

womens voice

20p October 79 Issue 34

**Contraception
and abortion
go hand-in-hand**

**We want the
right to plan
what we can!**



My child, to give you life I have to fight for your freedom



'Today we fight against white Rhodesia, not because we want to fight but because they have forced us to do so. We cannot leave, as in the old days, because there is nowhere for us to go any more. The black people in Rhodesia, our brothers and sisters, have started to fight for their freedom, seeing that you just could not talk sense to the white man. The white man has become desperate. Otherwise why should he attack us?'

In this weave you can see how the white Rhodesian troops have killed many people and put them into a huge hole. But the guerrillas are catching up.

The weave also shows that even the women have been forced to take to the guns. The woman says: "My child, to give you life, I have to fight for your freedom."

60 people, mostly women, run a weaving cooperative in the African village of Oodi, Botswana. Their weaves are priced so that the women earn as much as the men who go to work in the South African mines—which means most of the able-bodied men in the village. Each weave is different and tells a story about their lives, their problems, and their attempts to solve those problems.

Some of the money made from the weaves is put back into the village. They formed a marketing co-operative which sells goods at a cheaper price than other stores. They say, 'We hope that people will slowly start to realize that they can do a lot for themselves. We who are working in the weaving factory did not know four years ago that we could do the things we manage today, and the old people are still surprised. Now we know that nothing will happen if we do not do it ourselves.'

Jenny Jackson

OUR POINT OF VIEW

Support the Engineers

THERE ARE 350,000 women in engineering now striking for a decent wage and a shorter working week. The Press and TV only gives the women a mention when they can find some who want a return to work. Of the thousands of women who want to step up the strike and win, not a word.

Altogether two million workers are involved in this dispute, which began quietly enough, a day a week, in August. At the

AVERAGE wages for semi-skilled women in engineering are £60 to £65 a week. If the claim is won they will get £70 a week, BASIC. That means an end to the race to meet bonus targets and an easier working week.

beginning of September the unions stepped it up to two days a week. Now workers are being locked out, and others are saying the time is right to come out on indefinite strike.

These engineers have taken on the most powerful employers organisation in this country, the *Engineering Employers Federation*. They are disciplined. They will not allow individual employers to settle with their workers, even if they want to. They are well rehearsed. In 1972 when engineers

occupied their factories the EEF set up a special fund to help its members make up lost profits rather than let them give in to the strikers' demands.

And they are ruthless. When the *Equal Pay Act* was passed the EEF did all it could to break the law! In a confidential circular to all members they advised: 'collective agreements should be altered in such a way that the removal of the differentiation according to sex *will not result in any greater increase in women's rates.*' Again they advised their members not to go it alone but to leave negotiations to national level.

This is the first big confrontation between workers and employers supervised by this Tory Government. If the Engineering bosses win we all lose. Whether we are fighting the cuts, fighting for better pay, fighting to keep our jobs, whether we are engineers or not, a victory for one group of employers will encourage all the rest. It will show Margaret Thatcher that her Government is strong enough to take us on.

But if the engineers win we win. It will be the biggest boost to the trade union movement for years. It will show that good organisation and a fighting spirit can win the day.

We have to match organisation with organisation, solidarity with solidarity.

Support the engineers!

womens
Voice

Womens magazine of the
Socialist Workers Party

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Are you good at writing, drawing, taking photos? Are you a designer or a typist? Can you help us produce Womens Voice? If you can, telephone or write to us, at the address below. If you want to come to one of our editorial meetings take a note of the date—Wednesday 24 October—and then get in touch.

Letters, news, reviews, articles, ideas, or whatever you want to send in must reach us by 12 October for the November issue.

WOMENS VOICE · PO BOX 82 LONDON E2 · 01 986 6222

NEWS

SOS: SAVE OUR SCHOOL MEALS

ONE OF the worst places for the Government axe to fall could be the school meals service. Since 1944 there has been a statutory duty on all local authorities to provide school meals, and those meals had to be suitable as a main meal of the day, providing at least a third of a child's daily energy and protein requirements.

In a document leaked by civil servants, and apparently already accepted by the Government, it has been decided to remove this statutory duty. Local authorities will be able to decide for themselves whether to provide snacks, increase charges or do nothing but make a room available for children to eat sandwiches brought from home—at a price, for their supervision!

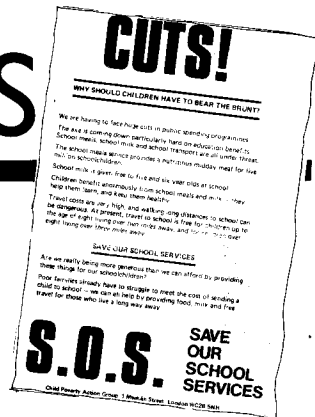
No decision has been taken yet on the future of the one million a day free school dinners which go to

children in most need. The proposals being discussed are either to abolish free meals altogether and increase benefits; or to make the scheme discretionary for local authorities; or to provide a minimum service for special cases—making it even more of a stigma than it already is for children to get free dinners.

The axe will fall just as heavily on children in special schools unless the local authority makes an exception of them.

The Government wants to save £200 million, half of the budget for school meals. But the *Association of Metropolitan Authorities* says that even these cuts won't save the necessary amount.

An estimated 300,000 part-time women work in the school meals service and most of them could expect to lose their jobs.



THE Child Poverty Action Group has launched a campaign to Save Our School Meals Service. Ruth Lister told *Womens Voice*: 'We have produced leaflets and petitions so that we can start organising a campaign against the Government. But once they have taken their decision it will be up to people in every locality to stop their authority from cutting back. All these proposals are going to create even more inequalities and difficulties. If authorities don't cut they will have to put up their rates to cover the cost.' You can contact the Child Poverty Action Group at 1 Macklin Street, London, WC2.

SOS: Electricity

BECAUSE of enormous increases in the cost of electricity over the past few years a scheme had to be introduced by the Labour Government to help some families pay their electricity bills, especially in the winter months.

Now the scheme is to be cut.

Last year £45 million was spent on the scheme, helping about 4,500,000 people receiving supplementary benefit, family income supplement and rate and rent

rebate and allowances.

The **Department of Energy**, at present responsible for the scheme, wants to shift that responsibility over to the **Department of Health and Social Security**. But the DHSS, says the Social Services Secretary, Mr Patrick Jenkins, is 'trying to do too much in the field of social policy' and has to implement cuts of its own.

Old people will be the first to suffer, especially in the cold winter.

Another cut planned by the Government is in free transport for children travelling long distances to school. Parents could expect to have to pay up to £50 a year in fares. Councils will have discretion in their provisions of transport to special schools.

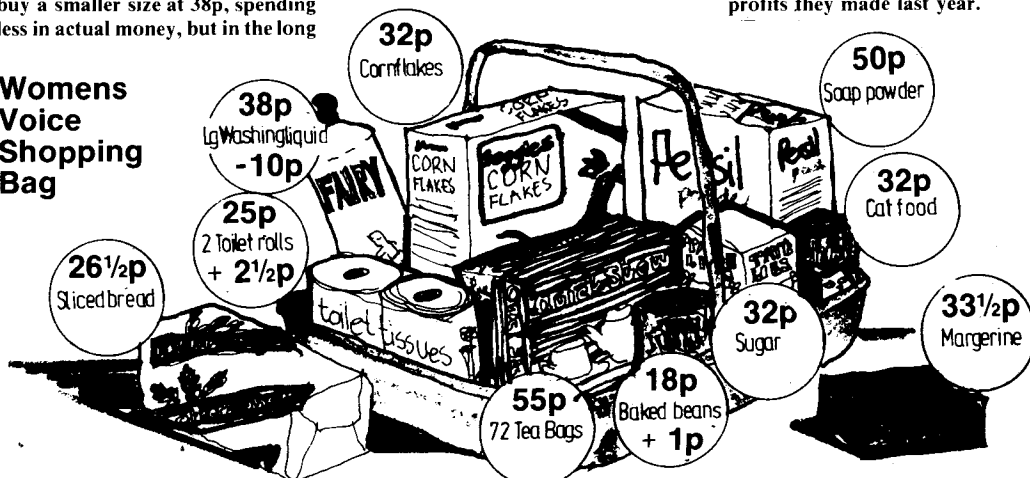
AS more goods go metric our prices shopping basket is going to increase by quite a lot. Instead of a large Fairy liquid at 48p, Sadie Blood now has to buy either an extra large size at 63p, an increase of 15p in actual money, but, of course getting more of the liquid. Or, she has to buy a smaller size at 38p, spending less in actual money, but in the long

run paying more as we always do for smaller quantities. We have taken the smaller size. So this month's total is down by 6p.

Kelloggs cornflakes are still off the shelf so we include them at the old price of 32p which we noted in July. But the Kelloggs workers have won

their dispute—they have had an hour cut from the working week and the production workers have won an increase of £10 per week. We shall have to wait and see how long it takes for Kelloggs to put up the price of their cornflakes rather than pay for the increase out of the big profits they made last year.

Womens Voice Shopping Bag



Total in June 1979 £3.13. Total in September £3.42 Increase 29p.



Women on the march in Hackney, East London. On Thursday 13 September a massive demonstration of 2000 people wound its way through Hackney, from the Education offices to the Area Health Authority offices. There were manual workers from the Council, Hospital workers, including those from the threatened St Leonards Hospital, workers from a CPSA office and parents whose children go to the five local schools threatened with closure, and workers from British Oxygen. There were thousands more on strike for the day. Mary Richardson.

SOS: JOBS

THE cuts mentioned here, in school meals and transport, are not the only ones proposed. It is also estimated that £500 million is to be cut from the education budget next year. This could mean:

- Closure of nursery classes or an end of provision for the under 5's.
- A reduction in the number of teachers by 50,000 and a freeze on appointments.
- Less choice of subjects in schools
- Less money spent on new schools or maintaining school buildings.

Already radical changes in the school day are being discussed. Parents in two rural Staffordshire schools are keeping their children at home in protest over a cut in the school day are being discussed. to 3.15pm. Parents took their children to school at the normal opening time of 9am on the first day

of term, but the children weren't allowed in. It's calculated that the children in these schools will lose a whole year and a term from their education by the time they are 13

Women in particular are going to get a hammering by the Tory Government. If the school day is reorganised onto the continental system of 8.30am to 2pm to cut out the school meals services, thousands of dinner ladies will lose their jobs. Thousands of working mums will have to give up work. Thousands of children will be left to roam the streets or become latchkey children, not for an hour at the end of the day, but for the whole afternoon.

Womens Voice is producing a leaflet to distribute around the schools, particularly to the school dinner ladies. Write to us for a copy.

EDUCATION UNDER ATTACK

Rank and File Conference
Saturday and Sunday 10/11 November, at Starcross School, Rising Hill Street, London, N1

Women in the
NUT Conference.

13 October, 11am to 5pm, Starcross School, Penton, London, N1.
Theatre Group, video and speaker from the National Abortion Campaign.

SOS: Teachers and the Schools

IN AVON in the South West the authority wants to save £6 million pounds in the coming year on its education expenditure. So they propose to cut 400 teachers' jobs by Christmas, by offering early retirement to all teachers over 50, and then insisting on large scale redundancies. All new appointments have been frozen; teachers on probation have been put on supply contracts, with one day's notice, instead of being given permanent contracts. Many will be sacked before their probationary year is over, and they won't get a penny redundancy pay.

A new redeployment scheme is to be introduced, where any teacher can be sacked for refusing to move to another job, wherever it might be within the Association. That could be miles and miles away from home.

Spending on books and buildings is to be cut, and schools won't be available for community use in the evenings.

When the local Avon Division of the National Union of Teachers called a meeting, 1700 teachers turned up! One policy agreed on was that teachers would not teach

extra children whose own teachers had been sacked or made redundant.

Avon teachers are calling a conference in Bristol on 20 October. Ring Maggie Eales 887 2896.

Wakefield

IN Wakefield 61 teachers are to lose their jobs, and the quality of school meals is to be reduced. Twenty schools are to be closed, and free school milk, kept on for the over 7's in this area when *Thatcher the Snatcher* took it away, is now to be stopped.

Five million pounds is to be cut from the budget in Cheshire, meaning the loss of 547 teachers' jobs, 463 ancillary workers jobs, and the closing of 50 schools. In Hampshire 470 jobs will go, 220 dinner ladies and 250 teachers.

Derbyshire, which needs to employ an extra 300 teachers to bring it up to the national average for teacher pupil ratios is to cut an extra £4 million from its budget. Jeannie Robinson.

FIGHTING WORDS FROM NUPE

EVERY member of NUPE should get hold of this new pamphlet produced by their union. It tells you just what action you can take to fight the cuts.

It demands:

No redundancies

No reduction in earnings

No increase in workloads

No increase in private

contract labour

And to win those demands it says NUPE members should:

Work to rule and refuse to co-operate with employers who are making cuts.

Rearrange work schedules—without discussion with employers—to offset the effects of the cuts.

Refuse to work with private contractors.

Hold meetings, demonstrations or token strikes at times when it will hurt the employers most.

It goes on to say that the best way to take action is to get the

DON'T GET CUT UP!

How you can take action to protect your job and your pay packet against cuts



national union of public employees

steward or branch secretary to organise a meeting of *all* the workers affected. Don't wait until the cuts are introduced. It's when the cuts are being discussed that action needs to be taken.

NEWS

TUC: MORE ACTION LESS TALK

THE TUC was not what I expected. I went to find out what went on and didn't like it very much. There were the TUC bureaucrats living it up in the Imperial Hotel while the *Right to Work* marchers, feet bleeding, didn't get a moment's notice. Everyone agrees, motions are agreed on, but what happens when you go back to work, that's what matters. There were 1200 delegates there, 120 of them women. And of that number of women about 4 got to speak. It may have been five, I may have missed one, but I took a careful note and I only came to four. It's General Secretaries and who you know, people on first names, you know the sort of thing.

Even the debate on equality,

when we remitted the TUC report, was mostly men getting up to speak. Anna Coote told them to help more at home and they just sat there with their mouths hanging open. No men there had to make special arrangements for their children like all the women with children do. There's no arrangements at the TUC. Where's the equality in that?

Real equality is a long way off. Maternity pay is bound to get cut soon. There is no equality of pay or opportunity in my industry. Even on the TUC General Council there are only two women, and they didn't like it when we said there should be more. Alright there's the women's TUC but that is all talk and nothing forthcoming. I don't agree with taking it away, but it



Val Dunn picture by John Sturrock

doesn't achieve much.

Nor does the TUC. The Bakers Union, had moved a resolution calling on the TUC not to talk with the Tory Government and calling a national day of protest against the Government's attacks on the closed shop. We wanted all unions to support workers who were under attack from the Government.

Instead they moved a composite resolution which just skated round the issues, no mention of talks and no call to action. What's the good in that? Val Dunn

EOC Criticised!

AT LAST the *Trades Union Congress* has woken up to the fact that Equal Opportunities Commission is getting nowhere.

After three years of study the EOC has recently published a report which recommends that legislation which protects women from the severity of night work and certain sorts of shift work should be abolished. Their argument is simple: *if women want to be equal then women are going to have to make sacrifices!*

But the TUC has rejected their proposals and passed a motion which called for the protection which is available to women to be extended to men. 'We do not want to see equality of misery' argued Mr Bill Keys, chairman of the TUC equal rights committee.

Alex Smith of the *Tailor and Garment Workers Union* got nearer the mark. He described the EOC's proposals as a 'conspiracy of business interests.'

