. Rod was in the small variety. (5)
80. Made in Finland. (7)
82. Glam rock vegetable oil? (4)
83. Amercian legend. (4)
84. Early radio gnome publication. (3)
85. See 39 across.
87. She's black?? (3)
90. See 96 across.
91. See 16 down.
93. Mock Pursey's love position. (4)
95. See 15 down.
- 98 & 89a & 9d & 9a. Geordie mists on the Thames? (3.2.3.4)
100. Egotistical? (2).

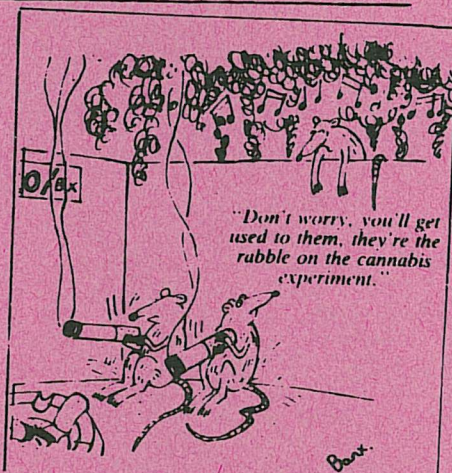


page 11  
(7)

1. Voice beyond Vienna. (2)
5. Holes in the road? (3.2.4)
9. See 98 down.
11. Shades of Mott... (3)
12. Combination of notes. (5)
13. Spielbergs monster hit. (1.1)
15. Chicago's initial name. (1.1.1)
- 18 & 39d. Cloudy Jam? (6.8)
20. Repeat this for a chart topping band. (5)
21. Wailers on the move out. (6)
22. See 19 down.
23. Simultaneous hearing, immediately! (4.5.3)
27. Lonnie was its only hero. (7)
29. Stop twice at the end of the alphabet. (1.1.3)
30. Primeval Anglo - rockers. (5)
31. Weird sounding chart group. (5)
32. Take a walk around a Bush. (4)
33. They shoot horses, don't they? (4)
34. Egyptian sun god. (2)
36. Swedens national export. (4)
38. See 49 across.
- 39 & 85d. Deep J.A sound. (5.6)
43. Beatles mimickry. (7)
46. Sticky mess today. (3)
47. Jumbled tale. (5)
- 49 & 38a & 62a. Broughton and Martyn L.P. (2.4.3)
50. Pretty woman in shades? (7)
51. ... what Jo Walsh. (2)
52. Grapefruit has reason to cry. (3)
54. Have you rolling in the aisles. (6.3.5)
55. We want it here, but not yesterday. (3)
56. This generation won't get fooled again. (3)
57. Reggae dam. (5)
60. Result of 59d. (2)
61. We're well into the new one. (4)
62. See 49 across.
63. Long tall ones lay down? (5)
65. See 92 across.
66. Tank like Armadillo. (6)
- 67 & 32d. Teddy's a survivor. (4.8)
70. One of the women Argentina cried for. (5)
71. Springsteen album. (5)
74. Grossly stupid anarchist band. (5)
77. .... to you! (4)
80. We don't want tons of sobs to be this. (4)
81. See 68 down.
84. The half of the Glimmer Twins that can stand up. (6)
86. A certain brand of toadstool. (5)
88. Nuclear rooster. (6)
89. See 98 down.
- 90 & 104a. Yessings. (5.4)
- 92 & 65a. Complete.'..a bottle'. (7.2)
94. Crazy band. (7)
- 96 & 90d. Goats Head Soup track\*\* (4.4)
97. Super spex. (4)
98. Shaved, King or rising? (4)
99. Floydian comment on the farm of society. (7)
- 101 Fair tales poet combo. (6)
- 102 Black magic guitarist from defunct airship. (4)
- 103 Floyd soundtrack sounds like an encore. (4)
- 104 See 90 across.



