

READINGS ONLY NEWSPAPER

FREE

5th-18th Mar

RED RAG is Readings only newspaper. It's free and has appeared fortnightly (more or less) since 1979. I, 300 copies of this issue were printed, more than half of which go to the outlets, and the rest delivered by hand. It's produced by a nebulous collective and has no links with any political party, group or line, or with the university. It depends entirely on donations from its readers- which is why it gets a bit thin sometimes. Another reason is that it depends on its readers for news & articles. We print anything provided we do not consider it "racist, sexist or supportive of oppressive religions" (poetry is also frowned upon). We try not to edit articles without the writers agreement, so it helps if you can give a contact number with any material you submit. If typed, it should be single-spaced and 12cm wide (which we photo-reduce to 10cm).

② Citizen Cain ③ Cruise Rumours + Right to Read ④ Events ⑤ May Day ⑥ Going Out ⑦ Whoopee! ⑧ Council ⑨ Veg. ⑩ Small ads

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Events: 868384
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INSTANT HER-STORY!

...from a roving Red Rag reporter at the first day of the Reading women's conference....

The first day of the women's has been an unquestionable success and, with the discussions still going on, there is an atmosphere of excitement at the ideas that have been raised and the potential available when women have the chance to get together and simply talk.

Although there was a list of suggested workshops the actual timetabling depended on what women expressed interest in when they arrived, and so nobody really knew what would happen. However, by lunchtime more than 80 women had arrived, and the costs of the conference had already been covered.

There were two morning discussions, one on Women in Men's jobs: how women got accepted and trained for them and how they coped with working in a male domain sur-
→ back page

FREE

SEND MAIL TO 'RED RAG' BOX 79, ACORN BOOKSHOP 17 CHATHAM St. SEND MONEY TOO.

CITIZEN CAIN

PANORAMA, contd.

My reminder that the other Caversham Councillor, Fred Pugh, had attacked last year the cultural grants which are largely given to ethnic minority organisations and which the Conservatives have dropped altogether from next year's budget has brought me a reminder that the 'Chronicle' did reveal some years ago that Mr Pugh is a former member of the National Front. He now says he was misguided at the time, but it's not only the Jesuits who believe in catching them young.

Meanwhile, Mr Jewitt (the same) at the Borough Council meeting on February 21st said that RCRE didn't have to worry about the expenses of their move to Silver Street because the County Council was likely to give them a grant, at the County Council meeting on February 25th suggested that the Council should defer the decision as to whether to make a grant for three months, and having not received support for this spoke up at the Borough Council's Policy Committee on rates on February 27th to say it was all right because the County was giving a grant after all. As a long-serving Council nominee on the RCRE Executive, albeit one who has bitterly attacked the organisation in public and private, he might be thought to owe them the courtesy of consistency.

JIM, ANN AND NORMAN

Immediately after the Berkshire County Council elections in May 1981 the strengthened Labour Group started moves to get comprehensive education in Reading. They generally had the support of the Liberals (except for grammar school freak Tom Heydeman) and of the then Liberal spokesman on education, lecturer Norman Edwards who is Jim Day's fellow County Councillor for Norcot. But the Liberals seem to have got scared last year by the strength of the grammar school lobby, particularly in Tilehurst which Big Jim sees as his safe way back onto the Borough Council in May. So Norman has been moved to Social Services (where he's a cod out of water) and replaced by Crowthorne Councillor and former WEA Secretary Ann Risman, who has had all three of her children educated at independent schools. And at the County Council meeting on February 25th Ann duly proposed the "rational solution" of a co-educational grammar school on the Reading School site and selecting children only from within the Borough boundaries, getting support from most of the Liberal Group and a few maverick Tories. Norman, to do him justice, abstained on the grounds that he at any rate couldn't bring himself to vote for the creation of a new grammar school after being committed for so long to getting rid of the two we've got. But Tom Heydeman, who has already been called to account by his fellow-Governors of Maidway for his pro-grammar stand, was enthusiastic in his support. And scared by their Reading experience, the Liberals also voted not to start consultations in Slough that could lead to closure of the Slough grammar schools and introduction of comprehensive education. What price the Liberal manifesto now?

GREENHAMGATE, contd.

Another price the Liberals found too high was any idea that they might follow David Steel's public commitment to civil liberties and not fall in with the Government's plot to rid Berkshire of the Greenham Womens Peace Camp. They all voted for an instruction to the officers to remove the benders from roadside verges so that, in the words of the minutes of a meeting between the Ministry of Defence, the Home Office and the police the women could be forced onto land owned by Newbury Council which has given itself powers under new by-laws to secure their eviction. The authenticity of those minutes was not disputed: not only the peace movement but all those who acknowledge the right to protest will feel that it is to the Liberals' undying shame that they fell into line behind this shabby Government conspiracy.

KING OF THE CAVERSHAM CASTLE?

As exclusively forecast in this column, last year's Mayor George Robinson has not been reselected by the Tories of Caversham (Chairman: Tory Mayoral hopeful Ron Jewitt) for the Borough elections in May. George is a loyal and popular sort of bloke, with rather charming enthusiasms for the town's football club and the town's waterways, and even though they will miss him more from the members' room and other bars than for his contribution to Council committees most of his fellow-Councillors would be sad to see him go.

That sadness is nothing however to the anger among some senior Conservatives at the candidate Cllr. Jewitt's ward has chosen in his place. She is admittedly a long-standing party worker. But she also has a long-standing and very intimate relationship with Cllr. Jewitt himself, and there is real indignation that George should have been elbowed aside for the Caversham chairman's "companion".

Cllr. Jewitt's married, and his colleagues endorsed his nomination for Mayor only on the understanding that his wife agreed to be Mayoress. They're wondering what she'll think at being expected at her husband's mayor-making to greet the Mayor's fellow Caversham Councillor.

It's a bit steep for the party of the family and shows that the arrogance and contempt which Mr Jewitt shows towards his political opponents outside and inside the Conservative Party more than spills over into his personal life.

POINTS FROM THE POST

Jockeying for Health The recommendation of the Griffiths ("Sainsburys") Report that there should be Chief Executives appointed in each of the Health Authorities has led to some interesting stances on the part of the candidates here in West Berks. The decision to tell the porters at Battle Hospital that their jobs were likely to be privatised (though this is not required by the Government's circular) and before briefing their union representatives was taken by administrator Ian Islip against the advice of the personnel officer and other senior members of the team. This display of managerial virility resulted in a four-hour strike at Battle and a much greater determination among union members to resist privatisation across the board.