But the TUC wouldn't accept criticism of its own workings. A motion for more womens places to be designated on the General Council of the TUC was remitted to the General Council for its own consideration.

THE EQUAL Opportunities Commission aren't aware than anything is wrong. In a statement following the TUC Baroness Lockwood, chairwoman of the EOC said 'where there is a genuine difference, as there has been in the matter of reform of protective legislation, I am afraid that we have to present our own distinctive point of view to the public without fear or favour, and let the public choose.'

The Equal Opportunities Commission is supposed to give a lead on issues of discrimination against women, and not let the public choose. It is there to influence public opinion, and not just represent the best case for the employers.

I learnt at an early age that the odds were weighed very heavily against the working class. My father was scaling a boiler at work when it backfired, leaving him deaf. The company folded and didn't get a penny. Following my father's advice, I joined a union when I started work. I didn't realise at the time that the equal pay and reasonable conditions were due to the union's involvement in the engineering factories where I worked. This fact only hit me when I returned to work after ten years of bringing up my four children. For a year I worked in a British Rail canteen for lousy pay, working nights with only mice for company! There was very little we could do to improve things as we weren't organised into a union. When I moved to Manor Bakeries the workers were organised into a union, and with my insistence on sticking up for people's rights I was soon elected shop steward. Since then I've held most offices in the *Bakers Union*, bar that of General Secretary! Last year we were out for five weeks trying to force the management to recognise our shop stewards. They backed down in the face of workers standing together and fighting for their rights.

Val's road to socialism

Two weeks after we won that dispute we were called out again for the National Pay strike. We formed a strike committee and organised flying pickets, visited students Unions, who gave us a lot of support, factories and held mass pickets. Things looked very promising at first but we were soon to learn that it's a mistake to put all your faith in national union leadership. It's the rank and file who take the action and put up with the hardship, and they should be involved in the decisions. We were assured by an Executive member that the draft agreement he showed us had been rejected and so we didn't organise against it. It included penal clauses which threw away our rights for a closed shop. Two days later we found that it had been signed. After the dispute I was so annoyed at being put on a plant with mainly scabs I gave in my notice. But the girls at work signed a petition asking me to reconsider, and I withdrew. It happens quite

often but this time the management refused to let me withdraw and used it as an excuse to get rid of me. I haven't worked since then. Those disputes taught me that although the working class may win concessions we'll never win the right to control our working lives under capitalism. The employers will always have the upper hand. *They even control the law.* You've only got to look at the legislation the Tory Government are pushing through to see that. I've always been one to stick up for the underdog, for those worse off than myself and I've come to realise that the only way to get justice is through socialism. That's why I joined the *Socialist Workers Party* last December, after receiving a lot of help from comrades during the strike. The *Socialist Worker* rally at Skegness last Easter convinced me that socialism is the only answer. To me socialism means caring for others and that's what I saw people doing at Skegness. I was impressed by the way the whole family was involved and the responsibility for the children wasn't just left up to the parents. I've never been anywhere where there's been so much friendliness and honesty. Interview by Pat Jones

PAY YOUR OWN RISE?

SEVENTEEN women in the General and Municipal Workers union have been locked out at Trafford carpets, Trafford Park, Manchester. They are demanding parity with other women in the factory who wearn £4.72 more than they do.

The women first approached their union rep ten weeks ago. After eight weeks they still hadn't heard anything so they started a work to rule. Management offered to pay the increase out of their bonus and then review the bonus at a later date!

The dispute is a classic example of a unionised factory in name only. The 'convenor' has stated he will resign after the dispute(!) and the stewards committee is made up of the convenor, a night shift steward and a day shift steward, all men, for the 400 members in the factory. The women have been told they can't have shop stewards!

The district official advised them not to picket although two days of picketing have stopped most of the lorries going into the factory.

On Saturday 15 September a GMWU divisional meeting took place at the Grand Hotel in Manchester. Mr Glover, the full time official told the women about the meeting but not where it was. Six of us, three from the factory and three SWP women members tracked them down. We went upstairs to a committee room and after egging each other on knocked on the door and opened it. Mary and Bernadette's heads disappeared further and further round the door, while the rest of us piled in behind, until we realised they weren't back from lunch! We all fell back with great relief at this momentary reprieve.

When we finally spoke to the meeting they didn't know anything about the dispute, but agreed at least to discuss it. Their report will now go to the divisional organiser who will decide whether to recommend that the dispute is made official.

Meanwhile the showdown is expected soon as management have threatened to sack all the 17 women by Wednesday 19 September. Management may be bluffing or they may hope to frighten them back to work. Whatever happens the women will have to build a real shop floor organisation which represents their interests and fights on their behalf when they return. In the short period since the dispute began they have already started to learn how important that struggle is. **Jannie Brightman.**

AT RAWLPLUGS, in Glasgow, where I work, two thirds of the workers are women. We were right behind the strike from the start, but there's a feeling now that we're not getting anywhere. We don't get any information from the Union about the progress of the strike, we just see what's on the television. The officials never come anywhere near the picket line.

I'd prefer an all out strike now. We have sent a letter from our factory to the District Committee of the AUEW asking them to reconvene the shop stewards meeting so that we can campaign for an all out strike. *Angela McHugh*

THE Peter Stubbs factory in Warrington Lancashire, employs 200 workers, most of them women, as file makers.

The women were glad to participate in the one and two day strikes as they thought it would mean a real increase in their wages. But by the second week in September they were sick of the two day strikes and wanted an all out strike to settle the dispute once and for all.

They came out for a week, but were then advised by a full time official from their union, the National Society of Metal

OUR SISTERS THE ENGINEERS

Mechanics, that they were going outside the official activity organised by the union. The women were divided. The most militant wanted to stay out, but the part time women thought it best to go back. The male shop stewards did all they could to persuade the women back to work.

Now they are back on the two day strikes. But the women are saying that if they don't get a commitment from management soon they will be out on all out strike again.

In Bristol, at Western Die Castings, the women were the first to take up the call for the official stoppages, the men staying at work.

Fed up with the two day strikes the women came out on an all out strike in the second week in September. Their strike was made

official by the Bristol AUEW.

Engineers from other factories have been on the picket line to help the women get the men scabs out on strike.

*** Did you know that over a million homes in Britain have no indoor bath or toilet?**

*** Did you know that the big asbestos companies spent half a million pounds in six weeks on a public relations campaign to improve their image and influence reports, legislation and government safety standards. Asbestos causes cancer.**

Saturday 519 marchers, from all over Britain, assembled in Liverpool for a 70 mile march to the TUC conference in Blackpool, demanding action on unemployment. Excitement was mixed with an air of real determination. First stop, Kirby—Dole City UK—nearly half the working population without work. £153 was raised that day. The people of Liverpool know what unemployment is all about. Sunday Skelmersdale, midday, deserted but for the marchers 'oasis'. A pub and the catering wagon laden with spam butties.

On to Wigan. It will always be remembered as The Night of The Rains. A tent blew down and later we found out what an early morning dip was really like! It was here, the following morning, that 24 marchers were arrested for leafletting a school.

Monday. A school caretaker risked his job so we could get dried off. It really took guts to do the march that day. That evening, after luxurious showers at Preston we heard from the real trade union movement. People like Val Dunn from the Bakers' union. When she said she'd be fighting about unemployment at the Conference we knew it wasn't just talk.



UNITY ON THE ROAD

Tuesday. Workers from a local building site gave £15 and a message of solidarity and then we moved off, terrorising Rolls Royce on the way.

That night we descended on Blackpool to meet

'informally' with the delegates. Some went to the £10,000 TUC banquet at the Imperial Hotel, though we weren't all that welcome! Ellen Gallagher was removed by the police when she asked Len Murray what he was going to do about unemployment. Elsewhere, in a pub, we met a Govan shipyard worker, who showed us the kind of support which puts the union leadership to shame. Wednesday: The big day. And we were an army, united. The catering crew had it's own banner: 'Yesterday Curry, today Len Murray.' Spirits are high.

There is no describing the pride, excitement and power we felt as we marched on the TUC. It was our day. New found voices let the Conference know we'd arrived. Our demands were simple: No more talks with the Tories, Mass action on Unemployment.

We were joined on the lobby by hundreds of Rank and File trade unionists, including the people of Corby.

You come a long way on a Right to Work March. Not just in miles. Our anger was united. Black and White. Men and Women. United for our next step. Christine Spriggs.

Answering back

Abolish the age of consent?

SHOULD the age of consent be abolished? Is it an unjustifiable restriction on young people's right to enjoy their own sexual feelings, or does it provide some protection for young girls in a world where sexual violence is rife?

One thing is certain. Although the law says that sexual intercourse under the age of sixteen is illegal, this in no way stops girls and boys under this age from having sexual relationships. A government report published last month revealed that three out of five working class girls had had sex by the time they were sixteen.

But the law on the age of consent does have several other effects. It hinders under-sixteens from getting proper contraceptive advice. Many young people fear that if they go to a doctor or clinic they will get into trouble with the law.

If the girl becomes pregnant, it may well make her too frightened to come forward and get proper help until the pregnancy is well advanced. It may then be too late to get an abortion. In 1977 over 4,500 schoolgirls became pregnant, and more than 1,500 went on to give birth.

Fear of the law also keeps the boys concerned from taking public responsibility for the pregnancy—it is the boy who could be prosecuted under the law.

But does the law, despite these drawbacks, have a useful function in protecting girls from the sexual advances of older men, who are in a position to take unfair advantage because of their greater age, experience and authority? The enormous majority of sexual experiences undertaken by girls are with boys of roughly their own age. They are usually part of loving relationships. They are not with 'dirty old men'.

There are other laws to protect girls against assault and molestation, against incest and rape. The law on the age of consent does not add to the effectiveness of these laws, and there is no evidence to suggest that it has any more impact in stopping girls having sexual intercourse with older men (and why shouldn't they if they want to?) than it does with boys of their own generation.

The age of consent is part of a set of ideas based on the belief that sex is wrong—a set of ideas that prevents many of us from enjoying sex fully, because we cannot rid ourselves of feelings of guilt. We are bombarded by different, often contradictory, ideas to do with sex. Right and wrong, social success and social failure, how we should look, how we should behave 'like a girl'.

We believe that all of us should have the right to explore and enjoy our own sexual feelings. None of us should ever feel we have to have sex with someone if we don't feel like it—or that we shouldn't if that's what we want. There's no age limit on when our bodies become our own.

MURDER IN SOUTHALL

'The police killed my husband'. Swan Singh Grewael left his house on August 1 to spend the evening with friends, and died that night in Southall police station. He allegedly choked on his own vomit. His wife was not allowed to see the body for nine days, and when she did she saw a large bruise on his forehead.

Mrs Grewael does not believe the police version of how her husband died and has commissioned an independent pathologist to examine his body. The inquest has been postponed until September 27 pending the findings of the enquiry.

Meanwhile Mrs Grewael is very angry at her treatment from Southall police. They have given her no explanation for not calling a police doctor until after her husband had died or for denying her access to his body for nine days, 'I will fight for my husband', she says. 'We should have the same rights as white people'.

Donations to help meet the cost

of the enquiry and messages of support should be sent to: SOUTHALL RIGHTS, 54, High street, Southall, Middlesex. Caroline O'Reilly.

*** Did you know that more women from the ages of 35 to 44 die from the effects of the Pill than from complications of pregnancy? In the USA, among couples over 30, sterilisation is a commoner form of contraception than the Pill, and in Britain almost a quarter of couples have one partner sterilised by the time the woman is 35.**

*** Did you know that between 30 and 40 per cent of spastic births could be prevented by better ante-natal care. In Britain, 30 per cent of women have still not received any ante-natal care by the 16th week of pregnancy**

Letter to June Greig in prison

Reading the article in last months *Womens Voice*, Brixton *Womens Voice* group decided to write to June Greig encouraging her in her fight for freedom. June is the scottish woman sent to prison for killing her husband after years of battering and physical abuse.

We took the letter to Brixton carnival and collected signatures to it during the day. Then we sent the letter, and one of the *Womens Voice* doodle colouring posters, to June in prison, 'Gill Walker from Brixton told *Womens Voice*.'

June's appeal is to be heard as we go to press. Until we know the outcome keep writing to June at Cornton Vale Prison, Cornton, Stirling, Scotland. You can also contact the campaign at Womens Aid, 88a George Street, Edinburgh.

Job Massacre at the Office

Word processors:
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how they work
the threat of jobs
loss of skills
health hazards

How to Fight Them

25 pence each plus 15p p&p

Four copies for £1 post free

From Womens Voice, Box 82 London E2 8DN.



SIX months ago Iranian oil workers went on strike. In the towns hundreds of thousands of men and veiled women took to the streets, organising and demonstrating, calling for the Shah to leave.

Peasants, workers and small traders united in their hatred of the Shah. The movement grew and forced the Shah to leave. But the recently organised workers movement was too weak to take over. Instead the country was taken over by the religious leaders, led by the Ayatollah Khomeini. Representing small shopkeepers, traders and merchants, their interests were opposed to those of the workers who had fought alongside them in forcing the Shah to leave.

Their economic interests brought them into conflict with workers. Their religious dogma made them attack the hundreds of thousands of women who had marched and demonstrated in the movement against the Shah.

The Khomeini announced that women should return to wearing the veil. But women organised huge

'When women appear on TV men get excited'

demonstrations in protest on **International Womens Day**. Shouting 'We will break our chains' they gained such support nationally and internationally that the religious leaders were forced to back down.

But not for long.

The economic situation was worsening—unemployment was growing, national minorities were discontented, many were demanding to know what had happened to the promise of the 'revolution'. To survive the religious leaders had to direct the anger and frustration away from themselves. They tried to use the religious fervour that had forced the Shah to leave, directing it against new targets, against workers organizations, national minorities, and the women who did not conform to Islamic law.

Khomeini's Komiteh burned down the Castle where Tehran's prostitutes lived saying 'There should be no prostitution in the Republic'.

Three prostitutes were executed. 'If you whip a prostitute, prostitution will disappear' said Khomeini attempting to draw attention away from the squalor and poverty that drives women to prostitution.

The chief of radio and TV pronounced that '**When women appear on television that makes men sexually excited**'. Many women were sacked.

The Health Minister said 'The reason for high infant mortality is because many women go out to work'. Women were sacked or



IRAN: The veil descends on the revolution

forced into early retirement.

Right across Iran women are losing the limited freedoms they have gained. They are being forced back behind the veil, back behind the walls of their homes, back into their religious straightjackets.

Two women are among the twelve members of the **Socialist Workers Party** condemned to death. In a letter from prison they say that one of the reasons they have been convicted is because they are women:

'Women are supposed to be driven back into their homes. They are only supposed to be means of production and to remain slaves as

far as their mental abilities are concerned.'

'Our conviction is another effort to sow the seeds of fear in the hearts of our sisters, the women of Iran who are fighting for freedom.'

But 'life sentences will not silence us' they say. And they point out that although the religious leaders are persecuting members of working class parties, the fight is not against religion. 'We don't think the fight in Iran is between Marxists and Muslims. We believe that the struggle is continuing between the great masses of the people and the capitalists and the landowners'. They want to build a workers

movement which unites men and women, Muslims, Christians, and Jews. 'We ask all organizations, all people fighting for freedom, all defenders of the Iranian revolution throughout the world to help us win our freedom'.

Join pickets of the Iranian embassy in protest against the death sentences.