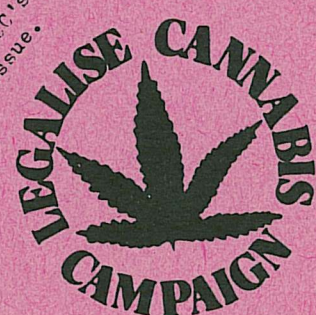
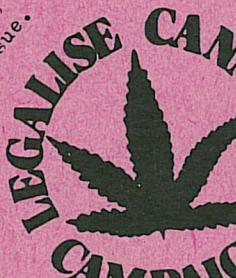
LEGALISE CANNABIS QUESTIONNAIRE

[illegible]

as a result  
of...  
ed. "One-  
nally consume can't  
correlation be-  
hol than cannabis, &  
assumption patterns included:  
V, improved lifestyle, univer-  
coherent. My favourite is, "Enjoy-  
t... sociable... Weightened awareness..  
Good times!... Keeps me together... Good  
body." Yeah!  
to everyone who went to the trouble of re-  
the questionnaires are now on their way to the  
in London for inclusion in their national survey.

PS. Save them seeds. LCC's own gardening column ♣411  
appear in the next issue.

**LEGALISE CANNABIS**





This, the second part of an article on El Salvador, deals with the military situation and the international aspects since the March elections.

#### The Military Situation

Shortly after the elections the army launched an offensive against the popular opposition, in one of the areas in the N.W. province of Chalatenango which was effectively controlled by the FMLN. The offensive, launched at the end of May, was hoped by the Salvadorian and its U.S. advisers to be the start of the process of breaking the Guerilla power within the country. It was spearheaded by three elite mobile brigades, the Atonal brigade, the Ramon Belloso brigade, and the Atlactl brigade, all of which had received extensive training either in the U.S. or by military advisers in El Salvador or U.S. bases in Panama. The army had also been equipped with Huey helicopters and sophisticated communication equipment by the U.S. The operation in Chalatenango had to be broken off however when the FMLN, which had greatly increased its coordination within the various guerilla groups, counter attacked in the N.E. province of Morazan, forcing the redeployment of the brigades to Morazan. At the same time the Honduran army launched an attack across the El Salvador border in a joint operation reflecting the increased cooperation between the two countries security forces. Even the help of the Honduran army could not prevent the Guerillas inflicting heavy losses on the Salvadorian army, with the FMLN capturing large numbers of arms and men by the end of June including the vice-minister of defence, Colonel Castillo.

The strength of the FMLN was underlined when it launched another series of attacks in October in which 19 towns were taken out of the army's control and over 100 prisoners were captured, extending the area in which government troops could move about only in large, heavily-armed units. The inability of the armed forces to make any headway despite being increased in size, and the increasing casualties it is suffering, has led to a feeling of demoralisation and disorganisation, especially within the infantry. While military defeats can only be prevented from increasing by vast amounts of U.S. military aid (El Salvador is now the third highest recipient of U.S. Military aid in the world), such as the delivery at the beginning of the year of 20 warplanes, eight Huey helicopters and 6 Cessna 43 aircraft. Especially worrying is the training of Salvadorian pilots in the use of Napalm at the US Southern Command base in Panama, indicating the increasing Vietnamisation of the war with the popular forces increasing their hold on the ground while the war becomes more technological and destructive of large areas of the country with all the consequences that would mean to the people of El Salvador.