Power of Delay The West Berks Health Authority at its last meeting endorsed its officers' ambitious privatisation programme with only one member, Liberal Councillor Paul Hannon, speaking against. There is a place on the Authority reserved for a trade union member, who would also no doubt have opposed these plans, but that has been vacant since October when Alec Welch resigned after leaving the area. The South-East Region of the TUC put in the two nominations it's required to make so that the Regional Health Authority can pick one - in November. The two nominees were Reading Health Watch activist Pete Ruhemann and EETPU stalwart Danny Buckley. The Region's officers have not reported to four successive meetings of the Authority with any recommendation to fill this vacancy.

Freedom bid fails The attempt to set up a Federation of Professional Railway Servants in Reading as a breakaway from the NUR seems to have failed, with all but a handful of railwaymen and railwaywomen back paying their subs. to a real union. There are rumours that the push and perhaps the cash behind the FRRS came from those well-known defenders of trade unionism the Freedom Association, which is supported by the founders of the Guinness Book of Records. What about the shortest-lived bosses' union?

Libations I'm told the silence in the County Council chamber during the tea-break was ruptured by the sound of a popping cork as Mr Jewitt (the same) opened a bottle of red plonk to see him through the rest of the meeting. And that Pearl Slatter was strengthened after defying her Tory whip to speak against extending grammar school selection outside Reading with what looked like a large helping from a bottle of scotch passed to her by John Trimming inadequately disguised by a paperback. And that contributions after the drinks break at Reading Borough Council from Simon Oliver ("Some of us are very worried about our parents. Some of us are concerned about whether certain Councillors are our parents") and Hansa Fuad ("We were introduced to frolicking by Cllr. Fowles. I would have thought at least Cllr. Jewitt...") suggested the helpings might have been generous.

Dunned And finally a vignette from the Policy Committee on rates. Liberal Leader (in the enforced absence of Big Jim) Basil Dunning was interrupted as he was droning on (about the need to support a Labour proposal to spend more on the town's waterways in order to prevent people falling in them) by Tory Leader and Policy Committee Chairman Deryck Morton who, waking up or something, suddenly said "Those in favour" in order that he could use the Tory majority to vote the proposal down and get on with the business. After a bit of uproar he did allow Basil to continue, but there is a view that the courteous chairman keeps his mind on the debate. Isn't there?

Citizen Cain

Sick Joke

The students at the University had their "beer week" recently - congratulations if you didn't notice. One feature of this is boorish behaviour and lots of vomit ("it's all for charity"). Another is the "Rag Mag" (no relation). Someone has probably made you buy a copy of this nasty publication - it's all for charity - one year or another. It doesn't change much. It's a collection of "jokes", apparently selected from a list provided by the printer. Most of them go like this: There's a man and a woman (a "honeymoon couple" - it's all rather dated). The man attacks the woman (this is "sex", giggle giggle). The woman is surprised. End of joke, much laughter, yes? Two things seemed different from the last time I looked at one of these sociological curiosities: fewer racist jokes (there are still racist jokes - it's all for charity), and an editorial saying, we know people will find this offensive, but so what? It's all for charity!

Apparently people who complain get told they "don't have a sense of humour"! Well, I wondered if there was anyone interested in getting together a collection of ideologically sound anti-authoritarian jokes? Jokes that are actually funny, unlike those in the "Big Red Joke Book". Such as? I don't know. "How do you confuse a policeman?" (Or politician, magistrate, teacher, man....) "Put two shovels against the wall and tell him to take his pick." Or "put him in a round room and tell him to sit in the corner." I don't know. Anyone who is interested should contact me on 666681.

James

Cruise Rumours

The small ex-patriate community of American Greenham Common personnel continues to consolidate its position in Reading's suburb of Woodley. A disturbing trend has been the habit of buying or borrowing a British registered car. Perhaps spotting the Guam and Iowa registered gas-guzzlers in Waitrose's car park was making things too easy for us.

Keeping in the best traditions of rock music journalism a bit of nocturnal dustbin raiding revealed a copy of what could well become Woodley's second favourite community newspaper.



AUTHORIZED UNOFFICIAL PUBLICATION FOR THE U.S. ARMED FORCES

Another curiosity was aerosol cans proudly proclaiming 'contains no hydrocarbons'. Is it odd that people involved in a project designed to blow half the population of eastern Europe off the face of the earth should be concerned about damage to the ionosphere?

We have only just learned that at the time of the Grenada invasion a very large hired coach bearing USAF identification boards in front and rear windows, was seen cruising, apparently lost, around the back streets of Woodley. We can reassure our readers that

this was nothing more than a little 'hearts and minds' operation to win over the local natives. The coach was looking for South Lake Infants School - not an easy place to find at the best of times - where it eventually arrived and took on an hundred or so school children. Unfortunately we haven't been able to discover the coach's destination. Information please, Woodley readers. Even better would be copies of childrens' exercise books with stories on the theme of "What I did on my day out with the USAF".

Being a championship standard ten-pin bowling player stuck out in Woodley must be very frustrating. As part of our role as a community information service we can advise our American ally that the nearest place for a quick game is the King of Clubs in Wokingham.

Zed Feecher

Right to Read - Locally and Nationally.

ACORN BOOKSHOP'S COURT DATE IS 20TH MARCH, 10.30am ONWARDS, WITH A SEPARATE COURT ALLOCATED FOR AN ALL-DAY TRIAL, AT REDING MAGISTRATES' COURT.

An Acorn Bookshop worker has been summonsed to prevent the forfeiture under the Obscene Publications Act of 47 drug-related titles, seized from the shop nearly a year ago, ranging from "Freak" comics to Penguin, Corgi and Granada paperbacks.

Knockabout Comics are coming to court on May 8th at the Old Bailey under the more serious section 2 charge. 17 drug-related titles are up to be banned entirely. Knockabout intend to mount a vigorous defence of the titles seized and charged as they consist of a wide range of attitudes to drugs, both entertaining and serious. What little funding remains today for research into, and treatment of, drug abuse could well disappear if no-one is allowed to read or write about it.