Write letters of protest to the embassy calling for the release of the two women, send them to the Embassy of Iran, Princes Gate, London SW7.

Anna Paczuska

NEWS

ABORTION NEWS

A RESOLUTION was passed at the TUC Congress in September in support of the Campaign for Abortion rights:

'Congress expresses deep concern that further attempts are being made in Parliament to weaken the existing abortion laws. Congress calls on the General Council to make forcibly known to the Government the policy of Congress in opposition to restriction on existing abortion rights, and to urge the Government not to allocate Parliamentary time to any private members bill seeking to regress these laws and calls on Government to expand the present inadequate National Health Service abortion services.

Congress further calls on all affiliated unions to campaign against any measures which seek to deny women their right to free contraception and abortion services on request.'

It was proposed by the Tobacco Workers Union.

Cardiff

Women's Voice and NAC are working together to mobilise support for the campaign through the unions, workplaces and the community.

Hospitals are being leafleted. There are plans for all day leafletting, petitioning, information stalls and street theatre in shopping centres.

At 12 noon on 13 October there will be a demonstration assembling at Charles Street with NAC and Labour Party speakers.

On 20 October a picket of Callaghan's surgery is planned and

Lea Valley Womens Voice public meeting Defeat the Corrie Bill, 8pm, Tuesday 16 October, Tottenham Community Project, High Road, Tottenham

Brixton Womens Voice 'Women Under Attack' Tory policies and their consequences for women. Speakers, abortion—Alison Kirton, Health Cuts, Pat Critchley, Immigration, Najma Rahman. Tuesday October 2nd Brixton Library.

Salford Against Corrie, Public Meeting. Wednesday 17 October, 7pm, in the AUEW Buildings, The Crescent, Salford. Speakers: Sadie Blood (NUPE Divisional Committee) and Denise Heaton (Pendlebury Children's Hospital).

Richmond Public Meeting to start NAC group in Richmond area. Thursday 4 October, 8pm, Richmond Community Centre, Sheen Road, Richmond. Further details ring Liz, 840 0468

Rights of Women have produced a script for a play Corrie's Dream, a frightening true-life story, with songs to popular tunes. Ring Ann Bottomley on 01 607 6521 for copies.

Hornsey Womens Voice Defend Our Abortion Rights public meeting Monday October 1st Hornsey Junior Library Haringey Park, N8, 8pm.

on 27 October there will be a NAC/CAC benefit.

St Albans.

22 people attended a *Women's Voice* meeting and a NAC group was set up. Public meetings and a Rock Against Corrie concert are being planned for the end of October.

Wolverhampton

Wolverhampton Against Corrie have an information caravan in the town. They are building the anti Corrie campaign around the existing campaign for improved abortion facilities.

Lea Valley

Lea Valley *Women's Voice* are working with Harringay NAC organising petitioning around the estates and shopping centres.

West London

West London NAC have a giant sized cardboard pregnant Corrie which is used as a target for pop-gun darts. At a recent carnival, they employed a hard worked typist to type out letters to Corrie and other anti-abortionists. Angry carnival goers dictated the letters. 200 signatures were collected for the petition at a cinema queue in 20 minutes!

Waltham Forest

NAC were on their way to an Anti LIFE demo in London and following interest in their placards from fellow travellers on the tube held an impromptu meeting in the train. They distributed leaflets and petitioned for signatures.

South London

200 NAC supporters foiled a LIFE demo in protest at the opening of a new day-care abortion unit at the South London Hospital. LIFE wanted to lay flowers at the door in memory of 'all the dead babies'. The delegation from NAC, *Women's Voice* and Wandsworth Against Corrie persuaded the hospital administrators that this wouldn't do and LIFE had to take their flowers elsewhere.

Women on Greenwich Trades Council have produced a leaflet

aimed at working women asking them to invite Trades Council speakers to their union branches and publicising the demonstration. The leaflet points out that the attack on abortion rights is part of the general threat to women's rights under the Tories.

SE London *Women's Voice* are leafletting Catholic churches.

Students Against Corrie

Representatives from all student political organisations including the Socialist Worker Students Organisation decided to work together to fight Corrie's bill and mobilise support for the demonstration.

A speakers tour is being organised and SAC are hoping to produce a poster and a badge. For more information SAC can be contacted at the National Union of Students, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1.

Help Needed

Women's Voice members in Gloucester, Exeter, Plymouth and Lowestoft need support in their fight against Corrie. If you can help in those areas ring: Lowestoft, Linda on 0502 60441; Plymouth, Fiona on 0752 46745; Exeter, Rosemary on Exeter 52390; Gloucester, Maggie on 0452 413910.

Arrests

The two women arrested at Downing Street on Friday 13 July have had their case adjourned until 20 November because they have been unable to contact some of their witnesses. Will anyone who saw what happened, particularly Katie Mann, contact them via the NAC office. A defence fund has also been set up, send donations care of NAC.

Petitions

The NAC petitions are being called in for the 14th January 1980, to be presented at the third reading of the bill in February. Keep sending them

in. 10,000 signatures have already been collected. The target is half a million or more! Remember - only 10 signatures per sheet please or they don't count.

Portsmouth

Women's Voice and NAC took the campaign to the Southsea Show. LIFE had a stall in the Community Service tent, which women leafleted and got thrown out of! Outside the tent an argument broke out, and whilst some women argued with the LIFE members others rushed round the crowd that collected giving out leaflets and collecting signatures.

Signatures were also collected at the Royal Marine, Army, Navy, Airforce and Police Stalls. Two policewomen took petitions for their noticeboards at work, and two sailors took petitions back on ship.

Warning

Even when you have won a resolution through your union branch don't sit back and relax. In Newcastle upon Tyne the NALGO branch passed a resolution to send a delegation on the demonstration. Now anti-abortionists have called another general meeting to try and get the decision overturned.

And another warning. Just because the TUC is organising the demonstration against the Bill on 28 October, don't think they will be mobilising the whole of the trade union movement. You have to do that in your area and your union. NUPE, for instance, one of the biggest local government unions with a high women's membership, have sent a circular to their branch secretaries notifying them about the demo. And that's all they intend to do. Probably no more than 5 per cent of the membership go to union meetings! So make sure your union members are leafleted for the demo.

Getting ready for the demonstration against LIFE in South London



Angela Phillips

Anti-Abortions Tell Us Lies!
FIGHT THE CORRIE BILL!



THESE ACCOUNTS...
NATURALLY...
EQUALLY FALSE...
A BARNESLEY...
GROSSLY EXAGGERATED...
WHY DO SUPPORTERS...

FIVE REASONS WHY TRADE UNIONISTS SHOULD MARCH AGAINST CORRIE'S ANTI-ABORTION BILL!

- 1 Women should have a personal right to decide on their own bodies and their own lives.
- 2 Trade unionists should support women's rights to decide on their own bodies and their own lives.
- 3 Trade unionists should support women's rights to decide on their own bodies and their own lives.
- 4 Trade unionists should support women's rights to decide on their own bodies and their own lives.
- 5 Trade unionists should support women's rights to decide on their own bodies and their own lives.

Womens VOICE 3p

Abortion Our Right to Choose

No Return to Backstreet Abortions

Support the TUC demonstration against the Bill

OCTOBER 28

12 NOON SPEAKERS CORNER HYDE PARK LONDON

MARCH FOR ABORTION RIGHTS OCT 28

Available from the National Abortion Campaign, 374 Grays Inn Road, London, WC1 Leaflets 1p each Posters £1 for 20, Badges 20p each Available from *Womens Voice*, Box 82, London, E2 Fact sheet 3p each or 30 for £1 post free Stickers 25p a sheet, speakers' pack 35p each All plus 8p postage. Money with orders please.

BUILD THE CAMPAIGN

P'ILL out all the stops and build the biggest demonstration ever for abortion rights. That's our message to every reader of *Womens Voice*. Now that we know the third (and final) reading of Mr Corrie's anti-abortion bill is to be in February the impact of the demonstration is more important than ever. A really good turn out will give the campaign the boost it needs and then we can make sure that in the short time left between October and February our message can be rammed home. It may be confusing for some of our readers then to know that there are two campaigns organising against this bill: the *National Abortion Campaign* and the *Campaign Against the Corrie Bill*. NAC was set up as an umbrella for every individual and organisation prepared to fight the James White Bill four years ago. We joined in from the start. Now some people within NAC argue that the campaign has to be broadened out

again, hence the Campaign Against Corrie. In fact, for every big abortion rights demo there has been a special mobilising committee and the strategy this time need be no different. Problems will only arise if within the campaign supporters separate NAC from CAC, and insist that there are two campaigns with two sets of differing demands. The National Abortion Campaign is well known and constantly named by every anti-abortion campaign. We can't ditch it now. But to have an argument now inside NAC and CAC about which committee decides what, whose name goes on what leaflet, will only divert our energies. We have to get on and build our campaign: locally, in whichever name suits local circumstances best, nationally by insisting there is no separation of the campaigns and certainly no division of resources. They are too limited and too precious.

Demonstrate For Abortion Rights
No Return to Backstreet Abortion
Sunday 28 October
Assemble 12 noon, Speakers Corner, Hyde Park.
March to a rally in Trafalgar Square
Speakers include Len Murray, General Secretary, TUC.
Organised by the **Trades Union Congress** and the **National Abortion Campaign**

In last months Womens Voice the lists of Labour MPs who voted against the Corrie Bill and those who abstained were muddled up. Our apologies to everyone for the mistake. We print below the correct list of MPs who voted for and against the bill.

LABOUR MPs FOR CORRIE

SCOTLAND ALLEN ADAMS JEREMY BRAY DENNIS CANNAN JAMES DEMPSEY ALEX EADIE JAMES HAMILTON NORMAN HODG JOHN HOME ROBERTSON DR. DICKSON MABON FRANK McELONE GREGOR MACKENZIE ROBERT McLENNAN DAVID MARSHALL MICHAEL MARTIN JAMES WHITE NORTH EAST DONALD DICKSON MARK HUGHES EDWARD LEADBITTER JAMES TINN THOMAS URWIN FRED WILLEY NORTH WEST DALE CAMPBELL-SAVOURS LEWIS CARTER-JONES LAWRENCE CUNLIFFE JAMES DUNN KENNETH EASTON ALAN FITCH MICHAEL MCGUIRE ALF MORRIS GORDON OAKES ROBERT PARRY THOMAS PENDRY HAROLD WILSON YORKSHIRE STANLEY COHEN PAT DUFFY WALTER HARRISON KEVIN McNAMARA BARRY SHEERMAN MIDLANDS MICHAEL ENGLISH GWILYM ROBERTS WALES LEO ABEE DONALD ANDERSON DENZIL DAVIES THOMAS ELLIS ROY HUGHES JOHN MORRIS EDWARD ROWLANDS ALAN WILLIAMS SOUTH MICHAEL COCKS BOB HELLISH MICHAEL OTHALLORAN NEVILLE SANDLESON	Palsley Motherwell and Wishaw Stirlingshire West Coatbridge & Airdrie Midlothian Bothwell Dumfriesshire East Berwick and East Lothian Greenock and Port Glasgow Glasgow, Queens Park Rutherglen Cathness and Sutherland Glasgow, Shettleston Glasgow, Springburn Glasgow, Pollok Jarrow Durham Hartlepool Teeside, Redcar Houghton-le-Spring Sunderland North Workington Eccles Leigh Liverpool, Kirkdale Manchester, Blackley Wigan Ince Manchester, Wythenshaw Widnes Liverpool, Scotland Exchange Gatleybridge and Hyde Huyton Leeds, South East Sheffield, Attercliffe Wakefield Kingston upon Hull, Central Huddersfield East Nottingham West Cannock Pontypool Swansea East Llanelli Wrexham Newport Aberdeen Merthyr Tydfil Swansea, West Bristol South Southwark, Bermondsey Islington, North NUR Hillingdon, Hayes and Harlington	Apex TGWU NUM sponsored AUEW sponsored Nafsu NFU GMWU/BMA USDAW sponsored TGWU sponsored GMWU TGWU sponsored NUPE TGWU GMWU sponsored NUT NUPE sponsored NUB sponsored UCATT sponsored ASTMS sponsored TGWU TGWU sponsored NUM sponsored TGWU sponsored AUEW sponsored NUM sponsored NUM sponsored Co-op Movement sponsored TGWU sponsored TGWU sponsored NUPE sponsored TSSA sponsored GMWU sponsored EETPU sponsored TGWU sponsored AUT & ASTMS GMWU sponsored TGWU sponsored ASTMS GMWU GMWU sponsored TGWU sponsored NUR sponsored GMWU
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LABOUR MPs AGAINST CORRIE

Glasgow, Provan
Renfrewshire West
Glasgow Kelvin Grove
Edinburgh Central
Aberdeen North
East Kilbride
Stirlingshire East and Cuckmannan
Newcastle East
Stockport North
Barnesley-Furness
Ormskirk
Manchester, Gorton
Oldham
Manchester Moss-Side
Liverpool, West Derby
Salford West
St Helens
Blackburn
Bolton West
Preston South
Kathley
Leeds West
Sheffield Hillsborough
York
Bradford West
Sheffield, Park
Kingston-upon-Hull East
Barley and Morley
Birmingham, Stechford
Walsall South
Asthall
Kettering
Birmingham Perry Barr
Bosover
Derby North
Coventry S-E
Birmingham Handsworth
Rhondda
Bedwellty
Ogmore
Carmarthen
Haringey, Tottenham
Haywood and Royton
Ealing, Southall
Hackney South and Shoreditch
Greenwich, Woolwich East
Whitechapel
Hackney Central
Waltham Forest, Walthamstow
Camden, Holborn and St Pancras South
Meriton, Mitcham and Morden
Wandsworth, Battersea South
Norwich North
Lambeth, Kenwood
Brent East
Enfield, Edmonton
Lambeth, Vauxhall
Wandsworth Battersea North
Hounslow, Fletcham and Heston
Pactham
Newham N-E
Eton and Slough
Newham N-W
Tower Hamlets Bethnal Green and Bow
Lewisham East
Haringey
Plymouth, Devonport
Brent South
Lewisham West
Haringey, Wood Green
Barking
Hackney North and Stoke Newington
Tower Hamlets, Stepney and Poplar
Lewisham, Deptford
Southwark, Dulwich
Hammermith North
Swindon
Lambeth Central
Islington
Greenwich
Newcastle West

TO BE WANTED

THE RIGHT OF EVERY CHILD



WORDS BY JANE HENRIQUES. PICTURE BY SYD SHELTON

ABORTION is usually presented as nasty, negative and destructive. But it can be a positive, healthy, and sane attempt to ensure that a child will be born only when the mother can bring it up with optimism and pleasure.

Until recently children were frequently treated with great cruelty, and many were actually done away with. In ancient Greece infanticide was an accepted, everyday occurrence: '*Children were thrown into rivers, flung into dung-heaps and cess trenches, 'potted' in jars to starve to death, and exposed on every hill or roadside a prey for birds, food for wild beasts to rend.*' Any child that was not '*perfect in shape and size or cried too little or too much*'—or was different from children described in the gynaecological writings on **How To Recognise The Newborn That Is Worth Rearing** . . . was generally killed.

As recently as the 1890s, in

London, infanticide was very common, while in Eastern Europe mothers still sent their babies to '*killing nurses*' who contrived their deaths in many surreptitious ways.

