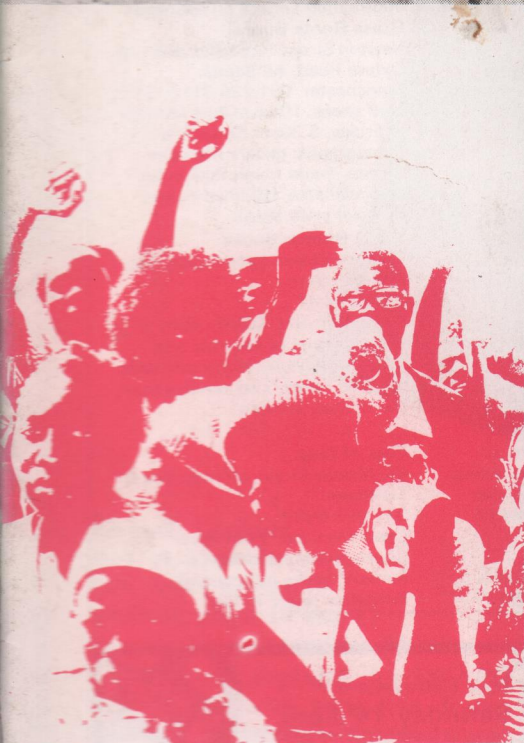


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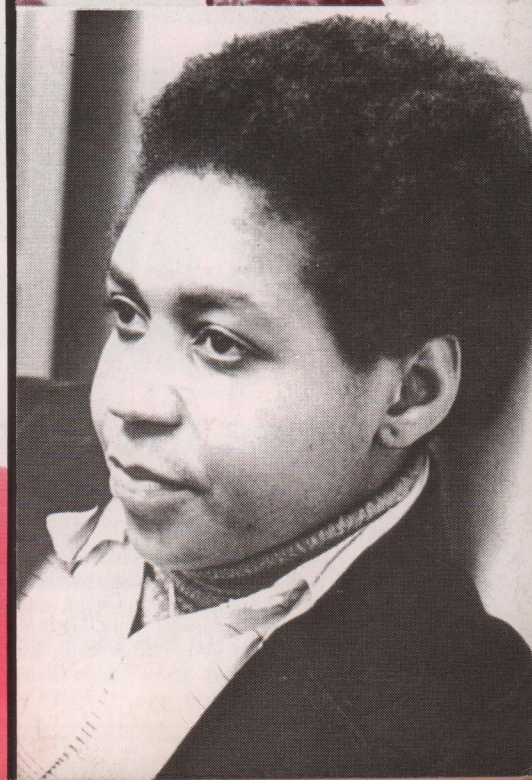
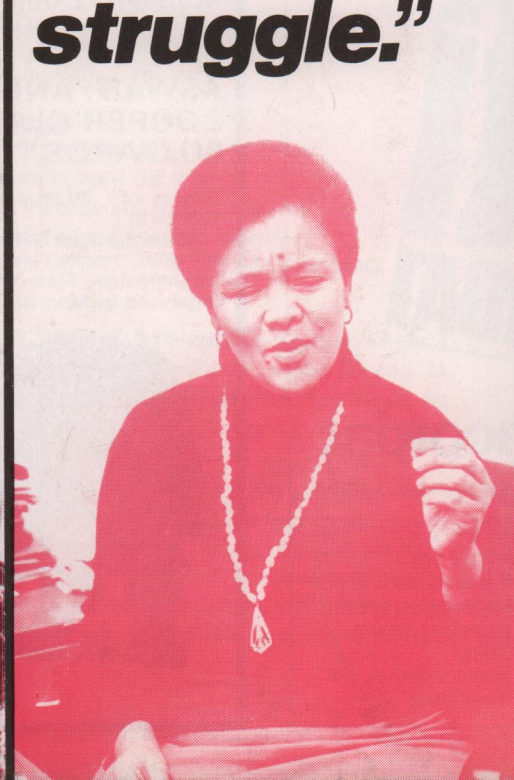
May '79

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Issue 29



NAMIBIA
***"Why
should
we be
diplomatic.
We're in a
life and
death
struggle."***



**UNVEIL THE
REVOLUTION!**

LONDON MAY 19



**Womens Voice national
demonstration
SUPPORT OUR SISTERS IN
IRAN**

Womens Voice calls on all women's organisations to join with us in making this demonstration a success. If you want to be involved write to Womens Voice Box 82, London, E2.

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Oppose the Concordat

Concorde cost us millions, the Social Contract cost us billions and now we have the CONCORDAT. This is the new Labour Party TUC Social Contract. It's aim is to smash our right to strike and to control our own pay deals. Labour hope it will win them the general election. If the Concordat is put into effect the low paid will suffer most and that means us women. Rank and file trade unionists have written a pamphlet which explains the dangers. Why not send off for a copy? Write to Anti Concordat, 265a Seven Sisters Road, London, N4. Price 20p & 10p p&p Bulk rate 10 for £1 50 (post free).

Rock Against Racism presents:

Militant Entertainment Tour Extravaganza!
Alexandra Palace Saturday 14 April
4.30pm-12.00pm

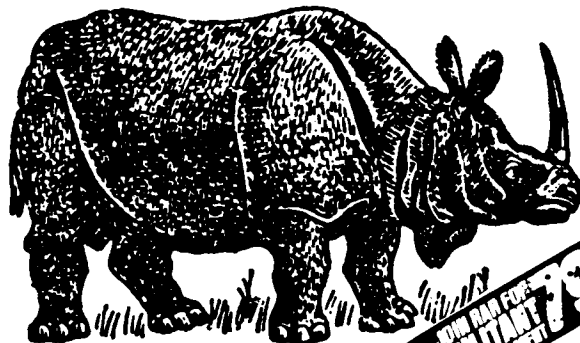
Tube to Wood Green, then bus W3 or walk from Wood Green British Rail



ASWAD/ANGELIC UPSTARTS/JOHN COOPER CLARKE/DAMBALA/LEYTON BUZZARDS/THE RUTS

Tickets - £1.70 (in advance*); £1.95 (on the door); £1.70 (with dole card)

* Advance tickets from - 'Rough Trade' Notting Hill, 'Ace Records' Islington, 'Honky Tonk' Records, Kentish Town, 'Small Wonder' Walthamstow. Free creche available Organised by Men Against Sexism.



**JOIN RANK FILE
MILITANT
ENTERTAINMENT 79**

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Cover photo of Martha Ford by Jane Henriques

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In case you are wondering why our ads are out of date: this months cover was originally printed for the April edition. Then the election was announced and we had to make some speedy changes, printing a new cover. And now we're late again in appearing because we had to wait until the election results were through before we could print the May Edition. **Next month** copies will be distributed on Wednesday 6 June, so the last date for news and letters to reach us will be Thursday 24 May. But contact us any time with ideas, features, issues that you think we should take up. Write to us at: **Womens Voice Box 82, London E2** Telephone us on 01 986 6222

Maggie wins- we lose

Margaret Thatcher is the first woman prime minister in Britain. That's how the history books will remember her, alongside all the other firsts in the march towards women's equality—the first woman doctor, the first woman to fly a plane, the first woman to drive a train. The press won't let us forget it. Women's magazines around the world will be running exclusive interviews. women's equality one bit. deserve to be among that hall of fame. She doesn't believe in womens equality one bit.

'I don't like strident females,' she gloats. 'I like people with ability. You get somewhere because of ability and not sex.' She firmly believes that clever women, like herself, will rise miraculously to the top—and the rest of us will stay at the bottom. Where we belong.

And her government will do all it can to see that we stay there. They are committed to trimming the EOC to nothing. It is true, that the Equal Opportunities Commission hasn't done that much to promote women's equality, but to lose it now will encourage every male chauvinist in the land.

The anti-abortion MPs will be lining up to introduce new legislation to curb abortion facilities, and with it sex education in school, contraceptive information, family planning clinics.

Margaret Thatcher is the first woman prime minister because she had the best right wing politics at a time when the Tories were looking for a new right wing leader as they dumped Ted Heath. The fact that she is PM is a victory for reaction not progress.

The Tories won the election because people wanted a change, and couldn't see what sort of a change they were voting for. Working people are fed up with Labour, the Party that is supposed to have their interests at heart. It has sent up prices, lengthened the dole queues, cut the health service and every social service to the bone. It betrayed its supporters. Many of them didn't vote. Many will have voted Tory.

Some will have been persuaded to do so by the campaigns which have been waged on the Tories' behalf. By the police, for instance, who beat up and arrested hundreds of Asians, West Indians and Anti Nazi League supporters in Southall, killing Blair Peach and then shouted, 'more law and order'.

Or by SPUC, the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child, who orchestrated a disgusting campaign around three live abortions, two of them conveniently held over from January, and then shouted 'murderers' at those who have campaigned for more progressive abortion laws.

A Tory Government is a setback for every one of us. It will be no use hoping that they won't be as bad as we predict. They may wait a week or two, a couple of months, but as sure as they are Tories they will introduce legislation which will curb every one of our hard-won rights.

We have to make sure they don't have it all their own way. That's why now more than ever everyone will have to stand up and be counted. It's about time you joined Womens Voice.

Sandra Edwards, the Tory candidate for Swansea, wasn't able to join Ted Heath for a campaign lunch when he visited her constituency. Because it was held in the men-only City and County Club. Serves her right for belonging to such a reactionary mob.

The fight starts here: if you belong to a trade union you should be at the conference to Defend Our Unions on June 23. See page 11





photo: Diane Bailey



photo: Carlos Augusto (IFL)

Left: scenes of violence last November during the Reclaim the Night Demo in Soho. Above: mother and child join the picket outside the court where the women were on trial for 'obstructing' the police.

RECLAIM THE NIGHT!

COURT CASE DISMISSED

A RECLAIM the Night demonstration through Soho last November was brutally broken up by the police and sixteen women were arrested. Their trials began on Monday April 23.

The first trial resulted in a mere £5 fine. The second two cases were dismissed by the magistrate hearing the cases, before they were even finished.

The second woman was charged with obstructing the police in their duty but the picture that resulted in the dismissal of the case showed her on the ground with a policeman sitting on top of her hitting her with his truncheon.

The evidence of the police was so obviously false that the magistrate then delivered a lecture to the police in which he referred to the obvious proportion of lies in their evidence and asked that it be investigated by the appropriate authorities.

The trials are way behind schedule. All sixteen were due to

have been heard in five days, only five have come up. The others will have to be allocated new dates and so the case drags on.

Janie Grote, one of the defendants, told Womens Voice how she felt about the success of the trials so far:

'I feel very pleased, and very surprised at how they've gone so far. The whole situation in court is very intimidating. The arrogance of the police is just unbelievable. They were so patronising and abusive and they had obviously given their case very little thought. The results so far though, have really lifted our spirits even though when it's your turn, you get very worried in case you might be the first one to get heavily fined.'



photo: B G Donovan (Reflex photography)

Reclaim The Night marches are still going on throughout the country. Women are taking to the streets, demanding the right to be able to walk safely, on their own, at any time.

On April 6, over 300 women marched through Liverpool's city centre. It was lively, angry, and joined by many women who were just looking on. Flaming torches were set alight in the city centre creating an atmosphere of confidence and strength, many women stayed on for a disco at the Womens Centre afterwards.

GLASGOW THEATRE GROUP

GLASGOW Womens Voice has written and produced another play. This time it's about a broken toilet which may sound like a strange theme for a play, but it goes on to show how if your house is falling to bits and the council won't do any repairs—that you've got to start organising to beat them.

It's about women living in the kind of crappy conditions we've become used to, but it's also about the fact that through talking and discussing problems where we live and work we can get together and do something about them.

The play is designed for Womens Voice public meetings, Tenant Association meetings, Community Centres—anywhere where bad housing is a campaigning issue. The play is clear, funny and to the point—Why don't you use it? Any Womens Voice or community group within reasonable travelling distance of Glasgow can book it. The script and tape are also available for £2.50 from Didi Ross, 2 Herriot St., Glasgow G41.

Dorte Pape.

EVERY CHILD A WANTED CHILD

ALMOST always, anti-abortionists treat abortion as a simple subject — one in which there are absolute rights and wrongs. Women having abortions are assumed to be unmarried women, selfish women, women who have been careless about taking precautions. Some accuse us of being no better than fascists, taking a grisly pleasure in committing live babies to the incinerator.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Just recently the accusations have reached a new pitch following the much publicised cases of live abortions in Liverpool, Wanstead and Barnsley.

Without any consideration for the feelings of the women involved, the anti-abortionists have taken up these cases and tried to turn them into an election issue. The abortion in Whiston Hospital, Merseyside happened last January (and the one at Wanstead happened over a year ago). We might well ask why they waited till the middle of April before splashing it across the newspapers.

Obviously it is repugnant to think of such late abortions needing to be performed, especially when the woman concerned is forced to go through all the pain of an induced labour.

But those who seek to publicise the more unpleasant details might care to contemplate that many medical procedures involve aspects most of us prefer not to think about. What, for instance happens to amputated limbs? The answer is that they are incinerated. Some aspects of medical practice are unpleasant, but we know them to be necessary to ease and cure human suffering.

But do those who seek to make political capital out of such cases campaign for earlier, safe abortions? On the contrary! Many of them oppose not only abortion, but also contraception. Thanks to their efforts in the past, holding back the development of contraceptive technique and preventing the spread of knowledge, they have ensured that *more* abortions have been performed. Witness to this fact is Italy, where abortion and contraception were so long opposed by the Catholic Church, but where every year tens of thousands of back street abortions were performed with terrible consequences for the women concerned.

In every case where a late abortion is performed we ought to ask: Why was the abortion late? Was it because of the time-wasting procedures employed by reluctant doctors and sanctioned by the current abortion regulations. Was it because of long waiting lists, and the lack of funding for day-care abor-

tion facilities. Was it because local consultants oppose all abortion and were able to exercise a veto over the woman's wishes, forcing her to seek help elsewhere? Was the best possible technique used?

We all know that the techniques for early abortion are safe and comparatively easy. Is it the case that some women are denied the simpler forms of abortion in order to punish them and deter them from becoming pregnant again?

Why, when late abortion is undertaken, is it necessary for the foetus to be born live, with the consequent suffering to all concerned?

Why are facilities so poor, and hospital authorities so insensitive that women who undergo abortion — and come to that women who miscarry or who give birth to still-born babies — are forced to

share the same wards as women experiencing normal childbirth, or women, unable to conceive, undergoing infertility tests?

Of course there are cases where late abortion is, unfortunately, unavoidable. The mother's well-being or the health of the baby may be called in serious question quite late in a pregnancy. In the Barnsley case, the woman concerned had been in contact with German Measles, and it was feared that her baby might be born deaf or blind. Yet even here, questions need to be asked of those in power. Why has the government delayed so long their promised campaign to inoculate all women against German Measles. This in spite of the efforts of the Spastics Society, which has tried, against government pressure, to publicise the dangers of delay.

Of course such cases are harrow-

ing. The foetuses concerned had a very, very small chance of surviving. Had they survived it would have been equally harrowing, for almost certainly they would have been severely disabled, suffering from cerebral palsy, respiratory disorders and other disabilities. It is nonsense to suggest that a twenty-three week old foetus is 'fully-formed' as some anti-abortionists try to.

But these are the questions they are not interested in answering. As the Rev. Thomas Robinson, Vicar of Garston, Liverpool, said 'They seem to me to be totally lacking any Christian sympathy.' And further, 'There would be no need for these late abortions if area health authorities throughout the country were willing to implement the 1967 Act and set up day-care abortion centres so terminations could take place much earlier.'

... EVERY MOTHER A WILLING MOTHER



photo: Angela Phillips (IFL)

THERE were 25,000 of them, an improvement on the 50,000 expected by the organisers (and the smallest anti abortion rally yet) but still enough to chill the blood of the small group of National Abortion Campaign Members who turned out to counter the propoganda on April 28th. SPUC and Life were commemorating what they called the International Day of the Child and their rally in London, was seen as a fitting wind-up to weeks of anti-abortion stories fed to the uncritical press. When SPUC squeaks the media listens. Clearly the only way they will listen to the message of the majority - that women want the right to choose - is to ensure that the next pro-abortion demonstration reflects the real size and strength of our support.
Angela Phillips.

