

5-1972

OZ 42

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Editor

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OZ 42

Description

Contents: Naked hippie couple cover. 'Miss Elektra Meets the Shocked Nun' - David Leitch on mental hospitals and ECT. Argent ad. Ad for OZ street sellers. Hippie couple photo. 'The Universal Exhibition' - Charles Shaar Murray on the Bickershaw rock festival. 'The Vanishing Life Experts' - indians in Columbia by Robin Hanbury-Tenison. , 'The Little Vanguard's Tail' - a fairy story by Sheila Turner (Sheila Rowbotham) + Gustav Dore illustration. Twilight of the Dogs 5p+ Richard Corben cartoon strip. Greasy Truckers ad. Brian Bolland cartoon. 'They Do it With Mirrors' - feminism/TV by Micheline Wandor. 'Let's Have a Party' by David Widgery. The Death of Lester Brown, House Painter - Rod Taylor poem and Ed Badajos graphic. Prison Special: 'John: 30 Years of Hard Rain' from *Tales for the Son of My Unborn Child* by Thomas Farber. RAP - Radical Alternatives to Prisons. Joshua Thomas graphic. Full page mail order OZ. The Angry Brigade/Stoke Newington 8 trial. 'Sledge Hammers in the Slums' - Roger Hutchinson on the Northern and provincial alternative press. 'There But For the Grace of God...' Jackie on jail in Iran. 'Muckro Biotics' by Amadeus Vivek. Clay Wilson graphic. Lucifer 'Fuck You' ad. Peter Frampton ad. 'From Pocket to Penis' - Jerry Hopkins investigates the wonderful world of rubbers. *Spare Rib* ad (and notice in Spike). RELEASE new address and ad. Book reviews of *Narcotic Plants*, *The Underground Dictionary*, *Beneath the City Streets* and Roland Barthes' *Mythologies*. Film reviews *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg*, *The Last Picture Show*, *Two Lane Blacktop*. Make New Friendz ad. Ad for Anthony Scudato's *Bob Dylan* biography. Emerson Lake & Palmer ad. LP reviews: Fanny, The Allman Brothers *Eat a Peach*. 'Love, Peace, Acid, Crashpads, Lightshows, Arts Labs, Karma, Incense, Grateful Dead & Far Out!' by Warren Hague. Germaine Greer's husband naked but not aroused. Back cover: Ralph Steadman graphic 'How you gonna crucify a child in Vietnam without any arms?' with Albert Schweitzer quote about the suicide of civilization.

Publisher

OZ Publications Ink Limited, London, 56p

Comments

Please be advised: This collection has been made available due to its historical and research importance. It contains explicit language and images that reflect attitudes of the era in which the material was originally published, and that some viewers may find confronting.

ONE CIVILISED READER IS WORTH A THOUSAND BONEHEADS

**GERMAINE
GREER'S
HUSBAND
FLASHES COCK**

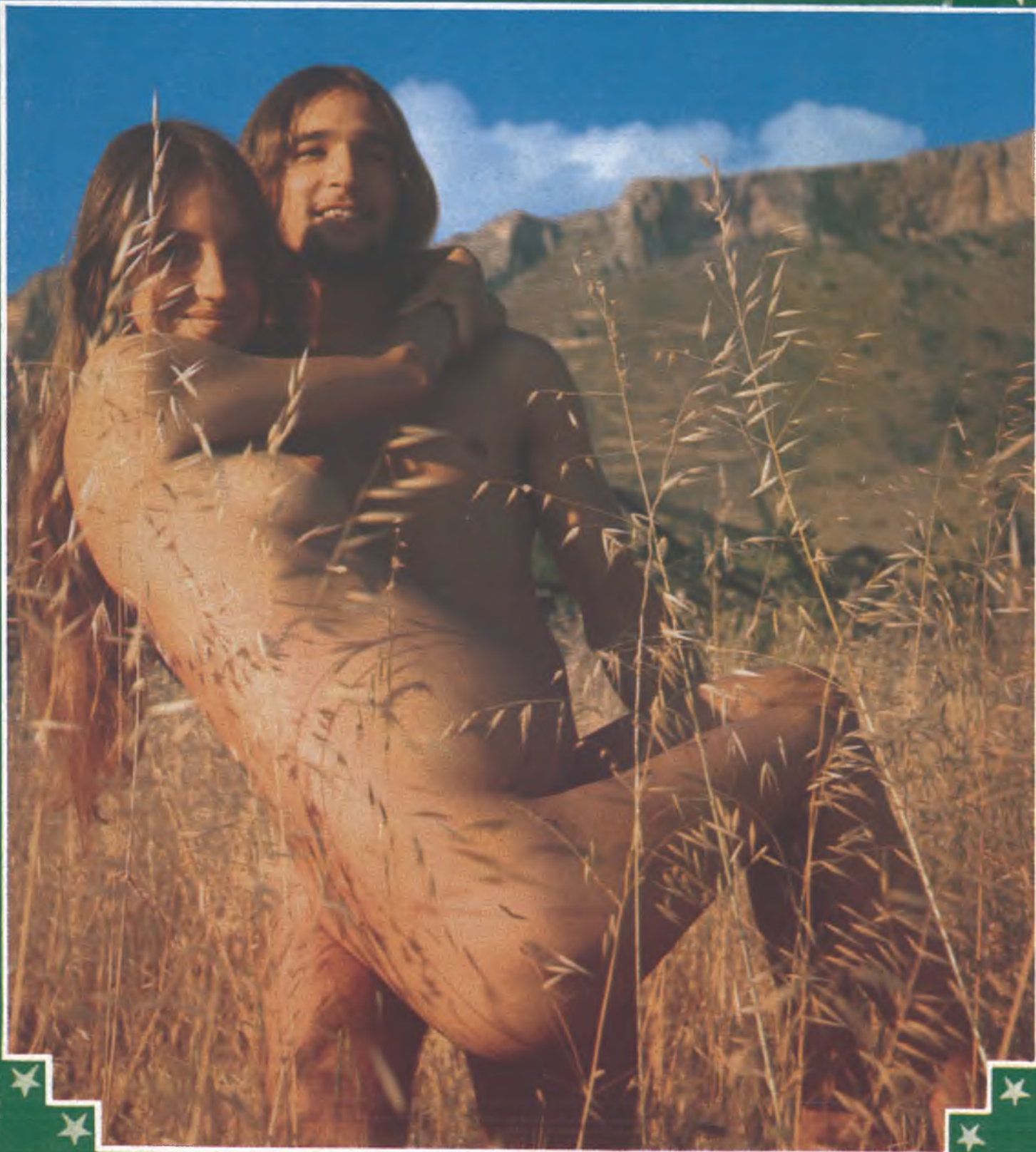
**OUR MAN
IN THE PANAMA
JUNGLE**

OZ

**INSIDE
PRISONS
MACROBIOTICS-
DEATH DIET
INSIDE
ASYLUMS**

OZ 42 May/June 1972

25p



Words of Wisdom...

Dear OZ,
I'm just writing to say how much I enjoyed your last issue and the one before it. At last OZ seems to be moving away from all that sexist tits and arse crap that has ruined so many of your previous issues and which still seems to dominate papers like International Times.

Susan Griffith's piece 'The Politics of Rape' was certainly the most informative and moving article you have ever published, and I hope you can persuade Susan to write another article soon for OZ.

Mr. Young's analysis of criminology and class structure was also a revealing piece of writing. Is this the same J. Young who published 'The Drugtakers' last year? Whoever he is, I certainly agree with him that it is the Kennedys and not the Capones of this world who have excelled in crime.

One last point. Was the Home Office Circular concerning women and crime another of your spoof letters or based on any real document? Whether fictional or factual it makes really hilarious reading. Can you imagine any boring bureaucrat as anyone's 'OBEDIENT SERVANT'!!

Yours,
Susanne Armstrong,
Spelow House,
Charlwood Terrace,
London SW15.

Dear OZ,
How I agree with your article in OZ 40, "The three Rs". Being a 14 year-old pupil at a secondary modern school myself, Peter Buckham is completely wright when he says the whole system of education must be radically changed. Or it will rot with increasing rates of truancy, dillinquants (whatever they may be) and more recently drugs. Acid tabs in the playground sounds ridiculous but its true. Teachers can't be blamed, with heads of departments its a whole system of mister bigs with everyone pushing everyone else. Then they can't understand why academic work is poor. I myself was nearly suspended for bad academic work but was saved by an understanding housemaster who I'm very fortunate to have. I wish there was something I could do. The

creating teacher" One thing won't have, taught under organisation hypocrites.

Power to the people and Kill the education system.

Martin Wagner,
Gable Court,
Lawrie Park Ave.,
Sydenham SE26.

Dear OZ,
The letter (OZ 41) by the one-track-minded, fun-hating Leninist from Jarrow (where better to hate from than Jarrow?) prompts a reply.

Why do so many people assume that the underground press, and OZ in particular, should be left wing? In origins, OZ is libertarian or even anarchist. Libertarianism is a belief in the freedom of the individual providing he does no harm to others. Anarchists believe that in a state of liberty, people would by nature respect the freedom of others. The left wing believes, in some form or another, in dictatorship of the proletariat through state control, all of which is totally contrary to any concept of libertarianism or anarchy.

Even more than this, the alternative society tends to profess a rejection of materialism. Whoever heard of a left-winger who didn't want more and more money for workers to spend on pollution and consumer goods?

David R. Pedley,
Netherwood Road,
London W14.

Dear OZ,
Your article "Natural Rhythm in de Woodpile" by Charles Shaar Murray is about the most blatant piece of racist shit ever to hide under the banner of an unprejudiced, intelligent music review. When is OZ going to get black people to write about the issues that affect black people's existence?

You have taken four examples of black music and tried to put the artists down by exposing your lack of understanding of just what contemporary black music is all about. You choose two good examples with which to expose yourself - Isaac Hayes and Curtis Mayfield. Black music, Mr. Murray, is preaching a new sort of black revolution to the people. If you are still caught up in the rhetoric of the clenched fist, then it's time you realised that today's black music is the music of the black underground communication medium.

When Curtis Mayfield sings about ecology, he is not just jumping on your fashionable bandwagon, but telling black people that since they are eventually going to inherit the earth, they should make sure that the white power-gods don't fuck it up in a last sour-grapes effort to make it unliveable in. Isaac Hayes might be doing a biblical thing on his album cover, but what do you really care if in the process some black kids get a poster of one of their cultural heroes?

Illustrations: RICHARD GALLAGHER





You say that we should get into the reality and energy of true black cultural spokesmen like Ray Charles and Aretha Franklin. Where have you been for the last five years? Talking to the commissioners at the Albert Hall.

I don't understand your objection to "cloying marsh-mallow strings" on the Curtis Mayfield album. You want to hear Curtis in "a small group situation with guitars and percussion." It's okay for the slaves to strum their banjos and bang their drums, but let them pinch whitey's violins to soothe the sound and make it peaceful, and they're treading in forbidden territory.

It is true to say that "few black artists have yet become real bona-fide gilt-edged superstars without capturing a white audience" but you forget that American culture is purely and one hundred percent black, and America's music certainly shows that. The blacks that America chooses to make into "superstars" usually present no threat to the status quo of the minstrel nigger entertaining the massa.....the we-love-you-because-we-can-get-into-you syndrome. You say "We no longer need Pat Boone to be the middleman between us and Fats Domino" but your very statement shows that you do, because if Fats Domino and Chuck Berry are where your black musical development is at, then you're probably still tripping out on the early Beatles as the best exponents of British music.

To answer your question "Who is buying this shit?" - Black People are buying this shit, Mr. Murray.

Briony Nolan,
20 Aldine Street,
London W12.

Dear OZ,

The last issue of OZ (No. 41) was really interesting reading, and graphically I think you must be the furthest advanced magazine in the country, but nonetheless, I think that dedicating the issue to Frederick Sewell was a silly and despicable thing to do. I know you probably meant it as a joke, but all the same I think it was in very, very poor taste.

Sewell is a murderer of the worst kind. He shot down a brave man in cold blood (I guess you might call him a stupid pig, but he was only carrying out his duty) and I can't understand why you would wish to dedicate a fantastic magazine to a piece of human scum like Sewell. I think you should send an apology to Supt. Richardson's widow. Is OZ part of the problem - or part of the solution? Why glorify mindless violence?

Love,
Sally Holder,
Queen Victoria Gdns,
Walthamstow,
London E17.

Dear OZ,

Why don't you go into business and sell rare pieces of art? So notoriety and rarity have "inevitably upped the price of OZ 28". You sick bastards. When you were in trouble, people paraded the streets for you, sent you money, often we were arrested because of what you say you believe in. The cats I'm squatting with in this house, all of us have fines and debts, we have been fucked around more than any of you in our fight for freedom. We know oppression, we don't work for the system but battle it with the claimants union and so on. Yeah, man, we were there, those of us not already in prison, to save OZ. And you show your solidarity in fucking this system by ripping us off to read a *people's* mag that we all fought for. I haven't read OZ 28, nor many of the ones previous, but I'll not fill your fucking pockets with my £5.50 Unemployment Benefit, it would probably disappear with the OZ benefit money - fucking *people's* bread. Fuck you rip off artists may you rot in hell, if there is anyone there who really wants equality and freedom, then write back, it would help us all up here to know some of you care.

Power to all People,
Keef Williams,
1, St. Botolphs Place,
Haverhill,
Suffolk.

P.S. You can have a photo of three of us for fuck-all!! (Providing someone pays OUR FINES FOR BS hence keeping us out of prison long enough to take them).

Dear OZ,
CHANGES IN THE POWER STRUCTURE.

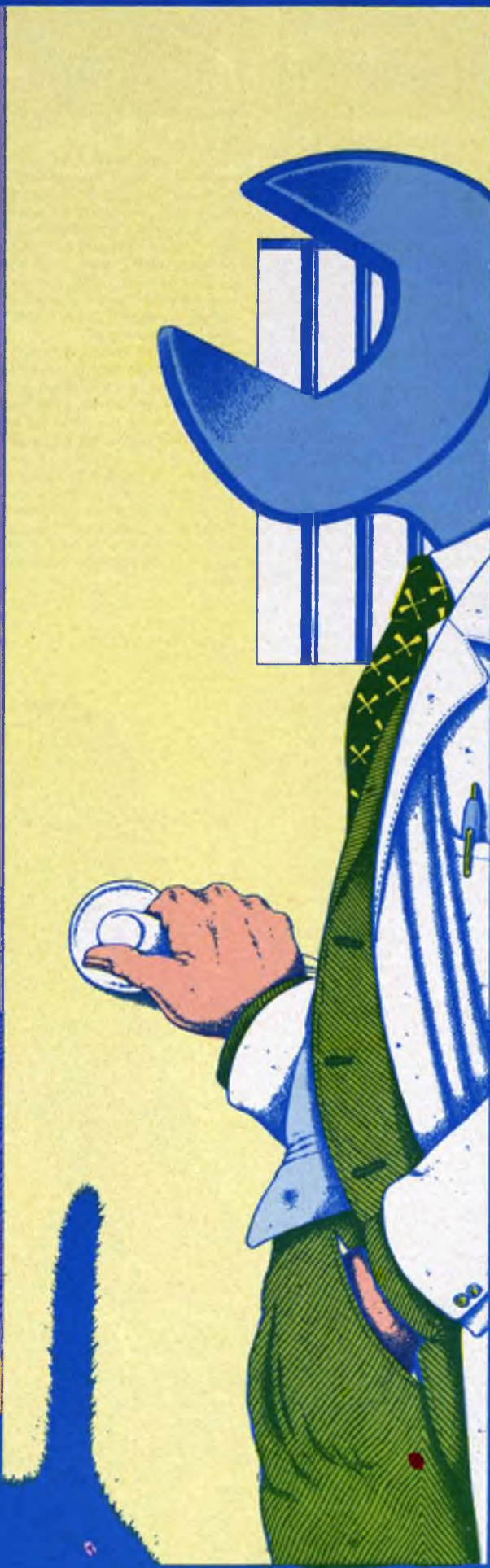
POLITICIANS are just international businessmen, FIXING the deals between your country and mine, Pushing PRODUCTIVITY, Fighting for CREDIBILITY, Balancing the DEBIT/PROFIT line.

INTELLECTUALS can only look & see, All the mistakes with CLARITY, Utter words of WISDOM, Only to be PISSED on, By the powerful money-loaded lords.

THE church cannot answer, THE hippies will not fight, THE police & the soldiers Are tied by their delicts. WHO will rule with truth? WHO will lead us through? WHO will bring reality to the fore?

Vernon Devar,
Grange Road,
Thornton Heath,
Croydon,
Surrey.





David Leitch has been Foreign Correspondent for the Sunday Times, most recently based in Paris. He co-authored the book on Philby — 'The Spy who betrayed a generation' and his next book, 'God Stand Up for Bastards' will be published by Andre Deutsch in the Autumn.

MISS ELEKTRA MEETS THE SHOCKED NUN

David Leitch



Naked, and on the point of clambering into the first pair of pyjamas I've worn in fifteen years, the depressive fog suddenly started drowning me. It was heavy enough to touch, oozing out of the grey/cream no-colour walls, sneaking up at you from under that mean single bed. And with it came depression, and a premonition of weakness. The fog centre seemed to be the brown door — why was there a hole in that door? To let the fog in?

I lit a defensive cigarette and wished someone had got to work on the tobacco with a little opium, the way they do in Saigon and Bangkok. So you expected it to be funny, I ask myself, and blow out a lot of carcinogenic smoke to make a companionable fog of my own. This is a mental clinic, albeit a genteel one attached to a London hospital's Psychological Medicine Department. They said it had a great reputation for dealing with addiction problems, but there was nothing in the brochure about it being *amusing*.

The first forty-eight hours mean compulsory "bed rest", so the fog and I got to know each other pretty well. But the door hole, that Judas window like the ones they have in cells — there's no possibility of indifferent familiarity, or mutual acceptance between me and Judas. And the same applies to the blue light that shines all night in the ceiling. It's a very pure blue, except for two antique stains like Rorschach test ink blots. Come to think of it that's the identical colour of the lights outside police stations.

Judas and the blue light are best buddies and indispensable business partners. Because of them They can look at you when you're sleeping. When I'm *that* vulnerable I like to be sure the only looking that gets done is from someone I love.

To be doubly sure, like wearing a belt and braces together, They also keep the door ajar all night by shoving what the nurses call a "sausage" into the lintel. The nurses giggle a lot about the "sausages" as they are very approximately penis-shaped — elephant penis-shaped — and this is the kind of joke that makes nurses fall about.

To pre-empt those readers already mumbly "classic paranoia case" I should point out that Judas and his friend in blue elicited an identical response from my friends and fellow patients: Ruby, Tim, Jock McGee (yes, like Bobbie) and Mrs. Ascot. And we are certainly no poker hand of paranoiacs; this is not our (temporarily) indissoluble bond. It took a while to see what we had in common at all. I began by asking the registrar.

"All nuts no-one else has managed to crack" he said, chuckling. It was clearly a punch-line he had delivered before. Ye-es, I thought, not a very happy metaphor in some ways, but it makes sense. I had by then seen the cracking process at work in the Day Room, reinforced by Jimmy Young on tape.

There are four Day Rooms for the whole clinic and within their confines you find nuts as eclectic as chocolates in a three pound assortment, each taste guaranteed different, each centre soft. There are teen-

age acid freaks and middle-aged women who have devoted twenty years to assaulting their heads with pink gin and tranquillisers or both. There is at least one copper-bottomed psychotic, who seems to have slipped through the net (he should have been certified and committed). A lady who sometimes prowls the first floor on all fours baying (moon-wards, I suppose). Some exotic schizophrenics and — the majority I suspect — clinical depressives. There is also, God help us, a nun having shock treatment. When I first saw her I thought the DTs had finally caught up, and I was hallucinating.

And there is Becky, the girl NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT because she hasn't been allowed out of her room for three weeks. They took away all her personal belongings and books: They even disconnected her radio ear-phones, depriving her of Jimmy Young. She smuggled out a poem in girlish blue ball-pen which begins: 'Does anyone hear me lying here?'

We hear, we care, but what about Them? We are weak so we do nothing (except complain to each other, dropping our voices when we hear the threatening shoes of the Night Sister rasping outside). There is a difference between the sound of a patient's tread, and a nurses — a difference of confidence, of physical and mental weight.

So, in Dylan's words, we are Temporarily like Achilles, though the weakness is not in the heel, but the head. This makes life nice for Night Sister because blind obedience about regulations to do with visiting hours and meals keeps the clinic running on oiled wheels. It is also a good system for those patients who have resignedly given up, like Ruby, but poison for those who might just, like Tim.

It's nice for the ward cat, named Miss Elektra in honour of Electro-Convulsive Therapy (ECT): the commonest treatment for depressives. Miss Elektra loves that empty silent corridor: Night Sister loves Miss Elektra as passionately as she hates the patients. I imagine them stroking each other deep in the night, and purrrrring.

ECT is a free space ride. General anaesthetic a few thousand volts — tuppence worth — of electricity through the skull: then they wheel the trolley away. Sometimes the patient too. There is *always* memory loss and disorientation. They say it's very refined nowadays, but it still looks like kicking a clapped out TV set. It might miraculously come on as good as new, but there's a fair chance it might turn into its own last picture show. We have had cases of both. When you ask about statistics they say they don't know. But They say that when you ask why They woke you up to get you to swallow your sleeping pills.

Perhaps an OZ-reading doctor could tell us? Some of the depressives are *right* to be depressed: any other reaction would be the insane one.

Take Ruby. A cockney housewife who, I'm sorry, is like a sparrow, a very pale one. Her fingers are claw-thin, and she keeps them twisted in a knot of fiendish complication, stretched tight as a rope. "It's been difficult wiv the kids because of the heroin, Dave" she says. To all the other middle-aged ladies, like Mrs. Ascot, it's "Mr. Leitch". It wouldn't occur to Ruby I'd be anything but Dave.

Difficult, sweet Jesus. She has a (just) straight baby daughter of nineteen who looks sixteen and makes me want to glide with her into the broom cupboard and lock up from the inside. According to the birth certificate Ruby's elder daughter is twenty-two but she has actually *lost* her age in heroin. It's vanished somewhere in the hinterland between thirty-five and seventy. And her husband — "a very gentle boy" (Ruby) — choked in his own vomit after a lavatory overdose recently. Anyone locked in a cupboard with Ruby's H-daughter would chop the door down, with his finger-nails if need be.

Ruby got into trouble for visiting the boy's grave without permission. One day I picked her up when she fainted in the corridor after ECT. A houseman wearing a tie with oars on it took her off me. It was a physical operation as testing as passing someone a bag of tomatoes. "When your gravity fails, and negativity don't pull you thru' as Dylan says. Will ECT untie those knots Ruby carries on her wrists?"

Or those in Mrs. Ascot's head? She has giddy spells. And she talks about *Ten Little Niggers* very loudly in front of the nurse from Barbados, who doesn't like it. And to Ruby — on National Assistance for seven years, about how her husband's having the garage lengthened to take the new Jag. Tim, the pill/pot-head roars with laughter at this, tipping backwards till his cowboy-boots are on the table. He's usually so quiet, so confused and bad at balancing acts.