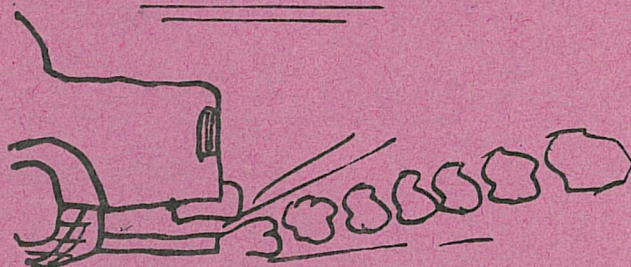
In addition to the El Salvador military the U.S. is also pushing ahead with the development of Honduras as the regions policeman, with military aid rising from \$2.3m in 1979 to over ten million in 1982. American green berets now train the Honduran troops which carry out joint operations with El Salvador on the two countries border regions while the Honduran airforce has been expanded to become the largest in Central America. CIA agents and U.S. military personnel are also training over 4000 'Somacistas' supporters of the now dead Nicaraguan dictator and ex-members of the National Guard - whose military camps lie near the Nicaraguan border across which frequent raids are carried out against border posts and villages while frequent violations of Nicaraguan air space take place as part of a wider plan aimed at destabilising the Sandanista regime there through military and economic means - Nicaragua is conspicuously left out of Reagan's Caribbean aid plan, and economically blockaded while surrounding countries receive massive amounts of aid to try and shore up their crisis ridden economies.

Because of the level of aggression directed against both the El Salvadorian and Nicaraguan revolution, and the importance which the Reagan government is placing on the region, international solidarity is essential in preventing the re-imposition of U.S. client regimes in the area.

- Nick

"STAND TOGETHER" Good Friday.

CND is organising a human chain linking USAF Greenham with AWRB Aldermaston and ROF Burghfield. This means a lot more work than you could imagine! On the day people are needed as stewards, coach directors, toilet attendants (!), walkie-talkie operators, helium balloon inflators, litter collectors....Contact BANC. On the previous day, signs have to be put up, possibly marquees, and a hundred and one jobs done. This is at the same time as blockades are taking place at Greenham and Burghfield. If you want to take part in those those, now is the time to get yourself organised. Final details have not yet been made, but CND is committed to going ahead with it. The Burghfield Peace Campaign will hopefully put together some educational events to coincide. Any ideas to Box 17, Acorn Bookshop.



#### FUME-HAPPY

Some mornings, when I wake to the smell of exhaust fumes from the traffic on Oxford Road, I am inspired by visions of a science-fiction town.

Dozing in my bed, I imagine streets that are no longer grey and dirty, but park-like, with a central aisle of trees, a narrow lane for electric buses on one side, and a bicycle lane on the other. And I imagine we had followed the example of that mid-western American town, where bicycles are publicly owned, and one need only take a bike from a rank at one side of town, and leave it, for someone else's use, in another nearer home.

At this point, no doubt due to an overdose of lead, my imagination gets quite out of control. The buses could be run, it suggests, on electricity generated using methane from the town's sewage.

Such a scheme, of course, would be hugely expensive, but it would, ultimately, pay for itself. Sewage is free; and, of all our resources, it is probably the most inexhaustible.

By the process of obtaining methane from sewage, pollutant-free fertilizer is also produced; it could be sold to local farmers at a low price.

And this is not all, my vision informs me. To maximise efficiency of the bus system, mini-buses could be used in low-demand areas, and in all areas throughout the night. In areas where car-parks once abounded, playgrounds and sports-halls could be built.

For the business and industrial sectors, too, electric transport could be supplied, perhaps as a continuation of the railways, on a smaller, slower scale.

And who should build these things but the unemployed? Paid, instead of supplementary allowance, a reasonable wage for ten or fifteen hours work.

And who should oversee these workers but the traffic wardens, deserted by their ugly wards in a new-found town of Eden?

And...and my mind babbles on until I finally climb out of bed and close the window, and wish, in my heart of hearts, that someone else, someone who could use it, had this imagination of mine, and not me.

- Ralf







# Book Review

REVIEW: "On Terrorism and the State" by Gianfranco Sanguinetti (B.M.Chronos 102pp £3.00)

The first English edition of this book is well timed, coinciding as it does with the end of the massive 'Red Brigades' show-trial in Italy. Sanguinetti, one time member of the Situationist International and accomplice of Guy Debord, was once himself arrested as a Red Brigade suspect (and subsequently released when the absurdity of the charge became apparent). Since the Italian publication of "On Terrorism..." an attempt has been made to burn his house down.

