

womens voice

20p JULY/AUG
'80 ISSUE 43

INSIDE:
News
Health
Letters

FEATURE:
The young
unemployed

PLUS:
Short story

**SUMMER
BUMPER
ISSUE**

Filipino women say: Let us stay.

wicked women



All wickedness is but little
to the wickedness of a woman.

the cottesloe theatre
1 July 2.30 7.15

oval house theatre
14 15 16 17 July 7.45

Vauxhall Manor School Drama

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 - Lecture 2 - The origins of oppression - current theories of patriarchy.
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 - Lecture 4 - The changing capitalist family.
 - Lecture 5 - Early theories of women's liberation.
 - Lecture 6 - Women's trade unions.
 - Lecture 7 - Different strands of the women's suffrage movement.
 - Lecture 8 - Women and the crisis - the position of working women today.
 - Lecture 9 - Women's consciousness at work.
 - Lecture 10 - Ten years of women's liberation - a debate
 - Lecture 11 - Women's liberation magazines and socialist organisation - symposium.
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The two sides of sex

EVERY YEAR the queen awards things called birthday honours. They are presented to people who are deemed to have 'served the country' in some way. What is meant by 'serving the country' can be seen clearly from the sorts of people who get these honours. They are nearly all rich and powerful. They are business men and politicians, with a smattering of sports personalities and unknown citizens thrown in for good measure.

Most of the honours are recommendations from the government of the day. Which makes some of this year's recipients rather interesting ... The editor of the Sun, Larry Lamb, receives a knighthood. Mary Whitehouse, well-known bigot and prude, receives a CBE.

Lamb, along with his boss, Rupert Murdoch, has built up the circulation of the Sun so that it is one of the most popular papers in Britain. It is also one of the most right wing. During the last election the Sun was in the forefront of the Tory propaganda machine, running a concerted anti-union campaign for Margaret Thatcher. Small wonder he gets a knighthood!

But the Sun built and maintains its success on the basis of a sustained barrage of trivia and sensationalism. It is sensationalism that centres in particular on the sexual exploitation of women. The Sun's Page Three is one of the main selling points of a paper which contains little else but scantily dressed women and shock-horror stories of sex and violence whose chief aim is to titillate the men who buy it. For women readers there is a heavy dose of old fashioned moralism as well.

Mary Whitehouse, on the other hand,

would claim to hate everything the Sun stands for. She believes that pictures, films and television which show naked bodies or sexual activity, undermine decent christain society.

She thinks they lead to more people having sex and so should be banned.

It seems strange that the same government should decide to honour both of these people who seem to have such differing roles.

But it isn't really so strange. In their different ways, Larry Lamb and Mary Whitehouse sum up what people who control our society think of sex.

On the one hand they see it as something which can be bought and sold, like anything else in capitalist society. They buy it themselves. They buy socially acceptable wives and they buy prostitutes.

But they also like to pretend that all sex should be within the family. That it only takes place inside marriage and in the dark, that outside these confines both sex and children are immoral.

But fewer and fewer people these days accept that. Old taboo subjects like divorce and abortion are much more open and available than they used to be. Sex is not a thing to be hidden away in the dark or stuck up on the wall, safely out of reach.

Sex is something we are learning every day to enjoy more and more. Women are claiming the right to enjoy sex openly and unashamedly. But only when we have replaced the society that breeds exploiters such as Larry Lamb and Mary Whitehouse, with one that is caring and equal, will women and men both be able to treat sex as the natural, loving act it is and not one fraught with guilt and fear as it is for so many today.



Cover photo: Helen Dady

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OUR next editorial meeting will be on Wednesday, 23 July. If you would like to come or a speaker for your WV group, give us a ring on 01 986 6222. The next WV Steering Committee is on Sunday July 13. Please contact us if you would like to attend.

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Nurses—low pay and lousy conditions

IN GLASGOW 300 nurses in uniform, from NUPE, COHSE and RCN, demonstrated on June 15. We were protesting at the pending 100-125% increase in accommodation charges, plus the meagre 14% pay offer. We were joined by 300 other trade unionists, including teachers and firemen.