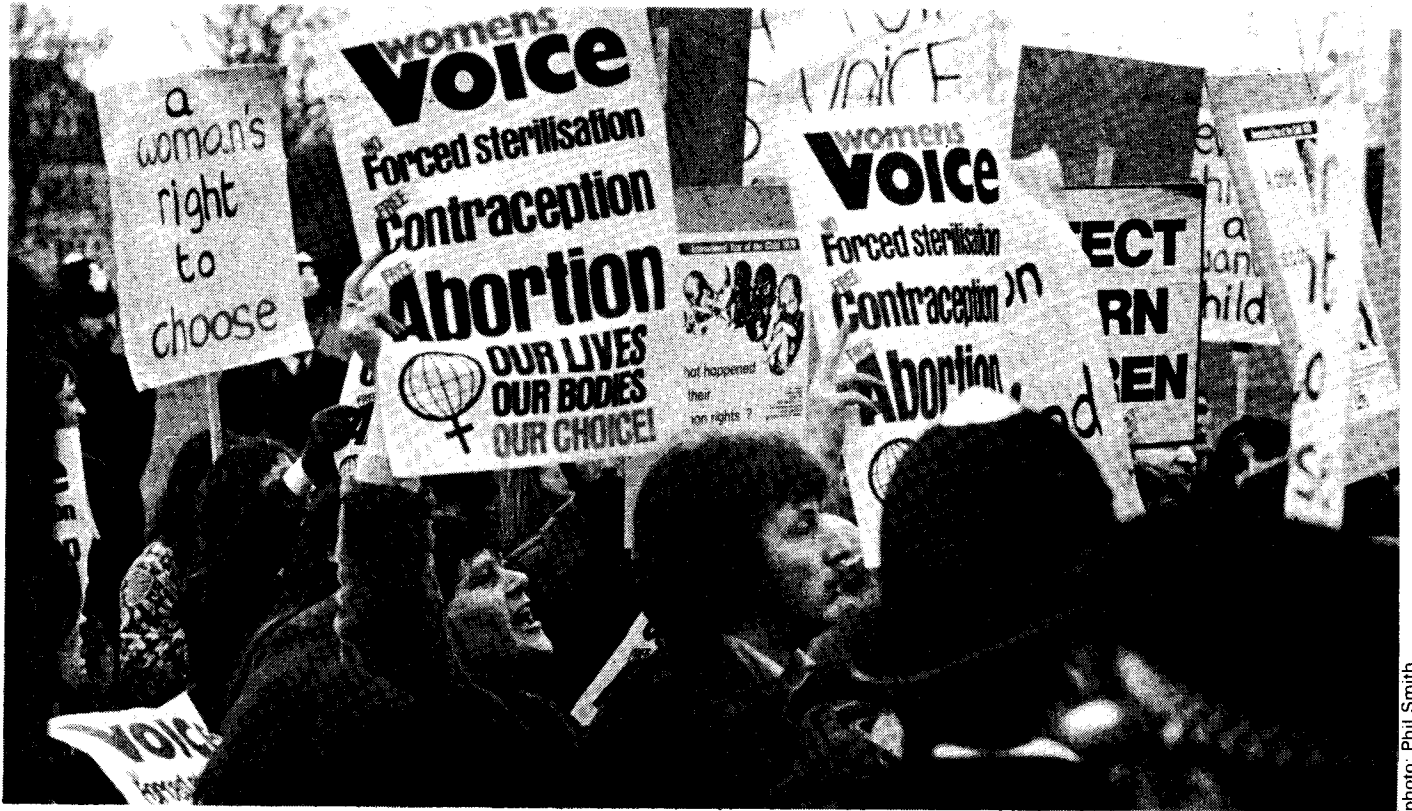


photo: Phil Smith

ON SATURDAY March 31, when thousands of women throughout the world demonstrated for the right to control their own bodies, for free contraception and abortion, LIFE, the anti-abortion organisation, attempted to hold a rally against abortion in Wanstead, East London.

Instead of the expected 400 people only 60 turned up. The meeting was successfully drowned out, despite expensive PA equipment, by 60 or more Womens Voice supporters who kept up a constant stream of heckling, chanting and singing throughout the speeches.

The rally was called because of an abortion 'scandal' blown up in the Sunday People the week before, as reported in last month's Womens Voice. What almost everyone who commented on the case failed to mention, (including the Sunday People), was that an out-patient abortion clinic, for which the AHA allocated the money in 1976 has still not been opened. Why? If there is any scandal in Wanstead it is that.

If we had an out-patient clinic, then such distressing situations where a woman has an abortion on the same ward as women who are having infertility tests, could not arise.

Waltham Forest Womens Voice, went to see the journalists at the Sunday People to find out why this had not been mentioned, and why their report of the failed rally had been made to sound as if it was a great success when even LIFE supporters there acknowledged that they had lost that round. We gave them a statement to print, setting out the real situation and demanding the opening of the clinic.

They did not print it and so, together with Fleet Street Womens

Voice, we handed out leaflets one lunchtime to the workers in the Sunday People offices, giving the true facts of the case.

The Sunday People has dropped the case but the clinic is still not opened and Waltham Forest Womens Voice is now campaigning for the clinic.

Without proper facilities where women can get abortions safely and early, the gutter press and the anti-abortionists will always find lurid scandals with which to prey on the guilt and despair of women who find themselves with an unwanted pregnancy.

Mary Anne Stuart.

LIVERPOOL

THE papers have been full of the story of a woman who had an abortion at Whiston Hospital in Liverpool, in January. The foetus is supposed to have been left crying to die on a draining board by nurses and a priest.

Why was this woman having a termination after 22 weeks? According to the Community Health Council, Whiston Hospital is one of the most difficult hospitals in the North West to get a National Health Service abortion at six to eight weeks, let alone at 22. So there must have been serious medical reasons for it in the first place.

This sort of thing would never happen if abortion was freely available on the NHS. At present the provision for free abortion in Liverpool is appalling, with 70 per cent being done privately, and the charity BPAS hoping to extend its premises because it can't cope with the demand.

Eighteen months ago women on Merseyside won an assurance from the Area Health Authority that an

abortion day care centre would be set up as soon as possible. We're still waiting to hear about the plans!

Three weeks ago Liverpool National Abortion Campaign led a march through the city to protest against the lack of progress. There are plans to step up the campaign

again.

So let's not argue about a foetus that was 'left to die'. Let's get on with the job of campaigning for abortion day care facilities wherever they are needed.

Alison Wilson.



photo: IFL

DUNDEE

WHEN we heard that the All-Scotland SPUC Rally was to be held in Dundee on Sunday April 22, we decided we must show our disgust. They chose Dundee because of the continuously high abortion rate. The rally was a climax to their 'Week of the Unborn Child' in the Year of the Child.

A few of us leafletted the city centre on the Saturday. We distributed nearly 4000 leaflets pointing out the importance of a woman's right to choose and inviting people to join our picket against the SPUC rally. We had already made plenty of large placards and contacted many groups, women trade unionists and hospital workers from whom we also received donations.

On the day we were thrilled to be joined by several womens' groups who'd hired buses from Stirling, Aberdeen and Edinburgh, comrades from in and around Dundee. Doctors For a Woman's Right to Choose, (white coats included), plus mums and wanted kids.

We were about 120 in all and we managed to keep up a constant barrage at the stream of SPUC supporters. One of them shouted at the demonstrators - 'If you ever had a child I hope it's deformed!' - and they call us mindless!

However, there was little of the usual abuse and we felt that the SPUC people who turned up were considerably subdued by our chanting and placards.

Priscilla Doherty and Carol Ewing.

WOMEN BEHIND THE WIRE

THIRTY-eight republican women prisoners in Armagh gaol are fighting for political status.

The women are serving sentences of seven years to life for political offences such as membership of the IRA and conspiracy. But the British State refuses to recognise that they have political opinions and that they are waging a political struggle to end the British occupation of Northern Ireland.

Since March 1976, when special status for political prisoners was removed, the republican prisoners have suffered 23 hours a day solitary confinement, regular searches of both prisoners and visitors, and indigestible food. This statement was sent by a woman in Armagh:

'We are put on report every two weeks for refusing to work. On report day each girl is taken from the cells one at a time into the governor's office.

'He then reads out the charge and finds us guilty and gives out the punishment, this being:

'14 days loss of remission, loss of association of parcels, weekly visits, tuckshop, handicraft and educational facilities. Last but not least there is *lock up* (solitary confinement).'

In an attempt to break the spirit of resistance the prison authorities are making conditions in both Armagh and the better known H block daily more inhuman.

But for a few minutes on International Womens Day, the republican women in Armagh were able to sing with their sisters who

had organised a picket outside the gaol. The picket of about 40 people, was called by a Belfast group, 'Women against Imperialism'.

Messages of solidarity were exchanged between those outside and inside and the prisoners managed to unfurl banners from their cell windows. It was not long however before the Royal Ulster Constabulary attacked the picketers. Eleven people were arrested.

A few weeks ago 'Women against Imperialism' called another picket outside Armagh gaol. It was arranged to coincide with the march and rally in Kilburn, London, called by the Women in Ireland group.

one demonstrator wrote: 'The picket outside Armagh was really successful, a big crowd came all the way from Dublin. The girls in the gaol were able to see and hear us and shouted and sang along with us. That was great.'

It's easy to forget the plight of the political prisoners in Armagh gaol, but they are the women who bear the brunt of the struggle for Irish liberation.

Yana Mintoff

• **The United Troops Out Movement and anti-racist groups are calling a march and rally on Saturday June 16th at 1.30pm from Speakers Corner Marble Arch to Trafalgar Square. The demands are Fight State Racism, Repeal the PTA, Abolish Racist Immigration Controls, Oppose the National Front.**



photo: Derek Speirs (IFL)

We're with you sisters! Women picketing Armagh Gaol on International Womens Day.

theories are gaining credibility among scientists. And not suprisingly the stuff is snapped up by racist groups like the National Front, to justify their policies (see April issues of NF Spearhead for a chilling read).

Another workshop discussed the problems of working in 'a man's world'. While only a few women actually *do* scientific research, most women in science are technicians, doing the shitwork for male scientists higher up the ladder. The group explored ways of supporting each other and organizing as women.

The conference discussed how most women fear scientific issues and feel ignorant about technology—and yet every day, at work, and at home, we are confronted by it. But just because we feel ignorant about things like

nuclear power, it doesn't mean we should ignore them. We have to find ways of struggling against technologies that have been developed against our interests.

Science is male-dominated in this society but is it enough to get more girls to do science at school and become women scientists?

It was felt that we need to change the *nature* of science, which at present does not serve the needs of women. Given the class nature of our society it's clear that science operates in the interests of one class against another. A further conference will be held in Bradford in the autumn.

More information on the conference or on groups from: Women and Street, London BSRS, 9 Poland Street, London W1.

Marianne Craig

PIN UPS AND PICKETS

AS we sat down to the debate between Arthur Scargill and Anna Coote, the woman sitting next to me said, 'I think we might be able to make a conversion by the end of this. How can the man who walks on water at the Grunwicks picket line fail to understand why pin-ups degrade women?'

The debate was organised by the National Union of Journalists and took place on 11th April. A great part of the audience went to find out why good trade union journals like the *Yorkshire Miner* offend women by having regular pin ups in their pages.

Scargill argued that trade union and socialist papers should not be boring tracts but should use humour and fun.

Apparently the *Yorkshire Miner* uses humour in the form of womens' bodies. This encourages miners to read the rest of the more 'serious' stuff. As people at the meeting pointed out, no one reads pin ups, nor do pin ups guarantee that people will read the articles next to them.

Scargill went on to tell us that it was OK for the *Yorkshire Miner* to have pin ups because unlike the Sun their women didn't get paid for it,

and miners wives and daughters were queuing up to be page three girls.

Scargill could not understand that the *Yorkshire Miner* may not be exploiting the pin up women because they do not pay them, but they are certainly oppressing them and many other women by encouraging people to see women as passive sex objects whose main function in life is to please men.

As Scargill pointed out - the miners formed the backbone of the Grunwick picket line, when the asian women were fighting for basic trade union rights. But while they took a political stand for women as workers, they angered hundred of women who had also joined the picket, by their constant sexist remarks.

There is a lot more to fighting for equal rights for men and women than supporting a womens' strike. We need to fight for the right of a woman striker to be able to go home from the picket line without being turfed out on her car for not doing the housework. Scargill may be committed to the former, but he is definitely not remotely bothered about the latter.

Anna Bradley,

GENDER AND SCIENCE

WASHING machines and hoovers, drugs and hormone therapy, microprocessors, the Pill and Depo Provera. These are just some examples of how science and technology directly affect women's lives.

At the Women and Science Conference in Birmingham in April, 60 women came together to discuss how science and technology control us. Much of science in general is geared directly to control like research on tranquillizing drugs or riot technology.

Scientific research is more often than not carried out for business or military interests. Much of it is pursued for profit, like a lot of industrial scientific research into cosmetics or home appliances.

The word 'scientific' is often used to con people, implying that if something is scientific, it must be good, progressive and true. The word of a scientific expert is like the word of God - not to be challenged

by mere mortals.

One workshop was on 'Domestic Technology'. The point was made that while it is women who use and who consume most of the gadgets and products for cooking and cleaning, this technology is largely devised by *male* experts 'with women in mind'. Appliances are built for appearance and often deliberately designed to fall apart before long. Scouring powders, shampoos, breakfast cereals and babyfoods are advertised as being scientifically developed just for us yet every day chemicals used in these products are found to be bad for our health.

Another workshop discussed the science of sociology which tries to justify the inequalities in this society by drawing parallels with inequalities among animals.

Women and blacks are 'naturally inferior' we are told. The proof is there - you only have to look at the behaviour and genes of rats and mice! It is frightening, but these

IT'S OUR UNION!

NICKI Sellars works in a children's home. She belongs to NALGO (National and Local Government Officers Association). Here she explains why it is important for women in NALGO to be active in the union:

'Women make up half the membership of NALGO. Most of us work as secretaries, clerks, typists and social workers. We are among the lowest paid in the union.

We do at work what we often do at home—look after people. Many of us have to look after our bosses' needs—see that the office runs smoothly.

Large numbers of us can be found in social work, residential social work, nursery nursing and looking after young children, adolescents and the elderly and handicapped.

Some of us work long and difficult hours—often in shifts—and can be isolated in our workplaces, unable to attend union meetings because of our hours and commitments. Many of us don't know who our union representative is—let alone how to contact her/him—and it's usually a him. That's how we end up isolated and low paid in a union dominated by male officials.

In one NALGO branch two women made a complaint to their union reps. They alleged a senior officer was sexually harassing them. But when the reps took this matter up, they and the two women were suspended! The senior officer was also suspended but later reinstated.

The two women and the two reps, still suspended, are now not allowed to visit the council offices or to talk to anyone except the trade union rep or lawyer. NALGO is supporting the chief officer and is at present suing the Daily Mirror for daring to mention this case! We must gain the confidence to speak out against the injustices we suffer and to campaign for a better deal. That means organising ourselves *first*. We need to elect our own union reps and call meetings of women at work.

There are several groups and campaigns going which can give you advice on how to start organising.

Nalگو Action Group is the rank and file group which fights to make Nalگو more democratic and take up issues which concern the majority of members. It fights for women's issues. You can write to the address below for advice on the problems of organising at work and for a copy of *Nalگو Action News* (10p each.) 120 Whitehouse Way Southgate, London N14

Residential Workers Charter which fights for better money and conditions for a very exploited group of people. Each charter cost 20p & 10p postage from Nalگو Action News. *Typists Charter* fighting for a regrading of typists and a better career structure. Write for copies of typists charter 5p each & 10p postage c/o Womens Voice Box 82 London E2

recognised us from the market and wanted to give donations. Some asked about the result of our petition (begun nearly a year ago). Apparently the county council are planning to set up *one* nursery in Kent during the next financial year. We have to make sure that they do build it and also press for many more. After all one nursery is no solution to the problem in Kent. So the campaign continues!

Canterbury Womens Voice.

Balloons

Printed by London Rubber Company

LRC Products Ltd
North Circular Road
London E48 QA.

Cost £20 & vat for 1,000 balloons.
Must be ordered 3 weeks in advance.