Children are born in desperate situations

The high rate of baby-battering today shows that many children are born into desperate situations. Research in the USA has shown that a high percentage of battered babies were born prematurely—often to very young parents. Frequently these are un-

IN THE waiting-room at the abortion clinic in Tower Hamlets I spoke to Jenny, who had come with a friend to seek an abortion. She was 17 and had been 'fooling around' after a party. She would not let me photograph her because she was terrified of her parents finding out about her pregnancy.

'I know they would make me keep the baby. And dad is very influential, and I know it would be really embarrassing to him if his daughter was pregnant. For myself, it would spoil my life to have a baby right now. I've only just left home.'

married teenagers, who couldn't get abortions, living in situations of emotional and financial stress. The added factor of losing early contact

with the baby, because it is in an incubator, increases the likelihood that the emotional bond between mother and child is not strong enough, at moments of tension, to prevent the child from being hurt.

Research also proves that such problems between parents and children can be more easily overcome where there is little or no financial stress, and where the housing is good.

So let's stop the hypocrisy about cruelty to (unconscious) unborn children, and fight to end the cruelties to existing parents and children.

At the London Hospital, Mile End, in London's borough of Tower Hamlets, Professor Peter Huntingford—one of the only leading gynaecologists in the British Isles to fight for abortion on demand—runs a NHS clinic against continual opposition. It was created in 1975. There are no waiting lists, and the entire demand for the

MAGGIE was in her second year at college when she found she had become pregnant. She and Pete decided to have the baby, and Maggie deferred her final year at college to look after it. It was twin boys, Sean and Kerry. When Maggie resumed her degree course she realized how trapped she had felt while at home with the babies:

I lost my self-confidence, and I felt stifled and bored. I longed for the stimulation of adult conversation. Now, realistically and cold-bloodedly, I feel I don't want more kids, but emotionally I'm not ready for Pete to have a vasectomy—which he wants. For medical reasons the only contraceptive we can use is a sheath and spermicide, so I depend on the provision of free abortion as a back-up, in case I should get pregnant. Another baby would threaten my relationship with Pete, who would feel totally trapped, and I know that I would resent being tied down again. There's nothing out there is this sort of society that would help us bear that strain. We are anyway under constant financial strain, and there's no way we would be able materially to provide what we want for more children. We can hardly meet increasing nursery fees with twins, but things are just under control at the moment. There's light on the horizon, now that I'm doing my teaching training—provided that the Tories are not allowed to totally axe the public sector. So we hope we'll have enough coming in to lead a good life with our twins. But it would all be shattered if we had another one. In fact, there's a one in eight chance that I would have more twins!

borough is met (20 per week in a population of 120,000). A woman asking for an abortion will usually obtain it within a week, and as a result, at least 40 per cent of women now have their abortions before 9 weeks of pregnancy.

In the waiting room young unmarried women come with girlfriends or mothers, couples, married and unmarried, sit hand in hand, and married women on their own walk in calmly and give details to the counsellor before having their physical examination. Some are there to discuss having an abortion, others sit waiting for their operations. The atmosphere is more like an ante-natal clinic. There is an air of confidence and calm, with both men and women apparently happy that they are free to make a decision on when to have their children, if they want children. When they do, they will usually

choose to come back to this hospital for ante-natal clinics and the delivery. It has become, for this community, part of an integral service that helps them with all aspects of their reproductive lives and the planning of their families.

The method of abortion in the out-patient clinic is vacuum aspiration. It is performed under local anaesthetic or a general anaesthetic, according to the preference of the woman, and her ability to relax.

The cervix is dilated, and a slim tube, attached to a vacuum pump, inserted into the uterus. The foetal parts are simply sucked out, and then any remaining material gently plucked away with tiny forceps. The products are examined to make sure the abortion is complete.

It is hard in this sort of society

I was invited to attend an abortion performed under local anaesthetic. It was on a married woman, six weeks pregnant, who already had children. She chatted with the medical staff throughout and was treated with consideration and even affection. Professor Huntingford explained everything he was doing, and constantly glanced at her face to observe whether or not he was causing discomfort. She told him her period pains were far worse than this! Like most women, she didn't much like lying with her legs held up by cloth straps, but the legs have to be well supported so that the abdominal muscles are relaxed.

After completing the suctioning, which took a few minutes, an IUD was inserted and the woman asked to return in a few days for an examination. I was called over to 'take a look at a 6-week foetus'. It just looked like large blood clots. I learned that by 10 weeks there are recognizable human parts. Why then should a foetus of 28 weeks be considered by Mr Corrie to be more of a human than one of 10? To a woman who doesn't want to be pregnant, the foetus is just an unwanted growth, while to a woman who wants a baby it looks and feels like a baby from the moment she suspects that she is pregnant.

Surely we must believe we are ready to be good parents before we bring children into the world. Even then it is hard with the lack of support given by this sort of society, and many of us will feel we have failed.

The Tower Hamlets clinic is a fine example of a service that allows us the dignity of determining for ourselves when we are ready to make an emotional commitment to a child. But we are going to have to fight to defend it under the cut-backs as well as fighting for the creation of more like it.

Wombs have a View:

When you want a child,
It lives from Day 1.
The egg smiles and gurgles—
And loves.
When a child is conceived
Without means, without hope,
It's a growth
That you want nothing of.
Conceived by mistake
(With indifference or love)
Is a start that no baby would choose—
But thinking of caring for that child for years
Leaves you panicked, despairing, confused.

If you want a child,
Then that's what you want,
And you're ready, regardless of cost:
If you don't want a child
All the bread in the world
Will not make you prepared for the job.

But who can pretend that material things
Don't affect dreams of maternal bliss?
So you with your house can afford to dream kids,
But I with my flat must resist.

In a caring society
You might feel good
About adding a child to your life,
But in this greedy age
It's not easy to choose
To bring kids to a world full of strife.

Single mums have to struggle in constant despair
In a world that couldn't care less.
Even 'marital bliss' has little to spare
For a child born to financial stress:
If the daddies are working they're busy all day
And if they go home they're too tired to play.
And the mummies who've been out at work all the day
Must get meals, wash the clothes
And keep house on low pay—
They don't have much time to talk.

So what's left for kiddies?
They only can lose
If we're not well-prepared—
Not able to choose.

At the best of times
Self-deception's our game—
We pretend we control our own lives:
And one day we will—but right now we must face
The choices that capitalism gives.

We do not choose
To work long boring hours
To pay for our food and our homes.
We do not choose
To close nurseries and playgroups
Or cut down on teachers in schools.
We do not choose
To close hospital wards
Or to skimp on pre-natal care.
We do not choose
Distant travel to work
Spending half of our pay
On our fares.

We do not choose
To live in tower blocks,
Six people crammed in two rooms—
No playgrounds or gardens,
No ball games! No cycling!
We do not choose all this gloom!
We do not choose
To be stuck there for years
As mummies in damp concrete tombs!

But nobody tells us
We cannot choose
What
We should do
With our WOMBS!

A New Town or a Ghost Town?

CORBY New Town is a steel town. Now the massive steelworks are threatened with closure.

Forecasts in 1960 predicted that by the end of the century there would be 75,000 people living in Corby. Instead the population has started to drop as the number of jobs in steel slowly declines. There is 7 per cent unemployment and 1500 empty houses.

The vast estates built by the New Town Development Corporation are emptying. On Kingswood, which won every award possible for its new and revolutionary design, half the properties are empty. The shops are closed. The fountain is full of rubbish.

Other factories have always been discouraged from coming to Corby because the steel bosses wanted everyone for their great steelworks. Work in steel is hard, hot and dirty. Now *British Steel* argues that the steelworks is unprofitable and will have to go. They propose to shut the steelmaking plant and keep open the section that makes the steel into tubes. But the fears are that once the steelmaking goes the tubes will be soon to follow, 11,000 jobs altogether.

All the women interviewed on these pages are fighting to keep the steelworks open and their town alive. It's their spirit which brings 6000 people to a meeting and stops the town for the day. They have picketed the TUC, their union the *ISTC*, they've marched from Corby to London and demonstrated there.

We'll have to occupy

KAREN LOCKER works in the steel works, in the canteen. She is the branch secretary for the Catering Branch of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation.

A year ago we started *ROSAC*, our campaign for the Retention of Steelmaking at Corby. We had one job to do—to publicise what was happening in this town. The management are to blame for what's happening, they made this into a one industry town.

They say they want to close the steelworks down by next year, because it's not profitable any more. They'll close Corby, Bilston, Shotton and Consett works, and if it's still not profitable then what will they close next? When there's no steel here there will be no

manufacturing, what will we do then? Go back to agriculture? All right, we need progress, but it has to be for people's benefit, like reducing the working hours. Not throwing everyone out of a job.

And what will happen when they do need steel again? You can't just open up again.

I was on the *Activities Committee* of *ROSAC* to start with but I had to give it up when I became a councillor. I did that for one reason only—to get the Tories out. They ran the Council for three years and ran it down. There were empty houses, they stopped painting, except for the houses on the main road, they closed the flower nurseries, cut play schemes, the one o'clock clubs, the boating lake. They didn't use money allocated so the Government cut the allocation. This is my home town and I was watching it being run down. So I stood for the Council.

I've always been socialist minded, my uncle helped build the union at *Fords* in *Dagenham*, when he moved from *Detroit, America*, after the depression. So I was brought up to believe that no-one's better than you. Without us the management would be nothing. I used to go to meetings and think *he's* clever, I could never speak like that myself. Then I heard them a few times more and discovered they weren't so clever after all. So now I get up to speak—from the heart, because I believe in it. We went to the TUC in *Blackpool* the other week and it sounded as though it had all been said before.

As a last resort I think we'll have to occupy the works. But support needs to come from other workers because they'll suffer too. Coalminers won't be sending coal here, the dockers won't be handling the steel. Everyone will suffer unless we stop the closure. I know we can.

The steelworks should give people more pay

MARLENE FITZSIMMONS lives on the Exeter Estate, unique in Corby for its sense of community.

THE MAIN reason I came to Corby was to build a future for my kids. My husband had no job. There was no future in *Glasgow* for us. Now we've got a nice house with back and front gardens, and Corby could still be good, if they don't close the steelworks. If they do my

husband will definitely lose his job. He's a crane driver in the coke ovens. It's an awful feeling . . . We came away from it and now we're going back to it. We bought this house from the Council last year. It was very cheap, £2000, and it's got five bedrooms. They're giving them away. Why? Because it gives them capital, it makes people stay. We'll never be able to sell it if the steel closes.

My kids are really affected by what's going on. Carol, who is eight, wrote a letter to the management. She said they shouldn't close the steelworks and they should give people more pay. It was her idea, she'd just been listening to people talking.

My husband works seven days a week in order to get a good living wage, he's done that for seven years! I have to make appointments to see him! He's constantly tired and he gets very depressed.

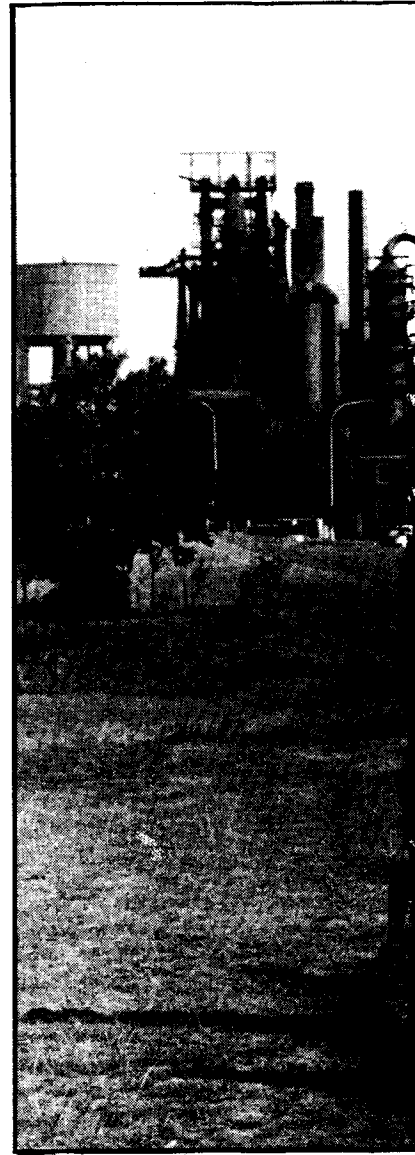
There's a good community here. It's unique in Corby. Everyone knows everyone. There are 2000 people living here and one grocer, one butcher, a fish and chip shop open in the evenings, a cafe with a pool table and a post office. That's it.

But the people on the estate have made an adventure playground and a youth club which is open two evenings a week. That's the sort of community we are. When *Jim Callaghan* made his big speech about Labour Party democracy at the *ISTC* offices we organised a women's and children's demonstration. Two coach loads went to London and one was filled up by *Exeter* estate. If only the men in the works were as active as the people on the estates.

The men have to refuse redundancy

GERDA MILLER'S husband retired from the steelworks a year ago. She also lives on the Exeter estate.

THE New Town Corporation, which built most of Corby, let the houses run down once they knew the Council was going to take responsibility for the housing again. So now it's in a dreadful state. But we're doing everything we can to keep the estate together. I pushed the *Community Association* to hold a public meeting for the people on the



CORBY



INTERVIEWS BY MARGA
MACFADYEAN. PHOT
(REP)



CORBY



MARGARET RENN AND MELANIE
PHOTOS: JOHN STURROCK
(REPORT)

estate last year. 130 tenants came and we set up the *Action Group*. We've seen now how people on this estate can get going, we've achieved quite a lot.

The Action Group meets monthly, with monthly organisation meetings as well. We have a group of committed activists running the group, mostly women. They're very good. The women get committed very quickly when they get involved.

We have a guarantee that every house is to be done up, all by next April. They're cutting the hedges of the empty houses, and cutting the grass. We are opening a community shop. We have to be consulted about every decision affecting the estate.

We're completely dependent on steel because the steelworks wanted to keep a monopoly on labour. No other factory could come here, so now they've gone elsewhere, to the other New Towns. People here are just moving from one New Town to another.

British Steel pays a lot in rates to the Council. If they stop paying, which they must do, then either our rates will go up or everything will close down, the nurseries, the youth clubs, the lot.

The men who work in steel have to refuse the redundancy money. They're not their jobs to sell. Where are their sons going if they close the steelworks down? To a lot of people in Corby who have never had much the money will seem like a lot, but it will soon go. Then they will have no house, no money and no job.

There is a depression about the place. *What is the future?* People feel the decision is taken and they can't do anything about it. But we can and we have to.

We should have raised our voices before

MARY JANE BELL CLARK lives on Penn Estate, the oldest of the Corby Estates. It backs on to the steelworks.

Everyone in Corby comes from somewhere else, usually from Scotland or Ireland. But the children are Corby children. When my parents first came to Corby, my father worked for Stewart and Lloyds, the old steel owners. It was the only way to get a house. My brother went into the steelworks until he was old enough to go into the forces. My younger brother did the same.

You should come and see my washing, it's covered in red dust. If you dig my garden, you'll find red dust under the topsoil. You just can't grow vegetables. People who have

been here for a long time all have chest, eye or ear problems. The medical authorities say it's not pollution! This is the second largest town in the county but it's got the highest percentage of physically and mentally handicapped people. There isn't a street in this town where there aren't handicapped children. No greater place existed on earth than the Corby we knew as kids. We should have raised our voices before. It's causing so much misery now. I see the heartbreak of the children of Corby. I love those kids, there's something about the expression in their eyes, it's as if they are asking you what they should do. Even during the war we had hope. The hope, the future has gone now. I've never seen anything that destroys the soul the way this does.