The increased accommodation charges won't be implemented now until January 1981, which gives us six months to prepare and build a campaign against these deductions at source. We will have to collect information from nurses in the homes about living conditions: washing and drying facilities, bathrooms and toilets, washbasins and power points in rooms, and the general condition of the buildings. Then,

armed with these facts, we will negotiate with the Health Boards. We may even find instead of increases there should be rebates!

This was the fourth time nurses here have demonstrated in the last four months. We in Edinburgh NUPE organised a march and rally on March 29 in support of our 30% pay claim. The nurses were well represented on the TUC Day of Protest on May 14, and at the Miners' Gala also in Edinburgh.

So obviously there is a stir and an anger that we haven't seen since 1974. We are fed up with low pay and lousy conditions and we must take a stand now. If we don't, we'll get more and more demoralised, losing the energy and motivation to protect the health service from

cutbacks.

And this will have its greatest effect on women. If we don't lose our jobs through hospital or ward closures, we may have to give them up anyway to look after sick or infirm relatives at home.

Nurses throughout the country, except the RCN, are being balloted over the next two weeks. If we vote 'no' to the 14% package, we've been asked to say what action we are prepared to take. So obviously the union bureaucracy aren't going to stick their necks out at all. We must turn demoralisation and exhaustion into militant action now!

Anne Alden
NUPE Shop Steward,
Edinburgh



Maggy Jones, a disabled tennis player, has been banned from the paraplegic games in Stoke Mandeville for handing out anti-apartheid leaflets pointing out the racist nature of South African health care. Her supporters picketed the centre last month as the start of a campaign to reinstate her and to exclude South Africa from international sporting events.

Playhut pawn piece

THE LABOUR controlled council in Islington have been threatening to close the Arundel Square playhut for the past four months. The playhut, as well as running a play scheme for five sixteen year olds, houses a mothers' and toddlers' group. The mothers have been campaigning to keep the hut open—holding public meetings, leafletting and lobbying the council.

The Islington Labour Council have used the club as a pawn between the right and left of the party (the right being stronger). One group votes to save the hut and the other side overturns that decision. As yet, the club has not been closed but it is obvious to everyone that the council intends to do so in the near future.

The mothers have organised a work-in as a protest against the council policy of cutting direct services and to show the need for more under five facilities.

Donations to keep the work-in going and messages of support to: Lynn Brady, 9 Barford Street, London N1.

Arundel Square Mothers and Toddlers Group

Nursery occupation

KITCHENER HOUSE day nursery in Hornsey is threatened with closure unless Labour-controlled Haringey Council come up with the 50% funding (£24,000) needed to keep it open. The Action Group of staff and parents have already occupied the

nursery for one week, forcing councillors into recognising the consequences of any closure.

The people most affected if Kitchener House closes will be working women, single parent families and the low-paid.

We are organising two protest pickets of the Council on Thursday 10th and Monday 14th July, 6.30pm at the Civic Centre, Wood Green. We need the support of all local readers! Maggie Solan

NEWS

Protest stops parade

WOMEN DELEGATES to the recent conference of the health workers union, COHSE, were horrified to discover that a Miss COHSE beauty contest was planned. Opposition from rank and file delegates culminated in a picket.

A *Hospital Worker* conference bulletin explained the thinking behind many protesters when it said: 'We are not an anti-men lobby—we are serious trade unionists committed to the principles of the labour movement. We know that we are not alone in our disgust at this contest which only reinforces the image of women as objects to be ogled at rather than to be taken seriously and on an equal footing.'

The protest paid off. The organisers got the message and in the end awarded the Miss COHSE award to a five year old girl.

Save the Belgrave

South London Women's Voice has been on the streets telling people about the secret planned closure of a small local children's hospital called the Belgrave. The Belgrave has served the local community well for generations. People queued up to sign the petition and took out leaflets, telling them of the first 'Save the Belgrave' meeting organised by the Kings Health Campaign.