It does look as if this is the Home Office's intention; various noises about preventing drug abuse have been made, although no action has been taken against the manufacturers of aspirin, tobacco, alcohol or largactil. The line is that booksellers and wholesalers are corrupting "the youth of Britain" through books about drugs. Does it then follow that an author writing on the historical development of firearms is vulnerable to charges of conspiracy to cause murder if the person who fires a gun owns the said book? Or, equally, is a government department, such as the Home Office, to be vulnerable to charges of conspiracy to cause rape because it produces annual rape statistics? It's unclear whether the sensationalism that surrounds illegality, dramatic police raids and censorship does anything to protect and help the vulnerable or whether it makes them more prone to prove their street cred at the expense of their health, while the government can sit back and congratulate itself for a show of activity, neatly extending the Obscene Publications Act into new areas in the process.

Recommended - an article in the current issue of Undercurrents "A Case of Abuse"

Knockabout are publishing a "trial special" paperback of comics, illustrations and writing (including Steve Bell, Biff, Duncan Campbell, John Dowie, Cliff Harper) and they're asking for sponsors to help publish it, at £75 a page. If you're interested, time's short, so ring them on 01-969-2945.

Meanwhile, Acorn has to find the cost of defending the 47 titles in Reading. We accept donations.

Distribution: new distributor needed for the Katesgrove round, to distribute Red Rag to about 15 homes every fortnight. Tell Mick (665676) or leave a note in Acorn.

EVENTS

EVENTS from Monday 5th March

- Mon 5** Reading Cycle Group meeting at the Rising Sun 8pm
Wokingham WEA evening class: "The Freeze Campaign" - possibilities for disarmament. With Brigadier Michael Harbottle, no less. Don't know where, when
Lunchtime debate, Vachell Room, Hexagon. 1pm, free (silver collection). Bring lunch. WEA.
Media workshop: 4th of 10 at South Hill Park, near Bracknell. Details: Tel Bracknell 427272.
- Wed 7** East Reading Berks Anti-Nuclear group: meeting 8pm 71 Hamilton Rd.
Cycle Campaign: special meeting, 7.30, the Crown, Crown St. Mike Barr will talk on what the County Council is doing for cyclists, incl details of the IDR. Good turnout vital, please support.
Women as Artists: women and media, 7.30-9.30, Alfred Sutton Boys' School. £1.20 (50p unwaged). Details: Margaret Keyes 872464.
Peace Pledge Union meeting: 7.45, The Willows, Nunnery Gardens, Purley.
- Thu 8** Creative writing workshop 1-3, S. Reading Community Centre, Northumberland Ave. £1.20 (unwaged free)
Maidenhead CND public meeting: Steve Holmes of Electronics for Peace. 8pm Friends' Meeting House, M'head.
Women's studies course cont: women and the law. 7.30 - 9.30, Women's Centre, Abbey St.
- Fri 9** Labour Party: discussions: "Black people and the Labour party". Phil Sealey, black councillor from Brent. 8pm, AUEW, 121 Oxford Road.
- Sun 11** Cruise: preparatory meeting for 24 March "Day of Action". 2pm, AUEW Hall, 121 Oxford Rd.
- Mon 12** Drawing: still life studies. 7-9, Town Hall. Free, bring drawing book. (Reading Recreation)
- Tue 13** Socialist Educational Assoc: Peter Jones on "what should should be in Labour's education manifesto for 1985?". Abolishing schools? Not this side the Millenium... 8pm, Committee Room 2, Civic Offices
Berks Industrial Archaeology Group: Brian Boulter on "the Venables of Cookham and their paper mills" 7.30 Museum of rural life, Whiteknights. 80p
Dra wing: 10am-12 noon. As Monday.
- Wed 14** Birth Centre meeting. Details: try 65848
- Thu 15** Creative writing as Thurs 8th.
Women's studies: "history is written by the victors". Details as last Thurs.
RED RAG editorial meeting (and copy date) to decide what's going in next time. 8pm 24 Norwood Rd. If you'd like to help, turn up or ring James, 666681
- Sat 17** RED RAG: laying out and pasting up. Help always wanted.
- Sun 18** RED RAG: Folding and labelling. Help!
Music workshop: Fairview Community Centre, George St, 4.30.
- Tue 20** Acorn goes to court: sometime from 12.30 at Reading Magistrates Court. "Your chance to see censorship in action".
Reading Health Watch meeting 5.30, Centre for the Jobfree, East St. "What W.Berks Dist. Health Authority is doing about ten year regional strategy and its privatisation plans."

FRI 9a - Veggie Dining 8pm Fairview Community Centre
tickets in advance from Acorn

Regular events

- Photography: sessions every Tues (10-12, 1-3) at Centre for the Jobfree, East St.
- Housing & Welfare Rights: Thurs evenings, Community Home, 117 Cumberland Rd.
- Reading Gay Switchboard: Tues & Fri 8-10. 597269.
- Mini-market: Thurs 9-1 St Mary's House, Chain St
- Women's Centre: Open Tues 10-2; Wed 10-2; Sat 11-3
All women & Kids welcome. Pregnancy testing: Tues 7-9, bring urine sample from first pee of the day.
- Incest Survivors Group meets regularly. Write c/o Rape Crisis line, 17 Chatham St, for details
- Anarchists: meet every Mon. Details via Box 19, Acorn Bookshop. Autonomists: contact via the anarchists. Libertarian bookstall: Tues in term time lunchtime downstairs in students' union, Whiteknights.
- Peace Pledge Union: meets fortnightly, always active. Contact Mike 588459 or Box 10, Acorn.
- Ecology Party: meets 1st & 3rd Mon of month at 25 de Beauvoir Rd & 38 Long Barn Lane respectively. Contact Maria 663195.
- Socialist Workers' Party: every Wed, 8pm Red Lion, Southampton St.
- Labour History Group: meets monthly at Red Lion. Contact Breda 584558 or Mike 665478 for details
- Vegans: First Sun of month, 2pm, 1 Orrin Close, Tilehurst. Contact Steve Shiner 21651
- Women's Peace Group first Mon of month at the women's centre. Contact Rheinild 662873.
- Amnesty: second Tues of month, St Mary's Centre, Chain St. Contact Jean 472598.
- History of Reading Soc. 3rd Tues of month, Abbey Gateway.
- Berks Humanists: meet 2nd Friday of month, Oct - May, 8-10, Friends' Mtg House, Church St. Details: Crowthorne 774871.
- Cyclists' Touring Club: outings Suns 9.15 from Caversham Bridge or Henley. Details: Richard Dumelow 50949.
- Sahara Asian Women's Centre: open for support and advice 9.30-1.30, Mon-Fri, 48 Eldon Terrace, tel 51158.
- Wednesday is women's day at the Centre for the Jobfree, East St. From 10.30: coffee, advice, courses etc
- Silkscreen workshop: Sat, Newtown Community House. 11-12.30 14-18yr olds; 1-2.30 others.