THERE are 20 of us employed as ward clerks in three hospitals in Darlington. In practice, however, we act as personal secretaries to the hospital's consultants, so when we learnt that staff doing identical work in other local hospitals were being paid as personal secretaries we decided to apply for upgrading.

That was in May last year. Since then we have been stalled all along the line. First management wanted more information from us. Then they were going to 'investigate further', but neither we nor the medical staff we work with were asked anything about our duties. In future we need to be much better organised. We should all be meeting regularly. We need a small committee to keep things

going and we need a union rep.

All of this is new to us, but we are determined that management will take us seriously this year. We want our upgrading, and we want it backdated to when we first submitted our claim.

Jeanette Malcolm

SHORT LEGS NO JOB

A GROUP of women council workers in South East London, decided that it would be a good idea if we organised a women's council workers group, involving women from all the various unions. We organised our first meeting on 25 April and 23 women turned up. Most of us are white collar workers, members of NALGO. We discussed maternity leave and the way that new technology would affect women workers.

Then we started to talk about part-time workers. Three women who work as meals on wheels drivers, members of the Transport and General Workers Union, Manual branch, talked about their position. One of them, Carol Manthorpe, explained that as part-time workers their prospects of promotion were nil. Management will not consider them for a full time job until they have done two years part-time.

Carol drives a 12-seater coach and was determined to drive the 28-seater. This meant that she had to take a further test. Management let her take the test, she passed and then they turned round and told her 'sorry, but your legs are too short. No go'. She told her branch secretary what had happened and he refused to do anything about it, he just didn't want to know. But she's determined to take it further.

The meeting was a great success and we are following it up with two more. One on the Typists Charter and one on part-time workers.

Peggy Eagle



BALLOONS TO YOU

OUR Womens Voice and Nursery Campaign group recently decided to give a new boost to our activities when we got some balloons printed with the words "Who needs nurseries? We do!"

We have been giving these out free to children in Canterbury. As part of the campaign's activities some balloons were given out free from a market stall where we also sold badges, Womens Voice, and jumble.

At 7.30 am it was snowing and there was a biting wind - we nearly

gave up! But by midday, with the sun shining and £25 in hand our point was well and truly made. Over 100 balloons were given out. We gave out leaflets and talked about the forthcoming film. Several people seemed quite interested and we felt the whole event had been very worthwhile.

On Friday morning we gave out more balloons and leaflets this time in the town. Again people were interested and children came running up for balloons. Some

NURSERY CAMPAIGN

At our Manchester poly general meeting about the pay claim, we voted overwhelmingly in favour of going for a £15 flat rate because it benefits women. This was the kind of money called for by Womens Voice and Nalگو Action.

The 15% rise suggested by NALGO's executive was thrown out despite the presence of one of the national negotiators and the opposition of the branch secretary.

Three women spoke at the meeting and everyone accepted

the fact that to get a good rise strike action would be necessary.

Our next battle is at the branch meeting where there will be a big fight to get our flat rate claim through.

One unusual supporter for the maternity leave clause is a NF supporter who said: 'If NALGO gets better maternity leave it will encourage white women to breed'.

That kind of support we don't need!

Penny Parkes

THE IRONY OF PROFIT



VALERIE Ellis works, or did work, at Dunlops in Speke, Liverpool. Her husband John has worked there too, for six years. Her father, Peter Ellis, has worked there for 15 years. And her brother Roy for 14 years. His wife Joan works for the International Sports Company, a section of Dunlops on the same site, which the workers fear will close next year. Valerie's mum was made redundant from Dunlops in 1975 when all the part-time jobs were scratched.

For their family the closure of the factory spells nothing but gloom and misery.

Valerie has four children, all at school. Debbie, the eldest, is 16. She just assumes that when she leaves school at the end of the year she will be on the dole. Like most of the other school leavers in Speke.

We met Valerie and her children on the women's picket line outside the posh London offices of Dunlop. It was the day the factory was due to close. The women had travelled all through the night in a coach to make sure they would be at the front door when the well paid executives that Dunlop can still afford to pay turned in for their hard day's work.

They had come to show the management that the workers at Speke won't be quietly defeated.

They had also brought with them a document to present to Albert Booth, the Minister for Employment, which shows just how much it will cost to close the factory. It may save Dunlops some lost profits, but the cost to the State, in dole money, redundancy payments, lost taxes and so on will be £8 million, and that's just during the first year of closure. That money, they argue, would be better spent in keeping the jobs open.

But Dunlops are like every other big company in the country. They don't care about their workers. They don't run their factory for the benefit of the community. Its sole purpose is to make a profit for the shareholders, who do nothing for their money.

On the same day that they closed the Speke factory, Dunlops announced their annual profits, £64 million. Can't be bad for some.

Margaret Renn.



CPSA

THEY'VE DONE IT AGAIN!

AGAIN the Civil and Public Servants Association has been sold out! Again it's by General Secretary Ken Thomas and his right wing colleagues. Over 200 members, half of them women, turned up to a National Executive meeting on pay. They came from as far away as Newcastle to try and stop the executive agreeing to the nominal increase in the Government's pay offer. But those 'people' ignored the membership completely.

In Harlow, feelings have been running high from the start of the dispute and the response to the two national one day strikes was overwhelmingly successful - all government departments were shut.

Harlow Womens Voice was on the picket lines supporting this action. But CPSA members curbed unofficial action because we were waiting for the outcome of the National Executive meeting.

The offer gives workers nine per cent on April 1979, a further five per cent on August 1st and the final instalment on 1st January 1980. This last payment will be determined by the findings of the Civil Service Pay Research Unit but will amount to five to six per cent for most of the lower grades in the CPSA. It was not a surprise when the membership voted to accept the offer by three to one in favour.

It is difficult for members to imagine where the impetus for carrying on action would come from. Many of them are claiming FIS and rent and rate rebates and certainly the workers in the Harlow offices feel this is the best offer they can get, especially with the threat of the Tories taking power!

As someone with a young family, living on £49 a week, after

eight year's service, and having had first hand experience of what it's like when the family is on strike, I say that the NEC's proposal should have been rejected. All out industrial action should have been taken, to get a fair settlement.

Now, the Society of Civil and Public Servants have at least told

SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN

SAVE OUR SCHOOLS

HACKNEY parents, put out a leaflet at the schools in the area saying what we felt about the matter and inviting people to attend a meeting at Centreprise. The response was staggering, about 50-60 people turned up (both parents and teachers). We have called the campaign, Hackney Schools Stay OK! At the meeting we discussed preparing a document giving our proposals for the schools in the area. We said that all schools should be utilised and made into community schools - thus becoming not only schools but nurseries, play schemes,

their members not to go back to work, in view of the victimisations threatened by the top civil service bureaucrats. The CPSA leadership have just sent their members back to work saying that they will fight victimisations as and when they occur - a sure way to lose people their jobs. Pat Ashford

adult education centres, art and craft centres, meetings rooms, sports centres etc.

We have badges, stickers, posters and an endless supply of petitions - which will be presented to ILEA along with our proposals. We still meet at 7.30pm every Thursday at Centreprise, 136 Kingsland High Road. Every Saturday at 11.00am we take our petitions and badges down Ridley Road Market.

Come and join us - our children's future may depend on your participation.

Chris Fellowes

SHIFTING THE EOC

THE EQUAL Opportunities Commission have recently put out a report which calls for the removal of legal restrictions on women's hours of work in factories. At present women are not allowed to do night shift work except in essential services like hospitals. In an attempt to achieve equality the commission says that this should be repealed. After all, men do it so why not women?

Yet again the EOC have highlighted their inability to look further than their own noses. Firstly to repeal such laws would simply

hand employers yet another weapon; any woman who refused to do night shift work could be sacked without any recourse. Secondly they have failed to take note of the fact that shift work of any sort can be highly disruptive to an individual's life.

Another important fact is that with the rise of new technology vast numbers of workers will be made redundant with no prospect of finding employment elsewhere. Now is the ideal time to raise the demand for a shorter working week with no loss of pay.

DEFEND OUR UNIONS...

We need trade unions. We need to be organised together in the greatest possible numbers, with all the back-up resources and contacts that trade unions can offer.

Then we can take on the employers and win. The bosses are organised. They have their employers federations, their strike-breaking support funds, their research organisations. We need to be just as well prepared.

But its no good being a member of a union unless it is prepared to fight for your interests, and support you. Too many women have found that their trade union hasn't defended them as it should.

Under the last Labour Government we saw trade union officials agreeing to limit the activities of their own members. The Concordat was nothing more than a pact that said the unions would fight with one arm tied behind their backs. The legitimate tactics that workers need to use to win disputes,

like picketing and blacking would be outlawed by the union leaders themselves.

The Tories threaten more direct assaults—they will use the police and the law against us if we dare stand up for a decent wage. They'll make it illegal for 'certain workers' to strike. We know who the 'certain workers' will be—they'll be hospital workers, school workers and so on. Mostly women, and all on really rotten wages.

The Rank and File conference has been called to bring together all those who want to defend our unions against attacks from the government, and want to make the unions fight harder for our interests. After the strikes of public sector workers this winter no-one can argue that women are not an active and important part of the trade union movement.

If you are a member of a trade union YOU need to be there. There will be creche at the conference

HOW TO RAISE IT IN YOUR WORK PLACE

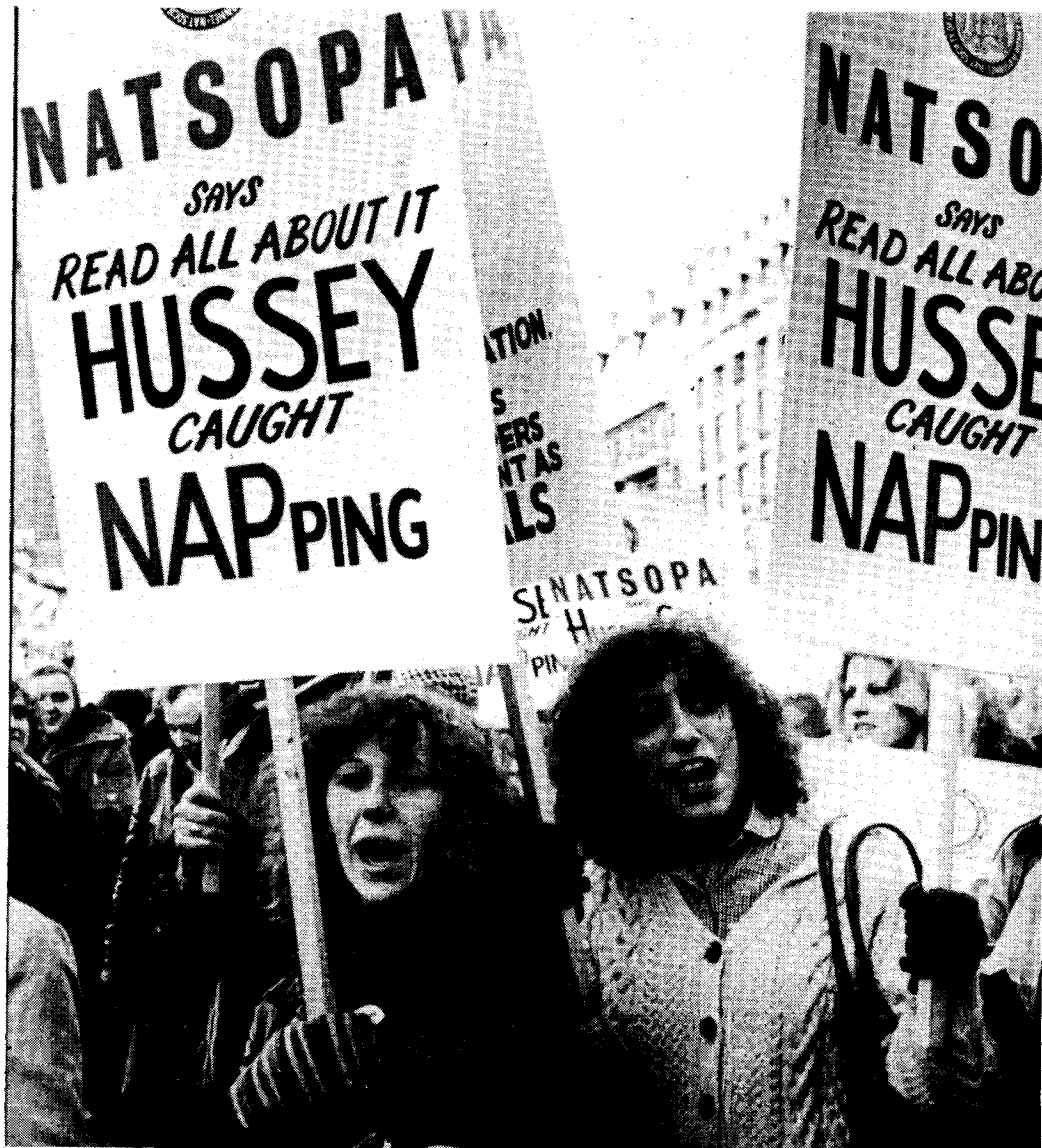
If it hasn't already been sent to your branch (check with the branch secretary) get a copy of the invitation letter to the conference by writing to: **Defend Our Unions Conference** 265a Seven Sisters Road London N4
Discuss the letter with individual members, and get it raised as soon as possible.
Get a motion put on the agenda for your next union meeting. Don't forget it may have to be sent to the Secretary several weeks in advance. It could just read:

'This branch agrees to send two delegates to the Rank and File Trade Union Conference called 'Defend Our Unions' on June 23rd in Manchester.'

Explain what the conference is by reading out the letter of invitation and use some of the information here to show how useful it would be to go.

If your union has a majority of female membership you can argue that a woman should be delegated to represent the interests of the women in your branch/association. Say that you would like to go yourself.

Ask the branch for the £1 delegation fee for each delegate and tell the other members that you will give a full report back of the conference. Good luck.



Photos: John Sturrock Report

I'LL BE THERE

I'M going to the conference with my branch secretary. I think it will be useful for women because there's still too much of a war between the sexes. Men accuse women of not being interested in the union. We get blamed for not being militant. We have to get across to men that this is just not true. Who fought in the recent public sector disputes?

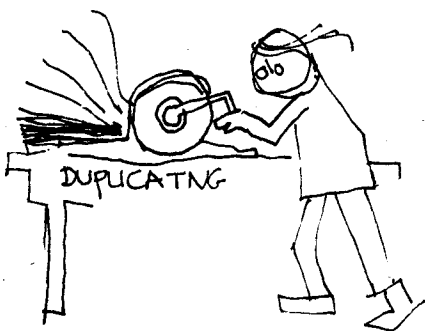
Many, many women—including part-timers—were ready for all-out strike and yet their male full time officials refused to go along with them. It shows how undemocratic the union is. There are only five women on the EC in my union NUPE, et the majority of the membership are women. Because a lot of female members are part-timers, they get even

less out of the 9 per cent settlement deal than the others. A rank and file conference could begin to bring out these problems. Also I think it would be useful to make links between the public and the private sector. At the moment its like the division between men and women—it weakens us. **SADIE BLOOD, School meals' supervisor.**

THE Womens Voice group at Essex University has only been going for about six months although the magazine has been sold here for a long time. Eventually we decided to get on with building a Womens Voice group because we saw that there was a need to bring the whole issue of sexism to the attention of the many students who felt that they wanted to do something.

A big priority so far has been to build up links with the women who work on the university campus. The Low Pay Campaign has been a good way for us to get talking to cleaners, canteen workers, and those who work in the university shop.

A campaign which we have put a lot of work into is for better nursery facilities. This is something that affects both students and staff so it is a good way for us to get together. We also try to link in the fact that the increase in nursery fees hits campus workers very hard because they are so badly paid.



We work closely with the town Womens Voice group. Together we held a street meeting on abortion where we asked women to sign a petition calling for more day care abortion facilities. We also leafleted together for an open meeting which we plan to hold at the end of the month. We sell Womens Voice on campus but we also sell in the town. As students we tend to have more free time, and we are able to help out with some of the practical work like duplicating leaflets. It's important to work with the women in the town because as students we are often isolated from the local community and get out of touch with local working class issues.

Next month we're having a Spring bazaar with the town group and we're going to go round the estates asking for jumble and just generally getting to chat to as many women as possible.