Jock McGee's face is a Playboy cocktail recipe book, only in relief. Every burst capillary is a Daiquiri, a martini straight-up, a double Bell's ('and no water thanks'). An educated cosmopolitan man, he has flashes of acuteness, even brilliance. Like watching an old tennis pro — Drobny, above all — suddenly play just one back-hand that sheds twenty years.

What lovely, gentle losers. They play *Monopoly* and the rules say if you land in jail you lose three throws. The game ends because they *all* end in jail. There's nothing about what to do when *that* happens in the rule book.

For our "Party Night with Bingo" Night Sister brings her Val Doonican collection, and goes berserk when Tim sneaks Black Sabbath on. I counter with some taped New York rock programmes (courtesy of a friend, who has shown up wearing the OZ Rupert Bear Phallus tee-shirt, and freaked out the staff). There is a lovely commercial for Community Sex Information on WPIX — "Dial 8679044 if you have VD" — (that's the right number, incidentally).

Everybody laughs — the long-hairs, Mrs. Ascot, even Ruby. The balance between depression and laughter is so delicate a dropped tea-spoon can make the scales tip. But we are getting better *together*, freak to alkie, old to young, the gaps close daily. But the hole Between Us and Them remains Grand Canyon-deep, broad as the Sargasso Sea.

Words of Wisdom...

Dear OZ,
Can you please give me any reason for buying your fucked up and over-priced magazine in future?

Since your trial the comic seems to be aiming for an exclusive readership of screwed-up judges, MPs and other bourgeoisie.

If you really are into the new culture of love and peace, then why do you make the covers of OZs 38, 39, 41 look like a pathetic sensationalist News of the Screwz publicity campaign covered with destructive shit.

What's wrong with a bit of love that couldn't be classed obscene?

As an example of the fucked up bullshit in OZ, I would like to submit the following breakdown of the contents of OZ 41 for comparison with the contents of FRENZ 25:-

Category of subject:	OZ 41	Frenz 25
Sensationalism & destruction	27%	0%

Sensationalism & destruction † 27% 0%

Unwitty comic strips (Freak Bros. in IT etc) 16% 0%

Constructive Criticism— Reviews etc 35% 79%

Good artwork/ Poetry etc. 7% 12%

Advertisements. 15% 9%

† e.g. pp 4,5,8,9,12,20,21,27-31, 25 - Oz 41.

This gives a constructive/destructive ratio in content of the two respective issues of:-

	Good	Bad	Ads
OZ 41:	42%	43%	15%
Frenz 25:	91%	0%	9%

Whilst there is twice as much paper in OZ, there is only half as much to read.

You seem to totally abuse the possibilities of appealing artwork with your colour facilities.

You need a kick up your arses, arses, arses.....arses.

May I suggest that OZ in the future should:-

- 1) still retain some (ricky neville) type humour
- 2) and some *more* amusing UPS comic strips e.g. Freak Bros. etc.
- 3) but that it should make full use of its colour with inventive artwork;
- 4) include more evolutionary environmental advice/contributions.
- 5) include information (from NCCL) on one's rights when grabbed by de PIGS and what one can do when harassed by the latter.
- 6) Report on community projects - BIT, Release etc. (as page 38 but more so).

7) Write-ups on grievances and repression by such as the Night Assemblies Bill.

8) Increased coverage of the rock scene (as excluded by the straight press) e.g. interviews with bands censored and ignored by MM etc. such as Hawkwind, Fairies, Schwartz, Steve Took etc.

9) Alternative radio coverage - an important media abused as your own.

Membership to the IFRC costs 60p annually - members receive badge, monthly 12 page Free Radio mags, station surveys (of alternative stations), alt. stn. carstickers & an information service. Address is:

IFRC,
22 Coldershaw Road,
London, W13 9DX.

Thanks for the good OZs (40 & pre 38) and the improved ones to come? and for tolerating the enclosed abuse (constructive I hope).

Love/Peace
Rik Billingham,
59 Chapel Road,
Isle of Grain,
Rochester,
Kent.

Dear OZ,
I'm in the 6th form at Sexey's Grammar School. Recently our Headmaster, has added this incredible rule 5 to our school rules.

"Boys must at all times keep at least 3ft away from girls, must not linger in the girls' playground and when crossing the girls' playground, must walk round the edge". This was the result of some little 3rd year boys and girls found learning about life, in a cupboard.

Is the school living up to its name?

Big "L",
Sexey's
School,
Blackford,
Wedmore,
Somerset.

Dear OZ,
What's happening to the British underground press? Of all the underground papers, OZ is the only one which remains consistently interesting and constructive. IT has been suffering from a heavy dose of acid brain damage for some months now, and what with Joy Farren's continuous avalanche of mystical occult crap, the unbelievably boring adventures of the Largactilites and the worst record and book reviews this side of the NME, I hardly ever even bother to read IT now. FRENZ is even more uninteresting - (at least IT publish a few reasonable cartoons like the Freak Bros & Fat Freddy's Cat) and seem to remain pathetically *obsessed* with "offing pigs", "smashing the capitalistic robot machine" and all the usual hysterical post-flower power New Left propaganda. When will the staff of FRENZ (and for that matter 7 DAYS and INK before they collapsed) realise that what the world really doesn't need right now is more and more fucking PROPAGANDA.

What the world needs now is intelligent discussion of common problems and constructive debate on possible solutions and alternatives. The underground press used to deride the publishing policies of papers like BLACK DWARF and IDIOT INTERNATIONAL because they were so obviously propaganda for those who couldn't see further than the end of their Marx, and it was at this time that sales in the u/g press seemed to be going up, and IT and OZ and FRIENDS were being sold all over the country. But now INK has folded, and IT and FRENZ seem to have fallen into the same self-deluding propaganda hype that is the mark of a paper desperate to hang on to what readers it has left - a typical example of Fleet Street attitudes.

People buy the Daily Telegraph because they *want* to read the same old boring lies and propaganda about "Communists", "students" and "long-haired yobs". People buy IT and FRENZ now because they *want* to read about "evil capitalists", the "glorious IRA freedom fighters", and "Hells Angels vamp on pigs".

I'm glad Oz hasn't fallen into this syndrome - and I'm glad too that you seem to have conquered your "coloured ink" problems so that the articles in recent OZs have all been very legible.

Power to your elbows!

Joe Francis,
39 Hazel Row,
NW10.



STREET SELLERS!

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"You know it's a shame and a pity/you were raised/up in the city/and never learned nothin' 'but country ways" — Country Joe.



THE UNIVERSAL EXHIBITION

Charles Shaar Murray.

"Festivals," said Tommy Chong, leaning up against the RCA caravan at Bickershaw, "are just camping out with a light show." With the spectre of the Night Assemblies Bill hanging over us all, Bickershaw was a test case. The dire fulminations of Jerry Wiggin MP and his cohorts concerning the evil effects of rock festivals were still ringing gloomily in my ears as we arrived at Bickershaw, but on that first Friday night there was an amazing amount of optimism in the air. Watching from the wings as Jonathan Kelly sang "We Are the People", his breath frosted in the lights and a vast carpet of huddled people stretching off into the darkness, the sense of community was overwhelming. It's a song of unity at any time, but Kelly sang it that night as if his life and all our lives depended on it. "We are the people, we are the proud, we are the people, won't you come and join the crowd, and be one of the people now..." In a sense, Kelly's performance of that song was the most magic moment of that entire weekend. Many other songs were sung, and many of them were greater, but none of them better summed up why we were there and what we were there for.

Friday night ended with some fierce and sneaky boogie and many handfuls of glitter dust from Dr. John, and in the cold light of the next morning, we toured the psychedelic concentration camp. Already the soft marshy ground had been sliced up by vehicles and people and cars were bogging down all over the place. Rip-Off Catering Ltd. was in full swing with 30p fishanchipz and 15p hotdogs, despite promises to the contrary, and bogs were conspicuous by their proverbial absence. Unlike last summer's Reading Festival however, the Man was relatively cool, and only 40 or so people were busted, which is substantially less than one in a thousand. At Reading, one in 20 of the people who turned up were harassed by the police.

Backstage was a permanent bubble of chaos. Since there was no press enclosure, the only place to watch from was the stage itself, and so everybody from the Sunday Times to the NME was waving bits of paper at the stage crew and demanding access. With tempers on both sides fraying like wet Kleenex, the steps to the stage were soon blocked by aggrieved press, power-crazy security guards arbitrarily banning anyone they didn't like, freaking stage crew trying to shift gear, groupies hustling anyone who looked like he had access, friends of Jeff Dexter and so on. Since I was on speed for most of the festival, I had reverted to my dual identity of Captain Obnoxious, and apart from alienating most of my friends, got thrown off the



stage on about fifteen different occasions, and so missed Beefheart, Family, the Dead, PG&E, the Flamin' Groovies and a whole bunch of others. By Saturday it got to the point where a security man was threatening to punch a fifteen-year old girl in the teeth if she didn't split, and midway through the Kinks' set one underground journalist was seized by Ian Knight who cried "You're not press for a start," and was manhandled half-

way to the exit before he could show his pass and prove his identity.

As ever, the contradictions between the intrinsic ethic of rock music and the behaviour of its producers was most clearly delineated. The Hard Rock Hierarchy, immaculately hip and elegantly costumed, wafted its way from hotel to caravan to stage, while intermediate figures

like IT, Hawkwind and the rest of the OZ/Frendz/Cream syndrome slept in trucks and tents and cars and took their chances with the security men, and the people who really mattered shivered and huddled closer and longed for the next bit of boogie to haul them onto their feet. "Oh brothers and sisters, come and join the army/ If we work together we can lose our chains," sang Country Joe, not long after playing policeman in the RCA caravan. "Is that Country Joe?" gasped the Southern Evening Echo's friend, "Shit, that's the cunt who threw me out of the caravan because I didn't have a press pass."

Other strange numbers that cropped up during the festivities included the high-diver who careened into a tub of boiling oil and later severely embarrassed Donovan's management by demanding his ladder and tub back during sunshine superman's set, the amazing muscular dwarf who lifted Seven Days' dex-crazed George Lennox into the air onstage, the knife-throwing cowboy act and the Welfare State Theatre group. The diver's tub was later drained, ruining the equipment and sleeping bags of many hippies.

Considering that Bickershaw was touted as the first of the new generation of festivals, both the audience and the performers consisted of festival veterans. The people showed endless ingenuity in their battle against the elements and the music for the most part showed that the sixties are alive and well, and the seventies have been cancelled due to lack of participation. Donovan, in particular, seated on his cushion and caroling out his greatest hits, seemed fresh out of a 1966 time capsule, except for the wrinkles. The Kinks proved that "You Really Got Me" and "Till the End of the Day" can still shift several thousand people off their asses, and Country Joe is still demanding (and getting) an F. The pleasant musical surprise came from Brinsley Schwarz, a band who I had only previously encountered as Magic Michael's backup group. Here, they trucked out some really joyous foot-stompin' country pop, including one lovely song called (I think) "Happy Doin' What You're Doin'". I'm really glad I heard them, and as if to prove that all was not lost, bits of Dr. John's glitter kept turning up in the mud.

Jeremy Beadle and his friends lost around £50,000 and I can't say I'm particularly grief-stricken over that. "Bickershaw Nation" is still hilariously unlikely, and tens of thousands of freaks all over the country are still scraping large parts of Lancashire off their boots.

Photo: Joseph Stevens

Photo: Joseph Stevens

Photo: Joseph Stevens

Photo: Bob Mazzer

Photo: CARLOS SILVESTRO

The Vanishing Life Experts

Robin Hanbury-Tenison is an explorer who has travelled extensively among primitive tribes in South America, Africa and the Far East. As a member of the British Trans Americas Expedition, he has recently returned from visiting Indian tribes inhabiting a vast stretch of jungle, swamp and mountain between Panama and Columbia.

I have spent many short periods of time living with the nomads, hunter-gatherers and primitive agriculturalists and while I do not pretend for a moment that I could ever become fully integrated into their number or escape from my 'civilized' background, I have learnt a deep respect for their knowledge and skill. A child who grows up in such an environment is no less intelligent. He may not be able to read or write, but he learns a whole library of information. He knows every plant, animal and insect in his world, and he knows which ones are edible or useful medicinally and how they can be used. He does not desire wealth or the accumulation of material possessions and yet his life is full and purposeful each day. He may have the secret of peace.



If we are to learn how to live a different and non-technological life, then we must look where we can for examples and teachers. Of course we cannot become primitive overnight, and I don't suggest we should, but if we destroy the experts then there is even less chance of our finding a happy compromise.

Last year, my wife Marika and I visited 33 tribes in Brazil on behalf of Survival International and although in three months it was only possible to spend at most a few days with each, that was long enough for us to see the appalling effects of too-rapid efforts to integrate stone-age people into an industrial society. We also saw the way in which sensible care and protection could establish a working and hopeful relationship between the two worlds. Unfortunately, Brazil is now in the throes of a vast plan to open up its interior and exploit its untapped resources. The easiest way to solve the problem of the Indians who occupy these lands and stand in the way is to try and make them 'full Brazilian citizens', with the same aspirations and needs as the rest of the population, as quickly as possible. As a result the days of their culture are numbered and their lives are at risk as many will die in the process from disease, starvation and finally despair.

This year I joined the British Trans Americas Expedition, a party of some 65 soldiers and technicians, with a small group of accompanying scientists, attempting to drive the first two vehicles (Range Rovers) through the Darien Gap. This is a 250-mile stretch of jungle, mountain and swamp between Panama and Columbia. The



13,000 mile road from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego is now open apart from this stretch, around which it is necessary to go by boat. My job was to assess the effect which the completed road would be likely to have on the two large tribes of Indians living in the region, the Cuna and the Choco.

Although I hardly saw any other members of the expedition, spending only three odd nights in various base camps, the facilities offered by such a large expedition were invaluable. Above all, the fact that they had their own aircraft, a single-engined Beaver, meant that I could be flown into an otherwise inaccessible area, dropped at a rough airstrip or stretch of beach and then arrange to be picked up a week or so later from an agreed point a hundred or more miles away. Meanwhile, I was able to travel by dugout canoe, along small jungle rivers, visit large and small Indian settlements and individual families and discuss their problems with them. In this way I spent some time with half a dozen different Choco (Embera) groups. They are a very shy, gentle people who, rather than defend their land against the onslaught, first from the Spanish conquistadors and later from freed slaves and their descendents and now also from white settlers from other

regions, have retreated further and further up towards the headwaters of their rivers. Now they can go no further, the streams they live on are barely deep enough for canoes for most of the year and fish are less plentiful. They are worried about their land being taken from them as there is nowhere else to go.

Living alone with these quiet, beautiful Indians who, with perfect hospitality, shared every thing they had, freely and at once with me, a complete stranger, I felt ashamed of our greedy, grasping society — and very happy to be free of it for a little while. The two Indians who were my companions stood at the very ends of the narrow dugout and poled it through the water fast and with perfect balance. Suddenly, one would reach for a spear, jab it into the clear water as we passed a deeper pool and bring up a fish. Then we would stop, light a fire and roast it, cooking some plantains from the bunch we carried, at the same time.

Afterwards, spreading our blankets and my sleeping bag in a row we lay on the sand and listened to the night noises. The Indians spoke some Spanish and I learnt a few words of Choco but, when specific details like timetables or facts and figures are not needed, I never find language difference matters



much. When they talked together, although I was probably only understanding less than one word in ten, I felt part of what they were discussing, knew whether they were happy or sad or if I had done something out of line which worried them. As a result we had no quarrels or arguments and, once our eventual target — to reach a beach on the coast — had been decided on, that subject was not discussed any more. Even with the best of companions from my own culture, I have always found that too much of any journey is taken up with plans and discussions which obscure my awareness of the country I'm passing through and my reasons for being there. With the Indians I found time passed at a different and less conscious rhythm so that the long hard hours of heavy poling upstream were not monotonous but just part of the unrolling day.

When we came to shallows or rapids, we would all wade, often waist deep, to push the dugout through, and when we reached a watershed we had to walk up to a day's journey to reach the other side. Once we dragged a heavy, 36 ft. long, dugout over one of these ridges, hauling on lianas looped over our shoulders for six agonising hours. During this muddy and painful business, while I was tempted to grunt and swear from the effort, I noticed that the Indians never did this, pulling in silence except for occasional long bird like whistles.

Aiming at the mouth of the river on the Pacific coast we found a small village with a mixed black and white population and a police post. Because they would have been arrested otherwise, the Indians, who normally wore only their brief loin-cloths, had to change into trousers. They did this without any resentment, simply regard-

ing it as another of our society's aberrations.

A sandy beach stretched along the coast, wide enough for the expedition plane to land on. While we waited for it I bathed in the surf. At first the Indians, neither of whom had ever seen the sea before, were frightened of the tall waves thundering in to the shore, but once I had demonstrated that it was safe they plunged in, laughing and enjoying themselves. I explained that at home in Cornwall we used boards to ride the waves and one of them, after thinking for a bit, took my machete and carved a smooth body board out of a piece of driftwood. Within a quarter of an hour he had got the hang of it, and was revelling in the completely new sensation of speed.

The Cuna of the Bayano River

were very different. They have always been fiercely independent and suspicious of outsiders and have their own territory, given to them by the Panamanian Government. In the two villages in which I stayed, I had to appear several times before 'congresses', gatherings of most members of the village, men, women and children. There, interpreted by the chief's secretary — the best Spanish speaker in the group — I explained how people in far parts of the world were worried about the Cuna and wanted to know what problems faced them in the future and what ways there were to help them. I learnt that a far graver situation faces the Cuna of the Bayano even than the fact that the road is at present planned to cut through much of their territory. Work is under way to

construct a dam which will flood over three quarters of their land and mean that most of the villages will have to move. Their rich and varied plantations will disappear and instead of a fast-flowing river, full of fish, they will be living on the edge of a vast swamp, where the trunks of uncut trees will make fishing almost impossible. I was alarmed to find how little the Cuna were aware of the full implications of the dam which, although it worried them, they thought would only involve the river flooding a little, so that they would have to move back from the banks. The idea that the hills around would also be under water was incomprehensible.

I am now putting all the information gathered with the Choco and the Cuna and preparing a



The poor countries, with the majority of their population already underfed, tend, in trying to catch up with the rich, to spend vast sums on grandiose schemes such as dams and roads which, if they are misconceived, can cause disasters and even if they work, usually end up by only making the rich richer and the poor poorer within the country itself, so that they move below starvation level. In their case the object must be to avoid making the same mistakes as the developed nations while at the same time improving their lot so that life becomes bearable.

But we have little or no experience of other ways of living, and although many are now calling for change and pointing out the dangers of continuing as we are doing, few can describe or even imagine what a world that is not obsessed with materialism would actually be like.

One possibility is to consider the few remaining people in the world — about .01% of the population — who are not heirs to the industrial revolution and whose lives are not dominated by this concept of progress. These are the so-called primitives, the remaining tribal groups who live as hunter-gatherers or by an agriculture which does not interfere radically with their environment.

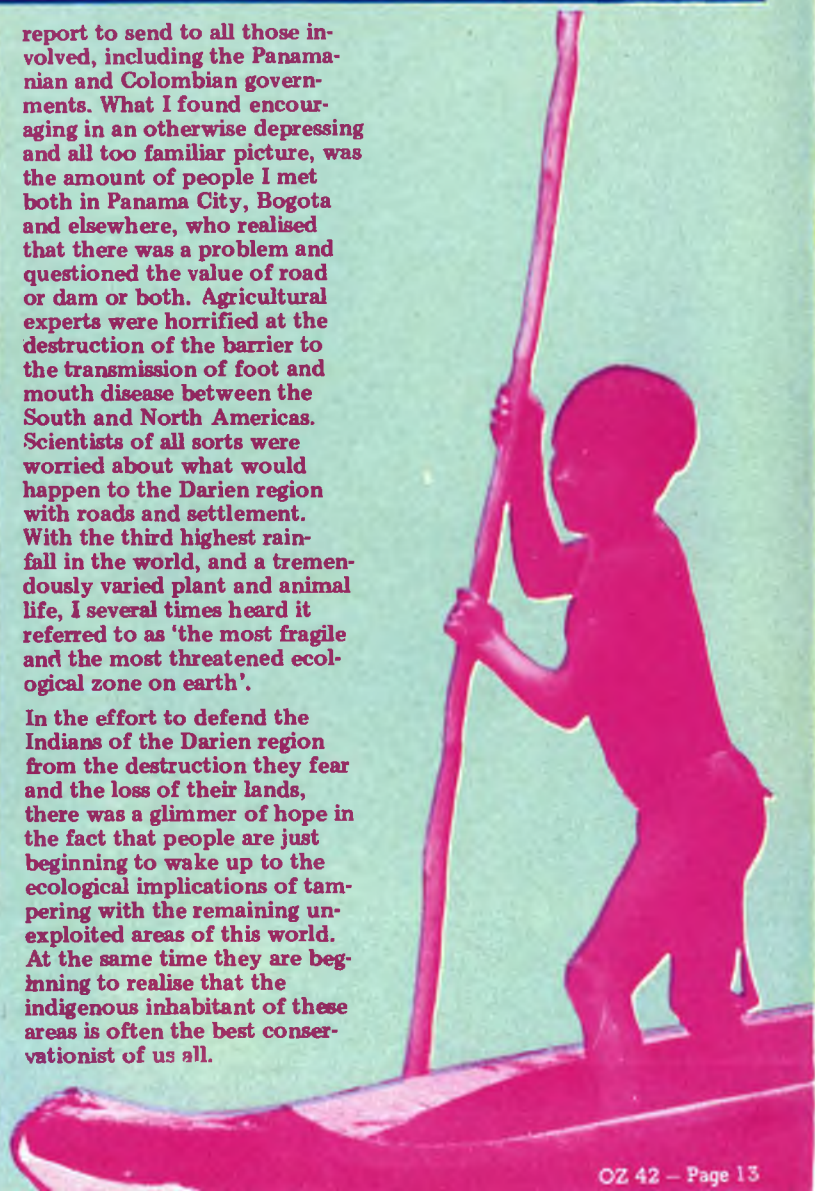
It was this thinking, combined with a desire to protect such people at the last moment from their final annihilation which brought into being Survival International, originally called The Primitive Peoples Fund. Those interested, write to them at 36 Craven Street, London WC2.





report to send to all those involved, including the Panamanian and Colombian governments. What I found encouraging in an otherwise depressing and all too familiar picture, was the amount of people I met both in Panama City, Bogota and elsewhere, who realised that there was a problem and questioned the value of road or dam or both. Agricultural experts were horrified at the destruction of the barrier to the transmission of foot and mouth disease between the South and North Americas. Scientists of all sorts were worried about what would happen to the Darien region with roads and settlement. With the third highest rainfall in the world, and a tremendously varied plant and animal life, I several times heard it referred to as 'the most fragile and the most threatened ecological zone on earth'.