The book is a lengthy extract from his forthcoming book "Remedy to Everything" and will be of interest to those who want some insights into the revolutionary situation in Italy, as well as to committed conspiracy-watchers (Sanguinetti makes a good case - by showing who benefits and who loses - for laying the Piazza Fontana massacre and the Aldo Moro kidnapping at the door of the Italian state). The book should also be of interest to comrades who are haunted by the tedious cloak-and-bomb portrayal of anarchists.

The term 'terrorism', as used in Britain, has a very wide meaning covering nearly all acts of political violence. Such broad usage dates from the days of the Angry Brigades in the late sixties. Without causing any casualties the Angry Brigade bombed innumerable Conservative Party offices and Army Recruitment Centres. In addition they bombed the BBC caravan at the Miss World contest, Biba's boutique, a police computer and the homes (empty) of the Commissioner of Police and the Minister of Employment. The Establishment was naturally worried, but even more concerned to find that most ordinary people couldn't give a toss or actually admired the cheek of these 'non-violent' bombers.

## Umbrella

The umbrella use of the term 'terrorism' enabled the media to link the activities of the Angry Brigade with the horrendous random bombings of cafes, pubs and bus stations by the I.R.A.

Sanguinetti reserves the term for political kidnapping and acts of random brutality such as leaving bombs in public places. Terrorism - acts of violence intended to intimidate your opponent into changing his policy or leaving the territory - is a technique used by both states and political groups throughout the world. While the British state is happy to lump most acts of political violence together, there are some notable exceptions. The attacks on the homes of black people and Asians are terrorism in the most basic meaning of the word, but we never hear news items that start, "NF terrorists struck again in Lewisham last night...."

The end result of acts of terrorism, within Sanguinetti's definition, is that, directly or indirectly, ordinary people are always the victims. S's thesis is that such terrorism is always counter-revolutionary.

## Statist ambitions

When acts of terrorism such as the Piazza Fontana incident kill and maim ordinary people they reveal the authoritarian, statist ambitions of the perpetrators. Bosses and leaders have always been ready to sacrifice ordinary people for the party or country or god or sovereignty or whatever. All the terrorist groups that indulge in such actions - the IRA, PLO, ETA, Red Brigades etc - are just alternative governments fighting for control with the existing governments.

Legal fetishists will always try to draw a distinction between terrorist bombings and 'legitimate' warfare - the IRA for instance want so much to be seen as proper soldiers - but we, the potential victims, cannot be expected to savour this fine legal point.

For us, be it by car bomb or cruise missile, the result is the same. A line often quoted in this quest for legitimacy is that "a terrorist is just a patriot without an airforce". We can accept that if we are aware of the other side of the coin - that a patriot is just a terrorist with an airforce. When an Irish terrorist sets off a bomb knowing it will kill a nearby child, he excuses murder by describing his victim as just another 'casualty of war' - and those who condemn his view spend millions of pounds preparing to fry equally innocent children in the Soviet Union - just more 'casualties of war'. Evoking the massacre at Kronstadt (by the Bolshevik govt in 1921, part of anarchist folklore - helpful typist) and the present decomposition of the Italian state, Sanguinetti writes, "All states have always been terrorist but they have been so most violently at their birth and at the imminence of their death".

## Propaganda

In making his case for state complicity in terrorism, S. points out the tremendous propaganda value to the state of acts of apparently mindless carnage. Such acts - like the Birmingham pub bombing - are so meaningless that even those sympathetic to the stated cause must reel back in horror. These acts escalate because if they do not, they appear to be subsiding and opponents and potential victims take heart, believing they are 'over the worst'. Neither states nor potential states can resist the spectacular and in Hyde Park last year images collided and brought the war to bandmen, horses and chocolate-box soldiers.