At the university we have initiated an afternoon creche on Saturdays to give students and Womens Voice supporters in Colchester a free afternoon. This is advertised in our regular bulletin. We also work with the women's group. We picketed a local beauty contest, and we have been actively involved in a campaign for a women's room. This is very important; attacks on students are increasing. At Sussex university a woman was raped and murdered on the outskirts of the campus and a number of women have been attacked here at Essex. We want 24 hour internal telephones *in working order* all around the campus, better lighting and a room where women can stay if they can't face the journey home late at night. Many of us feel that it would be nice to have

CANTEEN



some sort of social area where women only can go.

Obviously we are very active in campaigning against sexism in education. We want the different departments to incorporate into the courses sections that deal with womens' studies eg women in literature, history of the women's movement and perhaps even a whole Women's Studies Course. Often we have to sit through lectures and listen to the lecturer referring to 'HE' 'HIM', etc all the time. During the 'Women's Week', which we organised with the women's group, we went round all the lecture rooms, and put up posters complaining about the use of male dominated language in lectures.

During the 'Women's Week' we also organised an exhibition on women and Fascism, showed films and had a workshop on depression. We also changed the names of the residential blocks from those of famous men to those of famous women!

Our welfare officer is a Womens Voice member and a few of us help out with the day to day running of the welfare office because women's health is a very important issue.

The past months have shown us that there

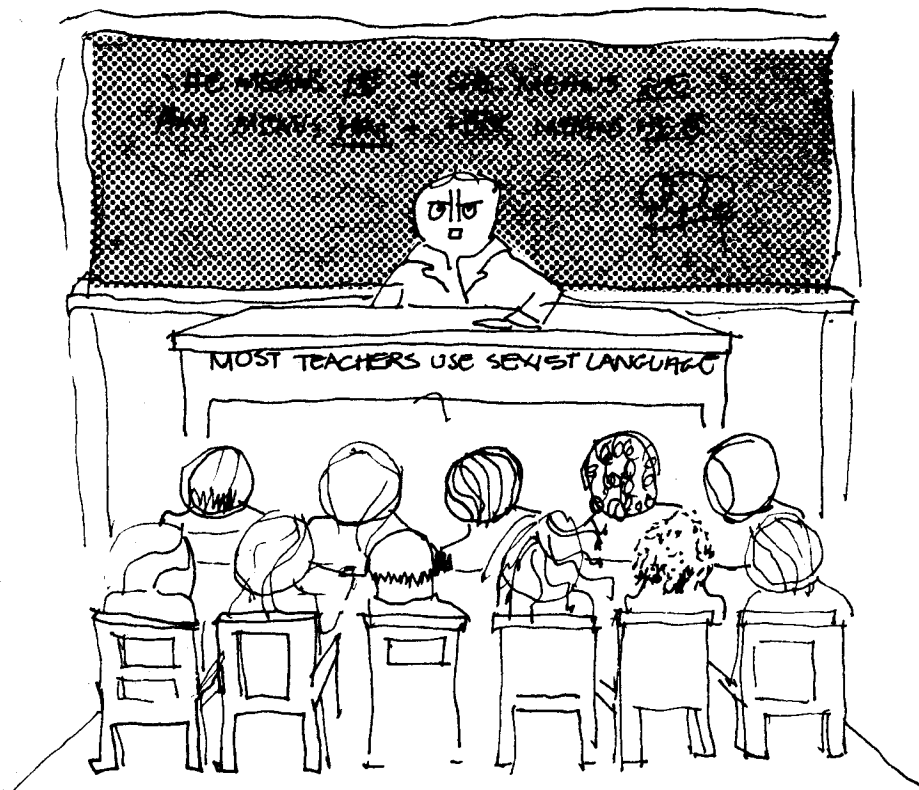
Around the groups

Around the groups is a regular spot for reports of your Womens Voice meetings and activities.

Please try and keep your reports brief and please try to send us photos, black and white print. If you haven't got anybody in your group who is a dab hand with a camera let us know about your activity and we'll try and send someone along.

is tremendous scope for Womens Voice in the colleges and we would like to see more colleges starting to build up their Womens Voice groups. Perhaps in time it would be possible to build up a network which would improve the communications between the different college groups so that we have a better idea of what others are doing and can initiate campaigns inside the National Union of Students.

• Essex University Womens Voice Group



Womens Voice interview **MARTHA FORD**



“Our life and death struggle to free Namibia”

MARTHA Ford, now exiled in Angola, heads the Women's Council of The South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). She recently came to Europe to build support for the Namibian people's resistance against the South Africans' illegal occupation of Namibia.

South West Africa was colonized in the 1880s by the Germans. After the First World War the League of Nations mandated it to South Africa. The United Nations revoked the mandate in 1971, but has done almost nothing to enforce the ruling because of the western members' extensive investments in Namibia, which includes amongst its vast mineral deposits some of the world's richest supplies of uranium, mined chiefly by Britain's Rio Tinto Zinc Corporation.

The different tribal groups in Namibia, including the Hereros and the Ovambos, long since united their efforts against their particularly savage colonization. Now the women are united with the men in the armed struggle against the South Africans. The contract labour system and imprisonment have removed so many men that the women's participation in the political and armed struggle for liberation is now indispensable.

SWAPO was formed in 1960 as a 'legal' political

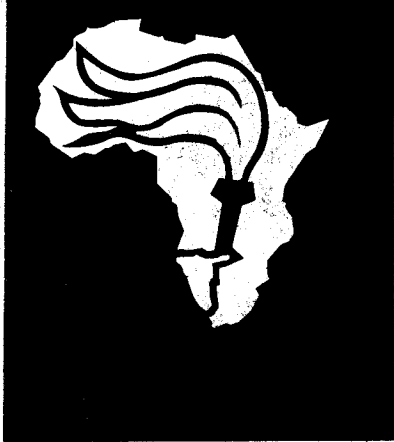
organization.

Farcical elections staged in 1978 by the South Africans, however, left SWAPO no choice but to free itself of colonization by force. There has been a huge exodus of Namibians across the northern border to live in settlements in Angola, from where the guerilla war is conducted against the 60,000 strong army of occupation. The camps are run communally by SWAPO, and include, particularly, childcare for mothers who are involved in the guerrilla fighting.

Martha Ford, while working all week as a bank clerk, travelled the vast country at weekends to address mass rallies of Namibians, calling on men and women to fight against their colonial oppression. To do so she left her own three children with her mother. "Mother was not happy about it because I was overstepping the limits of being a woman and a mother travelling about like that. I don't believe in making children too dependent. My mother made her children so dependent on her that when they grew up and wanted to leave home she used all sorts of strategies to keep them back.

"Once women join the armed struggle they don't want to leave it. We can play an active role in everything that is necessary to liberate our country. We are independent and stand on our own two feet. It is our right to be interested in how the affairs of the nation are run. But we have to develop this independence into conscious awareness of how women





are oppressed. It is a continuing struggle. It is likely that after the armed struggle women will be expected to confine themselves to the home again.

The system's very clever... you know the saying that 'a good wife should be a mother, sister, friend'. Now I don't know what a grown up man needs a mother for! The whole thing of the woman being male-dominated is just an illusion.

In actual fact women are *more* independent than men. They can look after the house; they can grow the crops, they can keep the family together. Men have not been brought up to do any of these things.

In actual fact women are *more* independent than men. They can look after the house, they can grow the crops, they can keep the family together. Men have now been brought up to do any of these things.

Many younger Namibian women are not interested in getting married. They will have a child or two.

There is a great love for children, they are very much a communal responsibility—this has been damaged lately

'Women do not make good guerilla fighters. Guerilla warfare depends on frequent attacks and withdrawals; women never want to withdraw, they think that is cowardly. They always want to go on and finish the job'.

by colonial rule, but it is still the same in rural areas. People are proud of having kids. It is not a social stigma having a child out of marriage. The grandparents will look after it so the mother can go out and work.

within the framework of a communal responsibility—this has been damaged lately by colonial rule, but it is still the same in rural areas. People are proud of having kids. It is not a social stigma having a child out of marriage. The grand parents will look after it so the mother can go out and work.

The climate we live in makes life easier. Somehow we seem less oppressed than our sisters in western countries. Here in London you feel confined. There is no place for the children to play. We do not live in flats. And people are not so alienated from nature. In spite of everything there are a lot of things I do not envy my sisters in the

western countries.

'And another thing—in our country people are surrounded in a framework of the large family. It's not this small 'family' the nuclear family. Old people in England are put in old age houses. There are so many ways in which people are alienated in this society here.'

'In the national liberation movement we have already experienced the new woman who participates side by side with men in the armed and political struggle. This experience of the capabilities of women shows both sexes how contradictory life was before the armed struggle—where women seemed to be weaker and less capable than men.

'It is hard for women in the west to become involved in a political struggle. Lack of childcare for instance is a real handicap. The problems in the west will only really be solved in the context of a revolutionary struggle.

'We are more fortunate because we are fighting within the frame work of a national liberation struggle.

But our sisters in the west are much

member phoned her and insisted she come over and iron his clothes. 'But I'm busy doing mine,' she said. 'I'm telling you to leave yours and come over here!' 'Why? Where's your wife?' she demanded. I explained to her that she shouldn't have asked him where his wife was. She should have asked him 'what's wrong with your hands!' But I was very proud of her.

'Men tend to be polite with each other. Women tend to be less diplomatic. And why should we be diplomatic—we're in a life and death struggle! People are not intimidated by people in leadership positions—they confront. That to me is very encouraging.'

The chauvinistic attitude people develop when they get into positions of power is something terrible. The leadership has to be aware that people have the right to criticise—it is a way of developing their consciousness.

'Take the example of the time in Angola when the prime minister was demoted. I was told there was already talk amongst the masses before the step was taken. One of the women explained to me that they didn't have any choice but to remove him because the masses were watching their leaders to see how they were going to deal with the problem. That's very good.

'In religion you convert. In politics you do not. I believe that when a man does not want to look at the women's question you will find at some point he will become an open counter-revolutionary. Sex cannot be used as a rationalisation for a class division.

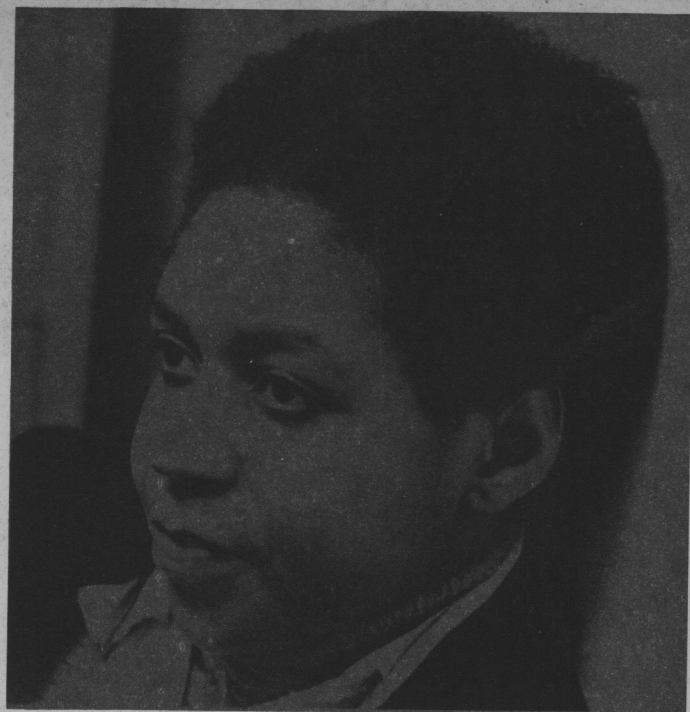
'A man said to me: the biggest test for a true freedom fighter is when a man is prepared to grow, to go into the woman question. That, and his relationship with women. I agree.'

Interview by Jane Henriques



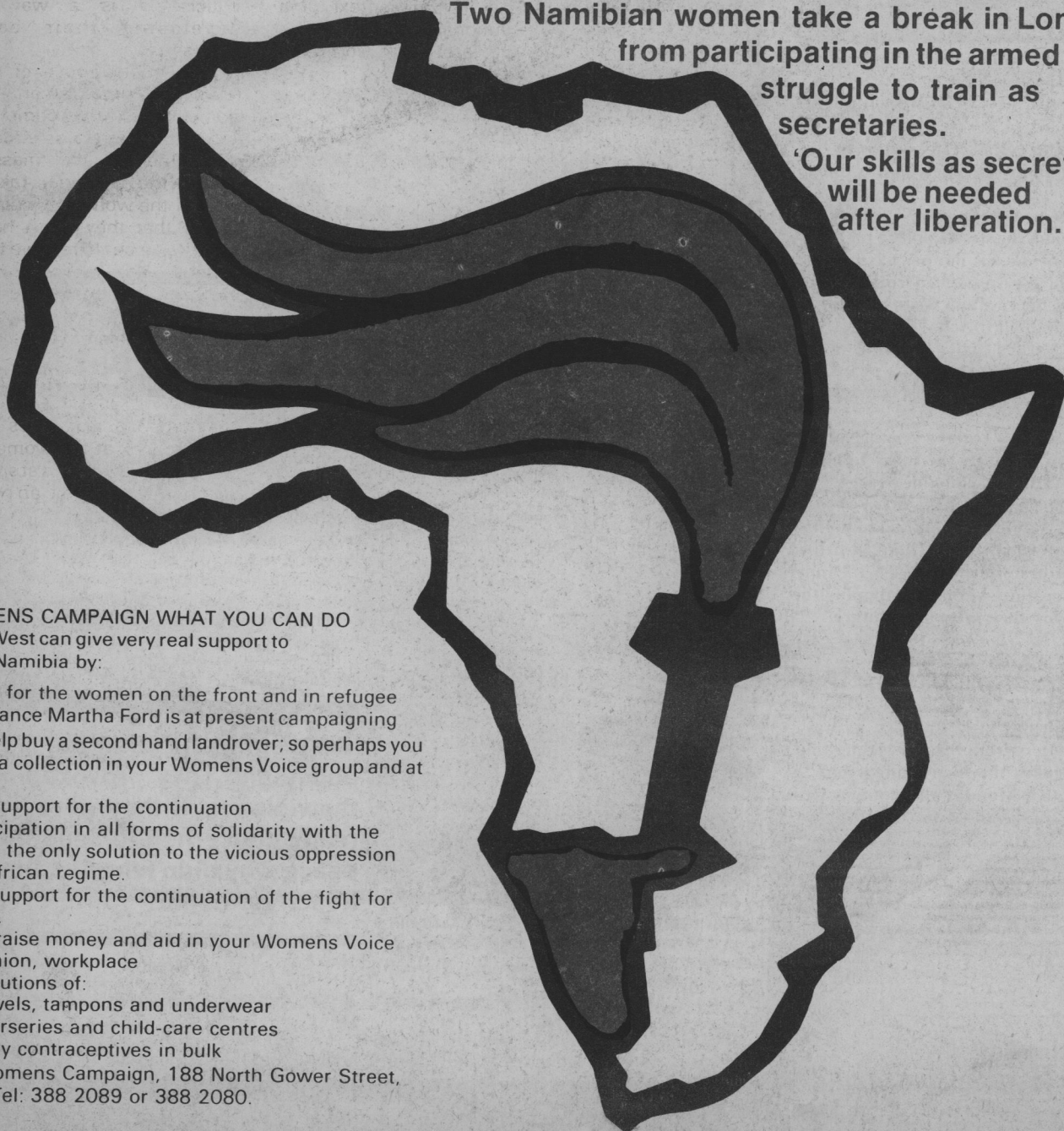
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No we are never afraid. We know what we are and we know what we have to do.'
Two Namibian women take a break in London from participating in the armed struggle to train as secretaries.

'Our skills as secretaries will be needed after liberation.'



SWAPO WOMENS CAMPAIGN WHAT YOU CAN DO

Women in the West can give very real support to the women of Namibia by:

- Material aid for the women on the front and in refugee camps. For instance Martha Ford is at present campaigning for money to help buy a second hand landrover; so perhaps you could organise a collection in your Womens Voice group and at work.
- Long-term support for the continuation
- Active participation in all forms of solidarity with the armed struggle the only solution to the vicious oppression of the South African regime.
- Long-term support for the continuation of the fight for womens rights.
- Organise to raise money and aid in your Womens Voice group, trade union, workplace
- Send contributions of:
 - Sanitary towels, tampons and underwear
 - Funds for nurseries and child-care centres
 - money to buy contraceptives in bulk

For: SWAPO Womens Campaign, 188 North Gower Street, London, NW1 Tel: 388 2089 or 388 2080.