In the effort to defend the Indians of the Darien region from the destruction they fear and the loss of their lands, there was a glimmer of hope in the fact that people are just beginning to wake up to the ecological implications of tampering with the remaining unexploited areas of this world. At the same time they are beginning to realise that the indigenous inhabitant of these areas is often the best conservationist of us all.





THE LITTLE VANGUARDS TAIL

A Fairy Story for OZ Readers by Sheila Turner

Once upon a time there lived a little vanguard. It was only very small but it was very hard. It was so tightly packed with cadres that there was no room at all for revision or deviation. No sinister ideas from outside ever penetrated inside the vanguard. All the cadres were carefully streamed and graded & taught not to step out of line. Consequently the vanguard was always extremely pure and correct. Sometimes there were bits who broke away. But they always ended up by deviating or revising something or other & the little vanguard used to shake its point over them. 'No-one is as correct as the vanguard,' it would say to itself.

Nonetheless, sometimes the vanguard became lonely. It would sometimes long to put its bottom up & give its point a rest & not bother to penetrate or inject correct ideas anywhere. It got so puffed raising the level of consciousness. In moments such as these, the vanguard thought how nice it would be to go all soft & floppy & not poke or pull at all. But where would a soft floppy vanguard get you? It might even find itself mistaken for a tail, and start to wag or straggle. Everyone knows that any self-respecting vanguard had to be hard. A floppy vanguard was a contradiction in terms.

The vanguard's job was to poke about until it found some unorganised lumps and clusters. Then it had to inject them with the right ideas & turn the people in the lumps and clusters into cadres. Unfortunately, the people were often unresponsive. They did not want to become cadres or receive the correct ideas. The vanguard got blunt with all the poking & injecting. It became lethargic & suffered from lassitude. It was obviously suffering from routinisation.

One day there was a terrible rumbling amongst the cadres. Splits were appearing in the vanguard, the cadres were no longer so tightly packed.

One lot were completely fed up with the lumps and clusters. 'Where do we get with all our poking and prodding? We get puffed and blunt, but the lumps and clusters never move. They just sit in a lump watching TV. It was alright for all those vanguards in the past. The masses weren't so dozy in those days.'

These cadres became nostalgic and went off to join the ruling class.

Another lot started to send each other papers on organisation. The began to question the structure of the vanguard.

'You better watch out with that kind of

talk,' said the top cadres. 'If you're not careful, you'll find the vanguard will disappear altogether & where would we be then? Indistinguishable from any old lump! If there's anything worse than a soft vanguard, it's one that's lost its cadres.'

But the bottom cadres were very determined, and started to say they didn't see what was wrong with people in lumps & clusters. They'd been there themselves, after all. If the vanguard stopped being quite so snooty & stuck-up, perhaps the lumps & clusters would be a bit more helpful.

After a top cadre meeting at the highest point of the vanguard, the following statement was issued.

'A threat to the top cadres is a threat to the whole vanguard. The whole existence of the vanguard has been challenged by adventurist, centrist agents of the swamp. Now at a time of crisis for the whole movement of lumps & clusters, certain cynical elements are playing on the political immaturity of the bottom cadres to get them to say they no longer should be bossed around by us. Comrade cadres — the struggle intensifies, the swamp gets wetter. The time has come for the vanguard to cease being merely a poker & become the puller. We have a long haul ahead. But you are fortunate cadres in having our leadership. Those lumps and clusters are useless without us. We, the vanguard, are going to drag them off on the correct path.'

This shut the bottom cadres up for a bit. It sounded like hard work, but it was something new. Anyway, how could they argue with the top cadres? They had no-one who knew what to do at the highest point of the vanguard. They also felt rather important having to drag the lumps and clusters out of the swamp. True, they weren't as important as the top cadres, but if they kept their mouths shut & stopped asking awkward questions they might become correct enough to get promoted.

And so the vanguard turned to the lumps and clusters and started to tug and pull. 'Ow!' said the lumps. 'Leggo!' said the clusters. 'Bigger off!' shouted the lumps & clusters. 'It's for your own good,' said the cadres. 'You're an ignorant lot, too brainwashed to know your own interest. We're raising you to a higher level.'

'Look here,' said a group from the lumps. 'We don't want to make trouble. We let you poke us about. But we're not going to be dragged off by you without knowing why or where we're going & without having any control over what happens. Keep an eye on a vanguard, we say. Vanguards can

get out of hand.'

'Economism,' barked the top cadres. 'Lumpism.' 'They're right,' chirped up a commune of clusters. 'We groove with the lumps. We've had our disagreements in the past & we don't dig their lifestyle, but we don't want a vanguard.'

'Petty bourgeois anarchism,' hissed the top cadres, quivering with rage at the highest point of the vanguard, top-heavy with correction.

More communes of clusters spoke up. 'We are not as solid as the lumps. But we're more mobile. We can get out of the swamp with a little help from the lumps. We're willing to accept that even the most hardened cadres can become people again. We are willing to work together, but not with top cadres bossing us around.'

So the lumps and clusters entered an alliance. 'Opportunism!' bellowed the top cadres. 'Lumps and clusters are useless without a vanguard. The way through the swamp is dangerous and wet. In order to get anywhere you have to be hard like us. Without a vanguard to lead you, you're bound to come to a sticky end. Clusters & lumps easily sink into the swamp.'

'What if you get cut off from us? If you're our leader & we don't know what to do, we'd be in a worse mess than ever stuck out in the middle of the swamp. Very exposed,' said the lumps. 'Quite so,' said the clusters.

Some of the bottom cadres started to mutter again. 'They've got a point there you know. If we all got together, we need not be so hard & poky all the time. We could be a bit squelchy & squashy sometimes. More human altogether. After all, when there's a movement of lumps & clusters, the vanguard can always become people & join in like anyone else.'

Will the top cadres inject the right ideas into the bottom cadres? Will the bottom cadres be absorbed by the lumps & clusters? Will the lumps & clusters maintain their unprincipled alliance? Will the top cadres dive into the swamp? Will the lumps and clusters gain the right to make their own mistakes & learn from history? Will they get out of the swamp? What kind of life will they make outside the swamp?

There is no quick answer to these questions. The tail of the little vanguard is very long indeed.

This is a shaggy vanguard story. Get organised and work out the end for yourself.

Oh, and keep an eye on those vanguards. Vanguards get out of hand.

TWILIGHT OF THE DOGS

Strip by RICHARD V. CORBEN



COM'ON BILL!... WE'LL MISS THAT TRUCK!

SHUDDAP! THERE'S SOME FOLKS DOWN THERE... JUST WALKIN AROUND IN THE OPEN!

YA MEAN LOOSE? WHY DON'T THEY RUN OFF?

THEM GOONS! THEY MUSTA DONE SUMPETHIN TO 'EM. BRAINWASHED 'EM OR GOT 'EM ON DOPE MAYBE...

THERE'S A COUPLE GOONS... I SURE WISH I HAD A RIFLE RIGHT NOW!

GAH! NO!... IT CANT BE!.. IS IT?

STOP YER SQUAWKIN OR THEY'LL KETCHUS SURE!... LET'S GO!

IT'S ANNIE!... CHORE! IT'S MY OWN LITTLE GIRL ANNIE!

LET ME GO, YA FOOL!... THERE'S SOMEONE THERE THAT I KNOW!

FORGET 'EM, BILL! YA CANT DO ANYTHIN ABOUT IT!

LET'S GO! WE CAN COME BACK AFTER WE GET THE TRUCK.

LIFE WAS HARD FOR THOSE OF US THAT WERE STILL FREE. WE CAUGHT SQUIRRELS, RABBITS, CATS, DOGS, ANYTHING WE COULD, TO LIVE ON THE GOON'S AGRICULTURAL CROPS WERE TOO WELL GUARDED BUT THEY MOVED THE FOOD BY TRUCK, AND TODAY WE WERE GOWNA HI-JACK ONE.

WE HAD PLANNED THIS FOR WEEKS. WE KNEW EXACTLY WHEN THIS ONE WOULD BE BY. EXPLOSIVES THAT HAD BEEN USELESS AGAINST THE GOONS MIGHT STOP A ROBOT TRUCK.

... AND AFTER WE GET THE FOOD OUTTA THE TRUCK, WE CAN LOOK AT THE MACHINERY... AND SEE HOW IT WORKS... THEN WE CAN FIGGER A WAY TO FIGHT THEM...

YOU'RE SO FULL OF BULL, IT'S SPILLIN OUTTA YOUR MOUTH!



ALL SET!

JUST IN TIME! I THINK I CAN HEAR IT COMIN.



YESSIR, SHE'S A COMIN ALRIGHT... I CAN HARDLY WAIT.

WE HAD SAVED THE STICKS OF DYNAMITE FOR SOME TIME NOW. WE WERE TOLERABLY SURE THAT THERE WAS ENOUGH TO KNOCK THAT WEIRD CONTRACTION OVER; BUT, THE DAMNED THING WENT TOO BLAMED FAST FOR US TO FIRE IT OFF. THEN ONE DAY HANK DRUG A TREE LIMB ONTO THE ROAD. THE TRUCK MUSTA SENSED IT BECAUSE IT SLOWED DOWN AND DROVE AROUND IT. WE KNEW HOW TO CATCH HIM THEN:



OH BOY! I CAN SEE IT! GET DOWN YA FOOL!



COME ON! GET ALL YOU CAN CARRY!



MAN! LOOK AT THAT, WOULDJA.

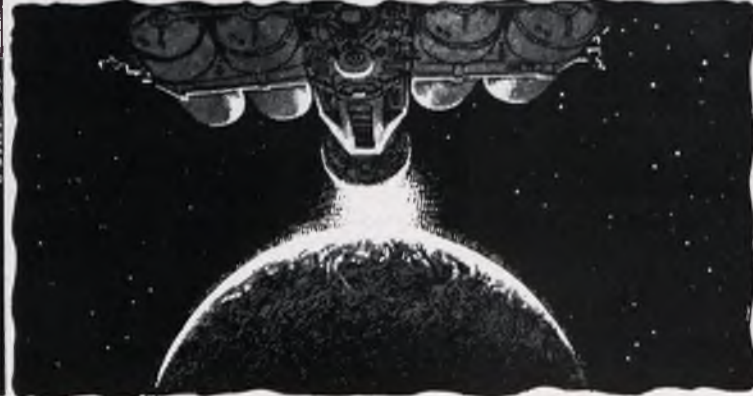


GET AWAY FROM THERE! THAT STUFF MIGHT BE..



COMPARED TO THE GOONS, I GUESS WE WERE DOGS. BEFORE THEY CAME, WE HAD THINGS PRETTY MUCH OUR OWN WAY. WE WERE THE SMARTEST THINGS THERE WAS... WE THOUGHT! WE WERE IN THE SPACE AGE, WEREN'T WE? EVEN MADE A FEW TRIPS TO THE MOON!! THAT DIDN'T HELP MUCH WHEN THEY PUT THEIR WARSHIPS IN ORBIT AROUND THE EARTH.

OUR SCIENTISTS, GENERALS AND POLITICIANS KNEW WHEN THEY ARRIVED, BUT WE DIDN'T START ANYTHING IN CASE THEY WERE FRIENDLY. IT SEEMED LIKE THEY WERE STUDYING US. THEN ALL THE...



FILLING STATIONS AND OIL REFINERIES STARTED BLOWING UP! COURSE WE KNEW THEY WERE DOING IT, SO WE SENT MISSILES AFTER 'EM. I DON'T THINK A SINGLE ONE HIT ITS TARGET. THEN THE MISSILES STARTED BLOWING UP BEFORE WE COULD...

FIRE 'EM. THANKS, PLANES, CARS, ANY-THING THAT HAD FLAMMABLE CHEMICALS OR FUEL WENT UP. WITH ALL OF THE GUNPOWDER GONE WE FOUND OURSELVES PREPARED TO FIGHT THE ALIENS WITH ONLY KNIVES, BOWS AND ARROWS.....

WE LOST!... WE DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE. IT SEEMED AS THOUGH THEY USED WEAPONS SIMILAR TO THE ONES WE USED TO HAVE. GUNS, BOMBS, GAS, ETC. OUR SURVIVORS RAN AND WERE HUNTED. THE GOONS DIDN'T HAVE A SINGLE CASUALTY.



A FEW OF US ESCAPED. MOST OF THE REMAINING PEOPLE WERE CAPTURED. WE DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM; THEY WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN.

WITHIN A FEW MONTHS, ALL OF EARTH'S NATIVE CITIES HAD BEEN DESTROYED AND REPLACED BY THE GOONS STRUCTURES.

MANK, SHEP, AND I BARELY SURVIVED IN THE FOREST FOR NEARLY A YEAR. WE FOUND THE DYNAMITE IN A MINE SHACK. WHATEVER IT WAS THAT HAD CAUSED THE OTHER EXPLOSIVES TO FIRE, HAD APPARENTLY MISSED THIS SPOT.

HMMMMMM... MORNIN ALREADY!... NOW WHERE'D HE GO?





HAH!... I KNOW!
THAT DUMMY'S
GONNA GET
HISSELF
CAUGHT!



JES AS I THOUGHT!



ARE YOU SURE THAT'S YOUR
DAUGHTER OUT THERE?

SHEP! DON'T SNEEK
UP ON ME LIKE THAT...
... YES!... THAT'S
MY DAUGHTER ANN
ALRIGHT!



THERE'S SEVERAL PEOPLE
DOWN THERE... WITH
JUST A COUPLE OF
GOONS WATCHIN EM...
... MAYBE WE COULD...



THAT'S ANNIE THERE... THEY'VE WANDERED
AWAY FROM THE OTHERS... C'MON! LET'S
GET A LITTLE CLOSER!



THEY'LL KETCHUS!

PLEASE SHEP! IT'S
MY OWN LITTLE GIRL...
WE GOTTA GET HER
AWAY FROM THEM
MONSTERS.



THEY'RE COMIN THIS WAY!
GET DOWN!



WHAHA!



THIS WAY!... COME
THIS WAY ANNIE!



ANNIE!... IT'S ME!
YER FATHER!



C'MON GIRL!... RUN!!

DAD! ON PAD... NO, I
CANT! I MUST STAY WITH
CHUBWAY; HE'S MY MASTER!

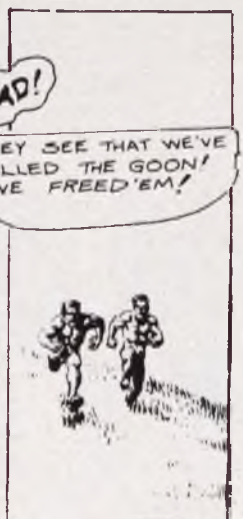
YES DADDY! I'M HIS!... STAY!
... STAY, AND HE'LL KEEP
YOU TOO!... PLEASE!

WHA-?



I'LL BE DAMNED!...





I STUMBLED ON. THE HORRIBLE RINGING IN MY EARS...



... CHANGED TO A HOWL...



... THEN A ROAR...



THEM DAMNED GOONS!... HIT BY A LOUSY TRUCK,... LIKE A MANGY, NO ACCOUNT... CUR!... DIDN'T HURT THOUGH... THEY CAN'T BEAT US... I CAN'T RELY A THING... HEH... HEH...



support the TRUCKERS

A special double album recorded live at the Greasy Truckers party (UDX 203/4) featuring Hawkwind, Brinsley Schwarz and Man at the special low price of £1.50*. All artists' royalties for the record will be donated to the Greasy Truckers fund.

* Rec. ret. price.



UNITED ARTISTS RECORDS
37-41 NORTHBAIR STREET LONDON W1



Don McLean "Tapestry" (UAS 29350)
Don McLean's fascinating first album was written during the famous "Sloop Clearwater" conservation project in 1970. Beautiful arrangements and McLean's flowing poetry throw "American Pie" into its proper historical perspective.



Cochise "So Far" (UAS 29286).
They made three albums for United Artists - "Cochise", which was excelled by "Swallow Tales", both of which are excelled by "So Far".





Spike is OZ's oldest regular feature — a dustbin of sad roined handouts, spurious information and minor news items emanating from a variety of contributors.

Most boring news of the month is the arant stupidity of the Post Office and the indefatigable grumblings of the Director of Public Prosecutions. OZ subscribers have not received the last two issues (40 & 41) and probably won't be celebrating summer with this one. This is all due to a nervous, repressed cipher at Criklewood Post Office who decided to 'refer' the bulk posted copies to the DPP. He didn't bother to refer his reference to us, although accepting full postage payment, and for weeks we thought all the angry phone calls from subscribers represented traditional P.O. bungling.

Again, we naively wrapped, stamped and delivered OZ 41 to Criklewood and sat back to await the applause. More angry howls from unrequited subscribers OZ sloshed into action, blamming that the man at Criklewood was sitting on tons of unposted OZs, while waiting for the verdict from the DPP.

More phone calls and solicitors, until we finally heard the DPP was going to prosecute under the Post Office Act, presumably for indecency.

██████████
 ██████████
 ██████████
 ██████████
 attached false beards ██████████
 ██████████. The prosecution is

naturally malicious, as OZ is no more indecent, to use their leathsome terminology, than most things on sale at W.H. Smiths.

This all means that OZ will soon have to find an alternative method of satisfying subscribers, or cancelling all postal commitments (refunding the remaining money of course). Fuck you, DPP, and if we ever meet your children, we'll do something grossly indecent with them.

Did you hear about the crazed Mrs. Blackaller, who was recently convicted of seven charges of wasting police time during the OZ trial? She is the wife of some pathetic Old Bailey clerk, who no-one had ever heard of, until she began to write herself anonymous letters.

She was in such a dither after having invited hanging Judge Argyle to dinner, that she invented a pile of monstrous lies involving death threats from OZ gangs. A suspicious policeman noticed that the anonymous letters were all written on Mrs. Blackaller's stationery and, despite unconcealed pressure from local authorities, an intrepid Sussex desk sergeant decided to prosecute. Mrs. Blackaller was convicted of all seven charges, notwithstanding loyal testimony of her husband, who has now presumably resigned from the Old Bailey in disgrace, and they are now £700 the poorer, plus costs.

During the case it was revealed that Mr. Blackaller personally selected the Judge for the awesome task of trying Schoolkids OZ, which shows that Argyle was no mere unhappy accident, but a calculated judicial perversion.

Finally, it seems that Argyle himself has cracked. The conviction of Mrs. Blackaller is also a conviction of this one time Chief Scout, who has made several statements since the Appeal Court reversed the OZ convictions and sentencing, claiming harassment by "known criminals" (none were named) and hinting at an avalanche of poison letters — all in all, remarkably similar to Mrs. Blackaller's own

delusions. Even more elaborate precautions swung into operation for the Argyle household, all of which are now known to have been unnecessary, although it is unlikely that he too will be prosecuted for wasting police time.

Meanwhile, mad Argyle continues his round of speaking engagements at Rotary and Old Boys Clubs, where he makes the following observations: 1) That he ordered the OZ defendants' hair cut in gaol to prevent them committing suicide. 2) That because of their extraordinary behaviour throughout the trial, the OZmen were obviously "hooked on marijuana". 3) That one of his favourite pets passed away during the trial (thought to be a whippet). Perpetrators of the dastardly deed were hired by OZ defendants.

No-one at OZ can be bothered to sue him for slander, but the sooner Argyle is kicked off the bench, the better it will be for what's left of the reputation of the legal profession — to say nothing of his erstwhile victims, now languishing in jails all over the country.

Perhaps languishing is the wrong word, as there are signs that Britain's prisoners are finally rebelling against Home Office indifference. Prison authorities have so far been protected by the Official Secrets Act, which stems criticism from any employee and keeps the Press relying on official handouts. It is rumoured that prisoners in Hull are about to announce the formation of a union and, as OZ goes to press, Brixton remandees have persisted in daily demos until breaking the Home Office silence barrier. "We're sick of being pushed around, penned like cattle and fed like pigs" said a spokesman for the 140 who took part in a sit-down strike, none of whom have actually been convicted of any crime.

While the most vociferous complaints from prisoners usually centre around physical conditions, OZ this month publishes a revealing portrait of a psyche brutalised by continuous incarceration, John, page 30. Also included is a report from RAP (Radical Alternatives to Prison), which offers positive suggestions for abolishing the barbarity of custodial institutions, page 33.

A communication from:
THE WOMEN'S BAIL FUND.

A number of us have been meeting in London for three months now, around the question of prisons. We are students, teachers, claimants, and ex-prisoners, mostly from Holloway. We hope to establish a grassroots organisation around Holloway. We belong to no political party and have no affiliations, except to Claimants Unions.

We have established a *Women's Bail Fund*. This fund now stands at several hundred pounds worth of sureties. The sureties are concerned or radical academics, who have agreed to bail out, at a moment's notice, any woman seeking

release from Holloway, up to £50 or £100 according to their salary and interest.

SO...

Have you a clean criminal record? Have you an unfurnished flat or house?

Are you worth £100 in cash, property, or record players etc? Did you know that by presenting yourself to your local police station in, say, Birmingham, you can stand surety for a woman in Holloway that afternoon?

THE WOMEN'S BAIL FUND.

We will send you a form — write to: 18, Asbrook Road, Archway, London N19.

Following hard on the heels of unaccustomed applause from Women's Liberationists over the astonishing lack of overt sexual titillation in our last issue — "You arseholes finally seem to be getting over those cunt, cock and anal fixations of yours" enthused an anonymous mother in our offices last week — we have more interesting news. *Pellen Personal Products*, one of OZ's original and most loyal advertisers of 'Stimulant Managers', 'Latex Bargains' and every kind of cream, jelly and French tickler known to man, are finally withdrawing the advertisement that they have been running almost continuously with us for four years. Long time OZ readers will doubtless recall the delicate subtlety of their immortal slogan 'YES! MEN IT CAN BE DONE!!' which permanently graced these pages. Whatever Pellen's reasons for leaving OZ (maybe our readers are a little too liberated to need all that sexual paraphernalia these days) we nevertheless wish them well. And don't forget, should any of you readers ever need a hand stitched, latex slide with triple tickle self-lubricating device, well Pellen's the name, and bless their game. Goodbye Mr. Rimmer.

SPARE RIB, the alternative women's news magazine, will be published in June. OZ warmly wishes them well, and urges readers to check it out. Two of their staff have been closely associated with OZ. Pat Bell, once our business manager, now belongs to *Spare Rib*, which is our loss. Marsha Rowe was the first 'secretary' OZ ever had — way back in Australia almost ten years ago — then she rejoined the London team, and later *INK*. Marsha has written bitterly of OZ brutishness, so we can claim some credit for goading her into this venture, which we think is the only women's magazine likely to be of any relevance to stoned, chauvinistic freaks like you.