HOUSING

In the next Rag we hope to start a regular column on Housing. If you have any ideas, experiences or problems regarding the recent housing situation in Reading please write to: 'Housing', Red Rag, Box 79, Acorn Bookshop, 17 Chatham St, Reading. Please indicate if your letter is 'copy' (meant for publication) or 'information'. Your name won't be published unless you say you are prepared for this to happen.

The sort of issues that could be covered include: Housing Benefit problems, homelessness, squatting etc..

Reading Borough Council is the richest local authority in the county. At present its accounts are approximately £6 million in the black. So why are so many people without decent places to live, and why is the housing benefit system such an almighty mess? You can help supply the answers!

MAY DAY

May Day Festival News

Did you know that Reading has a May Day Festival every year?

There is little enough sense of community amongst Reading people, and it is one of the aims of the May Day Festival to bring people of different political views and cultures together to strengthen this sense of community, and to communicate what we here in Reading are trying to do to make Reading a better place for all to live in, whether at work, in education, through cultural activity to mention a few ways.

May Day began as an International protest day on May 1st. 1890, when the International Worker's Congress (2nd. International) backed the American Delegates call for an 8 hour day. They decided by resolution to "organise a great international demonstration so that in all countries on one appointed day, the toiling masses shall demand the 8 hour day, and since May 1st. 1890 has already been chosen by the American Federation of Labour, this day is accepted for the international demonstration."

The American workers had been fighting for several years leading up to 1890 to improve terrible conditions of exploitation at the place. A series of strikes culminated in brutal police attacks, with 7 Trades Unionist leaders condemned to hang in a frame up trial. These seven became known as "The Haymarket Martyrs". In spite of this severe setback, it was acknowledged later at a congressional hearing that the working day had been shortened.

It seems strange today to realise what struggle and strife was involved in reducing the working day, nearly 100 years ago, when today workers openly grab 'overtime' to make up their wages. Some workers end up working several hours again on top of the '8 hour day' - the Post Office is one good example.

All the more reason then to remember the struggle of working people to improve the quality of their lives then, as we should be doing now. The Tory propaganda which calls for more work effort for less pay is a myth in what we know to be a potentially rich, highly developed, industrial society.

On May Day we must remember with others our past, and think forward to our future. The struggle of people to change history for the better has always been with us and, as it was in 1890, it remains today to be a struggle of an international dimension.

Remember May Day! And give us your support on April 28th. 1984. Further details of the Festival will be released later.

In conclusion, I would like to bring to your notice one of several fund-raising activities for the Festival. A forthcoming DISCO or LEAP YEAR LEAP will take place on 29th. February, 8.00pm. at the Horse and Barge, Duke Street. Entry will be £1 on the door ; 90p by ticket ; 70p unwaged (see going out guide). All fighters in the struggle welcome! We need your ideas but we also need your money!!

JCC

LABOUR HISTORY GROUP

The Reading Labour History Group has been meeting for over a year : here is a brief guide to our activities for anyone who may be interested in coming along.

We meet approximately once a month in the back room of the "Red Lion" in Southampton St. (grotty but cheap!), to discuss political

issues from a socialist angle, with particular regard to their historical background. Attendance is variable - about 15 to 20 is normal, some people coming only for a particular subject that interests them, while others roll up every time. You don't have to be a member of the Labour Party, though perhaps 50% are, on an average night. The atmosphere is usually relaxed and informal, and although we have had some speaker meetings, given by an expert on a certain topic, we generally try to avoid any feeling of being at a lecture. All meetings broaden into a discussion, where everyone is encouraged to ask questions or air their views, while some meetings are purely discussions, with a subject introduced by one of the group, (and sometimes continuing until closing time!).

As a guide to the nature of the meetings, these are some of the topics we have discussed in the past :

- The Russian Revolution
- The Palestinian Problem
- Ireland
- Women in the 1980s
- Reform vs Revolution : a debate
- Unemployed struggles in the 1930s

What links our approach to these subjects is simply that we attempt to look beyond a present-day problem or issue, to analyse its historical basis. Future subjects will be decided by those who come along!

The next meeting is on Sunday March 3rd at 7.30 pm, with the (long-winded!) title : "1848 to 1984 : The Communist Manifesto - what relevance today?". For future meetings, see your Red Rag Events guide, or 'phone : Brenda : Reading 584558 or Mike : Rdg 665478.

S.O.S.

This cry of distress is not for Greenpeace but for the children of coastal Cumbria & the Western Isles. And the whole marine environment which is being contaminated by radioactive discharges from the Windscale pipeline.

No one knows the long term consequences of this pollution. But contaminated beaches have been closed. Many cases of leukemia have been reported. Common sense insists this must be stopped.

To help Greenpeace save our seas send your donation to: Greenpeace, 36 Graham Street, London N1 8LL.

I wish to donate £ _____

Name _____

(BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE)

Address _____

If paying by Access (only), please quote A/C No: _____

Signed _____

Receipt will only be issued if requested.

6 GOING OUT

MONDAY 5

- THE CRUCIBLE by Arthur Miller. Progress. 7.45. £2.20
- BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN. Eisenstein, 1925. SHP. 7.45

TUESDAY 6

- GAY DISCO. Tudor Arms
- THE CRUCIBLE. as 5TH
- BARROQUE MUSIC. Univ, Palmer building C.10. 1.10 PM
- JAZZ. San Jacinto (new orleans sound) SHP. 8PM. £2.20
- FILM. Ploughmans lunch. SHP. 7.45
- DRAMA. Hedda Gabler. Woodley Playhouse. Hardly Rd. 7.45

WEDNESDAY 7

- PLOUGHMANS LUNCH as 6TH
- Hedda Gabler as 6TH
- THE KING OF COMEDY. Scorsesse 1982. RFT. 8PM
- CRACKERJACK SHOW. HEX. 4.15 + 6.45 £2.50 £3
- THE CRUCIBLE as 5TH
- ORGAN RECITAL. Leslie Davis. OTH Blagrove st 1.10 free
- SCHUBERT WINTERREISE. Univ Great hall. London Rd 8PM £1.50 (Talk on Winterreise 2.30PM Dept of Music Upper Redlands Rd. free)