With these images before us we are asked by the state to take sides. As Sanguinetti points out, "...if the workers declare themselves to be against this demented terrorism, then 'they are with the state'; if they are against the state then 'they are terrorists' that is to say enemies of the common good, public enemies. And against public enemies everything is permitted, everything is authorised."

When the state discovers the propaganda value of acts of terrorism it is a short step from using such acts to instigating them. It is, after all, easier to deal with a simulated enemy than a real one. When we consider that possibility, the parallels between S's Italy and the UK become apparent. The Birmingham pub bombing was a meaningless outrage that allowed the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act to be rushed through Parliament on a wave of public opinion. But who was responsible? The IRA - never slow to own even their most gruesome exploits - have never admitted responsibility. Those convicted, far from demanding political status, continue to profess their innocence.

When the Anarchists in the 'Persons Unknown' case were arrested the Anti-Terrorist Squad was about to be drastically cut in numbers because of the drop in incidents of terrorism in London. The trumped-up charges didn't even convince the rigged jury - but the continuing need for the A-TS was established.

More recently there was the parcel bomb sent to the Prime Minister by the so-called 'Animal Liberation Militia'. Over the past few years various animal rights direct action groups have caused millions of pounds worth of damage to laboratories, fur shops, factory farms, etc and such incidents are on the increase. Many of these groups organise themselves in a cell structure which is notoriously difficult to infiltrate or break without a suspension of civil liberties presently unacceptable. But if the police are looking for terrorists....

## 1984

Sanguinetti quotes a conversation from George Orwell's '1984': "In some ways she was far more acute than Winston, and far less susceptible to Party propaganda. Once when he happened in some connection to mention the war... she startled him by saying casually that in her opinion the war was not happening. The rocket bombs which fell daily on London were probably fired by the government itself, 'just to keep people frightened'. This was an idea that had literally never occurred to him....."



# Council Housing?

Following the article by Tracy in the 3rd Feb edition about squatting, she, her husband and 15 month old son were evicted, but not rehoused. However, the proceedings leading up to the eviction were misleading and very confusing. We were unable to attend the first hearing as the address on the summons was unreadable. In our absence the council were given possession. Fortunately we got a second hearing after the court agreed that the address was 'a little misleading'. I told the judge of the family's struggle with the council for re-housing. They had been put into temporary accommodation & left there for a year, where they had to put up with problems such as no drainage, no heating, a missing window, lots of mice and a landlord who more than once threatened them with violence to dissuade them from complaining about their conditions, and getting the rent lowered. The place was a shit-hole, but I forgot, its points that count if you want a home! The judge listened, and in his infinite wisdom did not sign the order for immediate repossession by the Council.

This meant that instead of a week in which to find somewhere to live we could have 2/3 weeks before the bailiffs came to evict us. What a patronising concession, in the name of justice! However we then learned that this hearing had been totally & utterly irrelevant as the council had acted on the first hearing & we had less than a week to get out in. The family now have 28 days in council accommodation, B/B before they are declared homeless.

If the council will not reorganise their housing policy to cater for people's needs, then the people are forced to take their own action and squat. But now even this seems to be made more and more difficult by Reading Council.

Each man is in  
his spectre's power  
Until the arrival of that hour,  
When his humanity  
awake  
And cast his spectre  
into the Lake William Blake.

1983 is a turning point. We have our chance to face up to ourselves, the most violent creatures ever to set foot on this world. We are faced with the simple imperative: Change or face extinction!

The public debate over Cruise missiles and Trident is more than just an argument over what is an acceptable level of deterrence; more than whether the world's arsenals are full enough; more than how many millions we are prepared to see starving in the Third World; more than the arms race, a self-perpetuating war machine; more than male violence and domination

14

of women; more than the rape of the earth's resources. Yes it is all these, passionately these, but more than that it has become symbolic of the human malaise, the catalyst of change, the hope of putting human back into being. Despite a century of continual war on earth, with 100 million dead, we now have the power and the will to destroy every living cell. We have every reason to ask; What has become of Life?