SOUTHALL: LOOKING BACK IN ANGER!

In the aftermath of events in Southall on Monday 23 April, we went to find out how the women of Southall feel now. We spoke to some on the march commemorating Blair Peach's death, and visited others who live in the street where he was killed. That Monday night will never be forgotten. *Interviews by Melanie McFadyean and Margaret Renn.*



Blair Peach was a fine man, a socialist.

When he saw injustice, he took action against it—regardless of whether it might cost him his job or his personal safety. He worked hard to get as many others as possible to join in—he knew that is our strength.

When he heard that a seven-year-old boy was left to roam the streets during the day—his father at work, his mother having left home, and the boy suspended from school—Blair took up the case and negotiated for the boy to be admitted to school again.

When he learned that a local pub would not serve blacks, he organised a picket of it for two months, until the racist manager was sacked.

When he found a reading book, 'Not Me, I'm Workshy' used by the Inner London Education Authority contained racist comments he fought to have it removed.

When the National Front tried to hold an election meeting in Brixton school, he helped organise a protest which resulted in the Inner London Education Authority stopping the NF from using their schools in future.

When the NUPE strikes took place early this year, he was on the joint teachers/caretakers committee to picket any schools which tried to open.

On the morning of his murder, he was answering letters from teachers requesting Teachers Against the Nazis badges and leaflets. On that Monday afternoon he went to Southall to join the Anti Nazi League protest that the fascist National Front should be allowed to meet in the middle of the Asian community.

That Monday evening—on his way home—he was clubbed to death by the police.

Please take a little of Blair's spirit into your heart and fight as he did. Our victories—no matter how big or small—will be his.

Jenny Jackson.



Photo: Mark Risher IEL

Asian women on the first demonstration in Southall. They will not be content to stay at home in the future.

Donate to the Blair Peach Memorial Fund.

Donations to be sent to: Blair Peach Memorial Fund, c/o Langdon Park School, Byron Street, London E14 0RY.

Davinder, Haminder, and Satinder are three sisters. They live in Orchard Avenue where Blair Peach was killed.

'What we saw in Southall on Monday was like a nightmare.

'After Gurdip Singh died three years ago there were hard feelings but this is a community without racial tension. What happened on Monday has changed that. For example, there's a white lady in our street who always used to be very friendly. Now she won't talk to us.

'Our mum saw everything that happened. Blair Peach was brought here after he was attacked. He lay on our settee.

'People have come out now because they want to, everyone, women and children too. They have learned to stand up for themselves.

'Life's hard for Asian women. They're forced to work. My mum works in the Walls factory. Language is a problem for the older women so they have to work in factories. They work all day and then they come home to do the housework.

'Our parents generation still have their old ways and customs. It's OK for boys to join organisations but not for girls. It's a tradition of over-protection.

'A lot of girls get married because of this. At least you can go out where you want with your husband. Marriages are still arranged but love marriages are much easier now. You

tell your parents who you're in love with and then they arrange the marriage for you. It's so important to be respectable in the eyes of neighbours, family and friends.

'We have experienced racism but not in Southall. We were turned away from a disco in Kensington. There were eight of us and they said it was full. But that wasn't true because they let more white people in after that.

'That kind of thing didn't happen before in Southall, because everyone knows each other. Now it will take years to rebuild the relationships.'

'It's disgraceful what the police did. They provoked all the violence. If they were really concerned to keep the peace why didn't they let Blair Peach go home?'

Mrs Kane Sandu

'A policeman picked on my son. 'What colour's my coat,' he said. 'Black' my son answered.

'Yes you black bastard. Why don't you go homes. And they slapped him. They just

picked on everyone.

'Lots of men were brought to our house. We live just where the fighting was going on. We changed their shirts, bandaged them up, and sent them out again.'

'When I went to work in the Catering Services at Heathrow the next day my boss asked me what had happened that night. I was there, my family was there, I wasn't going to stay at home while they were out fighting racism in the streets.'

'I had the feeling that the white people I work with in the airport weren't interested. Only one of them gave money for the collection for Blair Peach. One person said they would have no pity any more for the people of Southall!'

'It's a great tragedy. The trouble was caused by the SPG and The Ealing Town Council. Brent Town Council refused, why couldn't Ealing? Well, Ealing Council's Tory isn't it?'

Pushpinder Chowdry is a community worker, who has helped set up the Southall Women's and Girl's Association.

'We have been helping women to learn English. After Monday that doesn't seem enough. Women will have to become more politically informed.'

'The National Front have never been seen in Southall before. They wouldn't dare, that's why this time everyone took it as a personal insult.'

'Everyone signed the petition to stop them from coming. Telegrams were sent to everyone in authority, the Prime Minister included. Yet they took no notice.'

Mrs. Dialo Sandu:

'The police kept pushing us around, telling us to get in our houses. One policeman spat on me. I was standing in my front garden. They treated us like animals. The police were showing off their power. It's the first time I would ever speak against the police. But I saw what happened with my own eyes.'

Mrs Baines

'On the demonstration we were shouting 'National Front murdabad.' The women told us not to shout in Punjabi because the English people wouldn't understand. 'Tell us how to shout in English,' they said. So we shouted 'Down with the National Front.'

A woman on the demonstration

'I think people should be treated as human beings, not how the police treated us. This is the first demonstration I've been on. I feel so sad and angry about that young teacher. We should prepare ourselves and fight the Nazis.'

We demand: A full public inquiry into police conduct at Southall and prosecution of the police responsible.

Police treatment for one young West Indian girl



Pauline: A 19 year old West Indian tells her story:

'I was walking along and I saw a friend being beaten up. I went to help him, but six coppers were dragging him along. Opposite in the churchyard the horses were charging. The cops had their riot shields out. I was just standing there. I didn't do a thing.'

An SPG guy knocked me down with his riot shield. Another one came along and moved me on. He pushed me and hit me on the head. I shouted and tried to protect myself. Then a whole lot of cops grabbed me and chucked me into a van.'

In the van an SPG officer sat on me, bashing me with his elbow. He said to me, 'Keep quiet, you black bitch, you're finished for today.' I struggled, he bashed. I've got a really sore eye.'

Ten minutes later another cop came along and said that a policeman had been stabbed. He said 'They're really going to pay for this!' The one that had arrested me went off so in the end I wasn't charged. They took everyone to the police station. They bashed people around in there too.'

What happened on Monday happened because the police had it in for us. They were getting their own back.'

Geraldine an 18 year old West Indian tells her story:

When the police charged they didn't try to contain the demonstrators. They intended to beat them up. They drove people back, they chased, charged, divided. They stormed us on their horses with their batons swinging.'

I was at the People Unite Centre in Parkview Road, in the kitchen. The police came in at the back and the front. They just filed in and grabbed people and kicked them. I was with three young kids and we couldn't get out of the kitchen where a young West Indian man was being beaten up by the police. He was badly hurt and eventually they dragged him out by his locks.'

They let me out with the children.'

We were forced into the park. A West Indian girl went up to the gate, the police smashed the gate into her face. She was really screaming. Someone threw a stone. I suppose they shouldn't have really, but it was disgusting the way they treated that girl. The police piled in. Two of them grabbed me, one passing copper shoved my glasses into my face, punched me in the stomach, just for the hell of it.'

Black people were definitely picked on. I reckon that 400 people were charged and many more arrested, something like 700 or 800.'

It was insane, even when they had arrested people they went on beating them up. They had the weight of the law behind them.'

Photos: John Sturrock Report

'That young man died fighting for human rights. We all feel like doing something for him and his family, and the Anti Nazi League. We are frightened. And we are sad, but people feel like fighting now. The women are angry now. If one can die, so can we all.'

**Donate to the Southall Defence Fund
Bring Blair Peach's Murderers to Justice
Send your donation to:
Southall Defence Fund c/o
Anti Nazi League
PO Box, 151, WC2**

“To Cook and Wash and Sew...”

To cook and wash and sew, that's all my lot.

It's all that I can do, day in day out.

As time runs into weeks and months and years

That's all my life—there isn't any more.

Yes, there was love. It came just like a flower.

With trembling grew and stirred the depths of me.

He tired first and then my heart went cold.

The longing died for him to come of nights.

The children! Yes, but they're at school or play,

No time for me. The little ones were best,

When I could bath and hush them off to sleep,

They'd put their pretty arms about me then.

Now they're too big and perhaps I've grown too sharp.

I'm tired with work and all they want is their food.

Often there isn't much of that.

I don't complain, there's others live like me.

But sometimes of an evening when the sun sets

On Sundays after tea and I'm alone

I don't know how it happens —perhaps the sun

That seems to draw me as I sit and look—

A thought comes over me, why should it be?

Why should life be so hard and I so tired?

Why should I be so ignorant and dull

With never time to let my poor soul grow?

And I could think I'd got the strength to change,

I never open a book, my eyes too dim.

I scarce can write my name for lack of use,

But thoughts all melting gold flash in my brain.

Great men and women dressed in angel's clothes,

Flowers and fields and little baby things,

Water and sun and words too fine for me.

All of a stream. If I could write them down

Or think to say them after it was gone!

It almost seems that I could sing out free

So loud and grand that it would wake the stars.

Just foolish thoughts that go and leave me cold

The world's soon real again and work comes round

Suppers to get and washing up to do

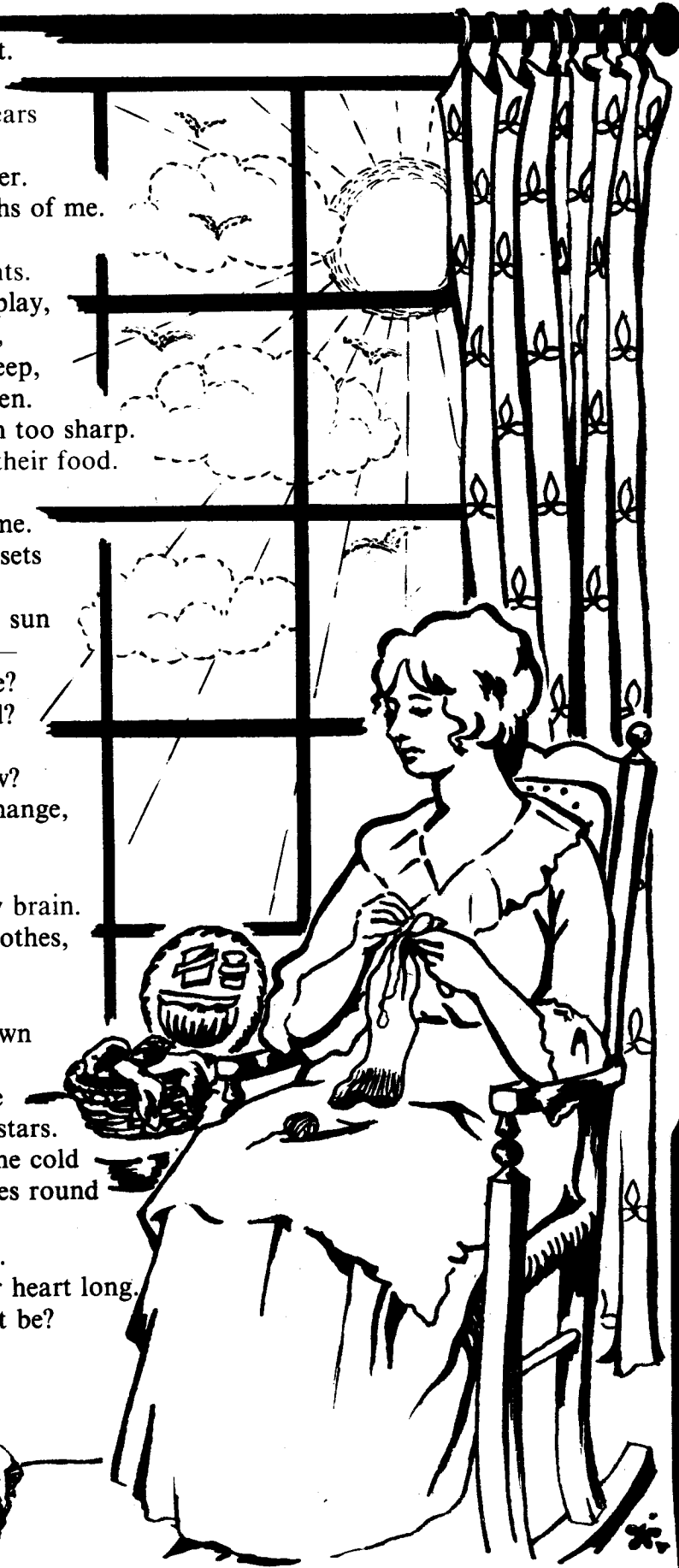
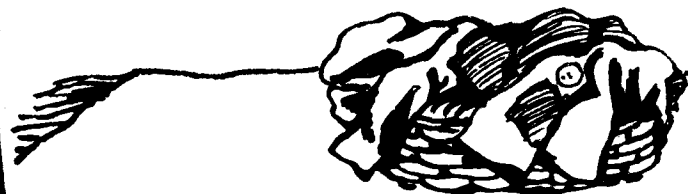
And children's Sunday clothes to put away.

Just foolish thoughts that make my poor heart long.

Just foolish thoughts, but yet why should it be?

Martha Watt, 1914

Published in The Women's Dreadnought



IN a recent *Womans Own* magazine, there was an interview with ex-empress Farah of Iran, wife of the Shah. The interview began:

'Here is a story of a woman's love that holds its age old mystery... that defies all reason.'

Anyone interested in current events in Iran and women's struggles there was badly disappointed if they read this article. That quote is typical of the rest.

Women of course aren't interested in politics and facts, give them a good romantic story to curl up in bed with and they're well satisfied.

Of course it's *much* more interesting to read of the selfless dedication and love of a woman who could say of one of the most barbaric and inhuman dictators the modern world has seen:

'My duty and wish was to support him and be his wife as long as he wanted me.'

The man most commonly known as King of Kings, Centre of the Universe, Light of the World etc or just plain butcher for short.

Of course this is the kind of model wife that women's magazines shove down our throats all the time. Yet somehow the interviewer manages to portray her as 'the liberator of women' as well.

We are told that concern for her people—the women and children—were uppermost in her thoughts (next to her divine husband of course who according to her lived up to his title of God on Earth).

And surprise, surprise, there was no indication in the article as to why women were in the forefront of the struggle to overthrow her husband.