CORBY is eerie. Imagine a town only 50 years old which is isolated from the main flux and turmoil of the world. Corby's

approach roads are long and narrow. There is no passenger railway to Corby, only a goods line. There's only one cinema, there isn't a single restaurant, the buses to the estates stop at 6.30. You have the feeling there that there could be a major disaster there and nobody outside would know.

That's just what is happening. If the steelworks close Corby will become a ghost town, the people who stay will be like isolated pioneers, the town will echo.

There are 18,000 jobs in the town, 11,000 in steel. If they go all that will be left are a few jobs in Avon cosmetics and Golden Wonder crisps, a few school teachers, road sweepers, doctors and shop workers. There'll be sociologists and journalists making radical inspections of a town built around a once profitable but now doomed industry. The biggest employer will be the dole office.

Centre top: The young balancing their future; Centre bottom: Corby women being vocal in London and below being vocal at the TUC in Blackpool.



The Pill?

A few years ago, it seemed that the Pill was the answer to all our contraceptive needs. But recently, more and more evidence has come to light which suggests that the Pill causes problems of its own, if taken for many years. Some of these problems are medical, but others are emotional and sexual.

Womens Voice is conducting a survey on side effects of the Pill. We'd be grateful if all of you, whether you're on the Pill or not, would fill in our questionnaire and return it to: Womens Voice, PO Box 82, London, E2.

- Are you taking the Pill now? _____
 How many years have you been on it? _____
 What Pill are you taking? _____
- Have you ever been on the Pill? _____
 How long were you taking it for? _____
 What Pill did you take? _____
 How long is it since you stopped taking it? _____
- Are you using any other form of contraceptive?
 What sort? _____
- Have you noticed any of the following?
 Depression _____
 Headaches _____
 Lethargy _____
 Weight gain _____
 Loss of sexual interest _____
 Loss of sexual feeling _____
 Dryness of the vagina _____
- Have you noticed any other effects that you associate with the Pill?

- Is there any other information you think is relevant about your experiences with the Pill? _____



THE Yorkshire Ripper's twelfth victim was a student in Bradford. Over the past year the number of rapes and assaults on students has increased and the National Union of Students has started a campaign for better protection of women students in colleges. Harriet Sherwood Reports.

IS OUR FUTURE FEAR OR FREEDOM?

IF you're scared of the dark it probably means you're scared of sexual attacks. But in fact about 50 per cent of rapes are by men who know their victim. Few people outrightly condone rape, but lots have a very limited idea of what it is. For example, a lot of rapes take place within a marriage—and that's legal. The rape of a prostitute is considered by the media and the courts to be less serious than the rape of a young girl. The accusation, either implicit or explicit is that the woman asked for it, liked it really or is no more than a 'prick-tease'—and who then can blame the man? The story doesn't end with the act of rape, regardless of whether a woman goes to court. The stigma of being a rape victim remains. You don't forget the humiliation easily. Apart from the curiosity and the implications of *she asked for it* by other people, there's the feeling that doesn't go away of being abused, of being the object of violent gratification. If a woman does go to court, there's a further humiliation to be suffered there. It starts with the unsympathetic attitude of the police to rape victims and continues through the magistrates. Comments from

just two judges well illustrate the point:
It's a well known fact that women in particular and young boys are liable to be untruthful and invent stories. Justice Sutcliffe 1976. It's unwise to convict on the uncorroborated evidence of a woman. Justice Rigg 1975.

Women are made to feel that they are party to the crime, by provocation, or that they fabricate the story for their own evil reasons. It's not surprising that the majority of raped women decide not to go through with prosecution. Having been raped, a woman

remains raped. It doesn't go away. Deborah, in James Baldwin's *Go Tell It On The Mountain*, is gang-raped, and the psychological effect, as always, is greater than the physical harm:
'When men looked at Deborah they saw no further than her unlovely and violated body. That night had robbed her of the right to be considered a woman... All men were like this, their thoughts rose no higher, and they lived only to gratify on the bodies of women their brutal and humiliating needs.'
 It's not surprising that many women who have been raped see every man as a rapist. It's not surprising that many raped

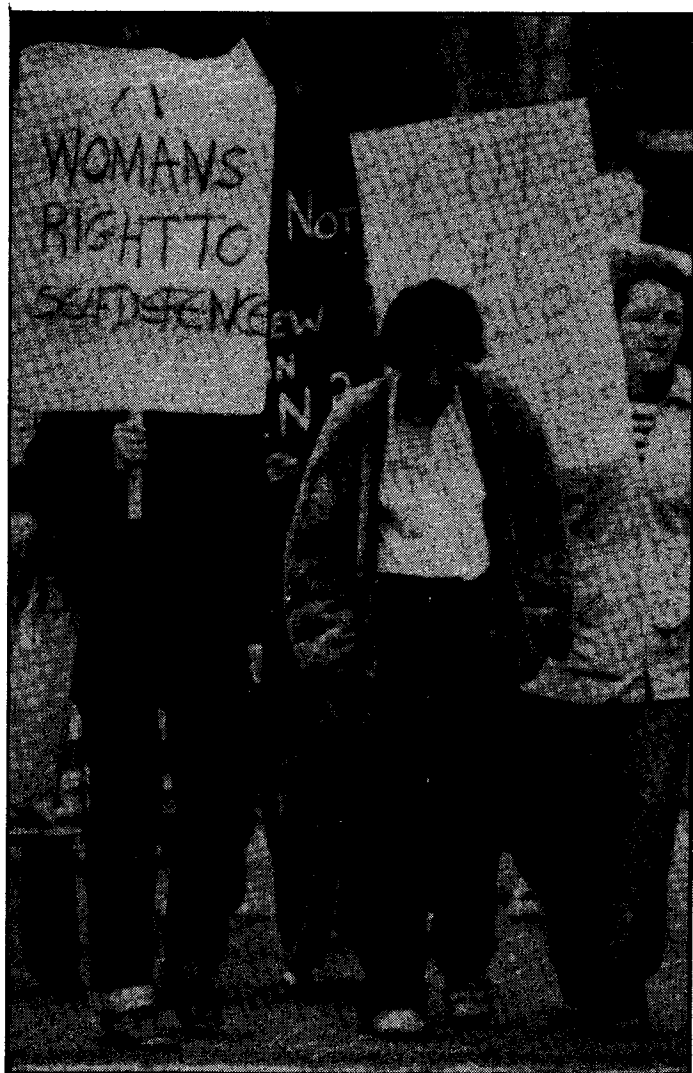
women hate all men, indiscriminately. But they're wrong. Rape doesn't happen because of inexplicable, uncontrollable sexual urges that have to be satisfied in the most violent manner. Nor does it happen because men and women are inherently divided against each other. Rape is a product of our society. If women see all men as potential rapists we will remain divided. Only when that division is overcome will men and women fight together for, and achieve, the socialist society where sexual oppression and sexual violence will be eradicated.

Increased number of student rapes

WOMEN students have never been safe from rape and sexual assault just because they are students. But this last year has seen a marked increase in these kind of attacks on university campuses and college sites. At Trent Park, one of the Middlesex Polytechnic sites, a local girl was raped in the college grounds earlier this year. The

Womens Group started a campaign against sexual violence and for better security on the site. They were supported by all the unions at Trent Park. There are just two driveways from the road to the main buildings. Both are over a mile long, and one is entirely unlit. The other has some lighting, but there are long stretches which are dark. Both lanes are bordered by trees and bushes, with fields and woods beyond. There is a minibus service between the tube station and the college buildings, which only holds the inadequate number of twelve people. The Students Union made demands on the Polytechnic to rectify all this. So far little if anything, has been done—but the Poly has warned women students to take care by avoiding these driveways! All too often women are told take care and this effectively means the only way of avoiding the possibility of sexual attacks is not to go out. Soon after a number of attacks took place in universities and colleges around the country, the National Union of Students

started a campaign towards a national Reclaim the Night demonstration in London. Since then NUS have done little, apart from writing to vice-chancellors and directors of colleges and universities with the demands of the motion on sexual violence passed at NUS conference in April. The motion called for lighting on footpaths, buses on and off isolated campuses, safe accommodation for women students, emergency telephones around the sites, and 'security personnel' to work in close liaison with the students unions. At Sussex University, where there were several rapes and a murder of a woman student, the union occupied the university buildings. Their demands were subsequently met. The only way college authorities will concede to the demands for better safety for women is if the students force them to—and that means militant action. Although those demands don't mean the end of attacks on women students at least they might make it a bit easier for women students to go out with a little less fear.



RAPE CRISIS CENTRE REPORT

1015 rapes were reported to the police in England and Wales in 1977.

Out of the 1015 rapes reported to the police:
 458 reached a magistrates court
 421 reached a crown court
 113 rapists were acquitted
 310 were found guilty
 In only 30.5 per cent of rape cases reported to the police were the rapist found guilty.
 About 50 per cent of rapes reported to the RCC were by men known to their victims.
 1979 (first three months) rapes reported to the police: 54, rapes reported to the RCC: 159
 1979 (first 8 months) - rapes reported to the RCC: 441
 31 per cent of rapes reported to the RCC take place in the women's home
 17 per cent take place in the assailant's home
 11 per cent take place in other indoor areas
 41 per cent take place outdoors.

The RCC estimates that only 27 per cent of all rapes are reported to the police.

REVIEWS

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS...

This month we have three pages of reviews on biographies and autobiographies. Some of these books may not be in the bookshops but they'll be in libraries. Reading about the struggles, fears and joys of women gives us insights into our own lives. There must be a great many more biographies and autobiographies which aren't mentioned here. Send us in reviews of the ones we haven't written about.

The Rebel Girl*
Elizabeth Gurney Flynn
International Publishers.
NY. £3.25

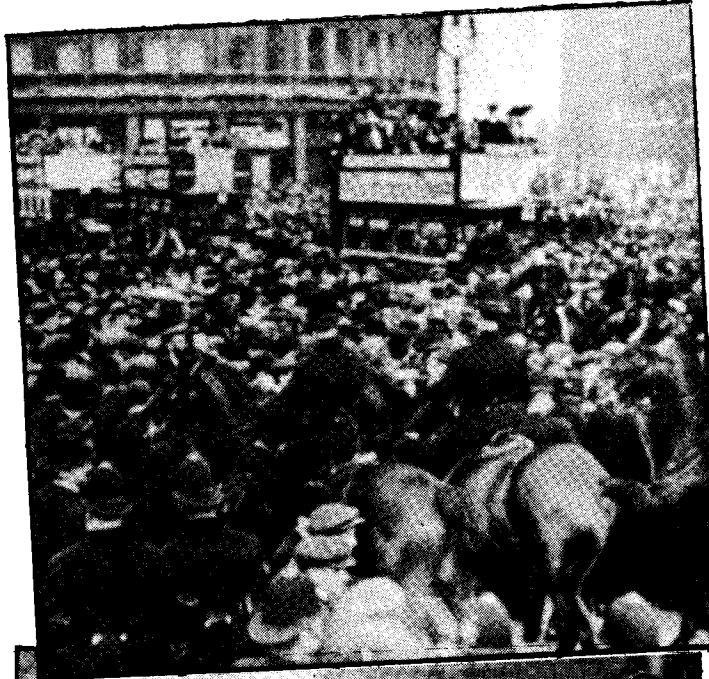
ELIZABETH Gurney Flynn was born in America in 1890. Her Irish parents were socialists and she attended political meetings with them from an early age. She made her first speech at the age of 16 on the theme, 'What socialism will do for women', and dedicated her life to the ideals of socialism.

She joined the IWW, **International Workers of the World**, and was an active organiser, taking part in the strikes like that in 1912 of the Lawrence Textile Workers, who were mainly women and children. The IWW unionized the unskilled, foreign born and itinerant workers. It had thousands of members and made labour history.

The authorities reacted brutally and many socialists and union members were attacked and imprisoned. Elizabeth campaigned for their release. Later she joined the **Communist Party** and was herself imprisoned from 1955 to 1957. Sadly, she did not complete the second part of her autobiography and died in 1964.
Ann Howard.

Rosa Luxemburg*
Paul Frolich
Pluto Press £3.30

ROSA LUXEMBURG was murdered during the unsuccessful workers' uprising in Germany in 1919. When she and the other leaders



Top: Mounted police clearing a Suffragette meeting from Trafalgar Square. Bottom: Elizabeth Gurney Flynn with other members of the IWW.

of the German communist movement were killed, the revolution died with them. But the ideas that Rosa fought for, that she spent her life teaching to others, are still relevant. An exceptional and talented woman, Rosa was the undisputed leader of the German communist movement. She did not believe that people should dogmatically repeat the ideas handed down to them from above by leaders. She thought that they should look at the world and draw their own conclusions building socialism from below. This belief in the rank and file and her work to spread mass action, mass strikes and revolutionary struggle were

constant themes.

She was never a feminist, believing herself equal to any man. But she supported the struggle for women's rights and for the vote. Like other German communist women of the time she placed great emphasis on the question of class—making a distinction between the situation of bourgeois women, and those of the working class.

Clara Zetkin the leader of the German women's movement was her lifelong friend. In 1915 the two women organised an International Women's Conference against the war. This was attended by women from all the countries involved in the war

and the women became very prominent in the anti-war movement.

The German Communist Party grew out of those organising to oppose the war. Rosa Luxemburg and Clara Zetkin were among its founder members.

Paul Frolich's book about her is the best you can read. It is an exciting and inspiring account of an incredibly talented woman, who changed many people with her ideas.

Lenin wrote of her 'not only will she remain dear to the memory of communists throughout the world, but her biography... will provide a very useful lesson in the education of many generations of communists throughout the world.'

I can't say better than that. The story of Rosa Luxemburg will inspire you to go out and organise to change the world.

Anna Paczuska

Living My Life,*
Emma Goldman
2 vols,
Dover, £2.85 each

BY ANY yardstick Emma Goldman had an extraordinary life. Born into a Jewish family in Russia in 1886, she went to New York at the age of 17 and threw herself with ferocious energy into every kind of political activity. She became notorious in the USA for what then seemed highly dangerous views on birth control, marriage, politics and revolution. She was a thorough-going anarchist who rejected all forms of authority whether imposed by the state, by religion, or by men over women.

Regularly arrested and imprisoned, she was eventually deported from the USA. She returned to Russia in 1919 full of hope, only to find the revolution already faltering.

She lived the rest of her life an exile—but still fighting until her death in Canada in 1940.

Some of her best writings are about women. Of so-called 'emancipation' she wrote: *'The right to vote, or equal civil rights, may be good demands, but true emancipation begins neither at the polls nor in courts. It begins in woman's soul. History tells us that every oppressed class gained true liberation from its*

masters through its own efforts. It is necessary that woman learn that lesson, that she realises that her freedom will reach as far as her power to achieve her freedom reaches.'

Jan Elsan

The Suffragette Movement* **Sylvia Pankhurst** **Virago, £2.95**

I HAVE never read a book which contained so many stories of militancy and bravery by thousands of women. Sylvia shows how the working class women's fight for the suffrage was tied into other women's struggles. A description of a fight in Poplar Council Chambers, where they refused to let Votes for Women meetings be held, gives an insight into the atmosphere of those days: *'Then the storm burst. Cries of 'shame'. The shooting of pop-guns, the throwing of bags of flour, blue powder and more solid missiles began the fray... Whilst missiles still fell from the gallery, wild women dashed round the room, overturning ink-pots and tearing agenda papers, seizing the Councillors' chairs as weapons of defence. The police were sent for but refused to enter the building.'*

Just one of the hundreds of demonstrations, disruptions and stunts the suffragettes organised to win their demands. We could learn a lot from them.