Strange things happening in Fulham Broadway. Forget the 'Hard Rock Cafe' with its prim white waitresses and factory lamps next time you're roaming the streets of London in search of the American Way to gastronomic hara-kiri. If it's hamburgers you want, anytime up to one o'clock in the morning, with the certainty of a free glass of wine with your ½lb of whatever, try a

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL



MAN, THIS IS CREEPY. WONDERING IF YOU'RE GOING TO MEET A LION OR SOMETHING

IT'S A KICK, SAM... A GREAT BIG KICK, BETTER THAN POT

straight chicken run down the Fulham Road and watch out for 'Custer's Last Stand' on the left as you hit Fulham Broadway Station on your right. It's quietly tucked away beneath a block of fantastically ugly council flats (Walham Green Court) with special forecourt on which to park that Buick VI (or Honda 125). The staff are real friendly, the girls are pretty (*sexist pig - ed.*) the milkshakes are thick and everything costs close to half 'Hard Rock' prices. (*Some people will write anything for a free hamburger - ed.*)

Five self-styled unemployed layabouts have started an Ealing Claimants Union, which meets every Monday at 7.30 p.m. All welcome: 7 Montpelier Road, Ealing W5, phone 998 2444. Free leaflet on request.

The 'alternative' Atlantis News Agency, which sub-titles itself 'The Truth Speakers', supplies odd tit-bits such as the *real* unemployment figure: 2,300, 475. Founder Bob Davis now faces four charges:

- 1) Sending a political threatening letter to Croydon Police Station, threatening lives of policemen.
- 2) Sending a political threatening letter to Croydon Police Station, threatening property.
- 3) Sending an explosive device to the Prime Minister, namely, a .22 bullet.
- 4) Being in possession of an explosive substance in circumstances that appear as though its intended use was suspect (or words to that effect) namely, an electric release switch.

All forms of help, from postage stamps to benefit organisers, should be addressed to Bob Davis, 54 Tweedy Road, Bromley, Kent BR1 3NJ. Anyone who thinks a .22 calibre would make any impression on Heath's head is an optimist.

The Society for the Abolition of Compulsory Worship in Schools sounds so familiar that one wonders whether they've checked to see if it's all been done before; (probably by the Humanists). Anyway the info contained on yet another roneod leaflet promises spiritual support for anyone interested in spreading the message: 45 Rensberg Road, Walthamstow, London E17; send SAE for propaganda.

I'LL BELIEVE IT WHEN IT HAPPENS DEPT...

The Brotherhood Commune, 40 Holland Road, London W14, is suffering an acute case of self delusion with its premise of a free people's pop festival in the "Park that extends for six miles from Windsor Castle to Virginia Water from Saturday 26th. August 1972." Every famous name group you can think of has been invited; but few, if any, are likely to turn up.

For those so brought-down by our scathing denunciation of macrobiotics (Pages 42-43) that they



Illustration: Brian Bolland

want to keep in touch with conventional medicine, try a dose of 'Socialism and Health', the journal of the Socialist Medical Association, 14-16 Bristol Street, Birmingham B5 7AA. Only 5p.

SCHOOLKIDS! What to do if you or your friends get nicked. 'THE CHILDREN'S BUST BOOK' is in Children's Rights mag no. 5, now only 7p to kids. Also 'Exam Resistance - Fighting the System' information, letters, pics etc. Sell in your school - send only 6p a copy for 5 or more, to Box 70, 5 Stewart's Grove, London SW3.

'BRITAIN, THE BLACK MAN AND THE FUTURE' by Vince Hines. Available from the Black People's Information Centre, 301 Portobello Road, W11 or from Dashiki, 59 Lisson Grove, NW1. 20p + 4p p&p.

This pamphlet is an outline, a very basic chart of the problems which the black community faces now and will face in the future, seen from the point of view of Vince Hines, a West Indian journalist who now runs the Dashiki community as a centre for homeless and ex-Borstal/prison black kids. He covers the main areas of black oppression - housing, work, education, cultural deprivation, police harassment.

He sees Dashiki as 'a first aid post', a temporary stage 'until the progressive working people, students, intellectuals and others in Britain decide to make positive moves to change the present system in Britain once and for all.' This recognition of the totality of the struggle is rare from one involved deeply in 'minority politics' and Vince's pamphlet is the more valuable for it.

Stand by for a recorded announcement from: **THE SOUL GARDEN SHOPPE & INTERZONE A PUBLICATIONS**, 351 Portobello Road, W10.

"A community service to supply books, LP records, incense, oils and even periodicals cheaper.

The Soul Garden Shoppe was set up in order to bring prices down. When we started we made reduct-

ions on everything, believing it would become known by word of mouth, with a low profit margin and a regular flow of customers, we could just cover our expenses.

There is already a Free exchange section in the shoppe where you can bring unwanted goods (books, records etc.) and take what you need. We have a cooker in the shoppe and could - with excess funds and donations - have one day a week of free food and tea.

The shoppe could also be a base for Interzone A, a local mag with news & events. Poetry, unusual and interesting articles."

White Rose, Yorkshire's Alternative Regional Monthly has its debut issue published from Sheffield, the steel city, in July. Copies and information from: Sprinboard Publications, 31 Springhill Road, Sheffield 10.

"Finding a good place to stash one's dope is a universally familiar problem," writes S.C. Ribbler from Oxford, who offers these suggestions:-

- 1) Shorten seven cigarettes by two inches each. Use the space in the bottom of the pack. Keep the pack open, with 18 ciggies in it, on the mantleshelf.
- 2) Construct an authentic replica of a pile of cat-shit. Make it hollow and keep it on the carpet, or in kittie's box. Train kittie to sit by it. Ideally keep a panther for a pet.
- 3) Gardens are great; unless you have super-straight neighbours, who are likely to be freaked-out by nightly patrols of hairies staggering along in gum-boots and carrying spades. Combat this menace by using their garden, QUIETLY.
- 4) Hollow out a slow-burning candle. Light it before answering the door.
- 5) Keep a row of containers on a kitchen shelf. Put a false bottom in one. Label it TEA and keep it full of garden peas.
- 6) If any tools are available it is possible to create some wonderful additions to the furniture. Add a hollow extension onto the window ledge; one which you can slide on and off. Practice pretending to

lean casually on it. Plumbing is great fun, but strictly for long-term storage.

None of these methods are recommended because they are all known to the police. The only real place to stash dope is somewhere the police won't look. Of course, you all know where that is, so I need not bother to write about it here."

As each OZ takes about ten years to put together, we never get around to properly covering experimental theatre. If you're ever in the West End around lunchtime, you can enjoy a gripping, entertaining hour almost free at the Almost Free Theatre in Rupert Street, off Shaftesbury Avenue, which doesn't set out to bore or impress, but gives you an hour that makes you regret all the other lunchtimes you've wasted.

Over the last 18 months, Street Aid has grown into one of the largest voluntary welfare agencies in Central London - in terms of case-load. They are embarking on all sorts of necessary projects, including the conversion of a double-decker bus into a coffee bar/information service. Naturally, they need help, so if you are interested in working at Street Aid or contributing to any of the projects, contact them at 14 Drury Lane, WC2E 7HE or phone 01-836-0700. They also produce an excellent paper (10p) which is essential reading for anyone West End orientated.

Everyone knows Jews in Russia wish they weren't, but if you are interested in reading weakly horror stories from that revolutionary Republic, telephone 01-580-0681 and ask for the latest information sheet. It will make your hair stand on end, especially if you are circumcised.

Not that it's all sunshine and diamonds for everyone in South Africa, as every Observer reader knows, the International Defence and Aid Fund (2 Amen Court, EC4) have just published an analysis of political trials and the use of torture in South Africa today, by Hilda Bernstein, available for 30p.



**THEY
DO IT WITH
MIRRORS:**
*The confessions of an
average member of the viewing
public.*
Micheline Wandor.

MICHELÈNE WANDOR
bapɪɪc
avəɪdʒə mɛmbəɪ oʃ ðə vijuɪŋ
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ðə kɒnfɛʃənz oʃ ən
**MIRRORS:
DO IT WITH
THEA**

When the Women's Liberation Movement started in this country, a few avid editors and journalists decided to get some laughs out of it. Among others, the *Sketch* whispered jokingly about secret revolutionary addresses in North London and how women wanted to make their husbands do ALL the housework. Like other dissident/radical/minority/political groups we argued fiercely about whether to co-operate with the media or not; views ranged from people who believed in using any means to speak for ourselves, to get information across, to people who believed in creating and controlling our own information systems rather than contributing to, and implicitly condoning the media industry whose structures and ideas we were attacking.

Things have changed; the movement didn't die away to the sounds of ridicule, many other radical groups have sprung up. The media has had to take these into account, its controllers have had to work out how to pay lip service to free speech by giving these groups time to 'put their point of view', while at the same time using them to give added content attraction to newspapers or programmes which depend on popularity (large numbers of people *watching* or *reading*, not necessarily approving) for their continuation.

When it is a question of whether such groups use the existing media to communicate their existence and ideas, it's easier to argue for alternative communication in print than it is in broadcasting. It's cheaper and easier to produce your own newspaper than your own radio and television programme; to transmit the latter you need the kind of apparatus which is still in the hands of the monopolies. To sell a newspaper you need a mobile distribution service in which the only mechanisation is the transport taking papers to readers. But to ignore the problem and power of TV and radio is to avoid confronting their potential; and to avoid understanding one of the key ways in which most people receive information about their world. *'...the men who own the media have developed special programmes which are usually called "Democratic Forum" or something of the kind. There, tucked away in the corner, the reader (listener, viewer) has his say, which can naturally be cut short at any time. As in the case of public opinion polls, he is only asked questions so that he may have a chance to confirm his own dependence. It is a control circuit where what is fed in has already made complete allowance for the feedback.'*

(Enzensberger: *The Consciousness Industry*).

It's mainly on programmes such as this that members of diffident groups appear, people who have a continuing involvement with a subject to which the programme staff are given a mere few hours, or at most, days of their time. Programmes such as these — David Frost and Jimmy Savile being prime examples — seem to me to be ultimately repressive of interest or involvement. The argument that there may be 9,000,000 people listening/watching and that this is a golden opportunity for them to hear the truth spoken straight from the

dissident's mouth is itself a product of mystique; like the hordes around the evangelist who equate hypnotic response with conversion.

It starts with the 'invitation' to appear; unless you are a public figure in your own right, fees are rarely mentioned. Contracts often don't get signed until the programmes have been recorded or transmitted. The attitude is that you should be flattered to be asked to be on the panel/in the audience, honoured to be allowed to become a public figure, a temporary rhetorician with the attention of millions forcibly riveted on you for a few minutes. The mystique has begun. An industry which spends thousands of pounds on programmes such as this skimps on its chief ingredients — the ordinary, average suckers. As an invited member of an audience often you get paid nothing, often a token few pounds for 'expenses', while a public name may get anything up to £50 or more. Not to mention our star comper who's getting hundreds.

Technology and the media industries have successfully retained their mystique; however much one may rationalise and understand that TV and radio should be means to ends, it is difficult to avoid their equivalent of stage-fright. Will I be articulate/funny/intellectual? Will I represent my own personal views, or can I adequately put across those of a group of people? Will I look good? Will my mother see me? Will my friends be jealous? Will they ask me to come back again? (After you've done one of these things, the last question takes on a creeping urgency: so much money for so little....). You're now suffering from the symptoms of intimidation.

The disease sets in as you prepare for the programme. What are you going to wear? Is it in colour? (A bishop wearing purple, sitting next to a lady wearing red on the Muggeridge programme *The Question Why* on abortion, whispered anxiously just before it went on the air 'Do you think we'll clash?'). When you arrive at the temple, the foyer hints at inscrutable glamour; the occasional glimpse of a famous face (what IS charisma?). The receptionist takes your name and your contract and you wait. You're led through blank-walled corridors, past bland doors with mysterious functions listed on them; occasionally a bureaucratic white rabbit scurries past, clutching a file of papers and looking at its watch. You KNOW that bustling glamour surrounds you; but you can't quite see it. Intimidation has set in.

As a member of a panel/audience you are as responsible for manipulating the response of the viewing audience as the programme staff. You are asked to clap when the star comper (Frost, Savile....) comes on. He greets the famous people and ignores the rest. He then begins his impartial investigation. This takes the form of a carefully structured series of questions prepared

totally by researchers, which start and end with the status quo of the average Englishman: law-abiding, family-loving, lawn-mowing, God-fearing. In between a few hysterics are allowed to shriek their dis-sension; Frost either leaves the lunatic fringe to the second half of the programme, by which time everyone is so tense and bewildered by points to be answered that they're likely to rush their speech, and be emotional or incoherent or both. Or he allows them in at a point where he can 'legitimately' interrupt them by either saying 'Well, we must let someone else have a chance to speak', or plead the exigencies of the box and break for the commercial. Jimmy Savile does the same, only for commercial read pop interlude.

The effect of programmes like this is to defuse serious discussions and make them purely cathartic processes. They purge people of their interest rather than arouse it. If you participate in these programmes you feel slightly elated (especially if pissed) at having been part of the great twentieth century process, but also deflated, because it never quite happened. The process is erotic titillation, always stopping short of any real pleasure or climax. What the viewing public never sees is the way the comper ignores undesirable participation; they never hear the remarks which are not picked up by microphones, never see protests not selected in the control room. As a participant on such a programme you are almost totally helpless. Even takeovers by groups no longer prove anything; the liberal media-monster can convert anything into a spectacle to get everyone talking and tuning in next week. Jerry Rubin taking over David Frost? With a studio next door, ready and waiting? Takeovers can be good tele, as long as it doesn't happen all the time. And they'll make sure it doesn't happen all the time.

It may well be important to boycott such programmes; but it's also important to work out a way of beginning to erode the stranglehold the controllers have on their programmes. Although many people working in the media talk in terms of direct access by minority groups to broadcasting time, it's going to take a long time before people overcome the mystique of technological communication. This applies to radical media people themselves, who are often as likely to talk in terms of high standards of photography and articulacy as the reactionaries. Cable television may be a long way away, and the idea of every street having its own TV and radio network is idealistic and air-jamming. In the meantime we could begin to think in terms of refusing to go on as isolated members of groups, to slot into a programme of someone else's conception, to appear on programmes on terms established beforehand — a certain amount of time and a structure to which we acquiesce. Learn to use video (where possible) so that if someone wants to make a film about you, make your own and suggest they use that. Of course, they are bound to refuse, until there's no alternative; in the meantime the most you can do is either stop watching completely, or get so stoned while you're watching that you become part of the farce too. You can still switch off.

LET'S HAVE A PARTY

David Widgery



Illustration: JOHN WEST

1) REVOLUTIONS START WITH A DISCOVERY IN PEOPLE'S HEADS CALLED CONSCIOUSNESS.

Most people, most of the time, accept things as they are, that work is not satisfying but a means to make money to satisfy other needs. That they have little control over their lives. That they are lucky if they stay out of the clutches of the landlord or the Law. That life is made bearable by a bit of sunshine, the Cup Final and the kids. People get so used to being bottled up trod on and ordered about that they don't notice it's happening after a while. Except that the very conditions of work and the unsatisfied needs of everyday life continually force people into conflict with things as they are. And in every conflict people see new possibilities which they call their rights, their dignity, their freedom. *'A rat race is for rats. We are not rats. We are human beings.'* Jimmy Reid.

2) CONSCIOUSNESS BECOMES REAL IN ACTION.

Ideas take on a shape in strikes, demonstrations, sit-ins, occupations. Conflict over how things are divided up unearths different views of what people could be. Revolutionary, democratic and loving instincts turn out to go deeper than the habits of deference and obedience. In every struggle our so-called free so-called society shows that it is based on courts and judges and cells. But solidarity, numbers, comradeship, sisterhood show another kind of power and the possibility of another kind of future. *'I've learnt more about the world in the last six*

weeks than I learnt in my other 26 years,' said a striking miner.

3) CONSCIOUSNESS DISSOLVES WITHOUT ACTION.

You can't wish a revolution into being on your own. You can't think your way out of capitalism. Those who make the revolution in a commune or a bookshop or a rock band end up turning the treadmill of their own desires in a self-defeating attempt at totalisation. Exhausted if they fight on all fronts, cop-outs if they don't. The pure intellectual spirals up into the metaphysics of the theory of theory. The pure activist conceals from himself the evidence of his own isolation.

4) BUT ACTION DISSOLVES WITHOUT ORGANISATION.

Some organisations represent a compromise. The Trade Unions and the Labour Party began in defiance of the system but nowadays are vital supporters of it. A revolutionary group is a refusal of compromise, a determination to win. To join a revolutionary group is a voluntary decision to accept limitations on your freedom in order to achieve a greater freedom. It is to take up a new attitude to reality and take practical activity in support of it. It is a combination by choice, a decision based on responsibility, an agreement to be effective. All revolutions start spontaneously. But if they stay simply spontaneous they are defeated. *'Suddenly there was an audience tens of thousands strong, shocked out of its old attitudes, bewildered and excited by what was happening, looking for explanations, asking to be*

led. *The Left proved incapable of taking the opportunity.* Eamonn McCann.

5) ORGANISATIONS NEED IDEAS.

The Marxist Party attempts to make a complete explanation of the world and to act on it. Its programme (the demands it organises around) is the point that its theory breaks through into reality. But its theory needs constant development as reality changes. It looks always for the cracks in the present, the upsurges and the conflicts which have revolutionary meaning. It tries to recognise in the imprint of each local struggle, a general meaning. It tries to overcome the tiredness, the dividedness and the isolation of each separate conflict by connecting and strengthening it. It pools the experiences of its members, exchanges and concentrates them and returns with them to the struggle. Within its ranks it aims to abolish all hierarchies and chauvinist and sexist ideas, not for moralistic reasons, because they will hamper and negate its work. *'A socialist theory finds the causes of working class discontent more deeply and surely than any other, which is why workers take to it so naturally; if this theory does not capitulate before spontaneity and if it learns to apply spontaneity to itself.'* V.I. Lenin.

6) REVOLUTIONS COME FROM THE BOTTOM BUT THEY NEED PREPARATION.

Like a poem, a party is a series of decisions about how to arrange and organise resources. It is also an act of connection backwards through history. A revolutionary worker knows which side he would have been on in the French Revolution or the Shanghai Commune, and has learned from them. But the revolutionary party is not, as both the Stalinists and some anarchists think, a miniature of the new society. It simply represents the determination of militants in different struggles to centralise themselves. Their aim is a political instrument which, in the moment of crisis, can gain the support of millions to destroy the capitalist state's power, its media, its armies, its prisons, and, most of all, its ideas.

But the party does not and cannot aim to replace the old state. A revolutionary society will be governed by itself, by producers at their work and on their streets, the real rule of the majority for the first time. Unlike the way things were forced to develop in the Russian Revolution, in a modern western revolution the revolutionary party would be within, not above, the Workers Councils. It is most difficult to imagine what shapes a society with its energy released from the cages of private property, commodity production, the bourgeois state and the bourgeois marriage. We can only see glimpses in the Paris Commune, the Russian Revolution, Barcelona in 1936, Budapest in 1956, Paris in 1968. *'The great only appear great because we are on our knees.'* Camille Desmoulins.

7) REVOLUTIONS CONGEAL, REVOLUTIONARIES ARE ALONE. THEY LEARN TO HATE. THEY DESTROY ONE ANOTHER.

Our origins are all sour, we are political orphans. Russia is a revolutionary albatross, despite its origins now a tragic parody of what socialism means. The Communist Party in Britain, which for some 30 years dominated the socialist Left has declined too, now occupying the political positions the Labour Left vacated 10 years ago. Its impressive industrial strength is without strategy, deeply divided and unwilling to fight coherently to exert rank and file control over a union bureaucracy they frequently provide. The Trotskyist groups are all scarred by their past, 30 years as exiles within their own class, political Cassandras able only to say 'I told you so'. The Socialist Labour League, which aims to become *The Revolutionary Party* this November, continues to exhaust its fast changing membership's revolutionary enthusiasm to service the special delusions of its unchanging leadership. The very nature of SLL politics prevent it retaining a stable real membership.

A revolutionary party becomes one not by assembling people in amphitheatres, but actually leading and winning strikes and organising movements. The SLL does neither. Like the Salvation Army, the SLL has confused selling a paper to a worker with having a relationship with the working class. The International Marxist Group is in the same tradition and has the same (recently even greater) shrillness and sectarianism with none of the SLL's activity. Politically the IMG are obliged to occupy the place left between IS and the SLL, organisationally it is sustained by a big bank balance and affiliation to a much vaunted International which itself barely exists outside France and America. The Maoist groups seem determined to import the most specific experience of a peasant revolution to an overwhelmingly working class Britain and seem to delight in their manifest irrelevance.

In all truth, International Socialism is the only group which has really grown beyond its, necessarily, sectarian origins and stands a chance of becoming a real force in the modern class struggle. It has the beginnings of a real following in the engineering, printing, power and mining industries, and has a political base in five or six other unions. It alone can really begin to challenge the Communist Party's domination in the trade unions rather than in the columns of a newspaper. It is the only group with a sufficiently confident grasp of Marxist ideas to be unorthodox and imaginative in dealing with them and acting on them. Its present size of 2,600 members is, just, big enough to become 10,000 in three years which would be, just, big enough to really challenge the next Wilson Government from the Left. It's also big enough to get debate and activity off the ground among school-kids, apprentices, students and women workers without wrecking its main effort in industry. Its internal structure is libertarian enough to allow real choice about its direction (its leadership is frequently over-ruled by its membership, which is rather rare on the Left) and yet still be politically effective and able to cut short more bickering.

This is not to knock or sneer at revolutionaries in other groups or in none. It is to say that by a combination of luck and judgement, IS seems to have the best chance of emerging from the sectarian ghetto. It is a group around which the left of the Communist Party and other revolutionaries might regroup and might then be able to attract those shop stewards, tenants, militants and community freaks, who at present are sympathetic to revolutionary ideas but don't see the point of joining a group, those militants who have been burnt before and don't want to get fooled again. However, every organisation has its weaknesses and mistakes. *'The means of preventing the bureaucratisation of a living revolutionary organisation, in advance, must be sought as of now.'* Wilhelm Reich.

8) IT AIN'T EASY.

The problem presses upon us. While the underground sets about a summer of more ludicrous clothes, more repressive festivals and more archaic rock records than ever before, we are living through one of the most revolutionary periods in British history since the Chartist upsurge in 1948 and the foundation of the Communist Party and the General Strike in the 1920s. In the next ten years we may get the third chance there has ever been to make a revolution in the oldest capitalist country, a chance we may not get again in our lives. If we fail that chance – because we thought organising was a drag or because it would be alright on the night – we will be faced with a Right Wing government which would make Heath look like Enid Blyton. So let's get it together gang, always remembering: *'Revolution is the festival of the oppressed.'* V.I. Lenin.

'Revolution appears to a conservative as collective madness only because it raises the "normal" insanity of social contradictions to the highest possible tension.' L.D. Trotsky.

9) REVOLUTION IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.

THE DEATH OF LESTER BROWN, HOUSE PAINTER

by Rod Taylor

He'd seen his blood before, called forth
by fishhooks, knives, wrenches, and it flashed
in the sun like the river, But something went wrong.
Between the hyacinths on the lake, the quiet
bees in the orange grove, the white house he
lived in, somewhere
between these, the flashing blood
went dark. He started falling
asleep at work and driving through
red lights. And the doctors
had a new word for the family to learn,
but had no words
to help him live.