Since the overthrow of that despotic regime, women have again been in the forefront of the struggle, this time organising

Iranian Womens Conference

Saturday 12th May
at City University London
Morning session in Farsee
Afternoon session 2pm onwards in English

Solidarity With Iranian Women Demonstration

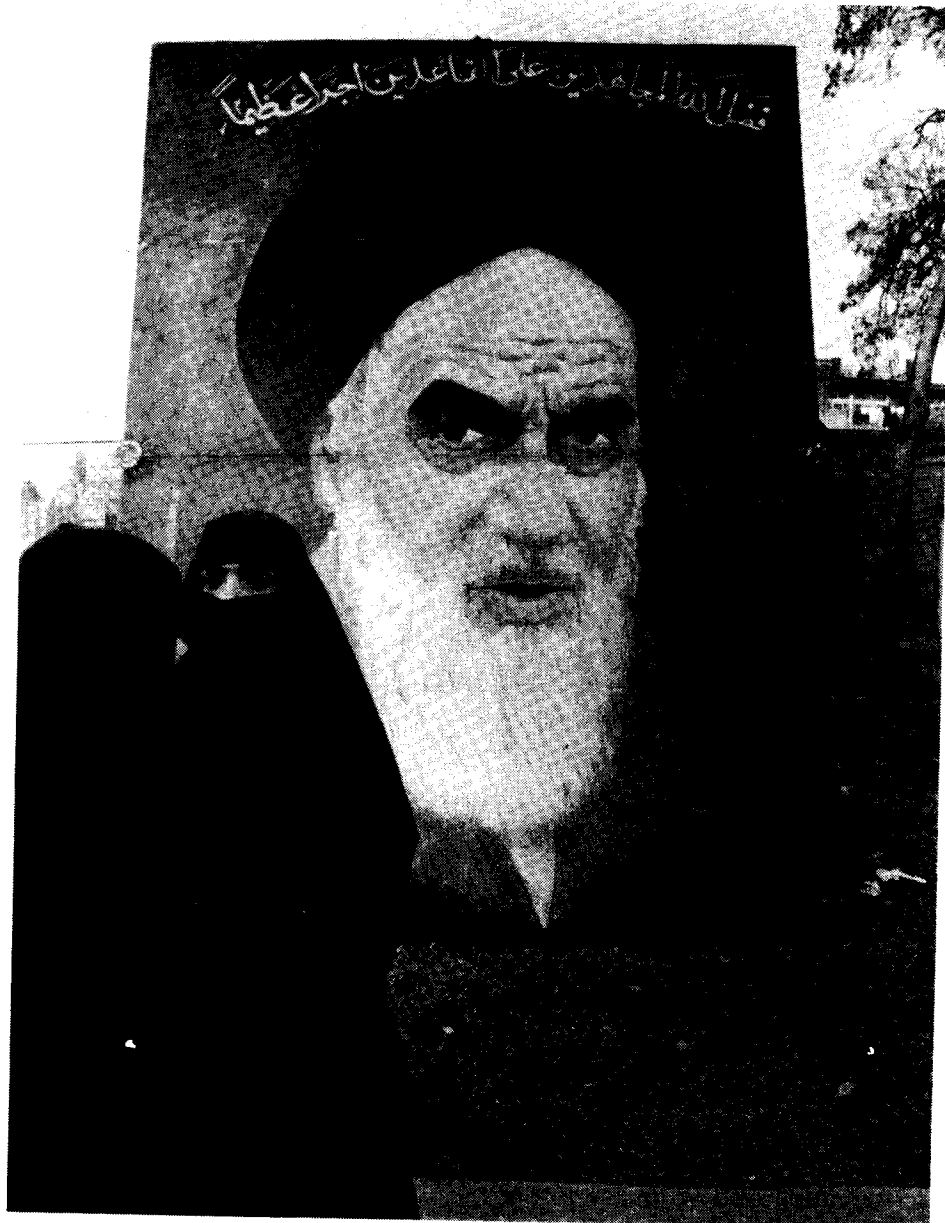
Saturday May 19th 2pm
Assemble Trafalgar Square for March past Iranian Embassy

No Revolution Without Womens Liberation

a very good pamphlet written by Azar Tabari which explains why the fight for womens liberation is so important in Iran price 20p & 10p postage from Box 4, Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, London N1.

Women in Islam and the struggle for Liberation

Speaker Colnar Irani
7.30pm Tuesday May 22
Staff Common Room Central London Polytechnic
New Cavendish Street
Organised by Womens Voice and SWP Middle East Group
All welcome



themselves around their own specific demands: equality at home, equal rights of custody over children, equality at work, freedom of movement and equal rights with men and an end to all discriminatory laws.

Since the International Women's Day demonstration when 15,000 women demonstrated, a number of women's defence committees and organisations have been formed to agitate and organise around these demands.

But it has not been easy. There is no new found freedom for women even though they played their full part in the revolution. Women's meetings and demonstrations have been attacked by religious extremists, unveiled women have been sacked from their jobs and women's demands have been branded as counter-revolutionary.

Women's jobs are threatened first as the economic crisis deepens. Women's records are no longer played on the radio. A man still has the right to stop his wife working if he thinks the fact she works demeans her status as wife/mother. Women still need their father's permission to marry.

But as yet the situation is not stabilized. The revolution is not yet under the control of

Khomeini and the religious zealots.

Women have shown that by organising and demonstrating their opposition to his decrees, he can be made to back down—as happened over the compulsory wearing of the chador, the veil. He now says it's not obligatory—merely a duty.

Compared to the situation under the Shah, there is now the possibility of fighting back, not just for women—for everyone—workers, peasants, minority nationalities. Compared to before, everything is possible including the liberation of women.

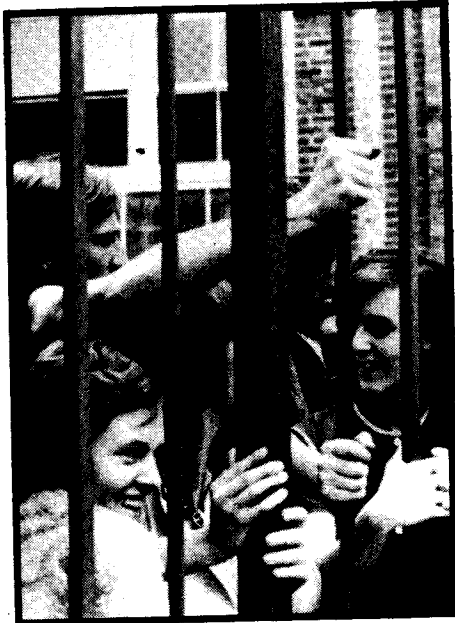
The solidarity of the women's movement, the messages of support and the delegations which have gone to Iran have given Iranian women new strength and a realisation that they are not alone.

As a new constitution is being drawn up it is more important than ever that women step up their activities and oppose the attempts to drive them back into traditional Islamic roles.

The right to work, economic, social and political equality are our demands too! Let's show our solidarity by demonstrating in support of our Iranian sisters.

Linda Quinn

Let's go to the pictures



WE HAVE reviewed these films because we think they are good ones to show at meetings. It's often very successful to show a film and have a discussion about it afterwards. It's also good for fund raising. The magic of films is a sure winner anyway. To go to the pictures and have a meeting all in one enriches the experience of both—two for the price of one!

The administrative side of film shows is less daunting than you may think. You will need a 16mm sound projector and either a screen or a clean, unscarred white wall or sheet. You can usually hire a projector from a school, college or university. Look up Cinema Equipment in the yellow pages or ask the distributors. It's also worth getting in touch with your local Arts Council.

Distributors often offer 10 per cent discount if you book three or more feature films at a time. Book films well in advance.

For a much longer list of films see Spare Rib 77, December 1978. Our thanks to Spare Rib for allowing us to use some of their material.

The reviews are written by Celia Shalom, Marilyn MacLean, Sheila McGregor, Anna Paczuska, Kim Longinotto and Melanie McFadyean.

Take it like a Man Ma'am

Red Sister Collective, Denmark. 96 minutes.

Distributed by The Other Cinema, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2 01 734 8508. £35, or £25 to Womens Groups.

This is one of the funniest films I have ever seen. It is good for mixed audiences because it illustrates how ludicrous sex roles are. The story centres on a middle-aged housewife who feels useless because her children have grown up and left, and she is utterly bored

with her life. Her husband doesn't understand her and her doctor suggests she buys a dog!

She has a dream about a society where men stay at home with the children, work in offices as secretaries and decorate themselves up as sex objects.

She eventually gets a job in a factory and life improves, until ... well I won't spoil the end!

Who needs nurseries?

Cartoon in colour. 10 minutes. Made and Distributed by Leeds Animation Workshop, 20 Westminster Buildings, 31 New York Street, Leeds 2. Jill Lacey on Leeds 460171. £6

Four year-old Tracy, feeling hemmed in by family life, runs off from her mother in a supermarket. She joins a group of children who are talking about their problems at home. A 'child expert', aged 18 months, presents the facts and figures on nursery places, showing how few places are available. The children decide to take action!

The film presents information about nursery provision in an entertaining way, and through children's eyes. Fact sheets and discussion notes are also available.

With Babies and Banners

Lorraine Gray, USA. 46 minutes. The Other Cinema. £18

Money was worth little and by 1937 unemployment was ten millions in the States. Workers at General Motors in Flint, Michigan came out on the famous sitdown strike. The women—who worked for General Motors, those in other factories and women at home—gave active support to the strike. They formed the Women's Emergency Brigade which organised like an army. It was crucial to winning the strike. Backed by original film of the events, members of the Brigades (now in their 60's and 70's) talk about their battle. They tell how suspicious the men were, how the women couldn't be too feminine or masculine in behaviour or they wouldn't be accepted. The Red Brigade woman became a symbol of a new type of woman, committed to fighting for freedom.

Shirin's Wedding

Helma Sanders, West Germany. 1976. 116 minutes.

The Other Cinema. £30

This is one of the few films that I saw last



year which really stuck in my mind. It's about a Turkish woman who goes to work in Germany. The film manages to combine her dramatic and moving story with a strong impression of what life is like for immigrant workers in Germany. I wasn't sure about the end, but we all had a lot of ideas we wanted to share and discuss afterwards.

Superman and the Bride

Thames TV. 40 minutes.

Available from Film Forum, 56 Brewer Street, London W1. £10

This film shows how the media reinforce the traditional sexual stereotypes. Superman flexes his magnificent muscles while the woman does a spot of baking. It would be good for a meeting which discussed what sexual stereotyping is. It's very slick, and very, very funny.

Blow for Blow (Coup Pour Coup)

Marin Karmitz, France 1972. 90 minutes with subtitles.

The Other Cinema. £20

Blow for Blow tells the story of the occupation of a clothing sweatshop by the women workers. They kidnap the boss, a monolithic embodiment of the upper classes, and give him the punishment they receive daily: they refuse to give him permission to go to the lav; they dangle sandwiches under his nose. They win their demands, they sing and fight and support each other.

The film was made on location in Northern France with a cast taken from the dole queues. It is a fantastic film that inspires you with optimism and encourages you to fight. Everything seems more possible after you see it.

Harlan County

Barbara Kopple, USA, 1976. 103 minutes.

The Other Cinema. £35

This brilliant film tells a story similar to Blow for Blow, but compares the militancy and determination of women compared to their men. The women organise their husband's strike for them in the Kentucky mine fields.

The film is in documentary style and records a true story. It makes you feel involved. Another good thing about it is that the women are real. These aren't the pretty little men's darlings of the silver screen. They are real women, physically brave, resisting the attacks of police and scabs at the front of the picket lines.

Theatre Girls

Kim Longinotto and Clair Pollak. 1977 80 minutes.

National Film School, Station Road, Beaconsfield. 04946 71234 £13.80

Book this film early.

This is a documentary which is more like a

feature film. It was made in the Soho women's hostel which is known as 'Theatre Girls'. It's an extraordinary film, challenging, harrowing, funny and moving. It follows the quality of life for single homeless women, the rejected and deprived. It screams out at the insanity of a political system that allows anyone to be forced into such degradation. It makes you laugh, but you laugh with them, not at them. It is an unusually tender film, very much a film made by women about women.

It would be marvellous in a meeting, especially if you invited a speaker from Homeless Action or Womens Aid.

PROS

Jackie Garstin. 40 minutes

Available from Pros, c/o Peace Centre, Moore Street,

Birmingham

Price by agreement.

Pros is a film about prostitution, told by prostitutes. It is mostly interviews with prostitutes from a working class area in Birmingham, interspersed with sexist advertisements and pictures which show women as sexual objects and sex as a commodity to be bought and sold. It shows the hypocrisy of a society which decries prostitution on the one hand, then punishes the women and lets the men go free. Or, to quote one scene in the film of an arrest: 'I arrest you in the name of the law, public decency and local commerce.'

The Stepford Wives

Bryan Forbes, USA 1974. 114 minutes, colour.

Contemporary Films, 55 Greek Street, W1. 01 734 4901. £40, discounts available.

An unusual horror story, full of suspense. Something strange is happening in the small American town of Stepford All the men belong to a Men's Association which meets every night in a spooky big house. Two women try to get a women's group going, but the only issue people get excited about is housewife tips! Each woman is the advertiser's dream wife: the proud, neat, fussy housewife, crisply dressed, so feminine, so concerned about her family, and so boring! A parody on what society really does to us. A smashing film!

EGA Stays OK

Newsreel Collective, 1977. 27 minutes, colour.

The Other Cinema. £8

The campaign to save the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital is still going on! The EGA is one of two general women's hospitals in Britain, staffed by women for women patients. The film makes the point that women's health needs are not cared for properly in the N.H.S.

This documentary interviews staff and patients at the hospital. It shows the early stages of the work-in in late '76. The campaign has been very successful at involving a lot of active outside support. On the film, we see pensioners petitioning

outside the hospital. But, despite all this support, it looks like the hospital will continue to be run down.

Union Maids

Julia Klein, Jim Reichert, USA 1975. 45 minutes.

The Other Cinema and Contemporary Films. £12

Chicago in the thirties was a grim place to be. Workers were pouring into the towns and competing for jobs, while unemployment rose. Bosses used the situation to force low wages, long hours and rotten conditions. They beat and intimidated the workers who protested by using hired thugs. The craft unions were interested only in skilled workers, the unskilled were unorganised. In this situation the CIO was formed. It was a rank and file movement organised in the steelyards and the meat factories. Its success can be gauged by the extent to which it involved women workers.

In Union Maids three women recall their struggles, vividly illustrated by old newsreel film. It's a moving argument for rank and file organisation for women as well as men, and a tribute to the courage of working class women whose story is told and remembered.



WOMENS HEALTH

ECT: Kill or cure?



MORE than seven million tranquilisers are taken by women every day. It's a staggering statistic but every doctor has to see hundreds of women each week about the problems of depression. Why? Because of the pressures women face each day as wives as mothers and as workers. Women invariably do more than one job, and on top of it all we are forced by the society we live in to be beautiful and sexy all at the same time. It's all rather difficult to cope with when you're tired all the time and are constantly living a double life—not quite belonging at work because you only work part time and not quite fitting into the image of the perfect housewife and mother like on the adverts because you simply don't have the time, money or energy.

And what sort of solutions are offered? Usually it's the good old Valium tablet—a way of dulling the senses so that you can't remember why you were depressed in the first place. Well that doesn't seem to be very adequate to me. How can we come to terms with our problems and begin to fight back if we're too drugged up to think straight?

Electro-Convulsive-Therapy (E.C.T.) is a technique widely used in hospitals to treat people suffering from deep depression

and other mental difficulties. The technique involves passing between 100-140 volts of electricity through the brain. If you're thinking to yourself 'god that sounds terrible but I suppose they know what they're doing' then think again—because they don't. Psychologist *Carole Caulfield* told *Womens Voice* 'It is estimated that each year in Britain doctors give as many as 100,000 E.C.T.s yet incredibly no one knows how it works; it is not agreed that it cures illnesses for which it is prescribed, and there are numerous accounts of long term side effects. In what has to be one of the most dramatic, if unintentional, experiments on the effectiveness of E.C.T. patients in a London hospital were treated for two years on a machine that didn't work—and no one noticed!

Dr Hunter Brown (a Californian psychiatrist) boasts of a star patient—a preacher's wife, who hated doing house work and entertaining the guests. So she and her husband discussed the situation and decided that she should have a lobotomy (a psychosurgery operation which destroys part of the brain in an attempt to alter the patient's behaviour). The result? Excellent! She now quietly gets on with all the house work without a word of complaint.

Ms Caulfield spoke to two women who have experienced E.C.T. Mrs D.M.T.: 'I have not been the same since these treatments. They did not help my depression at all but have given me terrible headaches and lapses of memory. In these lapses my mind goes blank and I lose whole days. I also say things that I don't remember saying. This has made me even more depressed and I have attempted to commit suicide.' Mrs M.B. after six E.C.T.s said: 'I have had 14 years of absolute agony, in constant pain day and night; each week it gets worse and spreads further till now I am in pain from my head to my nerve endings in my feet.'

Last year the 'Times' reported that Mrs J.K.L. known to be suffering from cancer and later found to have a broken back was one day carried struggling to E.C.T. by four hospital staff. Her consultant told the committee that they had decided that her protests about being in pain were an invention to avoid treatment. Mrs J.K.L. was admitted as a voluntary patient. After receiving E.C.T. she complained of pains in her back and five days later she died.

According to Ms Caulfield many patients admitted as 'voluntary' are threatened that if they resist the treatment they will be compulsorily detained, and this can be for an unspecified and lengthy duration.