Lindsey German

Alexandra Kollontai, **'Autobiography** **of a Sexually** **Emancipated Woman,'**

ALEXANDRA KOLLONTAI was a leading figure in the Russian Revolution. Born in 1873, she rebelled against her noble background at an early age. She left her marriage after less than three years in order to develop her own political life. This short autobiography gives an account of her life, outlining her advanced ideas on women's liberation. She believed that women's emancipation could only be achieved under socialism. She argued that women should be sexually free, and not constrained by the fetters of marriage, the family and the economic subordination of women to men that these entailed. She scandalised many of her contemporaries by her views on sexual and moral matters.

Her autobiography is more than just a life story. It is also a sensitive analysis of how class society inhibits women's sexual freedom. In 1917 she became the world's first female cabinet minister, as Peoples Commissar For Social Welfare, and put many of her emancipatory ideas into practice.

Her autobiography ends in 1926, closing with the words... *'It is perfectly clear to me that complete liberation of working women and the creation of a new sexual morality will always remain the highest aim of my activity and my life.'*

This book also has Kollontai's essay 'The New Woman', about the double standards of morality applied to men and women, conventional marriage and love—and criticism of the Party's attitude to such things.

This book is out of print but due to be republished soon.

Helen Rose

The Tamarisk Tree: My **Quest for Liberty and** **Live*** **Dora Russell** **Virago £2.75**

'Many of the difficulties that later arose between Bertie and myself were the common fate of all thinking men and women in that period of women's emancipation. What should be the right attitude of the man to the woman, woman to man, parent to child, child to parent? How should women come to terms with, and how alter the rigid patriarchal structure of our society? The solution of these dilemmas is still

Hannah Mitchell

sought: therefore the tale of our pathetic efforts to resolve them may serve both to warn and to enlighten.'

Dora Russell is in her eighties now; in her twenties she married Bertrand Russell and had two children. There was an intense and complex relationship, in which, politically, she was to the left of him and personally she had a greater understanding and ability to preach what she practised. Bertie never came to terms with women and the working class: *'in spite of his championship of women's suffrage, Bertie did not really believe in the equality of women with men. I mean simply that he believed the male intellect to be superior to that of the female.'* Their different impressions of the Russian Revolution marked the differences in their political sympathies. Bertie, intending to take Dora with him to Russia in 1920, changed his mind at the last minute when he was offered a place with a rather stuffy labour delegation. Undaunted, Dora made her own way there, met Kollontai, attended a women's congress, met many ordinary Russians and heard Lenin speak. She travelled also to China shortly after (this time with him—a good job he didn't leave her behind this time—she saved his life).

Back in England in the 20's she

was involved with the far left of the Independent Labour Party. The struggle for birth control then has remarkable similarities with the Abortion Rights struggle today. Also, the questions raised on role, family and sexuality in her involvement in the World League for Sexual Reform were important beginnings which were dropped for thirty years till the Women's Movement and Gay Liberation began to raise them again.

She and Russell agreed they should not impede each other's right to sexual freedom in marriage. They both had affairs. But when Dora had her second child by her lover, it was too much for Bertie. The relationship foundered badly in the hands of divorce lawyers and property rights. They parted. Bertie moved to the right politically, but Dora never wavered.

Fiona Williams

The Hard Way Up,* **Hannah Mitchell** **Virago, £2.50**

No cause can be won between dinner and tea, and most of us who were married had to work with one hand tied behind us, so to speak. If you think we have difficulties today being mothers, wives, workers and political activists imagine how hard life was for Hannah Mitchell 70 years ago. She had no formal education and started out in life as a garment stitcher. She became a militant suffragette, a full-time organiser for the *Womens Social and Political Union* and a member of the *Independent Labour Party*, with a socialist husband who like other 'socialist young men expected Sunday dinner and huge teas with home-made cakes, potted meats and pies, exactly like their reactionary fellows.'

She also had a growing son. Hannah Mitchell fought against all the odds, and will inspire you to do the same.

Margaret Renn.

The Life and Death of **Mary Wollstonecraft,*** **Claire Tomalin,** **Pelican £1.50**

FORERUNNER of the Womens' Movement, Mary Wollstonecraft, born in 1759, was indefatigable in educating herself—through books, discussion, observations and experience of life.

Her parents weren't well off, the father drank and abused the mother and at an early age, Mary took over responsibility for the family.

She was determined to support herself financially. Hating the enforced servitude of being a companion and governess, she set up and taught in a school for





Dora Russell

girls in Islington. When this was unsuccessful, some of her radical Unitarian friends persuaded her to write.

Even the foremost women writers of the day considered a woman's education should only be such as to make her an agreeable companion to cultivated men.

In *'Thoughts on the Education of Daughters'* Mary saw education as the key to women's independence.

'Vindication of the Rights of Women', which followed, stressed the general case for women's rights. This book established her on an equal footing with the leading intellectuals of the day.

Well travelled, she visited Portugal and Ireland and went to France during the Revolution. In Scandinavia and Germany, with her daughter by a man who no longer loved her, she wrote *'The more I think the sadder I grow'*.

Always passionately involved, she finally found happiness with Godwin, a leading political writer, only to die in childbirth at the early age of 38.

Anne Johnson

Lady Sings the Blues Billie Holiday with William Dufty Abacus 55p

THE TITLE of Billie Holiday's autobiography comes from one of her most haunting songs:

Lady sings the blues, she's got them bad

She feels so sad and wants the world to know

Just what her blues is all about...

In the song she says the blues ain't nothing but a pain in your heart when you and your man have to part. She goes on to say she won't just sit around and cry. The film of her book dwelt heavily on Billie's drug addiction, and in her book she is honest about it.

It seems her blues were as much about her addiction as about her lovers, whom she



Billy Holiday—Lady of the Blues

barely mentions in the book.

She wrote the book because she wanted to put other people off hard drugs: ... *'Maybe some of the kids who wouldn't be caught taking advice from a judge will take it from me. Dope never helped anybody to sing better, or do anything better, Take it from Lady Day. She took enough of it to know.'*

This is the story of a fine woman who against the most phenomenal odds, her colour, her sex and her class, made it as a great singer and innovator of the blues. If you don't know her songs, listen to *Gloomy Sunday*, *My Man* and *Strange Fruit*. She was a jazz singer, and she sang the blues so that they eat your heart when you listen to her sing.

Marilyn Maclean

Frost in May* Virago £1.95 The Lost Traveller Virago £2.25 The Sugar House Virago £1.95 Beyond the Glass Virago £2.25 Antonia White

THESE four books are an autobiography in novel form of a girl from the age of nine to twenty-three. They are not particularly 'political', nor even

consciously feminist, but they are brilliant and absorbing. They are about Clara's relationship with Catholicism, with her father, with marriage and it's annulment, with her writing and with madness. And what is so good about these books is that she writes simply but beautifully about intense and complex emotions. She writes clearly and honestly: Clara is real and true. You need not have lived 60 years ago, nor be a Catholic, to relate to Clara.

I liked *Beyond the Glass* Best: Catholicism, guilt and repression are taking their toll and Clara is going mad. It is obvious to the reader that her actions are out of focus, yet it seems quite reasonable that they should be. She is sent to a barbaric public asylum, certified, and her parents and fiance told not to expect her out until she is fifty. Remarkably, within a year, she pulls herself back to sanity. Minute by minute, she summons all her emotional and mental energy to begin to understand the world again.

Antonia White is 80 now. She started the first book when she was 16, and only with a great deal of persuasion managed to return to it and finish it in her 30's. She didn't complete the quartet till she was 55, suffering from bouts of madness in between. These have forced upon her an understanding of herself which produces the rare clarity of these works of art.

Fiona Williams



Vera Brittain

Testament of Youth and Testament of Experience* Vera Brittain Virago, £2.95 and £3.50

VERA BRITAIN came from a comfortable middle class home. Her life was shattered when both her brother and her fiance were killed in the first world war. She rejected the calm of University and enlisted as a nurse. Her experience in France made her a committed pacifist. Afterwards, returning to Oxford, she met Winifred Holtby—author of *South Riding*. This friendship helped her recover from her tragic loss. *Testament of Youth* captures with passionate intensity the horror and waste of war. It became an instant bestseller.

Testament of Experience continues her life: marriage (to a political philosopher); the conflicts between being a writer and mother (her daughter is Shirley Williams); the sad death of Winifred at the age of 35; her pacifist stand during World War 2 when she courageously spoke out against the saturation bombing of German cities.

She was keenly aware of the situation facing women and used her writing talents to put forward a feminist point of view which was unfashionable during the 30's. After the difficult birth of her son she commented:

'This is what nine-tenths of the mothers in this country go through—not once—but again and again. I was filled with a vehement anger. I wanted to batter down the solid walls of the Ministry of Health; to take the minister and give him a woman's inside, and compel him to have six babies, all without anaesthetics.'

Anne Howard.

All books marked * are available from Bookmarks, add 10 percent for postage.

SEND REVIEWS TO WOMENS VOICE, BOX 82, LONDON E2

IRELAND: WOMEN AT WAR

I WAS brought up in Tipperary of Catholic parents and educated in a convent. I came over to London to do the inevitable job for an Irish girl: nurse or barmaid. I became a nurse and realised how exploited nurses are, especially foreign ones. It's very difficult to organise them, because they are too scared of being thrown out of the country. My political awareness started then. I was also involved in the *Irish Civil Rights* solidarity campaign in 1969.

I went to Belfast to go to college, became involved in the *Socialist Workers Movement*, and realised how inadequate policies for women were. I felt that men on the left didn't take women's politics seriously. They only had a commitment on paper, their understanding didn't go deep enough. When I started a Socialist Society in the college, I found that a lot of women were anxious to have a women's group with a socialist perspective. This was 1975, and I joined the *Belfast Women's Collective* which had just been formed.

People in the Collective work on the issues which they feel personally committed to. We work around nursery campaigns, we had a health conference to which 100 women came from all over Ireland, and we campaigned around abortion and contraception.

Our perspective is anti-imperialist and socialist. We raise feminist issues in every possible situation. We do a lot of work in the unions, but the trade union movement in Northern Ireland is very reactionary. On May Day they refused to allow women's banners on the march. There are about 50 women in all, but the main core is 15. It's difficult to build the Collective. So many women are under the *Payment of Debts Act*, or deserted by their husbands and they live on a pittance. Their survival is just a hair's breadth from going under. It's not so difficult to build a campaign. For example, there's a campaign against violence to women, partly because of the violence used against women in prison, and also because of the number of rapes which occur in Belfast. We had a Reclaim the Night demo last Easter supported by a lot of women.

NOT EVERYONE in the Collective is Catholic—it's a cross section. It's very important to involve Protestant women. For example on abortion you'd get more support from Protestant



RACHEL CARROL OF THE BELFAST WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE

women, but if you take the Troops Out issue you'd get more support from Catholics. The sectarian boundaries reach out to take in all sorts of things, but we hope to get women involved in feminist issues, and this can lead to the anti-imperialist stand through discussions and involvement. Feminist issues are common to all women, working class women whether Protestant or Catholic suffer poverty and degradation. The BWC is dedicated to a 32 county unified democratic republic. But we have no illusions about the Republic of Ireland. Catholic bigotry in the South is as repressive to women as Protestant bigotry is to republicanism. The Church has such a profound effect on women. They lay tremendous emphasis on the woman's role in the home and

family and preach about the evils of tampering with your own body. The sermons against abortion, the sanctity of human life, the evils of materialist society, the selfishness of women killing their babies rather than stopping work—all that is bound to have an effect on women. I remember as a child I was disgusted that anyone could kill a baby—abortion is presented to children as the ultimate horror and evil. For many women the whole question is a closed book.

PEOPLE in Belfast live with a continual underlying tension, especially when the Paisleyite factions are whipping up hysteria. People are nervous, anyone could be attacked, it's so much a matter of chance. I was raided, and the RUC

threatened to take away my daughter, who was three, and she was in the room all the time. It's terribly frightening being raided, they take everything to bits, fireplaces, floorboards, they go through the rubbish with a toothcomb. They don't even need a warrant in Northern Ireland. Once they raided us saying they'd been told by neighbours that men had been seen going in and out of the house with cardboard boxes.

I'D LIKE to see the BWC as a mass movement, joining forces with the unions and all other groups fighting for change in Northern Ireland. There won't be any changes for women without political changes, but it's essential for women to be in the forefront. If not, issues affecting us won't be considered urgent—that is the tradition—women must have confidence and force men to take them seriously. There'll be no real socialist republic until the working class joins forces—men and women, Protestant and Catholic must fight together to oust capitalism and all forms of imperialism that are so blatant in the North and the South. I think there'll be no revolution without a revolutionary party, but that's my personal opinion, not the line of the Collective.

The *Women Against Imperialism* group was formed as a split off from the Collective. It was really a question of emphasis—they see the struggle revolving around the war in Ireland, and although we see the war as crucial, we think lots of working class women can be reached through broad feminist perspectives. Once a month the two groups meet and discuss problems in common. The upsurge in women's consciousness in Northern Ireland since 1968 has forced the whole republican movement to take women's issues much more seriously.

THIS IS the last article in our three part series on Northern Ireland which was written and researched by Melanie McFadyean who visited Belfast earlier this year.

We plan to republish these articles as a pamphlet with additional material and information on women in Ireland. *Womens Voice* readers will be able to use it to support the struggle of the people of Northern Ireland for self determination and independence from British oppression.

LETTERS

Back to the roots

Dear *Womens Voice*

In your recent article about circumcision you say that it is practised for 'religious or cultural' reasons. Not quite true. I thought you might find it interesting that these practices, such as the removal of the foreskin in males or the excision of the clitoris and labial lips in girls, are only typical of patriarchal societies (or matriarchies in the process of transformation into patriarchies).

These genital ceremonies in the form of pubertal rites are part of the historical development of sexual morality and sexual repression; part of the many attempts by society to combat sexuality. Sexual repression arises for very definite reasons: the subjugation of women and men into monogamous relationships and thus the protection of the marriage institution. Through this institution the economic interests—inheritance of the paternal line and ideologies of culture—are furthered. Once again economic reasons prove to be the cause, the true root of practices such as circumcision.

A. Pinto,
East London

Missed points

Dear *Womens Voice*,

I would like to reply to your article in July's *Womens Voice* about Epilepsy as I feel some of the statements made were misleading.

First of course Epilepsy is not a disease—its a condition.

The part played by heredity is very small.

The anti-epileptic drugs mentioned are not fully representative of the range. Epilim is mentioned twice and there is some confusion between the trade names and the content name. Mysoline, Zarontin, Carbamazepine are not mentioned.

It is not true to say that different forms of contraception have to be used, but to avoid risk it is advocated. Neither is it true to say that anti-epileptic drugs should not be taken during pregnancy.

The second item by Pauline



Alden runs counter to the advice of the Association as far as concealing the fact of Epilepsy from employers is concerned. Also the experiences of one woman should not really be stated in general, for example, generally speaking the drugs do not make you feel tired and doped-up. If they do, it is either because the dose is wrong or the type of medication is wrong for that particular person.