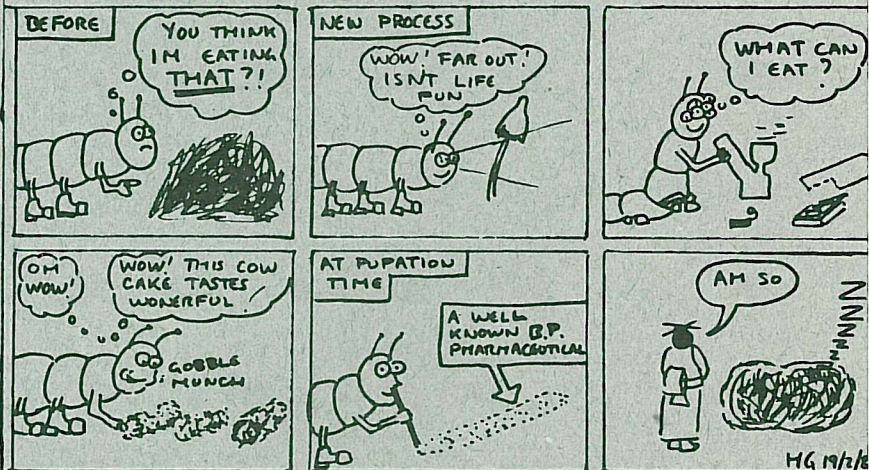
Now we face the twilight of humanity with monstrous certainty, armed with moral absolutes, with peace dogma, with vile statistics. We brandish sickening photographs of atomic victims like advertisements for double-glazing. We speak of marches and rallies, we demonstrate with slogans and chants. We seek confrontation. We want to be arrested. We try to undo the knotted tangle of fear with boxing gloves - to loosen the delicate nuts and screws of the mind with pick-axes, bolt-cutters and chains. We blockade the paths of doubt. No questions asked, it is what we have set ourselves to do.

We cannot set out to change the world. I am told that we all go through that phase - part of growing up, but we can start from the grain of sand. We start from home, from our hearts, our hopes; where we are - ourselves. If we are to set out in search of our lost humanity, we have to listen, we have to learn, we have to look back at ourselves - to feel our futures start to breathe again in the firmness of personal experience and discovery - now. The ends and means can only be synonymous.

Everywhere there has been a renewed emphasis on personal and direct expression. The loosely-termed 'Peace Movement' is a rich mosaic of private visions and aspirations embracing every country, culture and social situation. This more than anything gives us reason for hope. Join in with us - do it now!

## SILK

IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT SILK WORMS ONLY NORMALLY EAT MULBERRY LEAVES; HOWEVER READING UNIVERSITY MAY HAVE THE SOLUTION:



RED RAG is Reading's Only Newspaper - fortnightly free, financed by donations and produced by a collective. Anyone can write for it, and (space, time and money permitting) we will print articles so long as they are not "sexist, racist or supportive of oppressive religions". Send your news to us c/o Acorn Bookshop, or ring one of the numbers on the cover. Articles for the next issue should be in by Thursday 17th. Type them if possible, to 12cm columns using a new ribbon. Give a signature (needn't be your name) and some way we can contact you to discuss things we don't like or can't read. To help with the next issue ring Chris on 61257. Why not come to the collective meeting on March 13th - 4pm at 7 Manchester Road. Anyone interested very welcome.



Dear Red Rag,

# WANKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

Caroline's letter (17/2/83) gives rise to some anger. Apparently Red Rag is now giving space to what we SWP members call "petty-bourgeois moralism" - the use of "wanker" as a term of abuse. Maybe there are supporters of the Greenham women who have Victorian ideas about personal sexuality, but I see no reason why Red Rag should give them any credibility at all. The SWP supports wanking and the Greenham Peace camp; this doesn't mean we have to swallow every tactic adopted by other supporters, like singing songs that go "ON... and on and on and on and o - o - on.....". We don't have to accept the separatism, the divisiveness and the sexism that some of these people promote. We don't think dressing up as snakes, walking around with candles or dancing on bunkers will be enough to stop Cruise. If we're up against Mrs. Thatcher's state machine, committed to routine violence as it is, we'll need the self-activity of millions of workers and wankers, women and men, united in strikes, pickets and riots.