THURSDAY 8

- PLOUGHMANS LUNCH as 6TH
- HEDDA GABLER as 6TH
- THE KING OF COMEDY as 7TH
- SAD CAFE. HEX farewell tour 7.30 £3.50 £4.50
- THE CRUCIBLE as 5TH
- THE PHILANTHROPIST. New horseshoe theatre company SHP £2.50
- FREE MUSIC. Sportsman. Shiffeld Rd
- FOLK CLUB. Tony Rose. Horse + Barge Duke St 8.15
- RECITAL. Homalka Trio. Bracknell Coll. Free 12.45
- CABARET. The Musical. Leighton PK School 7.30 £2.25

FRIDAY 9

- ★ PARADISE CLUB. Factory Records Night. Stockholm Monsters + The Royal family and the Poor + videos £2 9-2am
- MUDDY RIVER (Doro No Kawa) Japan 1981 RFT B/W
- THE CRUCIBLE as 5TH
- THE PHILANTHROPIST as 8TH
- RECITAL. Wellington College Baroque Ensemble SHP 8PM £2.25
- HEDDA GABLER as 6TH
- PASSION. Jean Luc Godard SHP 7.45
- THE TOMB OF LICEIA. 1964. 11PM SHP
- GAY DISCO. tudor arms
- RADIO 1 FUN NIGHT. HEX fun?? £4 £4.50

SATURDAY 10

- PASSION as 9TH
- THE CRUCIBLE as 5TH
- WOMEN + ART. media workshop SHP 10.30-5.30 £9.50 for Weekend (1 Hink)
- THE PHILANTHROPIST as 8TH
- LATE FILM SHP as 9TH
- FOLK. Eddie Upton + Nigel Chippendale 8PM SHP £1.50
- AMITY. HEX midday music 12.15 free
- RECITAL. The Esslin Ensemble £1.75 SHP
- JIM DAVIDSON. HEX 6.30 + 9.30 £5 £6 (not suitable for children it said in the blurb) or adults?
- PARADISE CLUB. SOUNDS JA-TA, Teacher Ali 8-2 £2
- HEDDA GABLER as 6TH

SUNDAY 11

- JAZZ. Butler. Chatham st
- JIVE DIVE. Treats. Kings Rd
- PASSION as 9TH
- WOMEN + ART SHP as 10TH
- DEZME STRING QUARTET. HEX 7.30 £3, 3.50

MONDAY 12

- EATING RAOUL 1982. SHP. 7.45
- WRESTLING. HEX 7.30 £2.25

TUESDAY 13

- WILD STYLE (CLUB) film SHP 7.45
- JAZZ. Tony Lee Trio SHP 8PM 2.40
- WARSAW PHILHARMONIC. HEX 7.30 £3-6
- GAY DISCO. Tudor Arms free
- THE SLAMMER. Bridge st Caversham 8-2

WEDNESDAY 14

- MERRY XMAS MR LAWRENCE. RFT 8PM
- THEATRE. SHP After the Rain. Maidenhead Drama Guild £1.90
- ORGAN RECITAL. Allan Wicks OTH Blagrove st 7.45 £2.50
- HERMIT CLUB. upper Deck duke st.

THURSDAY 15

- RFT as 14TH
- THEATRE SHP as 14TH
- FOLK. Fault. Horse + Barge 8.15
- GUITAR DUST. BRACKNELL COLLEGE 12.45 free
- FREE MUSIC. SPORTS MAN Shiffeld Rd
- ALBERNI STRING QUARTET. GREAT hall London Rd 8PM £2 MUS/OAP £1
- SCHOOLS PROM. HEX £2.25 7.30

KEY. SHP. South Hill Park Art Centre. Bracknell 427272. RFT. Reading Film Theatre. Palmer Bldg. Whiteknights Pk. PROGRESS THEATRE. Christchurch Rd. 477594. HEX. Hexagon. Queens walk 571591
OTH Old Town hall. Blagrove st.

MARCH

7

WHOOPEE! FOR PEACE

What are we demonstrating? - Philip Cousins.

FRIDAY 16

- RECITAL. Pianist Marios Papadopoulos. SHP £3.20
- THEATRE SHP at 14TH
- VIDEO DROME film SHP 7.45
- HALLOWEEN late film SHP 11PM
- IAN STEWART BAND. SHP (rock) 9PM £3.25
- GAY DISCO. Tudor Arms Free
- THE KING + I. HEX 7.30 £1-2.50
- PARADISE CLUB. UK WARRIORS + FATBOY £2 9-2
- HERE + NOW. Guildhall Southampton Tickets + Transport £5 rmg 59995

SATURDAY 17

- JAZZ. Mike Cooper, Ghosts SHP 8PM £2.25
- HALLOWEEN as 16TH
- VIDEO DROME as 16TH
- THEATRE SHP as 14TH
- GEISHA GIRLS, SHOOTING THE RAPIDS, 13 at Midnight. St Crispin's centre, Wokingham 7.30 - late £1.75 £2 on door
- FOLK. Samanties SHP 8PM £2
- NSPCC benefit. West Indian Womens circle dance Rhapsody + disco 8-11.45 £1.50 OTH. Blagrove st.
- Die Fledermaus. Opera Players of London Chiltern Edge school 7.30 £2.70
- University choral + orchestral soc. 7.30 Great hall London Rd. Mendelssohn. Counod £2 MUS £1
- TOFFS HEX Free 12.15
- READING BACH CHOIR. HEX 7.30 £3-5

SUNDAY 18

- JIVE DIVE. Treats Kings Rd
- ARION ORCHESTRA of Reading HEX 7.30 £2-4
- JAZZ. BUTLER

MONDAY 19

- MOSCOW DISTRICTS TEARS. USSR 1979 SHP
- PROGRESS THEATRE 'LYSISTRATA' by Aristophanes - presented by READING YOUTH THEATRE 7.45 pm

EXHIBITIONS

- MUSEUM. BLAGRAVE ST. UNTIL 24 MARCH
KEITH KING: sculpture, relief drawings, prints
- UNIV. OF READING ART GALLERY, LONDON RD
UNTIL 21 MARCH. 6 PAINTERS
- ENGELFIELD HOUSE. THEATRE. 10-23 MARCH
Exhib of John Piper £1
- MUSEUM OF MODERN ART OXFORD. 30 PEMBROKE ST
Recent French painting: Printmaking 35
artists from Royal College of art:
19 + 30 photos from Royal Anthropological
Institute All until 25 MARCH

Over the last ten years or so, along no doubt with many other Red Rag readers, I've taken part in a good number of demonstrations over various matters, but, apart from one or two, like the tearing-down of the fences at Porton, and the embracing of Greenham, and the first few I attended, I've usually felt really let-down afterwards. What seems to happen, is that on a march, everyone gives out tremendous 'psychic energy' but at the conclusion, because no adequate direction for this energy is found, it all goes, sort-of, 'bleahh'. The customary parade of boring speakers just serves to knock it all on the head.