The British Epilepsy Association does not donate money to drug companies. It is in fact the reverse. Three of the largest drug companies donate substantially to the general funds of the Association. It is untrue to say *someone* will have fits when subject to stress—that is another generalisation which is most misleading. There is considerable confusion here between the causes of epilepsy and the causes of fits.

The last point I would like to make is that there is now considerable liaison between the

medical profession and the BEA and it is generally recognised that the sort of support offered by the Association, particularly through its groups, is a vital complement to good medical care. If *Womens Voice* could put people in touch with us it would do a great deal of good.

Rita Rushbrook,
Secretary of the Greenwich Action for Epilepsy Group.

Combat your own attitudes

Dear *Womens Voice*

Assuming T Shepperd (WV 33) is a man, I suggest he contacts *Men Against Sexism* to find out about their activities. He seems to resent women having their own groups and magazines for a change. Women rely on *Spare Rib* and *Womens Voice* to gain information they could never get from magazines edited by men, and

female writers have been discriminated against for years by male editors and publishers.

If T Shepperd thinks *Spare Rib* has a 'women only line', then he is discriminating against women by dismissing women's issues as irrelevant to men. *Achilles Heel* is a good magazine of men's politics, and is obtainable from The Men's Free Press, 7 St Mark's Rise, London E8.

It is good that men are taking an interest in fighting sexism, but men still have to combat their own sexist attitudes.

Meanwhile women have to combat their lack of self-confidence after years of being treated as inferior half-wits. Many women new to feminist politics would feel inhibited by the presence of men at women's meetings. We've been brainwashed into smiling sweetly when men are present, instead of airing our views. T Shepperd might well be a non-sexist, nice sort of guy—but some men would turn up at women's meetings just to scoff at our handling of various issues, or try to take over. Feminists have had very bad experiences in mixed groups, and were usually left to make the tea and clear up afterwards. Lesbians found the same attitudes in mixed gay groups!

Men's and women's aims in the movement are the same, but the problems are very different. Let's sort ourselves out first in men's and women's groups, then women and men will be more easily able to meet and converse on equal terms.

Susan Read,
Farnborough

I got a reply

Dear *Womens Voice*

I noticed that you printed my letter about Margaret Thatcher. You ask if she replied to my letter, the answer is yes, via some-one called Eric Koops from her 'private office'.

It said:

Mrs Thatcher has asked me to thank you for your letter and for the questions raised. Mrs Thatcher's own example as a woman and a mother with a science degree demonstrates her experience and concern for the equal rights of all people whether male or female. I hope you would wish to see Mrs Thatcher as the first woman Prime

Minister and will therefore vote for and support your Conservative candidate on Thursday. Meanwhile I am enclosing a copy of our manifesto.

Needless to say I didn't vote for her—in fact I abstained altogether I'm afraid—and not from apathy!

When I asked 'how else can a woman make it to the top in our society?' what I meant was how else can she overcome the pressure to waste her life looking after husband and home? I don't think it's a coincidence that the first woman PM is a conservative and not a labour supporter. Anyway, thanks for printing the letter—I wasn't sure whether you would. I hope I get some feedback on it.

Pauline Maniscalco,
Uxbridge

Dear Womens Voice

We have had a letter writing campaign to all MPs asking them to oppose the Corrie anti-abortion bill. One pro-abortion MP wrote that he was pleased to get our letter since 9 out of 10 letters he had received on the subject were in favour of Corrie's bill. As you said in your September issue SPUC writes plenty of letters. Please sisters write to your own MP and persuade as many other people as possible to write to their MP.

They do count the letters they receive and this bill is one backward step women can't afford to let the Tories take.

Lesley Williams,
Wolverhampton



Learn English the
WOMEN'S VOICE way....!

Thanks a lot

Dear Womens Voice,
I want to tell you how much I appreciate your magazine. Since I bumped into this girl in a Glasgow pub, who sold me my first issue. I wouldn't miss it for anything every month.

My friends and I pick on many subjects from the magazine and have discussions on them. When I start my English studies at university in a couple of weeks, I'm sure there's a lot of stuff from Womens Voice that we can use. It's going to be great. Thanks to you!

Keep on fighting,
Jetta,
Denmark



Rip-off

Dear Womens Voice,

Every day after school I go to the paper shop to do my rip-off paper round. I get paid £1.00 for six days. The people on my round pay 5p a week extra for the delivery of their papers which includes magazines. I deliver to 27 people. This means that the shop makes £1.70 profit out of me. The round takes 45 minutes. I start at 4.00 and finish at 4.45. When I get home I have an hour's homework. I think I should at least get £2.

BECK CHARLTON

P.S. Hazards at Work: Dogs chase me around and don't let me deliver the paper. When it rains we don't get extra pay.

Throw up

Dear Sisters,

The back cover of the September issue is enough to make anyone 'throw up'.

Are we confirming the leering chauvinists view that we are frustrated men? Surely what we are fighting for as socialists is not domination of our male comrades and others.

Let whoever thought up that disgusting design indulge in their own fantasies and not inflict them on us.

Carole Duffs,
Oxford

Let them drown?

A Chara,

I did not think much of your article *Answering Back* (August 79). The Vietnamese government is not 'expelling the Chinese population' as you put it. The 'boat people' made their gold working for US imperialism and they do not wish to work to build a new country. And if some take to boats with their ill-gotten gains to leave our 32 county workers republic, we will not be pleased to read *Womens Voice* crying for those who drown in the Irish Sea.

You did bring out very well the sufferings of our people under British military occupation and I hope you will campaign for the basic demand of the Irish people—for the British government to declare its intention of withdrawing from Ireland. Only when the Loyalists realise that the British people do not want to keep them in power will they sit down with the

anti-Unionists to plan the future of the Six Counties.

You are right that no one thanks the British soldiers for doing what they do: the Loyalists wish they hadn't come because they think they could have murdered every Catholic in the North in 1969 if they hadn't. The Catholics hate them for their continuing repression in their areas.

Is mise

Siobhan Kennedy,
Dunloy,
Co. Antrim.

That time of the month

Dear Womens Voice

Menstruation rules OK or Period Pains Ruin Lives OK? Another side of this so far not mentioned in articles and letters in *Womens Voice* is the extent to which period pains can be used as an argument against women workers—that women can never be equal because for one week out of four we're 'below par', irritable, careless or crippled by pain.

If pre-menstrual tension and/or painful cramps aren't your problem this may seem easy. I've always admired the woman in the story, who answered her boss when he used this argument, 'Really, Mr. Smith! How exactly can you tell I'm menstruating? Do you think I'm doing it now?' Guaranteed to stop em in their tracks!!

However, there's a lot of other women, like me, for whom cramps and short-temper are a reality. Leaving aside the causes and cures it's a fact that there's a greater than 50 per cent chance that the woman you work beside has some menstrual symptoms other than pleasure.

The sort of thing this means is:

1. Arguing the toss at work about the one-week-in-four argument, one more in the armoury to force us back to the kitchen sink. It's exactly the same as the argument that women can never be equal at work or in society because we have the pregnancies, bear children etc. To accept either is to accept that society's advances are to be used to keep us as second class citizens and not for our benefit—they can put men on the moon and transplant hearts but can't stop half the population having regular monthly

pains. They can bring in new technology to increase their profits and cut our jobs but not to shorten the working week and improve maternity provisions.

Try this story on your male colleagues. There's a new illness sweeping the globe, affecting only men. Over 50 per cent of men will get some symptoms—profuse bleeding from the penis, crippling cramplike pains in the genitals, a bloated feeling, headaches, backache, acute depression... then let them say there's no solution!

2. Preventing victimisation. For example, many employers have strict rules about taking sick leave without a medical note (ie you can take up to three days at any one time but if you take beyond a certain number in a year you're in trouble). The 'excessive' number is often around 10. It is amazingly easy to miss 10 odd days of work during a year if you have painful periods—if not for the pain or depression itself for the fact that on top of any minor illness pre-menstrual symptoms can make the cold or whatever it is unbearable.

Vera Breaney,
Kentish Town



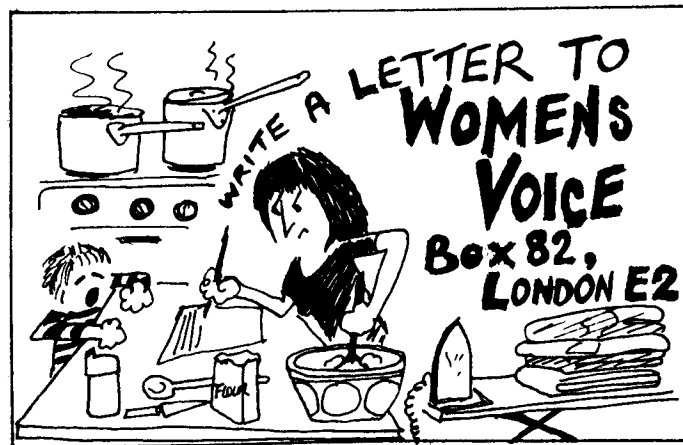
Dear Womens Voice

As part of my university studies, I am preparing information on various aspects of the feminist movement in this country and the United States.

I am trying to find out how I may contact a group in the states called SCUM, which I understand to be a radical organisation advocating the enslavement of men in a matriarchal society of the future. If you could assist me in discovering their address, I would be very grateful.

Also, do you know of any other similarly radical feminist groups in the States, this country or elsewhere, whom I could contact for further information?

David Keisner,
Willesden.



Deat Jane



BREAST is best. That is now the fairly unanimous opinion of the 'experts' in childcare and development. This has not always been the case, as theories and fashions of child-rearing and development vary. There are now very sound reasons to back up the current emphasis on breast feeding.

First, breast milk is the ideal food for babies, its carefully balanced composition and the fact that this food appears at a constantly correct

temperature eliminates problems that can arise with the measurement and heating of formula baby milks.

Second, breast milk is sterile, untouched by human hand, and so there is less risk of contamination of the milk or infection whilst feeding.

Third, and perhaps the most important of the current arguments is that breast milk contains important anti-bodies. These can help protect the baby against some infections during its early life. Some

research indicates that there may be protection against allergies in breast milk too.

Fourth, and not always taken into account is the fact that breast feeding is cheaper than buying bottles, feed, sterilising equipment and so on.

Lastly, breast feeding helps the womb return to its pre-pregnancy size.

Looking at these formidable advantages, it must be said of course that it's not always as simple as merely putting babe to breast and allowing it to consume this ideal food.

Breast feeding requires a fair amount of determination by the mother to stick at it through the problems that may arise. These range from dry and cracked nipples, not enough milk produced to meet the baby's needs, discomfort during feeding and problems in getting the baby to suck properly, to name but a few.

Successful breast feeding is closely related to the woman's health and how relaxed she feels. Tension and anxiety can affect the mother, her milk production and the baby.

Some women don't want to breast feed because they find the

process restricting—as only the mother can feed the child and this can be demanding and tiring. Particularly if a woman wants to share responsibility for child care, or wants to return to work shortly after the birth, bottle feeding may be preferable.

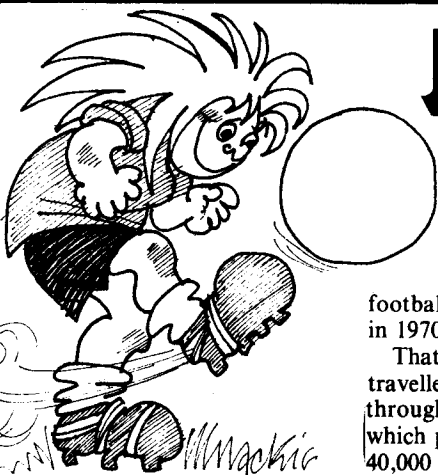
The idea of breast feeding is one that some women, quite simply, find unappealing. To have large, milk-filled breasts, smell 'milky', have to battle with prejudice and sometimes horror if a woman wants to breast feed her child in public, can be just too much.

One of the problems with breast feeding, and many other aspects of childcare, is that as theories have fashions or fads, the mother who doesn't conform to the current vogue can be made to feel at the least inadequate, and at worst that she may be doing her child damage. The barrage of advice for medical staff, health visitors, friends and relations can easily leave one feeling confused about what is the best thing to do. Breast feeding is a very personal thing. If it works well, it's great for both mother and child. If it doesn't, it shouldn't be seen as a disaster or failure.

JANE FOSTER

You're Worried

JIMMY HILL ARE YOU LISTENING?



MY FIRST contact with sport was when I was 5 years old. My father used to take me to his beloved *Queens Park Rangers Football Club*, and there I would sit hoisted above all the other supporters on my fathers shoulders wondering what on earth was going on. Why were all these men running about kicking a little ball?

Well that was many years ago and—yes, I still support that team, only now I know more about football. Little did I know then that one day I would form the *QPR Ladies Football Team*, but that is what I did.

It started just as an idea, as most things do, when womens

football was in its infancy back in 1970.

That Ladies team has since travelled to many countries throughout the world, amongst which playing in front of a 40,000 crowd in France. (So much for the myth that no one is interested in a load of angelic ladies trying to play a so-called 'man's' game.

My team was also the first ladies team to appear on Television in a 5-a-side match at Wembley, and since has appeared twice before the main football event of the year the

FA Cup Final, in a Ladies equivalent FA Cup, in which they won one and lost the other.

I had no trouble getting girls interested to join a ladies team, I received letters by the score, and these women were NOT all 'Butch types', far from it. They simply loved football and wanted to play.

They all knew the game inside out and after the initial meetings we were all raring to go. We trained at the Scrubs Training Ground twice a week and then the Local Paper took an interest and wrote an article, which of course attracted more girls.

We started off very humbly by playing in local 5-a-side matches, until we entered a major womens 5-a-side tournament at the Crystal Palace Sports ground and I still treasure my medal as winners. Things then just snowballed and eventually we entered the Womens Football Association which is run by Pat Gregory and entered the league.

For a long time we were unbeatable, but eventually I had reluctantly to leave the club as a fractured ankle and my personal life would not fully allow me to commit myself to my team. But my interest in football will never die.

Women's football has come a long way but not long enough for me. The day I see women playing on Match of the Day I shall be partially satisfied so take note, Jimmy Hill!

SPORT

Diane Lewis



Child of the system

BY NOELE ARDEN

I WAS in mental institutions from the age of 12. I was the product of a broken marriage. There were two of us, both boisterous children, and our mother and father got divorced. My mother couldn't cope and we went into care. I suppose I was a pest, a real nuisance.

I was in a home and they sent me to St. James' Hospital in Portsmouth. They were only trying to help.

I had ECT there, when I was 12. I used to go under fighting. I was terrified, they didn't even give you an injection. I saw all the other people along the ward having ECT before me and I could see them having convulsions. Nothing has ever frightened me so much. They don't give you any reasons for doing it, I looked on it as punishment. I did the sort of 'naughty' things children do today and nothing happens to them. The ECT has blocked parts of my memory. It certainly

TALES WE TELL OUR SISTERS

didn't do me any good, it was horrific—fear isn't beneficial to anybody.

I was disobedient because I resented not having a home or a caring mother. I wanted a home. I wanted to be an individual in my own right and they wanted me to be nice and quiet and do as I was told.

I was the youngest in the mental hospital. I was on a ward with older women. They used to swipe your food, you had to hang onto your plate. There were some very violent people. I was there for two years and then my mother took me home.