Why is it that such dubious if not

downright dangerous methods of treating depression are used? Well it seems there are two sides to this coin: on the one hand E.C.T. is an easy way out. Psychiatrist Anthony Clare states: 'It is easier to recommend E.C.T. than patiently tease out complex factors such as personal distress, sudden bereavement, personal doubts, marital difficulties and financial problems.' that is, because hospitals are so understaffed as a result of the health cuts, and because an inactive patient is easier to 'manage', E.C.T. is a very useful method of treatment. I used to work in a large mental hospital on a women's ward of forty patients. There were four nurses per shift—sometimes only three. All the patients were receiving E.C.T. or were heavily drugged—if they hadn't been then the ward would have been in a state of chaos.

how far does the male dominated medical profession understand the problems that women face? And more important, how far do they understand that much of the stress that women suffer is directly related to the fact that they are *women*?

Neither E.C.T. nor tranquilisers get to the roots of depression. Only by coming to terms with the way in which we are oppressed—that is recognising that we are what we are and we don't have to conform to society's stereotypical of the beautiful career woman-cum-home maker, can we start to deal with women's depression. Meanwhile if there were more staff in hospitals then it would be possible to offer a reasonable sort of therapy. Many patients simply need to explain their problems and learn how to cope. But it seems that the Government think this too expensive. They are closing down the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital—one of the few hospitals run by women for women. We say women must be allowed to run their own facilities for example well woman clinics to deal with womens health in conjunction with the health service.

Michele Grant

Research Carole Caulfield

Emergency Demonstration! Save the EGA!

The Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital for Women in Euston is once again under serious threat of closure. The next meeting of the Area Health Authority will recommend closure because of 'nursing shortages'. Since the Campaign to save the EGA began 3 years ago, the AHA have done nothing to encourage the recruitment of nurses. Who wants to work in a hospital under threat of closure? It is *their* responsibility to provide decent nursing cover and their determination to close the hospital despite the magnificent fight by local people and staff, has resulted in this latest threat. The Save the EGA Campaign are calling a demo outside the AHA's meeting on May 9 to demand: • Upgrade and expand the EGA on site • No loss of jobs or services • Expand health facilities for women. *Womens Voice* calls on everyone who can to be there—we can't let this unique women's hospital close! **Demonstrate: Wednesday 9 May, from 5.00pm onwards, Insurance House, Insurance Street, London, WC1 (back of Kings Cross Station).**

• Closure will be IMMEDIATE: so there will be a 24 hour picket mounted outside the EGA from Wednesday night. Everyone Welcome and needed!

YOUR QUESTIONS

*Sterilisation

Dear Womens Voice

I am 18 and have had one kid when I was 16. I fell for it again recently and had an abortion.

The only information I can get on sterilisation is that doctors won't do it unless you have had about 20 kids already, or you are within spitting distance of the menopause.

I'd like to know how you go about getting it, what effects it has on your body, what bad side effects there are and any other information you can give.

*Love from
Jane*

Dear Jane

As with abortion it's not so much a case of a woman being able to choose about her fertility, but whether you can persuade a doctor that your reasons are good enough.

Approach your GP first and see if he is sympathetic to the idea. You will hear all the arguments about being too young, changing your mind, and wanting kids one day. If your G.P. is agreeable then he would have to refer you to an NHS hospital, and then you would have to persuade the consultant that your reasons were sound.

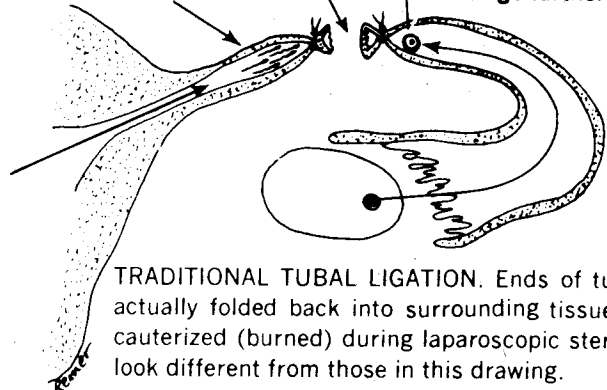
I think your chances of being sterilised on the NHS are very small. I have not heard of women of your age ever having the operation.

You might find a more sympathetic reaction by approaching a private, but non-profit making, clinic such as the Marie Stopes Clinic, Whitfield Street, or the BPAS, Petty France, both in London.

These organisations offer sterilisation operations, usually for around £60 for women and £40 for men. In addition there is a fee of about £10 for counselling sessions and medical examination. They both provide very thorough sterilisations counselling for any client considering the operation and consider each individual case on its merits. Even if you approached these clinics you would still have to fight hard for them to agree to the operation.

Most sterilisations are performed by a simple operation using a laparoscope, something like a tiny telescope, which is introduced into the abdomen through a small, half inch incision on each side. The fallopian tubes along which the woman's egg must pass before entering the womb can then be sealed off, either by cutting and then cauterising the tubes, or by

LIGATION OF FALLOPIAN TUBE
Sperm cannot reach egg. Egg (ovum) cannot go farther.



TRADITIONAL TUBAL LIGATION. Ends of tubes are actually folded back into surrounding tissue. Tubes cauterized (burned) during laparoscopic sterilization look different from those in this drawing.

putting tiny rings or clips on to the tubes. This operation can be done without an overnight stay, but most women stay for 24 hours.

The side-effects of sterilisation are not many. It is thought that cauterising the fallopian tubes can lead to heavier periods. The methods that use clips on the tubes have a slightly higher failure rate than other methods. The big side effects are probably psychological. There are those women who will

change their minds after the operation; perhaps remarriage or the death of their child may cause this. But there will also be many women who, perhaps for the first time, will start to discover and enjoy their sexuality, being freed from the fear of unwanted pregnancy.

If you are determined to go ahead and try, then I wish you much encouragement and luck. Be prepared to fight for what you want every inch of the way.
Jane Foster.

ANSWERED

ROCK Against Sexism is a campaign actively supported by musicians as well as fans and has the following aims:

1) To fight sexism in rock music, and to use rock music to fight sexism in the world at large.

2) To challenge stereotyped images of women and men and promote a more positive image of women in rock.

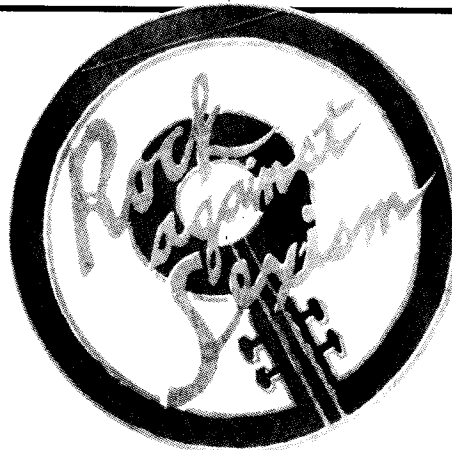
3) To attack the exploitation of women in advertisements, the press and on stage.

4) To encourage women musicians by giving them more opportunities to play.

5) To assert the right of everyone to determine their own sexuality.

Rock Against Sexism have had quite a few gigs in London and elsewhere. Letters of support are flowing in and we have sold out of badges twice.

It is expected that local Rock Against Sexism groups will be formed and they may well work with the local Rock Against



Racism groups from time to time to put on joint events.

We welcome support from mixed bands and male bands who are sympathetic to the aims of Rock Against Sexism. But we all agree that one of our chief functions is to provide women musicians with a sympathetic environment in which to play.

We want to organise some women only events as well as

mixed ones, and also workshops where women can share their musical skills and experiment in a supportive atmosphere.

The London group has just started holding open monthly discussion meetings on topics connected with music and sexism.

A mention in Blot, the National Union of School

Students' magazine, brought us lots of letters from school children and we are thinking of holding concerts, discussion workshops in schools and youth clubs.

Membership of Rock Against Sexism costs £1. We'll send you a year's subscription to our bulletin *Drastic Measures* plus details of meetings, other supporters in your area and so on.

If you want to get involved by putting on a Rock Against Sexism gig, starting a local Rock Against Sexism group or by selling badges and bulletins get in touch with us at: 121 Grandison Road, London SW11.

Rock Against Sexism London Concert

24th May in the Albany,
Empire Creek Road, Deptford SE8

*On Stage Carol Grimes
Tour de Force
Belt and Braces*

OPEN DOOR

express it!

Some lesbians will probably say that, even though they had an 'ordinary childhood', they still felt apart. Whilst others will say that an emotional and/or sexual relationship with another woman, 'just happened'. With myself it was the latter. While at college, I became sexually involved with my girlfriend - it just happened that way; but when we left college we both went our separate ways!

But did we both go our own ways - and forget what happened, because we wanted to suppress our lesbian feelings and try to go 'straight', i.e. live with a man? I don't really think so.

On the other hand it could be argued as before, that we treated it the way it should be treated, i.e. it happened and will probably happen again.

But, by examining the relationship in this way, am I still falling into the trap of suppressing my real lesbian instincts? There are obviously two sides to this complex argument!

Christine Stimpson
Hackney

It says that men must be big, strong, aggressive and dynamic. It says that women are smaller, gentler and exist on this earth to satisfy the male.

Women are told to strive to become the organised, pretty mum, who contents her family with soft nighties and a sparkling floor. Or she is used as a sex object displayed in all forms of male sex fantasy and fetish. 2. It makes Women compete to achieve an unreachable standard, to achieve an impossible image. You see the models in the Pretty Polly advert as being as near perfect examples of the female form as possible. If they are near perfect what is perfect Mr. Kerton?

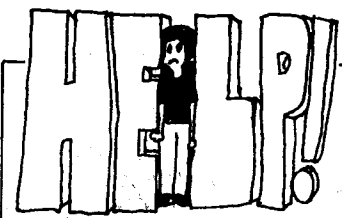
We are conditioned to see certain forms of the female body as 'acceptable'. Women corset and diet to achieve their anorexic visions of beauty sold to us by the media. There is no perfect body. No woman will ever achieve the perfect female form because the male ego will not accept woman as perfect. Women fail in their attempts to achieve the perfect form, they become neurotic paranoid and destructive towards their self

initiated. This could lead to men attempting to relieve their sexual frustration through rape.

5. By using women as sexually enticing objects, women are being used as a marketable product. Their sexuality is for sale. This belief that women are the property of men has led to men thinking that women are available at any time. This is why men see fit to whistle, shout, toot car horns, grope, pinch bottoms etc....

6. Women are used as a sex objects yet are denied sexual feelings of their own. Although she shows cleavage and legs her humanity is obliterated. She shaves facial, body even pubic hair. She disguises all her body smells and any evidence of menstruation. She has been conditioned to see these elements of her body as unacceptable the male.

The media promotes only heterosexuality, it reinforces prejudice against gays. It says woman must attract man and man must be attracted by woman. Your ego Mr. Kerton cannot accept that there are women who don't want to be ogled by men, who want to



Dear Womens Voice

Sappho is eight years old this month. During this period we have established a unique link with isolated lesbians, both home and abroad - through the magazine, meetings, discos, the office and by phone.

Owing to rising costs and inflation, Sappho's future is very fragile, despite that, those involved work voluntarily and in an unpaid capacity. We are writing to ask you if you will be so very kind and send a financial donation. We feel sure that you have benefited (or know someone who has) from Sappho's existence; without which many would have been deprived of any homosexual contact or fulfilment.

Unless Sappho continues, the past eight years' effort is meaningless and lesbians can look forward to a bleak future, so we earnestly seek your financial support.

With warmest regards in struggle,

BASEMENT,
20 Dorset Square,
London NW1 6QB.
Jackie Forster,
on behalf of the Sappho
Collective.

Dear Womens Voice

I am just beginning some research into attitudes towards women in male dominated work. As a beginning I want to look at the experiences of women who work in any male dominated jobs. Later I hope to do this through interviewing women, employers, male workers etc...but at the moment I am starting with a postal questionnaire.

Obviously the larger the numbers the more weight the research has. I hope it can go some small way to dispelling the strange ideas people have about women who want to enter 'male' occupations and the myth of equal opportunities. Hoping to hear from anyone willing to fill in a questionnaire or indeed anyone with any ideas or suggestions for areas of interest or angles to pursue in this field. Please write to me, Dian Green, at 41, Bobbersmill Road, Hyson Green, Nottingham. Tel 77194.

Rush your letter

WOMENS'

BOX 82

LONDON E2

'IF YOU THINK THIS AD EXPLOITS YOU-YOU MUST BE JEALOUS'



'This ad exploits women' read the slogan, hand-written on a sticky-label and plastered across the breast of a bikini-clad maiden, erotically clutching a bottle of suntan lotion. What annoyed me wasn't so much the fact that the label obscured her breast - although that in itself was disappointing - but that the author hadn't seen fit to write 'This ad exploits both men and women', or at least 'This ad exploits people.' Of course the ad exploits women, but it also exploits men. How?

If you remember, men are suckers for beautiful, curvy women and anything that smacks remotely of sex. Whether on paper, in real life or in the head. The ads use Woman as a medium to exploit Man by dangling in front of his lecherous eyeballs a procession of unattainable women in all manner of provocative situations. From the phallic to the ridiculous.

Paper seduction. The suggestive stance, the inviting pout. Protruding nipples, endless cleavage, the whole thigh-flashing, bottom-wriggling, 'I'm ready, come and get it', 'Buy one of these and give me one of those' fantasy.

You see, we're all getting screwed, so what's new?

After stepping from my train I was confronted with another label, 'This ad degrades women.' This I could not believe. The ad was the Pretty Polly one depicting two pairs of nylon-encased legs. The sort of legs that any man would stop to admire and any woman of sane mind would wish to have. I thought degrade meant to debase morally. How, when the models used in the ads are almost as near perfect examples of the female form as is possible, does this degrade women? Surely it can only promote and accentuate the fact that women are beautiful and influential.

These paltry motives for defacing posters lead me to the suspicion that the women responsible are somewhat hung-up about their own looks and a trifle jealous of the faces, figures and clothes of the models used in the ads. If this is true perhaps they should, instead of being self-appointed spokeswomen for the entire female populace, restrict their scribbled epitaphs to a personal basis, and be honest about it. Such as, 'I don't like this ad because it makes me feel ugly.' PAUL KERTON

Open letter

'Company Magazine'
Paul Kerton/Editorial
Assistant
National Magazine Co Ltd.,
Chestergate House, Vauxhall
Bridge Road, London SW1

Dear Mr. Kerton
I think that this ad exploits women not because I am jealous but for the following reasons:-

1. The male dominated media enforces sex stereotypes.

images.

3. It gives men like you Mr. Kerton the right to evaluate what is acceptable and what is not. What right is that, that women's aims to be judged by male criteria?

4. Sexist advertising can incite sexual assault and possible rape. You state how attracted you feel by these displays of the female body. Your sexual urges have been aroused yet as you rightly point out these paper images do not satisfy the response they have

define their own limits of sexuality. You counteract this rejection by saying that these women must be jealous. You believe that all woman are striving to be attractive to you. The whole standpoint of your article is that you dislike sexist advertising. So, do something about it. The women who stuck those stickers are fighting back. Your response to it is to condemn them.

Julia Garwolinska
Birmingham
Womens Voice

What is going on?

Events

• **Bath Womens Voice Day School on Womens Health:** 12 May. Century House, Manvers St. Bath. Topics for discussion include the National Health Service, abortion, contraception, childbirth, and more... creche available. For details contact S Smith, 2 Grosvenor Place, Bath. Phone Bath 314933.

• **Bath Womens Voice** is meeting regularly. For details contact Sarah on Bath 314933.

• **Fightback National Conference:** 'Health Not Cuts'. Saturday 30 June, 10am-5.30pm. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq. London. WCI. Social and supper 7pm till 10pm. • Lessons of the struggle against cuts. • The attack on trade union rights • Who suffers • The fight for a socialist health service • The way forward: building a movement. Workshop discussions: Organising against cuts and for better health. Cost: £2 per delegate in London. £1 per delegate outside London and wageless.

• **Hackney Womens Voice open meeting.** Fat is a Feminist Issue. Monday 14 May. 8pm. Dalston Library, Dalston Lane, London E8. For details or babysitters, phone Pauline 985 3086 or Chris 806 6198 (after six).

• **Lampeter Womens Voice Filmshow:** Take it like a man, ma'am. 10 May. 7.30pm. Arts Hall in College.

• **Please note mistake inside back cover.** Fashion Line. 01 837 8602. 2-10pm Monday and Friday. 7-10pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Womens Festival 79
June 8-17
Womens Arts Alliance
10 Cambridge Terrace Mews
London NW1
Still room for women groups wanting to take part or exhibit their work. 01-935 1841 after 2pm.