Of late, there seems to be a fashion in the anti-nuclear movement for silent demo's, funereal dress, silent vigils etc, which certainly do nothing for me. Much worse though, I don't feel they do anything to motivate the millions still largely uninterested in such things. It seems to me that most folk know only too well of overkill and megadeath, of places in the bunker for smug politicians, of firestorm and radiation - they are so terrified of these prospects that any serious thought of them is pushed away. Our dismal efforts but reinforce their despair.

Discussing all this with friends, the problem was, what can we do that will utilise and renew our 'psychic energy', and also affirm our confidence in the future for all to see? Undoubtedly non-violent direct action often does this, but it's not for everyone, every time or every place.

So, after a little home-brewed ale, arose in our minds WHOOPEE FOR PEACE! - a celebration of traditional circle dances, cooperative games, songs and chants, under the Moon's gentle light, in a place of green life.



Join us - Saturday March 17th, 7pm-9pm.
RICHFIELD AVENUE - ROCK FESTIVAL SITE
BY THE RIVER - Bring musical instruments
lights, warm clothes, food and drink to
share. Most importantly bring yourself
and your joy in life.

Pre-Victorian Values

8

Mrs Thatcher may prate of the Victorian virtues, but there is nothing prudish or proper about her followers on Reading Borough Council, who belong to an earlier and less-enlightened tradition, self-satisfied, self-seeking and arrogant, contemptuous of what their Mayoral candidate calls the rabble, and abusive towards those who dare to challenge their abuse of power.

To see Mr Jewitt heckle uncontrollably from the front-bench, Mr Markham lounge affectedly across two adjacent seats, Mr Oliver appear to doze under the strain of debate is to see again the venal values of eighteenth-century Parliaments captured by the cartoonists of the day. At the Council meeting on February 21st one could almost feel their venom.

The Tories' decision to cut £12,000 (or as they now said £5,000) off the Readibus budget and the campaign against that decision by Readibus staff and users ran like a burning sore through the meeting. Rising to the bait of a question from Labour Leader Mike Orton, rather like a Tolpuddle farmer hearing of oath-taking among his labourers, Ron Jewitt denounced the Voluntary Services Council (which runs Readibus) for scare-mongering and described a letter from its General Secretary to Readibus users as a "pack of lies".

That set the tone which was taken up later by Transport Committee Chairman Geoff Lowe when introducing the Minutes of the meeting that had made the cuts. Deploping that the cut had become a party-political matter (it was a Tory proposal!) he promised to "arrange for the facts to be distributed to Readibus users", if necessary by means of an advertisement in the press (it wasn't clear whether this was to be paid for by the Tory Party or by the Council, but if the latter would risk being an illegal use of rate-payers' money for political ends). Labour's Tony Page called on the Tories to admit they had boobed and to try and retrieve public respect by changing their minds. Fat chance. Paddy Day, who's been on the Council for 12 years and is chairman of the Access Working Party which links Councillors and the disabled, reported their view that Readibus was essential and complained that for the first time ever she as a Councillor had been refused permission to address the Policy Committee on the subject. Transport Vice-Chairman Tony Markham, who started the whole business and looks a bit too young to be on the Council at all, attacked Readibus for being a very expensive service (it is the cheapest in Europe) and for inaccurate forecasting (he had personally approved the purchase of new buses only eight days before proposing the cut that would mean they would have to be mothballed) and demanded that Readibus should take people to hospital (which wouldn't be acceptable to the Health Authority or the ambulance drivers). He three times dismissed Paddy Day's intervention as totally unimportant - the new Tories have no respect for their elders or betters. And Fred Pugh joined in with a personal attack on VSC's Colm Lyons for putting out what he called "a blatantly political document" and for making personal attacks on Tory Councillors. Lésé majesté?

(Intrascript The Readibus debate resumed at the Policy Committee on Rates on February 27th, which was lobbied by 150 or so Readibus users and supporters. The Tories climbed down to the extent of giving a grant for 84-5 equal to that for 83-4, without any allowance for inflation or for the new buses and subject to a report from a "technical panel" thrown together as a face-saving device. Tony Page again led the attack on what he described as a real cut, his speech punctuated by applause from the users crowded into the public gallery and, in wheelchairs, round the back of the Council chamber. Again Ron Jewitt rose to the bait, attacking the Readibus letter again and suggesting that Readibus "may well have something to hide" from independent inquiry. As the users filed out after seeing the Tories vote the cut through (Readibus had asked for another £4,000 which is 0.04% of the Borough's budget) Jewitt let fly a final crack about the whole campaign & lobby having been got up by the Labour Party. A pretty paranoid crack at that. Although the Labour Party can only

gain from what Readibus users who attended the meeting have no doubt was a Tory attack on the disabled.)

Returning to the Council meeting, displays of Tory arrogance continued. Their Housing Chairman, Ron Jewitt, denied that there was money from the sale of land that could be used for be used now for home building and improvements (at the Policy Committee he was to vote against a Labour move to release the money from the sale of the Council's land at Calcot for this purpose) and tried to undermine Labour's efforts to secure a better deal for owners of Wates houses with a bitter and inaccurate attack on Graham Morris, one of the campaigners. Their Leisure Chairman, John Oliver, said he hoped to save the facade of the Mansion House but refused to say where the office block would be in Prospect Park. Their Transport Chairman, Geoff Lowe, refused to comment on whether there would be a rise in bus fares this year, which his Vice-Chairman, Tony "Readibus" Markham had forecast at the previous meeting.

But the prize perhaps went to their Environment Chairman, Brian Fowles, who found himself with the task of deflecting a motion from Labour's Dave Absolom asking that the old corn exchange (now the Bingo hall down Caversham Road) should be used again as a dance hall now Top Rank has closed. The Tories have plans for the site they're not ready to reveal, and Brian Fowles moved an amendment to reserve the site for "leisure purposes" saying that the Labour motion was too specific. That passed, but the Tories were smoked out when Labour leader Mike Orton put another amendment to bring back "dancing and related activities" and Brian Fowles had to admit the Tories wanted to put the site out to tender and would take the best offer so long as they got "a substantial sum". So bowling alley, or private club, or even more private brothel? Wait and see.