Once Caroline has sorted out her sexual politics, she's welcome to join us in the fight to build that self-activity. Meanwhile, we'll keep on selling SOCIALIST WORKER, we'll keep on wanking, and we'll keep on shouting boring old slogans:

JOBS NOT PIGS!

Clive Crocker Reading SWP.

Echo: One Rag collective member received an irate phone call on the same subject: "Why did you allow this to happen?" (!). On hearing that she wasn't much involved at the moment, so he'd better talk to someone else, "Oh, I'm speaking into a cave, am I?"

Typist's note: SWP stands for "Socialist Workers Party."

Why not spend two minutes and 12p lobbying your MP? Sign and date the letter and send it to your MP at the House of Commons. Letters to MP's can have an effect, especially when an MP receives a number of letters on the same issue.

To: \_\_\_\_\_

MP for \_\_\_\_\_

House of Commons,  
LONDON, SW1A 0AA.

Dear Sir/Madam,

## PRESSURISED WATER REACTOR (PWR)

I would like to express my concern about the Government's proposal to introduce the pressurised water reactor (PWR) into Britain, the first of which would be sited at Sizewell in Suffolk.

I am concerned about the particular dangers that this reactor poses. I cannot see any need for an expansion of the nuclear power programme when there is such a large surplus of electricity generating capacity. (33% in England and Wales on the coldest, darkest day of the year; and 90% in Scotland.)

Furthermore, to make way for the PWR, 41 non-nuclear power stations are being closed, often well before their active lives end, at a cost of 5,000 jobs. (Sunday Times Business News, 6/9/81.)

I would be grateful if you would assure me of your opposition to the PWR.

Yours faithfully,

## Two courses at the Centre for Extramural and Continuing Education

### 1. THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE GARDEN.

Tutor Miss A. McCord. Tuesdays, 7.30-9.30pm, 26th April to 11th July at the London Rd site of the University. Fee £9 (OAPs £4.50).

To study a range of wildlife found in gardens, how to identify it and attract it. For gardeners and naturalists. Includes practical work but no previous experience required.

### 2. READING TREES.

Tutor Miss C.M.C. Oliver. Tuesdays, 7.00-9.00pm, 26th April to 28th June at the London Rd site of the University. Fee £9 (OAPs £4.50).

This course is to look at different areas of Reading to examine the different species of trees and practice identifying them. Most of the course will be a series of "tree walks", also visiting nurseries and the University library, all with a view to knowing more about the local "treescape".

ALSO, a Saturday School on 11th June on LOCAL TREES with Miss Oliver, 9.30am to 4.30pm. £3.50 (OAPs £1.75). Lunch provided or bring your own.

A morning session on twig and branch identification, followed by an afternoon of tree identification. Basically a day of recognition practice for beginners. Sounds like the way to find out once and for all which tree is which.

Enrolment for all three things at the Extramural Office, London Rd University site, by post or in person (To find it, go in the main covered entrance, round to the right, round a corner and through a door. Easy!)

A small ADS



"they work!"  
Satisfied small advertiser.



## FOR SALE

Ladies bike in good working order.  
for £30.

Contact Jen at Prets, tel 590130  
or 666681

## FOR SALE

Bass Guitar - render copy.  
£70 new - barely used. \*£50\*  
Tel 867955.

## WANTED

Clothes, carpets, hangers, mirrors,  
paints, etc.  
For Women's Centre Nearly New Shop.

FOR SALE: 52 Sci-Fi Mags Analog/Galaxy £6  
contact Luke 106 London Road.