• **North Herts Film Society** presents: Friday 18 May. **Amazing Equal Pay Show/Women of the Rhondda.** Letchworth, Herts. Guests of members paid in advance only, sorry. Baldock (0462) 89 29 58

• **Women and Work Hazards Group.** 9 Poland St., London W1. 01-437 2728. We can supply speakers and are willing to answer your enquiries on health and safety at work.

• **Women's Health and Safety Information Packet 40p**

• **NAC National Conference** Where does the struggle for assisted reproduction fertility go

from Here? Should NAC remain a single issue campaign? How does the struggle in this country fit into the International campaign? Discuss these questions and more at this year's NAC National Conference. June 9-10, Manchester. Deadline for papers May 17 (on Gestetner A4 Stencil please). Contact office 01-278 0153 for details and registration forms.

• **Workers Educational Association half day forum.** Women: Past, Present, and Future. Saturday, 12 May, 1.30pm to 6pm. The Lecture Theatre, College of Art, Church St., Stourbridge. Admission: £1 at door. Full time students, pensioners, claimants and unwaged: 50p. Free creche provided.

• **Gays in the N.U.T. conference.** How can we work openly at school and in the union and how we can fight for gay rights. Open to all interested teachers in the N.U.T. Saturday 19 May. Birmingham Gay Centre, 10 Bordesley St., Digbeth, Birmingham. £1.50. Details: Geoff Hardy, 7 Blackheath Grove, London SE 3 (01-852 2742) or Richard Larry (01-790 2454) Creche available.

• **Wanted**—Second experienced community arts worker for community print shop, to develop social use of print shop building and to contribute to regular workshops. Please apply in writing to: Telford Community Arts, 147 Severn Walk, Sutton Hill, Telford, Salop.

WV groups

• **Aberdeen Womens Voice** for more information telephone Liz 51059

• **Acton and Harlesden** ring Carrie 993 0356 or Pete 969 9812

• **Birmingham Womens Voice** meets regularly at the Holloway pub, Holloway Road, City Centre. For details and babysitters phone Jenny - 440 5794

• **Black Country Sundays** fortnightly, 2.30, 27 Glen Court, Compton Road. For information phone Wolverhampton 23233. Children welcome.

• **Bristol Womens Voice** meets fortnightly, at 7.30pm, Inkworths Community Centre, 22 Hephburn Road, St Pauls, off Brigstocke Road. Ring Bristol 553 740 or 669 198.

• **Canterbury Womens Voice** meets every other Tuesday at Jolly Sailor Northgate. Phone Barbara (Lynging 862742).

• **Chelmsford Womens Voice.** For details of local activities, see Womens Voice sellers.

• **Coventry Womens Voice** meets every other Wednesday, 8.00pm, at

the Hertford Tavern, off Queens Road (near the Butts). Phone 450 570.

• **Croydon Womens Voice** meets alternate Tuesdays. Phone Maureen 660 0989 or Yvonne 664 3768.

• **Faling Womens Voice** meets regularly. Phone Maureen 567 7083 or Jane 930 0986 for details.

• **Fecles and Irlam Womens Voice** meets fortnightly at the AFU Social Club, Mather Road, Fecles. For information ring Jennie 707 2557.

• **Edinburgh Womens Voice** meets fortnightly on Sunday evenings. Phone Penny 557 0731 for details.

• **Falkirk Womens Voice.** Anyone interested in building a Womens Voice Group in Falkirk area please contact: Frances, 1 Main Street, Shieldhill, Falkirk.

• **Finchley and Barnet Womens Voice** meets fortnightly, for information contact Anita 883 4968 or Glens 346 7627.

• **Fleet Street Womens Voice** meets every other Wednesday at the Hoop and Grapes, Farringdon St. lunchtime from 1 to 2. Ring Maggie 822 37780 (work)

• **Glasgow Womens Voice.** For information ring Clare 959 8041 or Dorte 423 1185.

• **Glossop, Derbyshire Womens Voice** meets first and third Tuesdays of every month at 110 Victoria St. Glossop. Phone Glossop 61873 or Claire. Glossop 64735.

• **Hackney Womens Voice.** phone Pauline (985 3086) or Chris (806 6198) for information and babysitters.

• **Halifax Womens Voice** details from WV and SW sellers every Saturday 12.30-2.30. Co-op arcade on the Precinct.

• **Harlow Womens Voice** meets fortnightly on Wednesday at 8pm. Ring Pat. Harlow 28022.

• **Highbury Womens Voice.** For details ring Flana 439 3764 (days).

• **Hornsey Womens Voice** meets fortnightly. Ring Jane 348 6712 or Maggie 341 1182 for information and babysitters.

• **Islington Womens Voice** meets regularly. Phone Sandy at 802 6145 for details.

• **Kentish Town Womens Voice** meets weekly. Ring Gail 485 0954 or Vera Di 267 5059 for information and details.

• **Lampeter Womens Voice** meets Tuesday evenings. Details from WV sellers or write c/o SDUC Lampeter, Dyfed, Wales.

• **Lea Valley Womens Voice** meets regularly. Phone Mary (802 9563) for information and babysitters.

• **Liverpool Womens Voice** meets on alternate Tuesdays at 8pm in the County Hotel. For further information phone Alison at 727 4057 or 709 1844.

• **Manchester University Womens Voice** meets each week at 5pm in the students union.

• **South Manchester Womens Voice** Group meets every other week. For details phone Kate, 434 2343

• **SE Manchester** meets at the Albert. Rusholme, 8pm, every other Wednesday.

• **Medway Womens Voice** meets regularly. Telephone Helen, Medway 270 684, or Marge 251 362 for details.

• **Newham Womens Voice** meets Tuesdays and Thursdays fortnightly. Phone Wendy 790 2373. Babysitters available.

• **Newcastle Womens Voice** meets second Tuesday of every month. Bridge Hotel, Newcastle at 8.00pm (Nr High Levelbridge). Telephone Newcastle 813877.

• **Nottingham Womens Voice** Group meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in every month at 8pm. 118 Mansfield Road. For further information or babysitters ring Jane 866522 ext 219 or Gill on 666 800.

• **Norwich Womens Voice** meets every other Tuesday, 8.30pm. Black Boys pub, Colegate. For information phone Norwich 29963.

• **Preston Womens Voice** meets every other Tuesday at the Windsor Castle, Egan St (near Meadow St) at 8pm. For more information phone Mary: Preston 55739 and for babysitters.

• **Reading Womens Voice** meets regularly. For information phone Kathy on 660 800.

• **Shrewsbury Womens Voice** meets the first Wednesday of every month. Other meetings too so phone 58830 for details.

• **Slough Womens Voice** meets on the first Tuesday of every month at Slough library. Ring Mary, Slough 24093.

• **South London Womens Voice** meets fortnightly on Tuesdays. Tate Library, Brixton, Oval. All welcome.

• **S West London Womens Voice** meets alternate Tuesdays, 91 Bedford Hill, Balham. All welcome. More info, babysitters contact Marion 673 1329.

• **Sheffield Womens Voice** meets fortnightly, at the Prince of Wales pub, Division St at 7.30pm.

• **Stockport Womens Voice.** For details phone 061 431 7564.

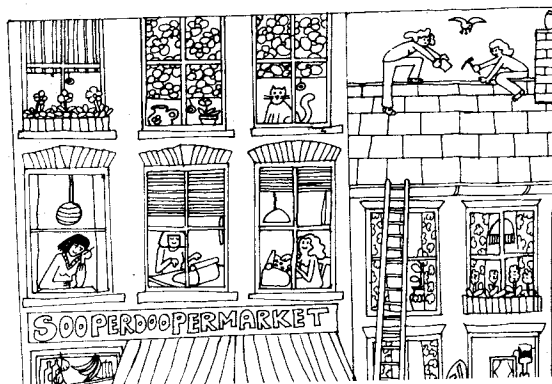
• **Stoke on Trent Womens Voice** would anyone interested in organising with us in the Stoke on Trent area contact. Sandra 814094.

• **Tower Hamlets Womens Voice** meets on alternate Mondays. Babysitters available phone Heather 739 6668.

• **Waltham Forest Womens Voice** meets fortnightly on Tuesdays or Thursdays at 8pm. For details ring Jeannie (531 8340) or Pauline (521 4768).

• **Walsall Womens Voice** meets regularly. Phone Ena at Walsall 644205 for details. Children welcome.

• **York Womens Voice** meets every third Saturday in the month at the Royal Oak, Goodramgate. Full creche facilities. Food on sale - do drop in!



Womens Voice doodle poster.
50p each, two for 75p
All proceeds to Womens Voice Funds.
Money with order to Womens Voice, Box 82, London, E2.

MARXISM '79

Asian Studies: Our Marxist Traditions: Marxism and

London, Prince of Wales

Personal Life: Science and New Technology Art

LECTURES

Politics; Marxist

accommodation available. For further information write to:

GARNER STRIKE FILM BENEFIT

APRIL

SUNDAY 1st
12.30pm **Dread, Beat & Blood** *plus*
Dark Star

GATE CINEMA NOTTING HILL

SUNDAY 8th
7.00pm **The American Friend**

WEDNESDAY 11th
11.15pm **Pressure**

THE SCREEN ON THE GREEN ISLINGTON

SATURDAY 21st
4.00pm **Shirin's Wedding** *plus*
Babies and Banners

RITZY CINEMA BRIXTON

NATFHE Outer London Region

Day School

Women in NATFHE

Polytechnic of Central London (New Cavendish Street)
10am - 5pm

For further information contact: Margo Galloway,
Acton Tech, High Street, London, W3.

small ads

The Other Cinema

Films by women and about women to show at your meetings. Complete list available of the films we have for distribution. Send SAE to The Other Cinema, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2H 7JJ. Telephone 01-734 8508.

Birmingham Womens

Liberation group can be contacted at 76 Brighton Road, Balsall Heath, Birmingham. Newsletter available with list of different groups.

Abortion

New group forming to collect information about abortion facilities and set up abortion counselling and referral service. Deptford Womens Centre, 74 Deptford High Street, 7.30pm, Tuesday 23 January. Ring Jennifer 732 9218 or Wendy 737 4849

See Red Womens Workshop

New catalogue and posters now out. Send SAE to 16A Iliffe yard, off Crampton Street, London SE17.

We are now printing for groups needing posters (+ T shirts) for meetings events etc Phone 701 8314

Small ads rates: 5p per word

Men against Sexism

are organising the creche for the Easter RAR extravanza at Ally Pally. We need books, toys and games. MAS supporters needed to help out with the kids. Phone Andy (278 0100) with offers of help and toys.

Rape Crisis Centre

If you have been raped or sexually assaulted and want someone to talk to or need legal or medical advice the Rape Crisis Centre runs a 24 hour telephone line. Contact us any time day or night on 01 340 6145 or PO Box 42, London, EN6 5BU.

Lesbian Line

Lesbian Line is a new phone service for women operated entirely by women and offers help, advice and information. Phone between 2-10pm on 01 794 2942. Scottish Lesbians can ring Homosexual Rights Group 031 556 4049, weekdays 7 to 10, weekends 2.30-10pm.

Menstruation

I am writing two books on menstruation for 9-14 year olds and I would like to hear from women of all ages who would be willing to talk to me or answer a confidential questionnaire about their experiences.

Please write to Ruth Thomson, 72 Hemingford Road, London, N1

Join Womens Voice...

WOMENS VOICE fights for womens rights. We want equal pay with the highest paid; maternity leave without restriction; the right to a job; nursery places for all children so that mothers can chose to work; and an end to discrimination in education, training, jobs and benefits; the right to abortion on demand.

To fight for these changes is only a beginning. Womens Liberation means we have to free ourselves from the grip of the rich and powerful whose oppressive rules and ideas are fostered on us from our earliest years. This means we have to fight for socialism too, to free us from a society divided between those who have and those who have not.

To fight we have to be organised: Womens Voice is a sister organisation of the Socialist Workers Party.

Fight with Womens Voice for Womens Liberation and Socialism.

join the fight!

Womens Voice Groups

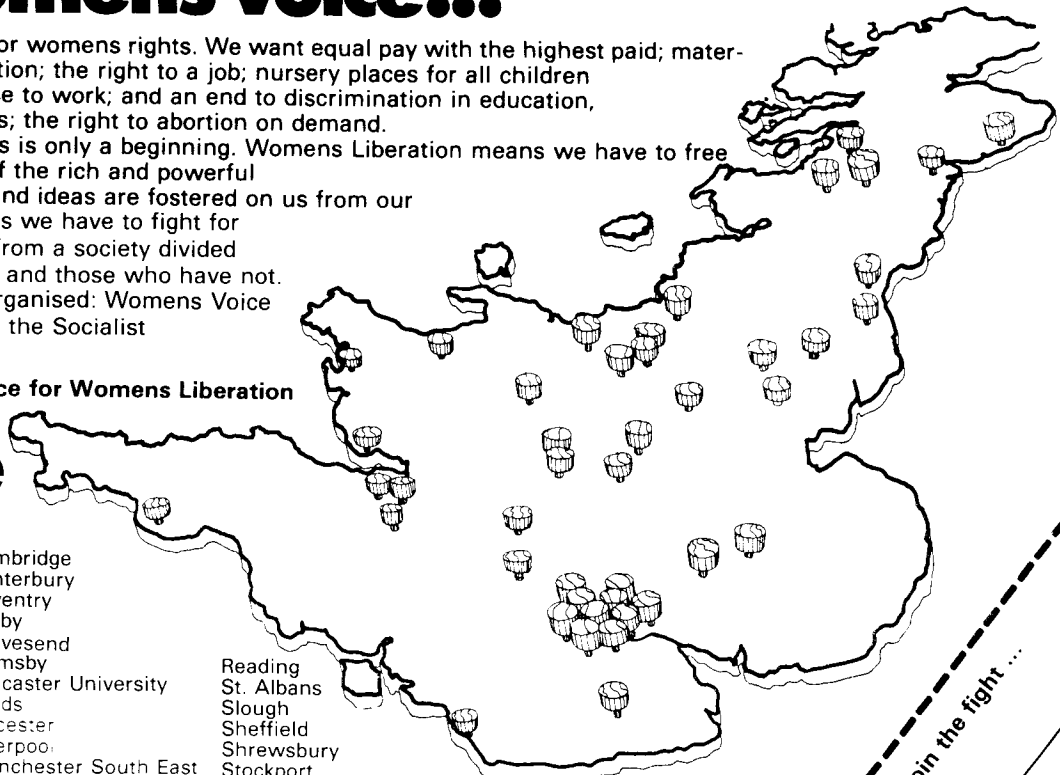
Scotland
London
Leeds
Manchester
Glasgow
Liverpool
Newcastle
Norwich
Nottingham
Oxford
Preston
Plymouth
Pontefract

Cambridge
Canterbury
Coventry
Derby
Gravesend
Lancaster University
Leeds
Leicester
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Manchester South East
Medway
Newcastle
Norwich
Nottingham
Oxford
Preston
Plymouth
Pontefract

Reading
St. Albans
Slough
Sheffield
Shrewsbury
Stockport
Sunderland
Wolverhampton
York

London
North East London Poly
Central
Fleet Street
South

South West
South East
Hammersmith
Bedford College
Lea Valley
Kentish Town
Islington
Walthamstow
Tower Hamlets



I want to join the fight ...

Name
Address

Send to Womens Voice
Box 82, London, E2.

Calling all Womens Voice groups — please beam into base!

Please answer these questions so we can make sure we send you the steering committee newsletter, bankers orders, membership cards, leaflets (and all the other things which make being part of Womens Voice such fun!)

Please send your replies in soon — we need to make contact!

Concerning Womens Voice Groups

Secretary's name and address:

Treasurer's name and address:

How many Womens Voice do you sell?

Where are your sales done?

How often does your Womens Voice Group meet?

When was your last public meeting?

How many non-Womens Voice members attended?

How many Womens Voice members are in your group?

subscribe

For yourself
For a friend

Name

Address

12 issues £3.60 and Airmail
£6.40

bankers order

I would like a bankers
order to help keep
Womens Voice fighting

Name

Address

Send cheques / POs to: Womens
Voice, PO Box 82, London, E2.