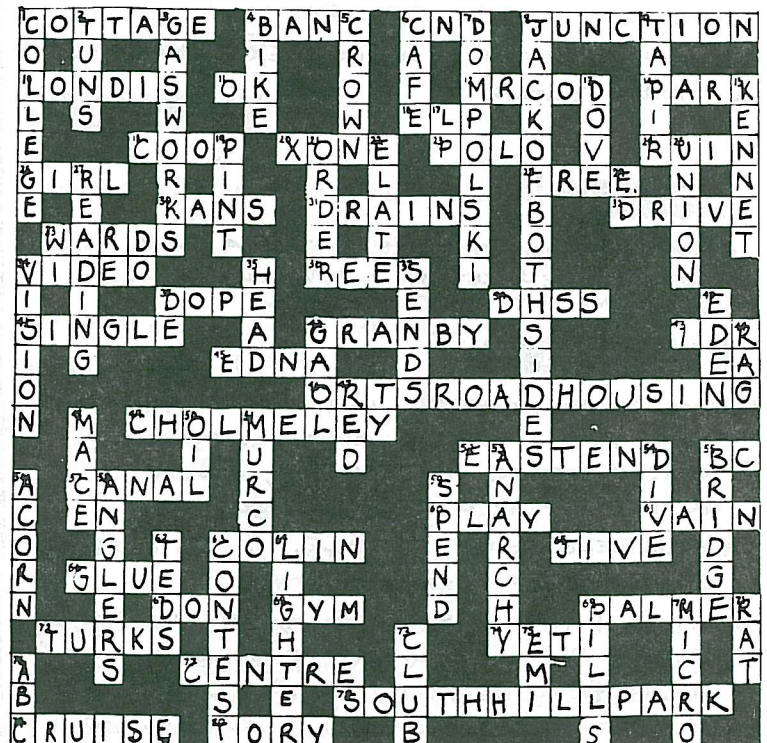
And Brian Fowles must take the runner-up spot too for his defence of the £500 charge for particularly well-placed sites in the Council's cemetery. "All we're doing," he said, "is to preserve this privilege for all those who want to pay for it."

Or, as Mike Orton put it in his final speech on the corn exchange, "Tories do it for money". And have lost even the decency of pretending anything else matters. There's a Council meeting on the Rates on Tuesday 6th March and another on Tuesday 17th April, both at 6.30. See for yourselves but don't feed the dinosaurs.

Disgusted, Tumbridge Wells

SOLUTION

to crossword in last issue



Gardening: Is anyone interested in doing a column, regular or occasional, for Rag readers with small gardens or window-boxes? Please get in touch! Meanwhile, here's Lawrence Hill's vegetable table!

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VEGETABLE TABLE

VEGETABLE	Seeds or roots per 50ft. row	How long Seed keeps	When to Sow	When to Plant	Depth to Sow or Plant	How far apart	Between rows	Thin to	Weeks till eating	Ready for eating	When to Harvest	Good Crop for 50 foot row As picked or dug
Bean Broad, Longpod	½ pint	2 years	November		3in.	4-6in.	2-2½ft.		24	June		40lb.
Bean Broad, Windsor			Feb-April		3in.		3ft.		20	June-July		40lb.
Bean French	½ pint	2 years	May-July		2in.	6in.	3ft.		14	July-Oct.		75lb.
Bean Runner	½ pint	2 years	May-June		2in.	9in.	30in. prs.		14	July-Oct.		85lb.
Bean Tic, for Drying	2oz.	2 years	November		2in.	1ft.	1ft.			Aug.-July	Aug.-Sept.	4lb.
Beet	1oz.	5 years	April-June		1in.		8in.	6in.	16		October	75lb.
Beet Spinach	½oz.	5 years	March-April		1in.		18in.	1ft.	24	Sept.-Dec.		85lb.
Broccoli Heading	½oz.	5 years	April-May	May-July	½in.	18in.	18in.		18-30	Oct.-May		30 heads
Broccoli Sprouting	½oz.	5 years	March-May	May-July	½in.	2ft.	30in.			Dec.-May		35lb.
Brussels Sprouts	½oz.	5 years	March-April	May-July	½in.	20in.	30in.		18-24	Oct.-March		36lb.
Cabbage, Green or Red	½oz.	5 years	March-June-Aug	May-June	½in.	1-2ft.	1-2ft.		18-24	All Year		30 heads (75lb.)
Carrot	½oz.	3-5 years	March-June		1in.		8-12in.	6-8in.	15-24	June-Mar.	October	75lb.
Cauliflower	½oz.	5 years	April	May-June	½in.	2ft.	2ft.		15-24	Aug.-Nov.		30 heads (50lb.)
Cucumber (Burpless)	20 seeds	7 years	April		½in.	2ft.	2ft.		14	Aug-Oct.		80 (60lb.)
Kale, Curly	½oz.	4 years	April		1in.	30in.	3ft.		18	Nov.-April		70-80lb.
Kale, Rape	½oz.	5 years	April-May	July	½in.	2ft.	30in.		18	Nov.-April		70-80lb.
Khol-rabi	½oz.	4 years	July		1in.		1ft.	1ft.	14	July-Nov.		50lb.
Leek	½oz.	3 years	Feb-April	May-Aug.	1in.	8in.	1ft.		16	Sept.-April		75 leeks (40lb.)
Lettuce	½oz.	4 years	March-Sept.		½in.		1ft.	8in.	10	All Year		75 lettuces (75lb.)
Marrows	14 seeds	6 years	April-May		1in.	3ft.	4ft.		14	July-Oct.		40-60 fruit
Onion Sets	100 bulbs (½lb)			March	2in.	6in.	1ft.		24	All Year	August	45lb.
Onion Seed	½oz.	4 years	March or Aug.		1in.		8in.	6in.	24	All Year	August	50-60lb.
Parsley	1oz.	2 years	Feb or July		1½in		1ft.	6in.	14			All you want
Parsnip	½oz.	1 year	Feb-April		1in.	3in.	1ft.	1ft.	26	Winter	November	50lb.
Peas	1 pint	2 years	Jan-July		3in.	1ft.	2-4ft.		14	June-Sept.		30lb.
Potatoes, Early	7lb.			March-April	6in.	15in.	18in.		12	July	August	60lb.
Potatoes, Maincrop	7lb.			March-April	6in.	15in.	27in.		25		October	100lb.
Radish	½oz.	4 years	Feb-Aug.		½in.		8in.		5-6	April-Oct		40 bunches
Salsify	½oz.	2 years	April		1in.	1ft.	12in.	8in.	18	Nov.-March	Leave in	20-30lb.
Savoy	½oz.	5 years	March-April	May-June	½in.	12-18in.	2ft.		18	Oct.-Feb.		40-50
Shallot	2lb.		Feb-March		2in.	8in.	1ft.		24	Winter	June	30-40lb.
Spinach, Summer	1oz.	2 years	Feb-Aug.		1in.		1ft.	8in.	8	May-Sept.		35lb.
Spinach, Winter	1oz.	2 years	August		1in.		1ft.	6in.	10	Oct.-March		35lb.
Spinach, New Zealand	1oz.	2 years	March		1in.		2ft.	1ft.	14	June-Oct.		30-40lb.
Swedes	½oz.	2 years	May-July		1in.		1ft.	1ft.	20	July-March	November	40-60lb.
Tomatoes, Outdoor	½oz.	3 years	April	May-June		2ft.	3ft.		14	Aug.-Oct.	October	av. yr. 80lb.
Turnips	½oz.	2 years	Feb-June		1in.		1ft.	6in.	6	May-March	As required	50lb.