We didn't get on. I took phenobarbitones. That was an offence and the doctor called in the police. *They sent me to another mental hospital.* I played up, I was on a bad ward again. I had to learn to defend myself—the patients were bigger than me. I'm only 5ft 4 inches now and I was only 14 then. I had to fight like fury to survive.

I was there for two years and then they sent me to Rampton. I was very difficult—I wouldn't do as I was told. I'd sit on the wall, I wanted individual attention and you didn't get it unless you did daft things. I was just 16 when I went to Rampton. I was there for 8½ years.

I came under the Moral Imbeciles Act, I was certified mentally defective. I was never mentally defective. If you're defective what isn't there can't be put back.

There weren't any facilities for badly adjusted children. There still aren't enough. Twenty years later there are still children in mental hospitals.

The outside world is a complete mystery when you're in there. There are no newspapers. The radio ran off the mains, you got Mrs Dale's diary and music. Everything was censored—even letters.

There was no loyalty between women patients. You had no future and no past. You made friends but you had to be really careful. I was 16 and growing up. Lesbian relationships would come up and if you had one they locked you up. They were usually lesbian by necessity and not choice.

Punishment was being locked in an isolation block. There was nothing in the

cells, just a rug, not even a bed. There was no daylight. There was just an iron shutter in the door, there were double doors, one iron, one wooden. They threw your meals in. At the same time they threw in a pot, so there were only toilet facilities at meal times. I was locked in the isolation cells 4 or 5 times, beaten and throttled unconscious by women warders. There were only women warders for women patients.

I fought all the time to keep my individuality and never succumbed to the institution. I found a way of keeping in the middle of the road and I kept my sanity. I learned to cope, you have to.

I was never insane. *I have a certificate to prove I'm sane.* They did an IQ test in Rampton, it was 120. What they kept me there for I don't know, they never gave me any reasons. They ask you stupid questions to find out whether they think you're improving. Once they asked me to tell them the difference between an orange and a lemon. I told them to suck them and find out for themselves. If I had responded like a dear sweet little person I might have been let out, as it was I was taken back into a ward I'd been in previously which added another five years onto my stay.

In the end I got out because my brother was in the army. He took my letters to his commanding officer and it was obvious that I was lucid. There's a welfare unit for the forces, called SSAFA, who poked their nose in and the hospital didn't like that. I was released.

After I got out I had a few jobs. I got married and now I have 4 children. I've told them my story. I've never lied. I don't see why I should.

I had been pushed around all my life. Who can say what kind of person I'd have been otherwise? Rampton is covered by the Official Secrets Act. To expose what happens there I've done radio and TV programmes. It was my book that started off the enquiry into the scandal about Rampton. It's called *Child of a System* because I was the child of a system and there are still so many children like that. It's a timeless title. The system I'm talking about is the Department of Wonders and Blunders, Whitehall.

WHAT IS GOING ON?

WV groups

- **ABERDEEN Womens Voice** for more information telephone Liz 51059
- **ACTON & 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.
- **BURY Womens Voice** meets every other Wednesday. Ring Lynn 061 764 6659 for details.
- **BLACK COUNTRY** Sundays fortnightly, 2.30, 27 Glen Court, Compton Road. For Information 23233. Children welcome.
- **BRISTOL Womens Voice** meets fortnightly at the Inkworks, 22 Hepburn Road (off Basingstoke Road), St. Pauls, Bristol 2. Ring Bristol 46875
- **CANTERBURY Womens Voice** meets every other Tuesday at Jolly Sailor Northgate. Phone Barbara (Lyminge 862742).
- **COVENTRY Womens Voice** meets every other Wednesday, 8.00pm, at the Hertford Tavern, off Queens Road (near the Butts). Coventry 618956
- **CROYDON Womens Voice** meets alternate Tuesdays. Phone Maureen 660 0989 or Yvonne 664 3768.
- **EALING Womens Voice** meets regularly. Phone Jenny or Caroline 567 7676
- **ECCLES & IRLAM Womens Voice** meets fortnightly at the AEU Social Club, Mather Road, Eccles. 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 & BARNET Womens Voice** meets fortnightly, for information contact Anita 883 4968 or Glenis 346 7627.
- **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 Street, Glossop. Phone Glossop 61873 or Claire, Glossop 64735.
- **HACKNEY Womens Voice** phone Pauline 985 3086 or Chris 806 8535 for information and babysitters.
- **HALIFAX Womens Voice** details from WV and SW sellers every Saturday 12.30-2.30., Cop arcade on the Precinct.
- **HARLOW Womens Voice** meets fortnightly on Wednesday at 8pm. Ring Pat, Harlow 28022.
- **HIGHBURY Womens Voice.** for details ring Elana 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.
- **LUTON Womens Voice** is being set up. If you are interested please contact Jane 421 266.
- **MANCHESTER University Womens Voice** meets each week at 5pm in the students union.
- **SE MANCHESTER Womens Voice** 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 regularly phone 29129 for details.
- **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, Nottingham 625499
- **NORWICH Womens Voice** meets every other Tuesday, 8.30pm, Black Boys pub, Colegate. For further information phone Norwich 29963.
- **PRESTON Womens Voice** meets every other Tuesday at the Windsor Castle, Egan Street (near Meadow Street) at 8pm. For more information phone Mary Preston 55739 and for babysitters.
- **READING Womens Voice** meets fortnightly. For details phone Shirley on 585554
- **SHEFFIELD Womens Voice** meets fortnightly at the Prince of Wales, Division Street. For details ring Sue 613739
- **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
- **SOUTHWARK Womens Voice** meets every other Tuesday evening. Contact Jenny 697 7996 for more information.
- **SOUTH LONDON Womens Voice** meets fortnightly on Tuesdays. Tate Library, Brixton. Oval. All welcome.
- **SOUTH WEST LONDON Womens Voice** meets alternate Tuesdays. 91 Bedford Hill, Balham. All welcome. More information and babysitters contact Marion 947 0560
- **SOUTH WIRRAL-** Would anyone interested in forming a Womens Voice group please contact Janet, 051 339 6070.
- **STOCKPORT Womens Voice.** For details phone 061 431 7564.
- **STOKE ON TRENT Womens Voice** meets at Knotty Action, Mollart Street, Hanley. Fortnightly. Ring 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.
- **WATFORD Womens Voice** is being formed. Anyone interested in coming to meetings please contact Davina or Ros. Watford 28500 ext 659
- **YORK Womens Voice** meets every third Saturday in the month at the Royal Oak, Goodramgate. Full creche facilities. Food on sale - do drop in!

Brixton Womens Voice Little Helpers — play by Counteract Theatre Group at Surrey Hall, Binfield Road, SW4 October 23rd 7.30pm.

Bristol Womens Voice WOMEN ALIVE
A host of feminist entertainment featuring Franki Armstrong + theatre group, singers and friends. Bristol Folk House, 40 Park Street, 8pm to 12 midnight. Saturday 6 October. Bookstall, food, late bar. Tickets 75p from Fullmarks Bookshop and Womens Centre.

● **Education Under Attack.** A conference to develop the joint struggle of all those who will be hit by the cuts in education spending—parents, ancillaries, school students and teachers. 9.30 to 5pm, Saturday 20 October, The University Settlement, Barton Hill, Bristol.

A WOMEN'S
INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL

HECATE



CONTRIBUTIONS EMPLOYING A FEMINIST, MARXIST OR RADICAL METHODOLOGY TO FOCUS ON THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN RELATION TO CAPITALISM AND PATRIARCHY WELCOME... ALSO POEMS AND STORIES ETC.

9TH ISSUE

PARLIAMENTARY ROAD TO WOMEN'S LIBERATION?;
CORROBORATION IN RAPE CASES; CONTAGIOUS DISEASES
LEGISLATION IN TASMANIA; ENGELS ON THE FAMILY;
KYLIE TENNANT'S NOVELS; DRAWINGS, POEMS AND STORIES.

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Open Gaze Bookshop
60 Broughton Street, Edinburgh.
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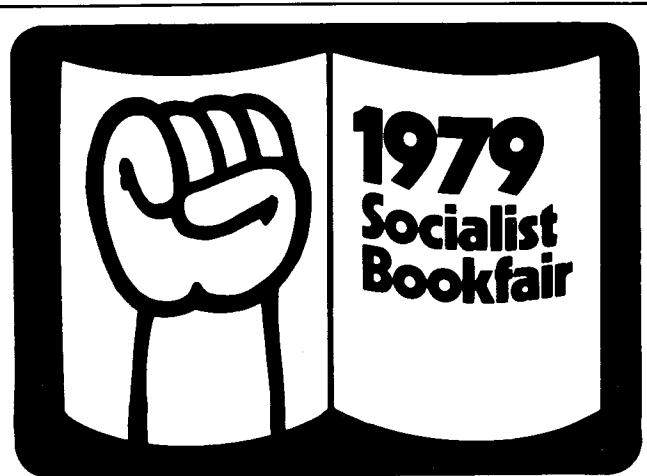
Advertise your bookshop 50p an
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London Day Workshop on
Consciousness Raising
27 October 10 a.m.—11 p.m.,
Methodist Church Hall, 240
Lancaster Rd, London W11
(Ladbroke Grove tube). What
is consciousness raising, how
do we do it, and why do we
want to do it? For all women
who are in a CR group, want to
be in one, or want to discuss
the ideas behind it. Social in
evening. Limited numbers—
register in advance with
Debbie Gregory, 77 Bramley
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children for creche, send
large sae for papers and £1
(75p unwaged). Women only.

Feminist Education Group
Taboos
11 week course, starting
September 25, 8-10pm, Drill
Hall, 16 Chenies Street,
London WC1. Fee £12. Phone
202 6610/3024 or 445 6733.

Womens Media Action
Newsletter costs £1.20 for 10
issues (£1 if unwaged) 15p for
back issues. Cheques payable
to Affirm, Womens Arts
Alliance, 10 Cambridge
Terrace Mews, London NW1.

Southbank Poly Womens
Group: Little Helpers, a play
by Counteract, Monday 15
October, 7pm, at the
Southbank Poly. 80p. 60p for
claimants and students.



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socialist and radical writing from
Britain and abroad at present available
in this country.

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Bar and food available throughout the
day.

Camden Town Hall
Euston Road
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Friday, 2nd November
12.30 pm to 6.30 pm

Saturday, 3rd November
11.00 am to 5.00 pm

Your nearest Womens Voice Group meets

Join Womens Voice...

join
the
fight

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.

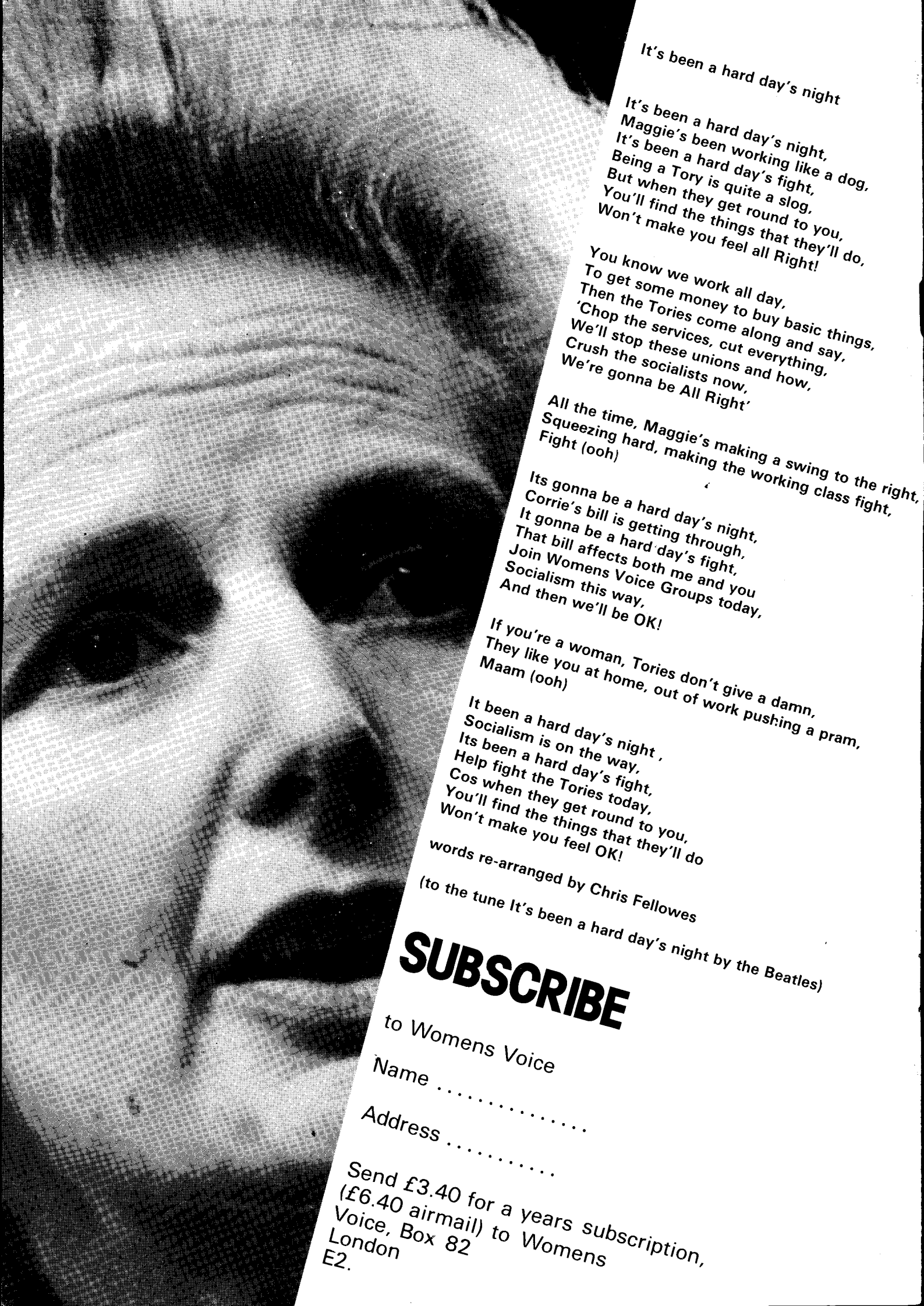
Fight with Womens Voice
for Womens Liberation
and Socialism.

I want to join the fight ...

Name

Address

Send to Womens Voice
PO Box 82, London, E2



It's been a hard day's night

It's been a hard day's night,
Maggie's been working like a dog,
It's been a hard day's fight,
Being a Tory is quite a slog,
But when they get round to you,
You'll find the things that they'll do,
Won't make you feel all Right!

You know we work all day,
To get some money to buy basic things,
Then the Tories come along and say,
'Chop the services, cut everything,
We'll stop these unions and how,
Crush the socialists now,
We're gonna be All Right'

All the time, Maggie's making a swing to the right,
Squeezing hard, making the working class fight,
Fight (ooh)

Its gonna be a hard day's night,
Corrie's bill is getting through,
It gonna be a hard day's fight,
That bill affects both me and you
Join Womens Voice Groups today,
Socialism this way,
And then we'll be OK!

If you're a woman, Tories don't give a damn,
They like you at home, out of work pushing a pram,
Maam (ooh)

It been a hard day's night ,
Socialism is on the way,
Its been a hard day's fight,
Help fight the Tories today,
Cos when they get round to you,
You'll find the things that they'll do
Won't make you feel OK!

words re-arranged by Chris Fellowes
(to the tune It's been a hard day's night by the Beatles)

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