Everyday he asked for his gun, but no one
knew where it was; no one
asked him why he asked. In that first year
we visited often
and although the birds went hungry
for the bread of his hand, the oranges
got picked and the house had only
begun to fall apart.

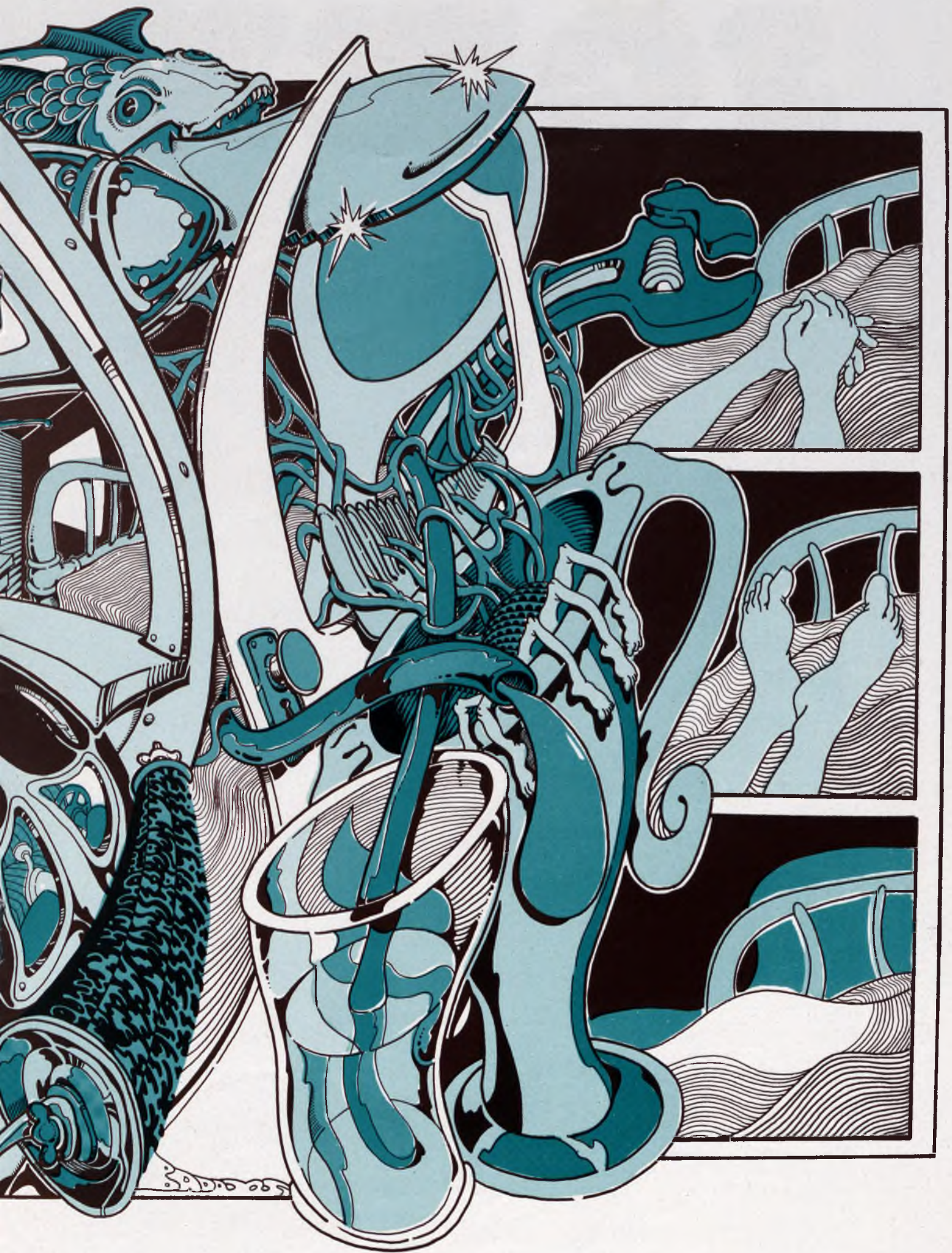
The doctors gave him only a couple of years,
but they were wrong: five years before it
ended, noiselessly, in a damp side room
where a portable electric-coil heater
had been put - plenty of time
to let his living go and forget
the things he loved, one
by one, until there was nothing
in him. In that second year
of his ling dying, we came on holidays, ate turkey
and didn't watch when Mrs. Brown
was feeding him. It was the year
of the portable TV and the propped-up feet and blue
terrycloth bath robe
and all those things were death. Death was in
the mildew on the ceiling and the cracks
between boards and in the rug. It was pale blue
in his thinning arms and face
and hid itself like a red eyed spider
in the dark throat of his fishing trophy.
It was in every word spoken

You told me last night how he was before,
how, when you were little, he loved you
and took care of you. You were sad
and combed your hair in the mirror.
In the third year he watched his hands
all day, and in the forth he lay and stared
at his feet. Mrs. Brown, who had known
the strength of his arms and given
him three sons and a daughter, turned him in
his bed and washed him with rags. At night
she prayed while the house peeled and the grove
was choking with weeds. In the garage
the tools of his trade deserted him, dried up
or rusted. Then the roof sprang a leak
and had to be patched with tar.

*His arteries are too thin
for a needle,* the doctors told them.
The year was sucked around the bend
of a glass straw and was over. I didn't visit him.
Those who did were not known. They say
that in the last months, he couldn't
close his eyes. Tomorrow we hide him
in earth. Mrs. Brown will be alone then
in the damp sagged boards of the old
house. Maybe, when she cleans, she will find
some thing - a hairbrush with his hair in the bristles,
a fingernail,
and it will be hard to keep on living.

Poem from FLORIDA EAST COAST CHAMPION by Rod Taylor. Published 1972 by Straight Arrow Press, San Francisco. Illustration by ED BADAJOS





JACOB HOBBS LA HARPE NIGHT



30 Years of Hard Rain

Thomas Farber

Let me take you down, or, sixty years on.

Where have you spent most of your life?
In institutions.

Did you have a happy life as a child?
No.

How many years of school did you attend?
Eight grades.

Did you lose interest in school?
Yes.

Are you married?
No.

Do you have a common-law wife?
No.

Do you have children?
No.

Were you ever in the military forces?
No.

Do you like to travel?
Yes.

Why?
To see historical places.

Do you have convulsions?
No.

Do you have dizzy spells?
No.

Do you have fainting spells?
No.

Are you excitable?
No.

Do you think you have a bad temper?
No.

How many times have you been arrested?
Quite a few.

Are you guilty this time?
Yes.

What did you do on the "outside"?
Hospital orderly.

Were you incarcerated before?
Yes.

When?

1940—50, 1950—52, 1953—56, 1957—64, 1965—69.

Do you have any sexual problems?
No.

How do you feel in the morning?
Fresh.

Do you have dreams?
No.

Do you have nightmares?
No.

Do you have any bitter or painful memories?
Yes. Too much time.

Do you bite your nails?
No.

What is your main worry?
Old age.

Are you too ambitious?
No.

Are you suicidal?
No.

Are you desirous of success?
No.

Do you drink?
Seldom.

Do you play poker?
No.

Do you roll dice?
No.

Do you use drugs?
No.

Were you ever in the Boy Scouts?
No.

Were you ever in the YMCA?
Yes.

Do you have a religion here?
No.

With whom do you plan to live when you get out?
Myself.

Consider now this old man, imagine the waiting he had done in his life, the waiting in county jails, waiting in bird cages behind courtroom doors, the waiting for meals, for directions, for the day of release. Consider too that he had lost the ability or the will to stay away from prison. A threshold had been crossed; a final vital iota of resilience had been eroded or bludgeoned away. Catechisms which inveighed against the heresy of manhood had been whispered too many times.

John had spent perhaps thirty years of his life inside the walls on various sentences ("bits", they were called, pieces of a whole), and waited once again for the end of his present term, watching each unit of time pass by, waiting until one bearing his name presented itself, all in good time, of course. In observing the flow he had become deft at gauging the rate — a timekeeper. Someone ventured that it must be at least three-thirty, time for chow. "No," John said, "only three-fifteen." The man did not argue the point, though the discussion itself might have carried them through several minutes. No, his opinion of the time was an ingenue's query posed to an expert. John had survived a long time, had done a lot of time, and was generally credited with being an expert on time, time-honoured, as it were.

In the process of walking off each segment of his life span he had reduced his life to order and control, to anticipating and rolling with the routine, to riding the breakers of each wave of time, and had learned never to offend anyone, hack or con. Since neither silence nor neutrality could guarantee safety he appeased everyone, every last man. He had learned to place himself at the very bottom of the pecking order, a threat to absolutely no-one. So harmless had he become that he could occasionally expect to receive the largesse of those who competed for so much more from life. A soft job from the lieutenant, a good seat in the movie hall, these were the prerequisites of total abnegation.

In learning to wait, in learning to wait without ever giving offense, his life in words had been reduced to one form or another of genuflection. "How are ya?" or "How ya doing?" always sure to be offered with a blank smile. In addition to the salutations he communicated to all possible enemies (that is, to everyone), he had several other catch phrases, the essence of which had long since escaped him, rhetorical questions, imprecations, and requests which had in time long past ceased to convey any expectation of response.

"Figure that one out." He said the phrase randomly. It popped up at any time, after any event, with any idea. Once the phrase had articulated surprise, was at least a statement of the impossibility of expecting anything reasonable to occur. But over time it had become no more than a rote phrase. He had reduced it all to that. And why not? It had worked. He lived to say the words long after Al Capone, Shorty McGee, Red Wilson, Clyde Barrow, long after men bigger, tougher, and smarter than he had been laid to rest. 'Figure that one out.'

Well, he had stopped trying to figure anything out. It was all pretty obvious, obviously insane. The phrase, therefore, was not only not an imperative, but was uttered with each new shock or for just any occurrence, without hope for any form of instrumental understanding. Now formula, the message of the phrase was nonetheless clear; it isn't really very hard to figure anything out, and when you do, it would have been better if you hadn't, and you can't do anything about it anyway.

In the same way, like a human toaster, he continually popped up with "Oh my God" or "God bless us and save us". These words (his finger outlining the cross) must once have functioned as a reaction to some moment of terror, some blow that his system could not and would not absorb. There had been, however, so many blows that the words had become declensions of verbs the meaning of which he had long since forgotten. That horror had elicited the same response from him so many times that the phrases had been reduced to babble. They came to take a place as choral elements in his ceaseless litany of horror stories, tales which in the telling became tokens of his capacity for survival, tales which warded off the silence he had not tasted for so many years, of which he had become so afraid.

The silence, such as it may have been, vanished at the age of seventeen when he began his institutional life, when he entered a universe in which there was not one corner in which a man could be alone, in which he could for one moment be free from the breathing, thinking, and yearning of hundreds of other men. Nor could there be isolation from the ordered discipline. Even thought crimes were punished, if only by oneself. Not even psychological privacy was to be asked for. It required a battle to set up a wall within those outside walls, to maintain anything that was even potentially contraband, not to accept the institution's definition of its best interests. It was a battle one only foolishly engaged in, and always lost. Nothing, not even memories of another time, were to be smuggled inside. Those dreams of a

past which did manage to scale the walls faded almost without notice.

It was early then, that John gave up his privacy. Understanding that it would be easier to live if he had no thoughts of his own, he abandoned them too. Oh, to be sure, he had his desires, but he lost the capacity to dream for more than a better or worse dinner, to hunger for more than two packs of cigarettes instead of one. Deprivation became a way of life, he yielded to almost everything except life itself to be spared further pain, and talked incessantly to fill the vacuum. Rather than face the void, or perhaps just to make sure that no-one could take offense from his silence, he talked without pause, his stories culled from years inside and from brief vacations as a free man, all augmented by stories from the street that reached him through the walls.

Thus, in just this way, he could describe the shanking (the knifing) of a man in prison, how the murderers had waited until the guard had passed before they threw the body from the fifth tier, and he could then pass directly from this, save for "Figure that one out" or "Oh my God", to a story about the man who killed his neighbours and was charged with intent to commit necrophilic acts.

Having seen so many forms of mayhem and murder, having lived for so long with the fear of offending someone despite his own best efforts, having reduced himself to being a creature who claimed almost nothing except the right to request to go on living — having done this and still having to live with the fear that he might be sleeping one night when some lunatic came creeping up on him in the dark to hold court on him with an iron bar, living with this fear — he had come to see the outside, even only a mirage, as simply more of the same.

There were brothers who did not write and a mother who did not visit, whores in Steubenville, Ohio, and the daily paper. He read to keep up with the deaths, murders, rapes, and scandals that comprised the news. So familiar was he with all this, so unable was he to discern any fundamental difference between the quality of life inside and outside, that he spoke of people from both worlds with equal familiarity, mingling the stories of each without notice, blending both so completely that in any real sense he had lived them all. Given his presentation, it was hard to argue that the worlds were different.

The flow of stories was endless, from the man who was a hero at sea, and then murdered someone, and turned out to have sunk the boat on purpose, from him directly to the guy who set his mattress on fire in the cell and they left him there and he died like a rat, which led to the dead racoon on the highway, which brought him to "Heaven forbid it should be one of us", and the fingers outlined the cross.

He could perform, and would take you through memory lane before you could ask him (or rather command him — no-one asked John for anything except the time of day): "For there on the floor, on top of the whore, lay Dangerous Dan McGrew." "Dancing with my shadow, making believe it's you." "I walk along this street of sorrow, this boulevard of broken dreams." "You call everybody darling, everybody calls you darling too." "There is a gold mine in the sky." "It's just a shanty in old shanty town."

When the songs ran out, he'd tell you about Two-Ton Gilento out of Paterson (John never forgot a pedigree), or about the Titanic, or about George Rogers, who said he'd eat so much that they wouldn't be able to get him into the electric chair, but they did. Or he could offer a little quick patriotism, stories about how he made uniforms inside the wall during the war, sagas about how we licked the Japs.

Over time he had become a pet, a housebroken animal, no danger to anyone, just aware enough of the fragility of his environment to remember to be ingratiating. All he asked was five dollars a month and he would do that labour, and never never forget to tip his hat and give you top of the morning. Or you could take away that five dollars, you could do anything short of killing him, since nothing could induce John to risk any change for the worse.

Someone once decided to tease John, or just to tell him the kind of truth that has no right to be uttered. "John," the man said, "you'll get out but you'll just come back again." For a moment, just a moment, John faced the void once more, tasted the silence, and was silent. To come back would be to die inside the walls. He started to say no, a word he had long since learned not to use. Forced to see the horror again, however, he began to form the word on his lips. And then, recovering, he grimaced, smiled and said, "Yeah, figure that one out." Yeah, figure that one out. Oh my God. God help us and save us. God forbid it should be one of us.

Tales for the Son of My Unborn Child: Thomas Farber. E.P. Dutton & Co. 1971.



RAP

Radical Alternatives to Prisons



We started RAP in 1970, because there was no-one around at that time arguing that prisons were evil dumps and should be abolished. There were various reform groups, concentrating on achieving better visiting conditions and so on, and suggesting that specific sorts of prisoners (e.g. alcoholics) should not be inside. No-one was then pointing out that putting people behind bars for breaking the law was not only expensive and counter-productive, but also immoral.

Jock Young offered stinging criticism of straight criminology (OZ 41) which most of us in RAP would agree with. While the Americans bomb the Vietnamese, and old people die from cold, who can get excited about a mother of six shoplifting, or a kid nicking cars? Angela Davis spoke for millions when she proclaimed who the real criminals are.

But we do have to sit uncomfortably between two stools. However often we spout our radical analysis of society, the truth is that every day in the magistrates courts, people with no money or power or legal help are sent to nick for the most innocuous 'offences'; and in the high courts, they are sent for longer periods which only embitter them, break up their marriages and friendships, lead to their physical ill-health and, often, mental imbalance, confirm their own feelings of failure, or reinforce their self-image as anti-social.

Many left-wing groups consider it's misguided to try and prevent people from going to prison. They feel that prison can be a politicising experience, and having read some of the Black literature by US prisoners, we can understand their hopes. As one man wrote, who spent a little time inside: '... prison is not totally bad, because it is the one place in which the State reveals its true nature. It shocks those who loved the State and turns them into potential revolutionaries.' But at the present time, in the present place, these hopes are pie in the sky. Only a handful of people leaving prison bother to do anything about either prisons or society in general. They are either too demoralised, poor, ill-equipped,

hung-up, uninterested, or — dare we say it — reactionary!

At a recent meeting in Hull, where there were several highly-intelligent, articulate and experienced ex-prisoners, a few stereotyped 'revolutionaries' expressed their hopes that prisons will ferment revolutionary activity. The ex-prisoners stated, from their own experience, that this was just not happening; one of them in fact had tried and failed to spread his own left ideas. But the revolutionaries' ears were closed, and they continued their romantic and unrealistic dream.

We have two main hopes. Firstly, we envisage, along with the revolutionaries, that the alternatives we want set up will enable people to develop their ideas and learn how to take action, that it will give them the self-confidence they need, the skills at organising, the understanding. We see people who have been in prisons getting involved with Claimants Unions, starting a prisoners' union, being active in the squatting movement, writing books which no-one will dare publish on prisons. If alternatives can be devised where more or all of this can be encouraged, then we will feel RAP deserves the label radical.

Secondly, though, so many of the people in prisons are not the stuff of which revolutionaries are made. If the aged, 'unemployable' alcoholic manages to come off drink (if that is what he wants), make some friends, decides how he'd like to live, and achieve it, then this is, within his limitations, a radical alternative to his previous lifestyle, and to prisons. For prison is the last place where you are enabled to work out what you want and how to get it. You can easily begin to want to rob a bank and learn how to do it while you're inside; but most people want to stay out of prison, and they rarely learn how they could re-order their lives to achieve this.

One of the alternatives we suggest is a commune-type scene for people who would be happiest there. One ex-prisoner in his 20's who had been to Grandon prison among others (Grandon is the 'therapeutic' psychiatric prison in Buckinghamshire) said that he relaxed for the first time in his life when he joined a commune. When he was in a bad mood, and wanted to be left alone, no-one

would rush up to ask him why he was feeling like that. The commune which RAP has set up — Excell House — expects participation from everyone there. There are five young people there — some have been inside and some haven't — and they run the place entirely by themselves and for themselves. It is developing into an information/action point for the locality — they are going to start a craft workshop, and they need lots of outside help. Anyone who has ideas, skills or an interest to offer, is invited to give them a ring. (Details below).

Another area in which we've been campaigning is Holloway Prison. We have concentrated on that not only because we think that it is worse for women to be inside than men (although in this society, where kids are mainly brought up by women, it is worse for kids when their mother goes inside). It's just that they're building a vast new Holloway prison (500 beds and lovely Scandinavian furnishings!) and it seemed a good time to attack the whole concept of putting women inside, the concept of providing a 'hospital' type prison for 'criminals', the concept of providing new expensive prison places for the Courts to fill up, while the Home Office moans about how unsuitable prisons are for women!

Also, we have to specialise to some extent, to try and get the prisons cleared bit by bit. The more people work with us, the more specialities we can have. We seem now to have reached a stage where everything we set up flourishes, the meetings continue, people stay. It hasn't always been like that. Many people like to talk and criticise, but that's the limit of their involvement. Unfortunately, a project like a magazine, or a pressure group needs just as much monotonous slog (typing, contacting people by phone, envelope addressing etc.) as it needs ideas and imagination. We try to sort out the work so that no-one will have all the slog, and no-one has all the glamour.

To draw attention to Holloway, and the booklet we're publishing about it, we have circulated a petition, organised a meeting of MPs, a press conference and, a new venture for us, street theatre, including six foot puppets enacting scenes of female criminality! To end this phase of the cam-



RAP

Continued

paign, a rally will be held at Central Hall Westminster on June 6, and we still need people to help with this.

Several local groups have been formed, and we would like to hear from others interested. We can send speakers anywhere. We also need more volunteers, public speakers; if you have inside experience, so much the better.

Many people who end up with 10 year + sentences claim that it all started in approved school, that they were sent away — for 'training' — as a harmless pilferer, and learned so much about crime that they emerged with higher ambitions. We thought

it would be rational to spend time on the problem of young offenders — more accurately on the problem of the institutions where they are sent. So a Young Offenders Group meets weekly to work out the best approach to take in a constructive attack on approved schools (now known as community homes — much cosier), Borstals, detention centres, and young people's prisons. It's the right time to plan this attack, along with the growth of the Children's Rights movement (see their monthly magazine) and the critical look which a lot of professionals are giving to the new legislation on young 'offenders'.

The 'prison movement' is gathering ground in Britain, still way behind other countries. In the USA, not only is there great solidarity in some of the prisons, but the Fortune Society and other voluntary ex-prisoner groups are applying North American dynamism to mutual help and propaganda about the state of the prisons. In Sweden, the prisoners' union is taken so seriously that some members, who had been on hunger strike to dramatise their demands, threatened to fast to death. There have also been important riots in French and Italian jails. Over here, the authorities usually manage to avert any serious 'trouble' — and the prisoners, of course, mostly collude.

So if you have been in prison, have a relative or friend there, or have some other reason to be interested, please contact us, as we need all the help and support we can get.

RAP Office, 104 Newgate Street, London EC1. Tel: 01-600-4793 (office hours). The office will send you RAP literature, plus details of local groups.

Excell House, 134 Bedford Road, London SW4. Tel: 622 0374. The house has weekly meetings, to which all are welcome.

Speakers. If you want to speak or want a speaker, ring Duncan Leys, 01-467-1534.

Holloway Campaign. Contact Richard Hartnoll, 01-836-2369, if you can help with this.

Young Offenders Group. Fiona Gardner, 01-286-8932, will give details of meetings.

Remedial Teaching. If you know anyone who wants to learn to read and write, let the office know — we have volunteer teachers.

Fund-Raising. Your ideas are needed! Ring John Forbes at 828 5969 (evenings).

June Rally. If you can help with this, ring Gail at the office.

Meetings. We hold open meetings on the first Sunday of the month, and administrative/discussion meetings every week, which are also open. Details from the office.

Please send me more details about RAP.

Name.....

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to: RAP, 104 Newgate Street, London EC1.



Illustration: JOSHUA THOMAS

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All aboard for the Old Bailey in June. Top of the bill is the 'Angry Brigade Trial'. The Stoke Newington Eight are all different areas of the revolutionary movement - Claimants Unions, Tenants Associations, Gay Liberation, Women's Liberation, Squatters and so on.

The Stoke Newington Eight are not terrorists — all political bombings in the past 8 years have been directed against State property or that of the State's functionaries.

The Stoke Newington Defence Group has arranged a teach-in on Saturday June 3rd at 2pm, probably at the LSE Old Theatre. Watch Time Out for details, or check with the group c/o Box 359, 240 Camden High Street, NW1.