Red Rag Outlets

Acorn Bookshop, under Chatham St car-park

Listen Records, Butts shopping centre

Central Club, London Street

Centre for the Unemployed, East Street

Rag Dolls, Duke St

Elephant Off-licence, Derby Street

Fine Food Stores, 168 Oxford Road

Harrison's Newsagent, Caversham Road

Jelly's Stores, Whitley Street

Number Sixty, Christchurch Green

Ken's Shop, Students' Union, Whiteknights

Tech College (lib, students common room), King's Road

Pop Records, 172 King's Road

Kan's Kitchen, London Road

Rib 'n' Roast, 189 London Road

Mace shop, 2 Crown Colonnade, Cemetery Junction

Continental Stores, 199 London Road

The Sugar Bowl, 26 Wokingham Road

Ling's Chinese Fish Bar, Wokingham Road

Sutherlands, 55 Erleigh Road

Local news: we want more of it! Someone has offered to do occasional pieces on what goes on in Newt-on. Would anyone else like to write bits about their area? Get in touch! Better still, just write it and send it in.

SOS list: we have a list of people who don't mind being asked to help with Red Rag (people who can say no!) This has become all the more important now we've abolished the production groups, for the co-ordinator of any issue. We want more people on this list! Get in touch! Tell us who you are, how to contact you, and what you're happy to be asked if you can help with (e.g. typing, pasting up, graphics, collating on Sunday, driving, distribution....) If you want to get more directly involved, ring the number given in each issue for who to contact for the next one.

MONEY

The situation is getting difficult... we didn't have enough to cover the cost of this issue (each one costs about £60), and the standing orders are only bringing in ½ of what we need. You can help by filling in a standing order form (makes regular payments to the rag from your account), available from Acorn, or by making a donation -collecting tins at Acorn or Pop Records. One of these days you'll be glad you did!

EVENTS

If your event isn't in our events guide, well, that's your fault! You should have rung Debbie on 868384, or left a message for Red Rag Events, Red Rag, Box 79, Acorn Bookshop.

Small Ads

FREE!!!

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY. Bulmershe College
March 8th 7.30pm Spwaker: Sophie Bowlby on
The Non-Sexist City. Film: Rosie The Riveter.

WANTED Newspapers, Old cloths (pref cotton
shirts etc) jars, tin cans. Leave at NEWTOWN
COMMUNITY PRESS. Community House, 117 Cumber-
land Road.

WANTED-2 rooms in shared house or flat for two
for 2 female university students. Dates required,
now till the end of June. Contact Angela Glennell
+ Julie Gibson 61 Addington Rd Reading.

WANTED -My accommodation has fallen through at the
last minute! I urgently need a flat, bedsit or
sharing a house with fellow vegans or vegetarians
in Reading. Please contact Alan Godwin (age 27)
c/o 1 Orrin Close, Tilehurst, Reading, Tel 21651

DO YOU LIVE IN SQUALOR? Cooker silted up? Fridge
malodorous? Rebbledashed carpet? Sinister bathroom?
Let us give it the once-over. No job too big or
small. Nothing swept under the carpet! Remarkable
rates. Make it a yearly event for your home.
RACING DEMONS: READING 530063

Small Fridge (about 2ft by 1ft by 1ft) wanted in
exchange for my bigger one (about 3ft by 2ft by 2ft)
so I can get in my bathroom. Contact 367955 (or
534425)

Polystyrene 'macaron' packaging available to take
away free (please) at Acorn Bookshop. Lots of uses!

JOB ADVERT

Network Liaison Worker *EB is a voluntary network
organisation working to promote Development Education
in Berkshire by means of a Mobile Teaching Centre on
a converted double-decker bus. Part time £4000.
Funded by Christian Aid. >AM for details to *EB
coordinator c/o Constables, Windsor Rd, Ascot, SL5 7LF



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WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

cont. from p1



rounded by male standards, and one on Living
with ourselves & others: the problems encount-
ered when we live communally, with a partner
or on our own, and finding the balance between
wanting our own space and freedom and fulfilling
our needs for emotional support.

By lunchtime the call for food was strong, and
hunger was more than satisfied by women from
Veggie Dining's catering. At this point a con-
ference organiser was heard to say that her
tummy hurt from giggling so much.



In the afternoon women had the chance to
attend two more workshops out of the selection:
Assertiveness; Rhubarb Circle (a discussion on
discussions); several groups on Racism in the
Women's Movement; Class; the 7 Demands of the
Women's Movement (then and now); Women and Food;
Natural and Active Birth. Videos were also
available all day and there was a feminist
bookstall to supply reading material for any
spare moments!

Saturday has been a time for heavier discussions
and after the disco tonight Sunday will start
at a slightly later time and will be for more
practical and lighter workshops including silk-
screening, video, new games, women and creative
writing, self-help health, acupuncture, anarcha-
feminism and witchcraft.

People asked what the point of the conference
was, given its lack of specific aims. I think
any women present would argue that the space
and time to get together with other women and
exchange ideas about issues of our choosing
and concern, the opportunity of making contact
with so many women and the fun we have had
have already made it more than worthwhile.

J.