Hallo Eve! stop sorry stop love Ana

WANTED... Moped/70cc bike for around £50.  
Ring Paul: 587381

WANTED: CYCLISTS to help co-ordinate the C.N.D.  
Easter chain (Details and info. from Lindy who  
-se phone number i've lost or Paul: 587381)

WANTED: People able to help steward the C.N.D. Easter chain.  
Easter chain. Any time spare is most welcome..  
Lot's of different jobs need doing.  
Phone Sue for details on 690813.



# THE QUESTIONNAIRE ?!?

7 replies (one from 2 people) are hardly going to be typical, but here are some points for what they are worth. Occupations ranged from 'unemployed' and 'bleedin' student' to 'civil/structural engineer, property developer, tennis coach etc'; ages were 19, 19, 21, 23, 29, 32, 34, 48, female (2) to male (5). Interests included the peace movement in various forms, women's issues, "squatting, the police, anarchism", "civic society, FoE, BANC, Eco Party, art, theatre, music, lectures" and "anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-nuke, anti-vivisection, anti-tory, anti-oppression, anti-police".

4 have it delivered, 2 got it from Acorn, 1 from friends. One suggested various new outlets. Do you know of anywhere you could usefully leave the Rag (such as waiting rooms). What are your local shops like? We can provide you with extra copies - ring distribution on 666681.

Some of the comments follow:

Ban "schoolboy humour", in-jokes, obscure references, racism (eg references to "Paki-shops"), poetry arts/events critiques.

Spellout in full initials of organisations for the uninitiated (sounds suspiciously like a schoolboy pun to me - typist)

Include suggestions for combatting racism, sexism etc at work etc, on a personal level. Suggestions for economising, do-it-yourself, eg: clothes-making, furnishing, cooking aimed at the penniless.

Too overtly biased to the Left. Apart from occasionally being offensive (even to sympathisers) it ensures that the people who read to read the good ideas, opinions, etc never do.

(From a letter)

I don't read the famous going-out guide much but I read anything there is on party politics, BANC, Greenham common & notices of events connected with these. I also take it into work, where they look at me strangely.

Put out by the same clique every time. Too self-indulgent. Articles & comment slightly wet.

I'd like to see RR cover a broader spectrum of news to encourage a more varied readership (young people, old people, Tory people). Also, some more light articles with a sprinkling of humour - without cynicism.

I prefer black on white, it's easier to read. You could start charging a small cover price... - go a bit more for regular contributors & a "style" of contributions.. Get a friendly band or two to do a benefit at a youth centre or something - get the Rag known with VI formers, schoolkids... I prefer a more newspaperly format... The whole thing has to 'look' more acceptable to the possible sympathisers outside the "left ghetto"

FAIRVIEW

COMMUNITY

CENTRE

bottom of George Street

- off Oxford Rd.

RED RAG / PEACE WEEK

JUMBLE!

sale  
5p

2pm,

Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> March.

(offers of jumble and help, PLEASE, phone 867955/587381).

## Outlets

Get your copy of the next issue from any of:

Acorn Bookshop 17 Chatham St.

Pop Records 172 Kings Rd.

Centre for the Unemployed East St

The Emporium, Merchants Place (off Friar St)

Central Club London St

Our price records Butts centre

Lazar Records Butts Centre

Kens Shon Students Union, Whiteknights

Brets has fallen (temporarily) under a fascist despotism. But if you're in the Cemetery Junction area, you can now try:

The Sugar Bowl 26 Wokingham Rd

Mace Grocer 2 Crown Colonnade.

Or ring 666681 to get a copy to your door.

## Finance

The position is fairly healthy, with c £160 in the bank after the last issue has been paid for. This will be a much bigger rag than the last few. To go on doing this we need a regular income! There are boxes in Acorn Bookshop & Pop Records where you can make a donation; or send cheques (to 'Red Rag') or p.o.'s to us c/o Sue Clarke, Flat 7, 66 Wokingham Rd.