Come to the Old Bailey, Monday June 5th, to show solidarity.

In the Metro case, now running at the above venue, applications for an all-black jury were characteristically refused. The prosecution claims the clash outside the Metro Youth Club was an unprovoked attack on police by black youths. Anyone who witnessed the incident should urgently contact Jo Kaplan, Neighbourhood Law Centre (Notting Hill), 969-7473.

Extract from a Letter to the People, Tony Soares, Brixton Prison:

"Dear Brothers and sisters, In September 1971, a black community newspaper called Grass Roots reprinted an article on self defence from the Black Panther newspaper (vol 4 no 20). The Black Panther newspaper has a wide circulation in the US and a large number of copies are available in Britain.

On March 9th 1972, I was arrested and charged on two counts, both relating to the article in question. At the moment I am held in custody, bail having been refused.

Such cases are not rare in Britain. In 1969, Peter Martin was sentenced to 9 months' imprisonment for distributing leaflets calling for a demonstration against police brutality in Brixton. The leaflets were alleged to be "likely to cause a breach of the peace". In February 1969 I was sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment for allegedly handing out leaflets about the October 27th 1968 anti-Vietnam war demonstration which were "inciting persons unknown to assemble riotously at the scene of a public demonstration".

We must not be fooled by recent acquittals in certain well-known cases. The ruling class tries to create an illusion of freedom and justice. Where there has been widespread publicity and mass mobilisation, it might try to use that particular case to reinforce the myth. But the fact remains that a large number of black activists and thousands of innocent black people are quietly and systematically put away."

(INFO ABOUT BROTHER TONY'S CASE/DONATIONS TO HIS DEFENCE: BLF, 54 Wightman Road, London N4).

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SLEDGE HAMMERS IN THE SLUMS!

Roger Hutchinson, founder of Yorkshire's *Styng*, sets out from our plush West End offices in search of the provincial Alternative Press. After a week up North, Roger filed this report. He is now recuperating in Portugal.

Manchester abounds with demolition sites. Irregular squares of rubble, littered with garbage, children, and the occasional indeterminate bulldozer. The Orders of Doom have been served on last centuries' slums in a hurried attempt to demolish the terraces before they crumble of their own accord. But Council orders one day don't necessarily mean sledge-hammer toting workmen the next day, or even next year.

What they do mean is minimal rent for an indeterminate number of months. And minimal rent, sure as eggs is eggs, means freaks.

Manchester

In the case of 7 Summer Terrace, Manchester 14, it meant cheap premises for MAGIC, the Manchester community switchboard, and more recently, a permanent home for Mike Don's *Mole Express*, whose 22nd issue in May this year celebrates its second birthday and establishes *Mole* as the oldest, most persistent alternative newspaper outside London. *Mole* was conceived at the

end of 1969, after the closure of *Grass Eye*'s first series left Manchester's hippy community voiceless. By the time Mike and two other ex-*Grass Eye*s got their paper together in Spring 1970, they were in competition with a revived *Grass Eye*'s vastly improved second series. *Grass Eye* won hands down, reaching a peak of 5000 sales by late summer while the first five issues of *Mole Express* sold 200 copies each. Peculiarly, *Grass Eye* folded in October and the imperceptibly renamed *Mole Express* stumbled on.

At that time *Mole* was printed 35 miles away at Open Design, Liverpool. Every month Mike would seize a rucksack, hitch the East Lancs Highway to Merseyside, load up perhaps a third of the copies, hitch back, deposit them, and repeat the process until 1000 *Moles* were home, dry, and ripe for touting. Which is where the real trouble starts. Outside London there is no effective alternative distribution service. Moore-Harness's supposedly national network wears a little thin at Potters Bar, and all but gives up north of the Humber. Brave attempts by Night Ferry and Transmutation failed the

Economically Viable Acid Test, leaving all provincial alternative papers with the thankless task of distributing their own goods; finding by sheer default the one newsagent in thirty who'll look twice at the underground press. There has been too little inter-communication between the northern papers, too little combined initiative in facing common problems. A Northern Free Press Conference held at Leeds Information Point last summer extended open invitation to more than thirty papers. Five sent representatives.

One of these, predictably, was Mike Don. Once across the Pennines and back ain't nothing after two days lugging magazines along the East Lancs Highway.

When Moss Side Press, a Mancunian equivalent to Open Design, made available their small offset machine to *Mole Express*, Mike hung up his rucksack and took the magazine across town. Moss Side Press now prints the *Birmingham Street Press*, *Manchester Free Press*, *Sheffield's Arrows*, and a plethora of community newsheets. They are non-profit-eering, efficient and quite indispensable. You try finding



Photo: Pete Tidball



Manchester Free Press —
"...A rather dry paper,
a rather bitter pill."

SLEDGE HAMMERS IN THE SLUMS!

continued

another printer in Manchester whose hands won't twitch nervously for the opaque ink brush at the sight of a solitary 'fuk' on your paste-up boards.

The second anniversary issue of *Mole Express* will sell 2500 copies, somewhat better than 200, but no startling success. The future? Mike laughs cynically: "I haven't seen much sign of one. *Mole's* got a hairy past to live down, a history of mediocrity burdens us. I'm trying to produce a paper somewhere between the straight community papers, like the *Cardiff People's Paper*, and the underground press. The national underground papers in Britain exercise too much influence. The whole revolutionary left, diverse youth scene cannot be truly reflected by London papers."

Nor even the whole Manchester scene by *Mole Express*, according to the people behind the *Manchester Free Press*, for seven uneasy months co-dabblers in Mancunian alternative publishing. There's no longer much apparent rivalry, however, and certainly no cause for any. The *Free Press* is as different in origin and perspective to *Mole Express* as Mike Don is to the *Free Press* staff. *Free Press* was born in the three-day newspaper lock-out last September, produced by a group of Bolshie

journalists from the offices of the *Guardian & Evening News*. Their action was certainly radical, the paper was not. You see, they were using the *Guardian's* production system, re-channelling for three days *Grauniad* copy into the *Free Press*. It was a question of catering with zomboid foreign editors, who for thirty years have known no way of spending Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday other than squatting before a typewriter, getting slowly drunk and rattling out reactionary copy. The only difference this time was that the copy was whisked across to Moss Side Press and reappeared under a *Manchester Free Press* logo. When the dailies went back to norm and the *Guardian* reclaimed its wayward correspondents; the exhilarated *Free Pressers* began formulating a monthly radical news magazine for Manchester. The first monthly *Free Press* was distributed by W.H. Smith & Son (an Alternative Press National First) around Manchester, in December '71. 5000 copies were moved, riding high on the lock-out publicity, a figure which has since fallen to 4000.

To be honest, the monthly *Manchester Free Press* is a dry paper, a rather bitter pill. It exacted (upon cursory examination) from one London journalist the dispirited cry of "IMG!", and while the *Free Press* is genuinely unaffiliated with any such sectarian leftist group, it occasionally echoes the more monotonous aspects of their publications. But perhaps the way to a working man's heart is through his politics, however staid. Although the *Manchester Free Press* isn't the first paper to try and net that bright elusive butterfly: the lumpen, simply attempting so unfashionable and formidable a task calls for a round of energetic applause.

Yorkshire

Yorkshire is the largest county in Britain. Comprised of three Ridings, it reaches from the Tees to south of the Humber, from the Pennines to the North Sea. It contains the cities of Bradford, York, Leeds, Sheffield and Hull; the resorts of Scarborough, Whitby, Filey, Hornsea and Bridlington; and over one quarter the population of England. It is currently served by not one alternative newspaper.

There have been attempts. In the late sixties, a small magazine from Leeds named *Hod* fired a salvo or two at local officialdom, hit the front page of the *Yorkshire Post*, echoed around the West Riding, and retired gracefully. *Hod* was succeeded by a string of less sensational efforts: the *Leeds Other Paper*, *Leeds Local*, *Ops Veda* from Sheffield: all provided a meaty, variable diet of social comment occasionally laced with acid, bopping to rock'n'roll; and all were out of business by 1971. In May of that year the first issue of *Styng* was distributed loosely around Yorkshire. Too loosely to justify its proud claim to be 'Yorkshire's Alternative News-

paper'. Published from Barnsley by the staff of *Sad Traffic* (a gentle, colourful arts magazine), *Styng's* first three issues adopted an established underground press formula and sold 3000 copies. The *Yorkshire Post*, however, knows good material when it falls through their letterbox. Some lively hack isolated an informative article on Amsterdam which incidentally mentioned the availability of hash at the Paradiso crash-hall, and headlined: DRUG HOTEL'S LURE TO YOUNG PEOPLE. Leeds City Police salivated keenly, dug up six charges which could be brought against *Styng*, and despatched two earnest cops to question its staff. The resultant publicity rocketed *Styng's* sales to 7000 copies by the sixth issue. The charges never reached court, to the chagrin of *Styng's* publicity hungry staff.

Even an estimated readership of 35,000 failed to maintain *Styng*. By November '71, pressing back debts and tardy creditors rendered the paper non-viable; the seventh issue was the last. "Don't worry" croaked a back-page stop-press, "we'll be back....." *Styng* may be dormant, but its ex-staff are

"Mole's got a hairy past to live down, a history of mediocrity burdens us."
Mike Don



Mole Express 10p 7 Summer Terrace Manchester 14 Tel. 224 9087.

Manchester Free Press 5p 45 Aspinall Street Manchester M14 5UD.

Liverpool Free Press 4p 107 Bookdale Rd. Liverpool. Tel. 709 0264.

Grapevine 10p 209 Monument Road, Edgbaston Birmingham 16 Tel. 454 7397.

(Birmingham) *Street Press* 10p The Peace Centre 18 Moor St. Ringway Birmingham. Tel 643 0996.

Wuthers Grumble 10p 13 Silver St. Durham City.

Moss Side Press 104 Bold Street Moss Side Manchester 15 Tel 226 3458.

Horse 12 Regent Street South Bromley Yorkshire.

by no means sleeping. Those still resident in Barnsley are engendering schemes for a community project under the manifold title "Horse". Horse at present comprises a lively, imaginative folk-rock band, a screen printing service, and preparations for a newspaper "to take up where Styng left off". It's a hopeful project. They've learnt enough lessons to work in "an anarchic rather than a democratic situation". They've seen *Sad Traffic* and *Styng* through two years, and they've recognised their function. "We're not working for Horse. Horse works for us, and for anyone who wants it." Two years in alternative publishing also helps you define the opposition — "It's quite simple really. We're fighting a lunatocracy."

Birmingham

"Before it began, everyone said you couldn't do this in Birmingham. There's nothing happening in Birmingham. They look through *GRAPEVINE* now, and their eyes fall out of their heads."

Grapevine was launched in March 1971 with all of £30 capital, in an area which had choked to death any previous attempts at underground publishing. The *Birmingham Free Press*, *Town Around*, and *Link* were all dead by spring 1971; dead and largely unmourned. None of them had published more than three issues. An unfortunate heritage. Nor was there much about the first few *Grapevines* to inspire colossal confidence; but the 24 unimaginatively designed, cheaply lithoed pages guide to local culture sold 1000 copies and maintained a monthly schedule. Their April 1972 issue was number 14. Its design is almost professional, the events listings are lucid, contents include several thoroughly

researched and pleasantly written feature articles, all contained in a glossy two-colour cover and now selling 5000 copies. The *Time Out* Formula for Success?

"We're inevitably compared with *Time Out*, but there's a vast difference about working in Brum — you're much closer to the ground. We are the people we're writing about. If we write an article about some people, and those people don't like it, they don't write us a letter — they come and tell us. In fact, they come and stick us up against that wall and go ZONK....It's a two-way process; our publicising the amount of activity already extant in Birmingham encourages more activity, and develops communication between active groups. A very intangible spin-off, but a very important one."

Importance has its perks. *Grapevine* is locally accepted in all the best places as 'Press', its staff enjoy mandatory film and concert review privileges, they can discuss paying full-time workers, and boast not only a telephone but an office to put it in — which for a provincial underground paper is one Very Big Deal. An inspiring circulation graph decorates one wall, beside a large street map of Birmingham and an impressive set of pigeonholes. Laurels, however, were never made for resting on.

"There's so much dirt to turn over in this city, we're just feeling our way into it." — a careful process, this, as they indicate — "You can't assume that everybody has your perspective. We're not writing for a student audience, and for that reason you have to think your way into other people's attitudes, and adopt different approaches. We put *Grapevine* in the position of arguing with a liberal. We presume that they're relatively liberal to buy it in the first place — we attack them with radical argument. You step on a bus and there's a man with a flat cap & overalls who pulls a *Grapevine* from his toolbag. One of the biggest kicks is getting outside the people you know you're talking to, people way out of the usual orbit. And it's only on a national scale that you can afford to serve minority

interests, working in one community you must go beyond that." — which involves some degree of compromise — "A: times you feel you're pulling your punches, then you wanna say 'This guy is a real jive-assed motherfucking cunt', and you have to say 'We suspect this judge to be a little improper in his practice' — but it pays. You have to talk to people in their language, not your own sub-cultural idiom. It's no good campaigning issues in a magazine that most people are never going to read, unless it's out of some voyeuristic interest in how the other half laughs."

The route from *Grapevine* to its survivor-in-arms, the *Birmingham Street Press*, is more than averagely depressing. There's no centre to this city, no focus to the sprawl of terraced redbrick suburbs. Areas differ in name only, Selly Oak becomes Solihull becomes Smethwick....remember Smethwick? A safe Labour Party seat until 1966, when Patrick Gordon-Walker was ousted by a Tory campaign which flyposted the immortal slogan: IF YOU WANT A NIGGER FOR A NEIGHBOUR VOTE LABOUR. Weird undercurrents eddy beneath all that redbrick. Four Parliamentary Race Relations enquiries have been conducted in Smethwick and nearby Handsworth over the last few years; but blacks are still rolled by skinheads, stomped by cops, and abused by the courts. Not even Parliamentary enquiries can see through redbrick.

Roland Clark of the *Street Press* defines it as an Urban Struggle. "This is a drab concrete mess, a city whose fathers care nothing for their people. This city erects class barriers between people of the same class. We've only dented them. It's a slow process."

Street Press first published one month after *Grapevine* — in March '71. Then, it sold 2000 copies. A year and five issues later the circulation has reached 3000. A slow process



SLEDGE HAMMERS IN THE SLUMS!

continued

indeed. It's a fun u/g paper of the old school, a blast from the past, irreverent, colourful and completely formless. "By freaks for freaks", explains Roland, "Street Press tries to present a happy alternative. It's very difficult to come to grips with working class feeling in Brum. There's such a division in the city." Their first issue editorial was as explicit:

"Birmingham more than any other places lacks a happy spirit of its own. People are worn and choked by the machinery and effluent of an oppressive industrial routine. CAN'T WE KICK IT OFF? MAKE YOUR OWN FREEDOM IF IT IS NO LONGER GIVEN AS A SIMPLE RIGHT..... The Midlands may be the Wastelands, but first we have to prove it....."

Printers zealously censored their first three issues, until Moss Side Press materialised. Streetsellers have been busted and harrassed. The Director of Public Prosecutions regularly chews over copies; and Street Press bounces on. Not the greatest underground paper in the world, but a splash of colour in the Black Country, and better than Birmingham deserves. Last words from Roland: "We're very high on communication, on a growing spirit among alternative papers. I think London's coming out of its shell and finding areas of interest elsewhere. We do want this to continue — communication. Communication."

Liverpool

High above the Liverpool docks, overlooking the hourly voyage of the Mersey ferry to Birkenhead and back, is a very large building. On top of the large building are two circular towers. And on each tower squats an immense, sculptured bird, staring inland at the city. The Liver Birds, they're called, and folklore has it that they squawk every time a virgin walks by. Driving down from the city centre you veer left beneath the ominously silent Liver Birds and cruise along Wapping Docks, between warehouses and cranes to a small plywood door uncomfotably sandwiched between two smutty trade depots. This is Open Design, freelance printshop and home of the *Liverpool Free Press*.

Liverpool weaned the Beatles. Liverpool fostered the Cavern. Liverpool saw McGough, Henri and Patten safely into Penguins. Then Liverpool sat back and let the world get on with it.

Throughout the late sixties no articulate tunes of dissent drifted down the Mersey. In early 1971 a group of disenchanted journalists from the monolithic *Liverpool Daily Post & Echo*, united in a conviction that "profit orientated tycoons shouldn't run newspapers", and their intentions to show "that newspapers on Merseyside are really just a link in the business chain, accepting the values and beliefs of the white business middle class without question", began to publish *Pak-o-Lies*, a viciously accurate underground house journal for the staffs of the Post and Echo. Six months later, in July, *Pak-o-Lies* had grown a little, put on weight,

and metamorphosized into the *Liverpool Free Press* — News you're Not Supposed to Know. The idea, says Brian Whittaker, was to publish a radical alternative newspaper "which would be acceptable to a lot of people who weren't used to underground papers". Accepted it was — at a conservative estimate the last issue was read by 30,000 Liverpudlians. A special supplement published by the Free Press Group on the Fisher Bendix occupation last year sold 25,000 copies.

"The basic fault with the straight press," expounds Brian "is the system of ownership and editorship designed to present news favourable to the establishment. We're a non-commercial structure; we take joint editorial decisions. Politically, there's no party line. We're trying to be a reflection of all the radical left. The old underground press was aiming at the under-25s. We find the *Free Press* more easy to sell to workers than students."

An indictment of local students, that, for the *Liverpool Free Press* is presently the most important newspaper north of London. An unlikely coalition of journalists and interested individuals whose influence on the rest of the provincial alter-

native press has been, dare I say it, revolutionary. *Free Press* advice and technique helped such Liverpool community papers as the *Tuebrook Bugle* and the *Scottie Press* off the drawing board and into the streets. The Manchester & Bolton *Free Press* both drew direct inspiration from their Merseyside namesake. The *Liverpool Free Press*, more than any other paper, has in seven issues given the term 'provincial alternative press' new and vital definition. It's a definition which Styng attempted in Yorkshire, which *Muther Grumble* expounds in Durham, *Grapevine* in Birmingham; and a host of other publications in areas churlishly neglected by this article. It works from a recognition of local identity and an acceptance of provincial function. From the staunch Methodism of the Pennines to those grim remnants of the work ethic hanging darkly over the industrial midlands, the sticks undoubtedly reek of righteous conservatism. But in the grimy terraces lurks an unusual sense of community, a bluff tradition of unity among the deprived; and a confused impression that all is not quite well, despite the straight media's daily assurances to the contrary. These are nebulous reactions, undefined and inarticulate; but in them lie an essential basis for media guerrilla warfare.

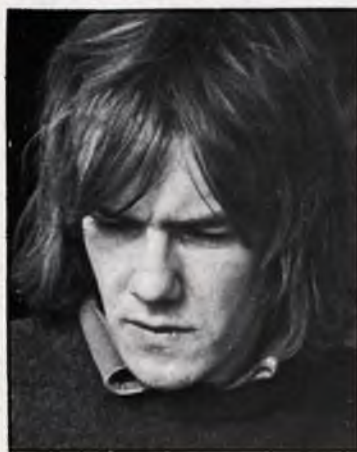


Photo: Pete Tidball

Member of the Liverpool Freep



There But For The Grace Of God...



Illustration ED BADAJOS

5 November 1971, Meshed, Iran:

At least the children have gone to sleep. I told them the Customs men were cross with Mummy and Daddy because they found some hash in our van, and they nodded off in the beds behind the curtain. That leaves more space for the rest of us. It's crowded in this little office, with three soldiers and their rifles to look after Eric and me, and all those policemen, and the Chief of Customs writing away at his desk. Nasty thyroid condition he must have to make his eyes bulge like that.

That oil lamp looks a bit dangerous to me, flickering in the draught. It's cold outside, with the wind howling across the desert. And black. There's a hole in the floor in the hut out back, and the very old Customs man with the scar down his cheek had to show me the way there with his torch a minute ago when I wanted to pee. He wouldn't let me borrow it, in case I bopped him over the head I suppose, and I nearly fell down the hole. Flattering to be thought so dangerous. Those soldiers are taking us very seriously.

Wish Eric and I could talk, but the Chief of Customs understands English. No chance of bribing this lot, even if we had the money; they're super-efficient. Scarface and his henchmen are really enjoying themselves out there in the dark with their crowbars and sledgehammers, smashing up our mobile home. Sounds like a guillotine being erected. They must have taken the engine out by now to get at the stuff in the petrol compartment. Now I can hear them ripping the cupboards out to have a look in the chassis. That loud crash was probably our cute little Dormobile-conversion sink-unit getting knocked for six. At least they'll find six kilos more in there; it'd be pretty galling to know they were wrecking it for nothing. Enter Scarface, hotfoot from the demolition squad; poor dear has blood pouring from his finger; bandages? Certainly, there are some bandages in the van, you mean you haven't found them yet? That's nice, I'm getting

an armed escort outside while I salvage the Elastoplast from the debris and bind up his finger for him. A woman's work is never done.

Back to the office. Now somebody's dragging something heavy down the passage. Scarface's fat friend comes in triumphantly hauling the first sackful of booty behind him. Hail the conquering hero. Back out again to get another. Wish he'd shut the bloody door behind him, I'm frozen. Hey, everybody's cheering up now they've found something. Tea? Certainly I'd like a glass of tea, two lumps please. That's better. Scarface has brought the last half-sackful in.

Oh, what an embarrassment for the fat man — several packages of hash have fallen out of his trousers onto the floor, and he can't pick them up without spilling his glass of tea. Scarface sheepishly looks the other way. He stares mutely at Eric and I, a gaze of Christ-like compassion. I know, you were just doing your job. Come to think of it, we were just doing ours. Thank God they've shut the door at last. Teabreak over. It's quite cozy in here now that they've lit another oil lamp and brought all the shivering customs men in from outside. Everybody's squatting around the walls. This is Fatso's big moment. Like a merchant revealing some magnificent tapestry to the enthralled spectators, he tips the first sackful onto the floorboards with a flourish. A hundred oilskin packages descend in a heap. Fatso and the most senior policeman begin to unwrap them. The first pieces get passed around for inspection and approval. Yes, that's right, it is from Nazar—I—Sharif; perhaps you could tell us whose farm it was grown on? They are engulfed in a sea of oilskin and polythene and Sellotape. Division of labour: everybody gets a package to unwrap, except us. It took me days and days to parcel it all up, somebody else can do the work this time. Quite Christmassy for the others, though.

Even the soldiers relax and prop their rifles against the wall, and begin unwrapping parcels. The youngest policeman is busy blow-

ing the tobacco out of a Rothmans. He makes a perfectly competent joint in the American style; nice to know somebody's got some culture around here. At the same time, he's trying to explain that Iranians like him don't ever smoke haschisch. Eric takes a drag and is convulsed by a fit of coughing; I never knew he could act. There are piles of unwrapped hash all over the floor now. Scarface disappears and comes back with the scales.

Our little boy staggers sleepily out from behind the curtain with his potty. He puts it on the floor between two small hills of hash and sits heavily upon it. Almost sleepwalking he totters back to bed. One of the policemen goes outside to empty the potty. Fascinating jobs they've got, I wonder if they deliver babies too, like the English ones. There's something going on outside; a bus must have arrived. The border post is officially closed — it's nearly midnight. American voices in the passage. A crowd of freaks stare in the door. Wow, what a heavy scene, man, and there but for the grace of God.....One of the American girls wants to talk to us. The policemen stub out their joints, put on their pig-faces and start manhandling all the bus passengers back out into the desert. DON'T YOU TOUCH ME THERE YOU FUCKIN' MOTHER-FUCKER! the American girl screams. Ah, liberation. We don't hear anything more. The door at the end of the passage is shut heavily and there's an argument going on outside. What's the use? They're going in the opposite direction anyway, and there aren't any telephones. Eric and I are resigned to whatever comes next. We're given a load of documents to sign in Farsi. Anything to get out of this place together and get some sleep. It's time to wake up the children for the ride in the jeep to the nearest jail. Eric's handcuffed, and then the handcuffs — British ones, we notice with interest — are taken off when they realise he'll have to carry one of the sleeping children. Forlornly, we troop out into the windy night.

Jackie.

(Eric is still in Iran, waiting trial).

MUCKRO

Amadeus Vivek who studied
Organic Agriculture at Berkeley
looks at the ten basic
statements of Macrobiotics

Western (Christian) civilisation is rapidly nearing its end, presumably to be replaced by a new civilisation. In the twenty-one world civilisations that Toynbee says have existed, there are laws governing all of them. One law is that as a civilisation enters its death throes, a spluttering of tiny funky religions crop up, most of them far-out, short-lived, and anti-establishment. Macrobioticism is one of today's religionettes.

How do we all learn of Macrobiotics? Usually you first hear the word at a private pad or health food store, or visit your local in restaurant. Or a friend who wants to share the True Way lays on a general outline of Macrobiotic theory, soon followed by its publications. When I first came in contact with Macrobiotic theory, I was intrigued and felt compelled to seriously examine it in the light of everything I knew or might learn, about diet and religion. I'm a reasonable sort and open to radically changing my life if logically and spiritually convinced of a new idea, after a pragmatic objective trial.

From their initial positive responses to the basic philosophic outline of Macrobiotics, many hip people went on to accept the theories *a priori* and subsequently accepted their embellishments in the form of shoddy applications of pseudo-scientific nomenclature, never again bothering to doubt or objectively question the basic tenets of their new religion. This offered many benefits: something to believe in and be enthusiastic about. A group of close peers waiting in any city. For those who worked in the mushrooming Macro restaurants, a feeling of doing something good for the world. For those who had previously existed on junk foods, improved health.

But those of us who went on to investigate the basic tenets of macrobiotics felt more and more misgivings about them.

The first group of Occidental Macrobioticists were generally sincere mystics, albeit a bit lacking in information, discrimination or both. They avidly made converts from a larger group of people less intelligent than themselves, who then went on to convert teenyboppers, dumdums, and squares who had never before heard of Yin, Yang, or organic brown rice. This downward directed consciousness has had two bad effects. The first is a decline reminiscent of Christianity's degeneration from the late Egyptian priests' high school of Coptic mysticism down to a Methodist Social. The second effect is the severed communications between Macroters and the hip health heads who have had second thoughts about Macrobiotics or found better dietary or spiritual systems. Since *Reader's Digest* et. al. knocks Sakurazani Nyoichi, alias George Ohsawa, author of most source books, and his theories, Macrotics conclude anyone who disagrees with the theories must be a square. All stupid factions assume that there are two groups of people in the world — us and people dumber than us. The purpose of a Macrobiotic conversion is to convert, not to learn. We anti-Macroters might like to point out faults, but how can one teach or reach a preacher? If we could speak, this is what we'd say:

1) The division of food into Yin or Yang is rhetorically interesting but neither in theory or in practice is it better than classifying food as: phlegmless or phlegmy; pure or impure; sattwa, rajas or tamas; starch, fat protein, vitamin or mineral; or any mystic system one might invent, such as aligning food to the seven holy planets. Eel is Saturnian, honey is Lunar, oil Mercurial, etc. Macrobiotics appear to be ignorant of the multitude of dietary systems that came before them, and uninterested in learning from the mistakes and accomplishments of others.

Note how seldom Macroters read books on the other common dietary schools generally available in health food stores.

BIOTICS

2) I had gullibly believed that a Macrobiotic diet was a Zen tradition, until I lived in Japan, learned to speak Japanese, and visited many monasteries. Conversations with monastic cooks and historians, Alan Watts, and other scholars made it clear that the Zen diet is not now, nor was it ever, Macrobiotic. It is contrary to Zen and general Buddhist thought to give ponderous attention to food, which should be treated with indifference and gulped down quickly. If food is evaluated at all, it is as a visual art form and not a Michelin Star Guide to palatal pleasures or yin/yang.

3) Sakurazawi Nyoichi is not the codifying scholar but the inventor of Macrobioticism which all Japanese, with the exception of his wife, consider a crackpot theory — if they have ever heard of it.

While living in Tokyo, I visited the world's original Macrobiotic restaurant, run by Madame Ohsawa. It was a hangout for rich eccentric foreigners. The only Japanese I saw there were the employees and Madame Ohsawa herself, an interesting if timorous woman. All the dishes on the menu, which the newly arrived foreigners found so exotic, were available at any of the ubiquitous restaurants throughout the city for one third the price.

4) To most people, Macrobiotics in practice merely means adding brown rice to the dregs diet they've been on. But if one could, for a moment, get away from lauding slight improvements in junk diets and from wildly abstract, unproven and irrelevant theories to a clear understanding of absolute food value, it is important to know that eating grains was only introduced about twenty thousand years ago. At that time, some of the more successful cultures wanted to increase their size and power by increasing their population, which required greater food yield for less effort. Grains were the answer. However, these grains were not in perfect attunement with the human digestive system which, over several million years, had evolved to a dietary preference still shared today by surviving primitive men and chimpanzees: fruits, roots, wild vegetables, insects, worms, and occasional mammals. This is usually called omnivorous. Every animal evolves a digestive system perfectly suited to the foods it finds in its ecological niche. E.g. the cow has several stomachs to digest grass. Man is omnivorous and *can* eat grains, for which birds with their built-in huskers are especially well-suited, but grains are really not ideal for man: they make him somewhat soft and sluggish. The speed of evolution (and change in diet preference) depends on the amount of generations, not people.

5) If one faithfully adheres to the yin/yang food list, one will be eating a very unbalanced and not very healthy diet. To those people who think all you need to know about foods is yin and yangness as determined by a Japanese layman, I can only point out that, despite the exaggeration of protein need and the square credo in science, the basic scientific analysis of the composition of the human body and the foods necessary to protect and sustain it can be proved just as clearly as proving $2+2=4$ by holding up fingers. Macroters generally classify brewer's yeast, live yoghurt, grapefruit etc. as no-no's, though there have been numerous books written on their beneficial effects. But the most insane forbidden fruit is fruit itself. The main dietary problems of modern man is his constipation, which prevents him from properly expelling wastes and poisons. Although fasting helps, fruit is the purifying and vitamin rich staple which his alimentary canal long ago evolved to digest easily. Why should he have to substitute the high vitamin C content of a couple of oranges with ten times their weight in raw parsley, carrot tops and dandelion? (I have yet to meet a Macroter with such rabbit zeal). Macroters claim that citrus fruits are harmfully



acidic. Are they unaware that in the body citric acid becomes alkaline? Otherwise, those who have done long citrus fruit fasts and the yogis I know who eat nothing but fruit would long ago have perished from all that yin sin. In choosing any diet, excluding the real baddies is much more important than adding goodies. The two baddies that loom above the others are white flour and, most menacingly, white sugar. It has been proven conclusively that if these two substances are removed from a human diet, the balanced, instinctive hunger returns. In the natural state, the pleasure experienced from sweetness on the tongue gives man lust for fruits, the only naturally common food that is sweet. Eating artificial sweets destroys hunger and otherwise degrades the body.

6) In creating the seven progressive diets, Nyoichi wisely suggested, as does yoga, that sudden jumps aren't worthwhile. The difference is that no yogi is ever ill, although yoga amateurs sometimes strain themselves. Macrobiotic devotees are often ill, especially in the higher regimens, where absolutely no fruits or salads are allowed and vegetables make up a paltry 20 or 30% of an otherwise pure cereal diet. The pure rice diet, number 7, is the highest in every sense. Once upon a time, people smoked dope and constantly fretted and freaked about the very real threat of being busted for such innocent delights, dreaming of a legally high future. This dream resulted in some pretty silly legal activities: smoking banana peels, breathing legal aerosols, eating brown rice only, popping any strange pill found lying about, and in short doing anything for a high, the definition expanding to include far more than the simple pleasures of a joint, a tab or a glass of wine. As for eating rice alone, you can get just as high eating marshmallows, or drinking water, which might revive some of the Macroters ailing in the last stages. They drink next to no water, thereby damaging their kidneys and increasing constipation, and go around dying of thirst. Nowadays, since only pushers, politicoa and provincials get busted, most of us can feel safe turning on and can afford to wake up from dreaming of what we already have. We should realise that although clunking yourself on the head with a hammer may give a groovy high, it has deleterious side effects.

7) The organicness of Macrobiotic products is desirable, though overpriced, but it is much more important in fruits and vegetables than in dry goods. The health food store business has stages of growth, like any animal. In most places in the world it was born recently or has yet to be born. California, the business's birthplace, is the only area that has completely outgrown the small-time books, pills and dry goods phase. It has flowered into supermarket boom: fresh organic groceries, fruits and vegetables, meats, dairy produce, everything. In the areas still in infancy, a health food beginner may chance upon a book by one of the phlegm men like Ehret, or the vegetable juicers like Walker, or the moderates like Bircher, Hauser or Bragg. He then becomes convinced that he has found *the way*. As time passes, he meets members of other sects, reads their theories, discovers how small his original sect was, and eventually adopts a well-rounded view of health foods. Those who fall into Macrobiotics are seldom so lucky, or wise. Whether they become experts or never get past the most rudimentary macrotic principles, they stick together and are by far the biggest group. They seem to have been appointed as the Movement's official health food sect, and the stagnating self-righteousness, which is found but soon lost by a beginner in any sect, is only reinforced by the power of numbers.

8) In most parts of the world it is cheaper, more ecologically balanced, and somewhat healthier to eat foods that are in season. But to confine oneself to food grown in the vicinity of one's home is really irrelevant for people living in a society which allows them to breathe smog, watch TV, indulge in hedonistic pleasures, and migrate to subarctic regions. Icelanders need vitamin C as much as anyone; let them have their Israeli oranges.

9) Now to jump from the sublime to the ridiculous: Macrotics claim that bad habits don't matter to them and don't affect their health. To my knowledge, no unbiased scientific investigation has been made to show that the Macroctic diet renders one immune from the debilitating effect of poisonous drugs. Members proffer glorified, isolated miracle cures and the faith roused by an unsurprising improvement in health resulting from kicking hamburgers and coke for vegetables and rice. The A.M.A. gives statistics listing hundreds of Macro deaths, thousands of cases of salt poisoning and dehydration, and numerous Macro-related incidents of rickets, hepatitis etc. An objective observer has to draw from these two opposing propagandas and his personal experience to reach any conclusions. The sheer physical reality is that nicotine, yang as it may be, and alcohol are among the most injurious human habits and the damage they do far outweighs the benefits of any diet whatsoever. Apparently Macroters think they've transcended physical laws, but the Macrobiotic junkies I've met appear to be as confined by the physical demands of heroin as anyone else. The most disturbing lot are the Macro-psychotics. There are catatonics, brain burned babblers, and indiscriminate bomb throwers who really believe that everything's cool if you just keep yangin' along.

10) The final claim is that eating by Macro law will lead to Satori. The only evidence of this is the petty high that malnutrition offers. In all my travels through consciousness, classes and countries, I've never met anyone who's made serious spiritual advancement in this diet, nor even heard of anyone, except from deluded neurotics waxing poetic over the lure of the mysterious Orient they understand so superficially. This Satori bit is just one more in the long list of unverified and rather pathetic minor claims: eating avocados makes you impotent, crying is yin (sweet tears anyone?), ancient foods improve the memory, protein is a bad conductor of vibrations.

The title of Alvin Toffler's book, "*Future Shock*", describes the malady we are all suffering from. Our nervous systems are starting to break down under the tremendous over-input of data and experience. One of the common courses of action a human nervous system takes to prevent its collapse is to escape into an idealised past. I'm not knocking serious religion for serious people. It's the same as it always was. But, just as the Western world is rapidly filling up with dilletante pseudo-artists, there is an exponentially increasing number of people who, as Jung would say, are desperate for anything to believe in. Of all the systems offered for this purpose, Macrobioticism is one of the easiest in required disciplines and most gratifying socially. As a religion it is extremely young, but well-suited to our present, if perhaps ephemeral, social needs. I hope that this article is useful to someone who has just dipped his toes into the Muckrobiotic well. But as regards the long-time addicts — how many people are there who could be induced to overthrow their life style, social system, and economic statures, and admit to having wasted years of work and devotion on pure bullshit, by reason of a mere statement of logic and truth?

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WHAT YA EAT LAST?

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*Jerry Hopkins investigates
the wonderful world of rubbers.*

Did you know that condom sales really took a nose-dive when The Pill was introduced, but now that the Pill is losing some favour and several governments are exporting condoms for distribution in overpopulated areas, sales are back where they were and rising? An estimated billion were sold last year.

Did you know that in Japan, where the condom comes in several day-glo colours, it is regarded as an exciting and sex-provoking device? It is the woman who buys the condom and its use becomes an important, rather than bothersome, part of the sexual play.

Did you know that until a few years ago, nearly every condom factory in the Western world was owned or controlled by Catholics?

Did you know that back in the 1930s, Al Capone decided against muscling into the condom business, but Murder Inc. accepted the challenge, extorting a small sum from every gross produced and fire-bombing factories if their owners refused to go along?

Did you know that nobody really knows who discovered the condom? Most give credit to Gabriel Fallopius, the Italian anatomist famous for his studies of the female form. He developed a linen condom which he described in 1564 as a safe, comfortable means of avoiding venereal disease. "From pocket to penis," he wrote, "for protection while pouched."

Did you know that the linen condom was held in place with a bit of colourful ribbon, tied in a firm knot?

Did you know that the date of the condom's manufacture, or a safety expiration date, is often printed on the condom itself, near the open end when it's been unrolled?

Did you know that condoms used to come in three sizes – small, medium and large – but now

the industry is fairly standardised, producing product between 7¾ & 8 inches long, between 2 & 2¼ inches in diameter?

Did you know that in Pakistan condoms have been advertised on billboards, and in Italy, on television? The English-speaking world must so far be content with an occasional magazine ad.

Did you know that 40 years ago most condoms had sexist brand names like Romeo, Man-O-War, Hercules, Super Ace, Samsonite, Peacock, Patrician, and Champion? Some are still being sold, but today the trend is towards pseudo-scientific gobbledygook: Rx 707 (an American brand), Durex Coral Supertrans and Durateste Superfine (both British).

Did you know that the first "teat-end" condom – the ones with the little projecting pocket at the head to catch the sperm – appeared in 1901 under the trade name Dreadnought?

Did you know that the most popular condom machine is 350 feet long, and that the product is never touched by human hands until it reaches the consumer?

Did you know that Casanova wrote in his *Memoires* of a friend who, "like a careful man, drew a packet of fine French letters from his pocket, and delivered a long eulogium on this admirable preservative from an accident which might give rise to a terrible and fruitless repentance"?

Did you know that a third material has been added to the traditional latex or sheep-gut used in making condoms? Right. It's plastic. Like disposable gloves, they are made in two pieces and heat-sealed together. They're supposed to have unlimited storage life (most disintegrate in five years) and greater lubricity.

Did you know that the British Standards Institution accepts defective product up to 0.5% of

production? Which means that of Britain's total (approximate) output of 100 million condoms last year, half a million had holes in them or broke when stretched.

Did you know that in Germany as well as in other countries that the thrifty may buy a small rack for drying the condom (after using and washing it) and a special powder for dusting it prior to rerolling?

Did you know that the thing that really bugs sewerage workers is the guys who tie the condoms in knots before flushing them? Gases form causing them to inflate – and float through the sewers like dirigibles – and the only way they can be sorted out from all the other waste is by hand.

Did you know that when you see someone get shot in the cinema, with "blood" splashing all over the screen, what you're actually seeing is the detonation of a small explosive charge inside a condom filled with chopped steak and fake blood?

Information generally more useful than that which appears above – and which should satisfy women's liberationists – may be obtained from the following:-

The Family Planning Association, Margaret Pyke House, Mortimer Street, London W1A 4QW. Ask for *Modern Methods of Birth Control* or *Straight Facts about Sex and Birth Control*.

Marie Stopes Memorial Clinic, 108 Whitfield St., London W1P 6BE. Ask for their "Method Slip". The clinic also offers condoms (CBC & Durex brands) by mail.

LR Industries Ltd., Hall Lane, Chingford, London E4. Ask for *Marriages are Made*. (Manufacturers of Durex).



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(First issue June)
Subscriptions £2.00
9 Newburgh Street,
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Book REVIEWS

NARCOTIC PLANTS,
by Dr. W. Emboden (Studio Vista
£2.80).

If you want to pick a mandrake root, tie it to a dog's neck with a rope, stand at a distance and block your ears before you summon the beast to wrench up the plant, the mandrake lets out a shriek of horror as it's pulled out. All who hear that sound fall dead — so it goes.

Mandragora officinarum grows under gallows. They issue forth from the ground where the semen of the hanged man falls. Thus it comes.

In point of fact, but not in place of phantasy, the mandrake is one of the nightshade and potato family, along with belladonna and the *Datura* species which include stramonium. (Get it from herbal asthma cigarettes). These plants contain Atropine alkaloids like scopolamine, a "truth serum". With the right dose you get a cloudy and delirious trip crowded with wierd experiences, mostly forgotten in turn. To take too little is just uncomfortable, too much is fatal. Once is enough, and *Datura fatuosa* as good as any.

And yet wise men, and well-tried traditions of consciousness control, like Don Juan and the method he used to turn on Castenada can make these herbs serve a way to a transcendence that really means something.

Majoun and maybe D.P. benefit from a small addition of datura. A spot of scop might go well with acid in the right conditions.

Some, though not enough, of these facts are from William Emboden's new book *Narcotic Plants*. It's an attractive production. Right from the cover photo of a poppy. A hypnotic image, at once, a buddhist mandala, the cross and a tattered red flag. Flipping through it you see plenty of old and new illustrations and 30 odd pages of colour photos of the plants and the ethnic bricker for getting high on them. At the end there's an index, a bibliography and appendices on chemistry and botany — alas, all four incomplete and inadequate as guides for finding further information elsewhere.

It's fact-packed and entertaining all the same — if you're interested.

By some gentle biochemical cooking you can get STP from nutmegs. The essential oils of fennel, aniseed, dill and parsley can also give a variety of mind-blowing chemical hybrids of speed and mescaline if you treat them right.

There are all sorts of (maybe) good trips to be brickered from botanic gardens. *Actinidea polygama*, a specific for cooling out tigers is O.K.



Columbian Indians chewing coca (from Mariani)

for us (make a strong tea from the twigs). Smoking the Madagascan periwinkle gets you stoned but fucks your blood and makes your hair fall out.

The Khat (*Catha Adulis*) they eat out east is a natural source of dextedrine and paranoid Yememis. Its daily export to Aden led to the setting-up Etheopiar Airways ("For highly sympathetic service").

If you are interested then this is a tempting item at £2.80, but don't expect it to live up to its first impressions or the blurb. It may be the only book around that's all about mind-blowing plants and fungi but it has less than 90 pages of text randomly sampling a vast field. Superficially, it's scholarly, with long words and quaint quotations, but more closely it's unsystematic and full of errors and omissions.

Opium a hallucinogen? What about the *Umbelliferaceae*? Where's our famous Wormwood (*Artemisia absinthia*) and Hemlock? Doesn't he know that you can get smashed on an O.D. of lettuce? "The pleasant taste of cola nuts" is like chewing aspirins. It wasn't the Buddha who cut off his eyelids... etc. etc. O.K. for the coffee (*coffea arabica*) table and showing off your superior experience. A glossy product by a Mandroid who can't have got far beyond the odd joint. Allow a week between ripping it off and giving it away.

Actually the only serious fault is in the author's frequent platitudes and moralising. "Just as ergot was

the scourge of the middle ages, so LSD may turn out to be the scourge of the 20th century, this we may leave to the judgement of history". Irrelevant crap on several counts. He keeps coming up with variations of the sick myth that the wonderful world of natural trips are just a means by which Man escapes briefly from the miserable conditions of his 'reality'. As though anew and higher consciousness of being in the world couldn't emerge from experiencing it in multiple perspectives. As we say, any state attainable on drugs could be reached without them by control of inner space. But not if you've no knowledge of your destination. Tell me, Professor... is it your bread scene or your ego that's threatened by alternative realities?

THE UNDERGROUND DICTIONARY. Eugene E. Landy, Published by McGibbon & Kee, £1.50.

".....She speaks good English, she invites you up into her room, then she steals your voice and leaves you howling at the moon....." Hip slang was "invented" (or rather grew up) for two reasons; to hold people together by giving them a common language which the straights didn't understand; and to escape the confines of fixed words, words with static meanings, the sort you find in a dictionary. So Eugene E. Landy has stolen our voice and stuffed it into another dictionary.

Is it any good, though? Gentle reader, any dictionary which acknowledges the help of the Los

Angeles Police Department Narcotics Division must be good!

For example:-

piss v. urinate, n.1. *Urine*, 2. *Exclamation of disgust* e.g. *Oh Piss!* see *PISSED*.

pain in the arse n. See *EUGENE E. LANDY*.

BENEATH THE CITY STREETS,
Peter Laurie. Penguin 45p.

"The fundamental function of civil defence... is the preservation of government."

Ever since Uncle Sam gave the Nips the old one, two, people have been in a cosmic sweat. Threat. Mummy lay smack on you, Daddy shit bombs if you don't behave. Yes, Hiroshima and Nagasaki brought conventional history to a full stop. What next? Throwing up/hands flying through the air. It was enough to make the sedentary English walk to Aldermaston, the sedated sit in Trafalgar Square. The Bomb sweeps into the nightmare displacing suffocation by Subway as top of the twilight pops. Well polish up your buttons, Laurie's warmed over weather report is enough to make a pacifist spit. It gave me the thin shits reading this rehabilitation of the H-bomb. The be all and end all becomes just another canister of CS gas. A little whitewash on the windows and most of us outside the 4 mile limit will be okay. And look how remarkably well our capital equipment withstands blast. All that nonsense about fallout and burning flesh, just froth from hysterical taxpayers. Swept aside by sober research. It's ten years since Spies for Peace blew the gaff but there is still enough fear left to sell a scare even when it's squeezed through an empirical sieve. Look, at worst, an all out but limited 5 megaton attack would kill 37% and given the old phlegm we could be back in a decade. The rain will wash away the dust and deep sea fish will serve instead of Wall's bangers. Community singing and the Home Service will keep us together.

Laurie expects us to swallow the next one like we did the last two. Let's see some stiff upper on your loose and flabby, freaks! Beside the exhausting analysis of military strategy shows that even in these days of infallible computation the weaponry is too inaccurate and uneconomical. We have nowhere near enough to win and far too many just to deter. Submarines are still where it's at. Civilians, leave it to our underseas heroes, conventional warfare will be improved for your recreation and involvement. Complacent, however, we cannot be. A limited affair is

Film REVIEWS

tolerable, but these multiple war-heads could destroy even our best laid plans to protect our government. So be prepared and remember wear white if you are frightened of the big flash. The question why doesn't get an air burst until the last chapter. Having been subjected to so many lbs per sq. inch I was beginning not to care. Why? Why spend £1,500 million on building a shockproof shield for 16,000 members of the ruling class?

Why have all these strengthened communication lines, tunnels and deep shelters for the Regional Seats of Government if the military hardware isn't to be used? Why all the Orwellian double-talk? Because we learn on page 250, we live in a permanent arms economy. And there is nothing like a steady job to give you peace of pocket. So the Western alliance sucks us off daily to satisfy its paranoid projects. Projected imperialism in outer space requires the pacification and mystification of the crew of mother-ship. Conquest of outer and domination of inner in the name of exploration/defence. Janus-like god to be bought with our fucking sweat. But in the basic schizophrenia of the rulers lies our hope. The Egyptians, whose monuments and technology were based on a morbid fascination/fear of death (pyramids and embalming), finally collapsed because their obsessions strung them out. Maybe this lot will get so jumpy that a real threat of revolution or a false alarm will send them scurrying. Concrete down the entrances, move in the video freaks and show the zoo on closed circuit. Ted Heath after three weeks of bulgy beef. Now I wouldn't mind boring my grand-mutants with tales of that. By the way, there is ten tons of T.N.T. for every man, woman and child among us, so why not come down to the Ministry of Defence with me and claim yours?

Dummy Slugs.

MYTHOLOGIES,
by Roland Barthes
(Jonathan Cape £2.50).

Anyone who buys this book expecting to read the adventures of Greek Gods, Celtic Warriors or Red Indian Totems is in for a disappointment. The title is nevertheless accurate, the book is about *modern* myths; the adventures of the Michelin Man and Persil, of Katie and the Silver OXO cubes. If you should buy it by mistake, read it anyway, it's worth the effort.

Roland Barthes is French, "the leading exponent of semiology, the science of signs and symbols". He is also intelligent, witty and very scathing, a combination notably lacking in English academ-

ics who on the whole prefer to lick arses.

Barthes sees "myth" as a form of speech which conceals what is really happening in the world (just as the Greek Gods did) like a "cuttlefish squirting out its ink". He finds myth everywhere.

This book, written in 1956, and typically only just translated, dissects myth from an amazing range of sources; newspapers, films, wrestling, cookery books, striptease, travel guides, toys, election posters, soap ads etc. etc. and reveals what lies behind their innocent "obviousness", the "what goes without saying". Each hatchet job is a separate one or two page essay, sarcastic and stylistic.

For instance, "Operation Margarine" compares, with a straight face, the sales techniques of the Army, the Church and Stork Margarine.

He values sarcasm very highly, the "condition of truth" in our times. A very un-English attitude; don't we regard sarcasm as "the lowest form of wit"?

Except up North, it is not allowed in England to be serious and humorous, or sincere and sarcastic at the same time. You're expected to keep them apart so as not to frighten people; the mixture is too corrosive for woolly minds.

This book ought to interest every-

one involved in the Underground Press (though it probably won't); after all, we did start out to tell people where it's at, behind the crud the straight press throws at us. Didn't we? Huh? Oh well, perhaps not, maybe we just wanted to produce *different* myths; sexier, dopier, rock 'n'rollier myths, rather than do without myths.

Pass the Tolkien luv.

Schraden Giftgas

A DAY IN THE DEATH OF JOE EGG - Directed by Peter Medak.
(Columbia, Shaftesbury Ave.)

Since it is characteristic of the times that dwelling on the darker sides of living is considered to be a fun thing to do, this film is very funny; and if I thought that films ever really changed anything (besides the financial situation of actors and directors, I'd be tempted to say that this is quite an important film.

It's an uncomfortable little ride through the wreckage of people's lives - not just through the ruin of Joe Egg's life, the idiot/spastic vegetable daughter of the couple who produced her (Alan Bates & Janet Suzman), but taking in on the way an excursion into the pitiful attempts of the couple to repair, or at least disguise, the broken link between each other.

The nastiness of the jokes prevent

it from ever being just a middle-aged ladies sightseeing tour, but the trip gets really heavy in these parts which give us a glimpse from the angle in which the existence of Joe is not the only reason for the marriage's crack-up. "The boat of love breaks up in the current of everyday life" - and Joe is only one small part of their everyday life. There is also the madness of spending your days doing things which leave you empty but exploding (He is a school teacher). Then there's the recognition of your boredom after years of contact with one person, when your love becomes a drug which is killing you.

And the humiliation in trying to resuscitate what has died (to get his hard-on he needs to get her to describe the performance of her previous lovers). Who wouldn't squirm slightly in the seat when seeing even a little bit of yourself slide disembodied past the coach window?

Although this is not a film I will be taking my old Mum to see, it is curiously old-fashioned in its handling of the nastiness. It glorifies nothing, not even violence - because glorification involves making the event mysterious, and in this film even when the father tries to kill of the burdensome vegetable we are made well aware of his reasons. Not only was it an understandable thing to do, but an eminently sane one too. Incredibly, you almost get the impression that Peter Nichols, the man who wrote the original play

continued on page 52...



Joe Egg—"The boat of love breaks up in the current of everyday life..."



HELP YOURSELF



Help Yourself Boxes are a Community Service. They are entirely free and are designed for non-profit community groups. Organisations wishing to advertise should contact HELP YOURSELF c/o OZ, 19 Gt. Newport St., London, WC2.

SEARCH, 93 Abingdon St., Blackpool. 0253 20760

We currently run a referral and advisory service and although we operate between 10a.m. and 4p.m. Monday to Saturday at present, we will be counselling 24hours a day by the end of this year. Get in touch with us for details of the many Search developments planned for July 1972- June 1973.

OUTPUT, 1a The Paragon, Bath. 0225 63717

Output is the Bath Arts Workshop Information Service run from the Workshop Shop. We run a 24 hour information service (10p.m. 10a.m. emergency only). We also print a once monthly broadsheet that falls into two categories. (1) Workshop News and (2) Local community group information.

BLACK BOX NEWS SERVICE, 15 Hope St., Glasgow C.2. 041-221 4750 041-883 3417 (night)

Britain's largest alternative agency supplying socialist, student and alternative press with fortnightly news packets including features and pix covering Scotland and Northern Ireland.

NEXUS, 15 Hope St., Glasgow, C.2. 041-221 4750

A 24hour info/advisory service will be fully operational by July. It is acting as a catalyst in a positive promotion of community self-help groups. It is independent of grants and will be financed by its own projects: Nexus Film Group, shops, cafes and printing services.

TOUCH, 56 Peddie St., Dundee. 0382 643367

Touch operates from a shop cum office. Sometimes we manage to sell a dusty magazine or politically inspired book from our well stocked shelves. You are welcome to wander in for tea and a rap with us, our Claimants Union or Woman's Group. We are very short of people right now so perhaps you could ring between 11a.m. and 7p.m. and tell us your talent.

ADVISE, 313 Upper St., London, N.1. 01-226 9365

Advise is about to publish the 'Advise Manual' (10p.) It hopes to represent alternative living styles, alternative employment, legal self-defense, urban agriculture and the like. The mag is strictly non-profit giving all monies not put back into the publication into the community. Politically, our editorial policy and practise is grass-roots and socialistic.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES, 152 Camden High St., London, N.W.1.

A lot of people talk about your civil liberties, but NCCL does something about them. The only permanent and independant organisation in Britain working to protect and extend all our civil liberties. We are financed solely by subscription and donations. If you value your liberty, join the NCCL and join in its work.

PROP, (Organiser Dick Pooley), 96 Victoria Ave., Hull, Yorks.

Preservation of the Rights of Prisoners is an offshoot of RAP (Radical Alternatives to Prison), We are similarly dedicated to reform of the prison system in this country, but are more immediately concerned to give practical support to released prisoners. We are shortly publishing the first issue of PROP magazine. We need support, financial and otherwise.

COUM TRANSMICATIONS, 8 Prince St., (off Dagger Lane), Hull, E. Yorks.

We are an aid and a service and our aims originate from a desire to make people laugh. We convert would be suicides, paranoiacs and schizophrenics by absorbing them into our group.

ACTION-Release Top Floor, 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds 2. 0532 40530

Provides 24hr. free information, advice and referral on legal, medical or social problems like abortion, contraception, drugs, arrest, V.D., rape, rent, Social Security etc. In fact anything you may come to us with. Crawlers are welcome during the day (10a.m. - 6p.m.) for free coffee and conversation, or if you prefer phone us any time day or night.

OUTSIDER, 9 Leonard St., Hull. 0482 20222

Outsider are 8/9 people who do window cleaning, removals, odd jobs, discos, allotments etc. to put money into the community via soup-kitchen, 24hour info help service, house for the homeless and cheap (sometimes free) clothing and furniture shop. This Summer: cheap food, play group, open house for mothers and kids, country cottage (weaving and legal surgery).

CLEVELAND WRECKING YARD, 175 Newcastle St., Bursham, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs. 0782 86024

C.W.Y. is 9 months old and functions out of the info service (a community thing centered round Social Security and landlord hassles) We are involved in promoting our own benefits, the fortnightly 'Greasers Ball' and various local college gigs using our own resources and those of Community Music & Music Liberation Front.

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Film REVIEWS

from which the film was taken, wasn't just indulging himself (hippopotamus-like) in nausea and disgust, but was even trying to explain it. So, no economy-class coach tour this! You get a guide thrown in for your money, up the front with his microphone telling you all about the scenery.

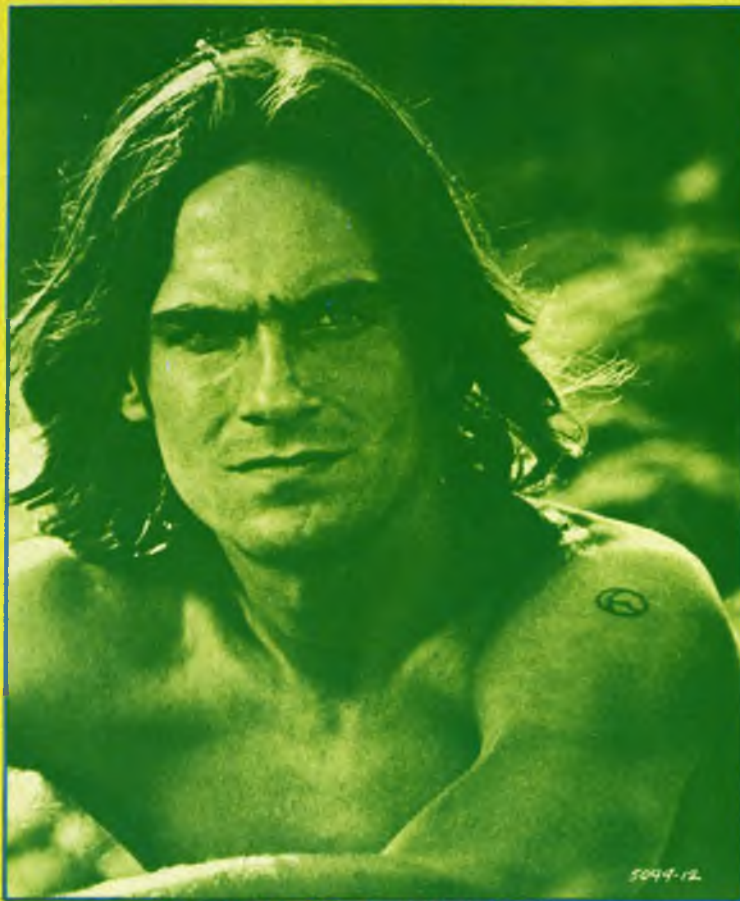
Stuart Wooler

TWO-LANE BLACKTOP,
Directed by Monte Hellman.

It's three years now since Peter Fonda and Dennis Hopper went looking for Amerika and discovered a box-office formula. The cult elevation that attended *Easy Rider's* initial appearance, and the inevitable reaction that followed, have perhaps subsided enough for us to look at the film's merits and failings more objectively. If Captain America was really no more than Peter Fonda's fantasy of Peter Fonda, and the film's commercial success was based on the traditional Hollywood pattern of providing the audience with an idealised fantasy-hero, at least Dennis Hopper's direction managed to inject something of the 'underground' film-maker's concern for the medium into mainstream film-making, as well as providing a healthy slice of post-Dylan culture.

The commercial success of *Easy Rider* was also something of a mixed blessing: "looking for Amerika" became a viable commercial proposition, but the carbon cop-outs that followed showed little of the genuine concern for their subject that distinguished the original. (Fonda, to his credit, didn't try to cash in on the *Easy Rider*-syndrome, and followed with a western called *The Hired Hand*, in many ways a more honest film, but a box-office failure). Anyone who has spent much of the past three years in darkened cinemas hoping to see the Great Amerikan Movie and getting yet another helping of second-hand *Easy Rider* mythology is advised not to give up just yet. It takes only one film of real value to justify sitting through all the others, and *Two-Lane Blacktop* is such a film. The only thing currently preventing you from seeing it is the British distributors' apparent reluctance to show it.

The plot of *Two-Lane Blacktop* is minimal. A driver (James Taylor) and a mechanic (Dennis Wilson) in a '55 Chevy, modified for racing.



James Taylor—"Racing is his living..."

Los Angeles at night: a drag-race broken up by the police. They head out of LA going east, looking for marks to take on at 200-300 dollars a race. Racing is their living and their life. A girl (Laurie Bird) gets into the Chevy at a food-stop, and stays. Continuing East, they encounter a 1970 G.T.O. driven by a middle-aged, self-styled hipster (Warren Oates). They take on the G.T.O.: a race to the east coast, for pink slips (the American equivalent of log books). Before long, it is the girl they are competing for, and when she leaves, it is no longer even a competition.

They are just going for speed. The script is credited to Rudolph Wurlitzer and Will Corry, but falls clearly into the pattern of Monte Hellman's previous work: characters about whom nothing is revealed (not even their names), unable to make any real contact with their present situation because of their total denial of the past, and the comparisons to Sartre and Kafka that greeted Hellman's now-classic western, *The Shooting*, apply equally here. Once again, Hellman has taken a *genre* subject and used it to express his own very personal view of human nature. The driver is the one who seems most completely to have denied his past, and

is therefore the most total victim — he has effectively destroyed his own existence: While the driver of the G.T.O. uses the chameleon-like defence of changing his identity in each new situation he encounters. (In a film notable for the naturalness of its performances, it is impossible not to single out Warren Oates, who here gives the finest performance of his not undistinguished career.) Only the girl seems to have any real contact with her past/present situation, or displays any capacity for happiness or despair in the present. She goes from the mechanic to the driver to G.T.O. before finally establishing a wordless relationship with a motorcyclist at a foodstop, and goes off with him leaving most of her possessions behind without any apparent concern. She's got everything she needs, she's an artist, she doesn't look back. The driver, the mechanic and G.T.O. just go on until they burn themselves out.

Hellman has no political axe to grind, nor does he have any freedom fantasies to offer. What *Two-Lane Blacktop* conveys, better than any other film I've seen, is the sense of a particular culture at a particular time, of a society caught in an untenable situation where there's no success like failure and failure's no

success at all. The only other comparable film I can think of is Jacques Rivette's *L'amour Fou*, where a rather different kind of life-style was examined with the same sensitivity, but which, like Hellman's film, has yet to be shown here publicly. Maybe the distributors are right to be nervous. After all, who wants to buy an unglamorized life-style?

Clive Hodgson

THE LAST PICTURE SHOW,
(Directed by Peter Bogdanovich)
Curzon Cinema, W1.

The Last Picture Show is a very realistic movie; in other words it's confusing.

Some people will see it as a "camp" film, "evoking the nostalgic world of the 50's". D.A. haircuts and Hank Williams on the jukebox. Others might see it as a romantic view of a Texas oil town; wide windy plains, whisky-drinking hard hats, fighting and fuck-ing; a low-key re-make of *Hud*.

Yet others will see no more in it than a hip Peyton Place.

All these elements are in the film, but if it were not more than these it would be a cruddy film, which it isn't.

All I can say is what I read in the film (regardless of whether Bogdanovich meant to put it there). After all, I'm a propagandist, not an ad-man or an art critic. A film which is at all realistic can be interpreted as you would a real situation.

The placing of the action in Anarene, Texas in the 1950s is not the main point. The fact that it's set in a small community which is being transformed (though the inhabitants are scarcely aware of it) by a new industry (oil) is. The backwoods of Anarene and the phenomenal wealth which can quickly be made from oil, makes it an exaggerated example of a change that has swept the whole Western world since the war. Exaggerated hence easy to grasp. This change which produced our generation of fucked-up freaks, was the appearance of *social mobility* on a massive scale. The process of "making it", "getting on in the world" i.e. rising out of the class faction you were born into. This film could have been made in Romford or Chesterfield or Dagenham (it would just have been a much more boring, greyer film). The principal characters in the film, Sonny, Duane, Sam, Jaycee and her parents are divided into

Love, Peace, Acid, Beads, Crashpads, Lightshows, Arts Labs, Karma, Incense, Grateful Dead & Far Out!

Warren Hague.

Join the Revolution and see — what? Two years ago, freaks began to join the political Revolution in earnest. Now, whenever there is a demo against internment in Northern Ireland or against the Industrial Relations Bill or any other cause dear to the Left, freaks are there in force. How did we get there? We used to see these things in a different light; we had a different scale of values. We joined the politics because we sensed a need for some political structure in order to fight the attacks of straight society upon our life-style. Woodstock impressed us with what we could do with numbers. We were against capitalism so we adopted the politics of the Left. And some of the Left started adopting our life-style and brought their politics to us. How it happened is not important. What is important is do we like where we are now?

The statement of our values is "dope, rock'n'roll and fucking in the streets". We know what we mean by this even if straights don't. We also know how hard it is to achieve what we want. But if we really do believe in the transformation of society by the transformation of individuals, then we have to fight for our rights to live by our values. Have we been fighting for these rights? I think not.

We have supported the I.R.A. But how would any of us fare at their hands? They have attacked dopers and beat-up women who court British soldiers. No-one could seriously state that the I.R.A. want a free society or that they would tolerate us. The same is true of the Protestants. So why are we involved?

And the working class? Have we not romanticised them? Are they not, on the whole, rednecks as committed to capitalism as that arch-redneck, Edward Heath?

Trade Unions, the Labour Party, I.M.G., I.S., C.P. — all these groups represent power struggles alien to us because we do not want power. What we want is freedom — freedom to break out of the structures we have been taught and do what we want to do. Freedom to be what we want to be.

Dope and sex are revolutionary activities. Revolution in the most immediate and personal way. We have built a way of life based on the awareness gained from drugs and sex and if we have learned anything, surely it is that freedom is anarchy. Rules, duty, obligation, responsibility, order — all these ideas limit us and ultimately limit all mankind. All these things serve to maintain power structures and the desire for power created Charles Manson — not drugs and sex.

Hippy murderers are as rare as people jumping out of windows on acid. Yet, it is illegal to use acid because of that sort of superstition and myth. All of us face arrest and imprisonment daily, simply because we use the drugs of our choice — drugs that every commission set up by Governments in the UK, US, and Canada

have described as not being harmful. In all our concern about internment in N. Ireland, have we marched in our thousands to protest the imprisonment of drug-users and dealers? In Canada, the most conservative newspapers are editorialising in favour of complete legalisation of cannabis. The *Montreal Gazette* said this would be "the triumph of reason over superstition and myth". In Europe, you can be sent to prison for writing favourably about smoking hash.

Writing favourably (and honestly) about sex is also a big no-no. So much sexual activity is illegal or frowned-upon that choice is effectively limited for most people to heterosexual marriage. Institutionalised sex leads to institutionalised relationships. We have experimented with sex to the extent that we know more about it than anyone else. What we have learned is that there is an infinite variety of sexual relationships and sexual activities. We do not want to be confined to roles approved by State, Church or Majority. Unfortunately, many people in Women's Lib and Gay Lib insist on their own versions of approved roles. I think Gay Lib is the best thing to have happened to heterosexuals this century. It has helped to break down the notion that the sexes are so different that male and female human beings are alien to each other. It has also helped to break down the isolation that develops between persons of the same sex because of role-playing. Yes, I think Gay Lib has been great for heterosexuals, bisexuals and homosexuals, but I am no longer a member. I do not go to Gay Lib because I see an insistence on a specific role for homosexuals that doesn't fit me and a political stance that is removed from reality. The Quakers recently passed a resolution calling for the age of consent to be lowered to 14. If Gay Lib had a concern for all homosexuals it would actively campaign for this. But it doesn't and like drugs, sexual freedom doesn't get the energy it deserves.

The Night Assemblies Bill, the new drugs act and the use of the Obscene Publications Act hit out at us. There are campaigns such as the Festival of Light and others directed at making life more difficult for us. Are we fighting back? Should we be directing our energy and creativity to the things that concern us or should we wait until the Revolution is accomplished? If the Revolution happened tomorrow, we would be dead in concentration camps or mental homes. Until you and I are free to have "dope, rock'n'roll and fucking in the streets" without fear, we will remain within the limitations of our own fear. Perhaps, we should have another smoke-in in Hyde Park this summer. Perhaps we should also form a Freaks United Party to campaign for these rights. We don't want to be rich and we don't want to be powerful. But to get what we want, we will have to be united. If we are not united soon, we will be done in by the Right now, or the Left later. I want the Revolution to happen but I want to survive it.

**Will the
real Mr. Greer
please
stand up?**



Not quite; but we did try. 'Germaine Greer's Husband Reveals All' lied the second issue of *Cosmopolitan*, which revealed nothing, not even a navel, and sold out. Paul du Feu ('Mr. Greer') was just as angered by *Cosmopolitan's* rip-off as their readers, and agreed to pose erect for *OZ*. But every time his prick was ready, our photographer wasn't. Here's Paul at half-mast (which is better than no mast at all).



HOW YOU
GONNA CRUCIFY
A CHILD IN
VIETNAM
WITHOUT ANY
ARMS?

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Ralph STEADMAN

It is clear now to everyone that the suicide of civilisation is in progress... Wherever there is lost the consciousness that every man is the object of concern for us just because he is a man, civilisation and morals are shaken, and the advance to fully developed inhumanity is only a question of time... Albert Schweitzer