The following Thursday the meeting was packed to overflowing. A local GP chaired the meeting, another trainee GP explained how important the Belgrave was for primary and preventive health care.

A local mother spoke next. She said she stressed how important the hospital was to local parents. It had a tradition of caring so it has a relaxed friendly atmosphere and is trusted by those who use it. This is very important for children for admission to hospital can be an extremely damaging experience.

The meeting decided to picket the next Area Health Authority meeting. The hospital worker said she'd try to call a meeting in the hospital, to fight the closure. We are going to continue street meetings and send a delegation to the Variety Club to ask them to direct their money to the Belgrave. It's beginning! The Womens Voice group had been vitalised by the campaign and we'll put up a good fight so . . . STOP THE CREEPING CLOSURE OF THE BELGRAVE!

The union now exists inside the factory, but prospects for the majority of strikers are the blacklist and the dole queue. Chix shows how hard and determined Asian women can be when fighting for their rights. It also shows that however left wing an official may seem, in any strike they will always try to negotiate a settlement which is less than total. They are always prepared to give up *something*. Every strike has to remain in the control of the strikers themselves—the only people they can rely on.

KLEINS STICK IT OUT

THE WOMEN at Kleins clothing factory in Salford went back to work after 13 weeks on strike for recognition of the garment workers' union NUTGW.

They went back to wait for the decision of ACAS on whether the strike should be recognised—and they are still waiting.

On the first day back, Klein tried to alter their hours on Fridays from an 8.30 start to 7 am. This didn't suit all the women so he backed down and agreed to a flexitime system and some still start at 8.30 on Fridays.

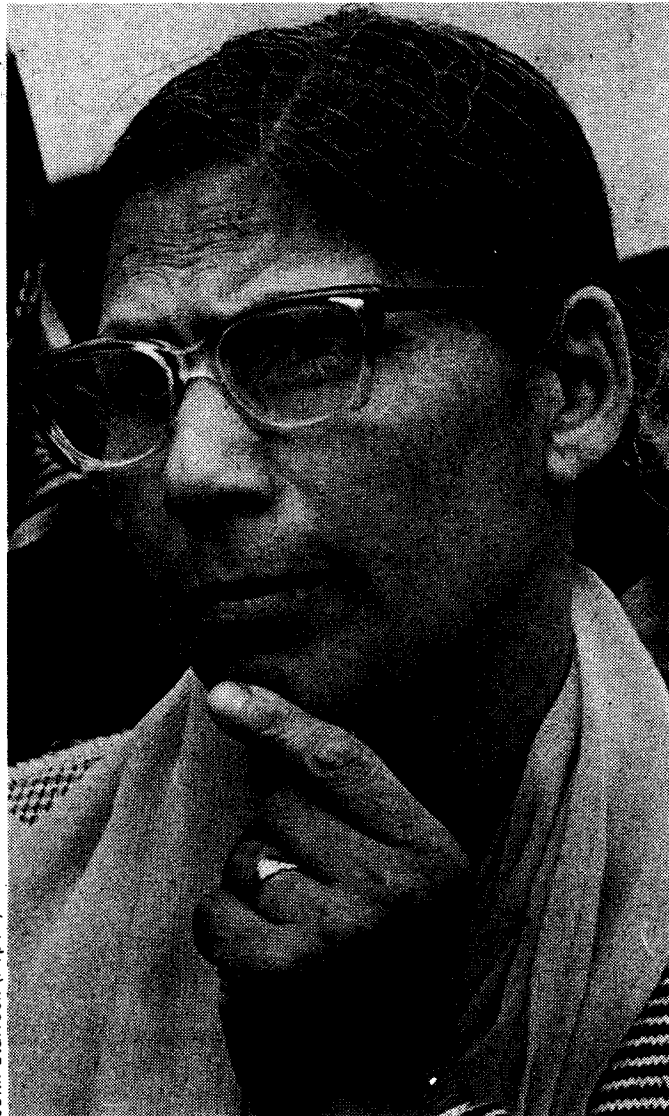
He was trying to bait those on strike. The situation is tense anyway. The strikers will not forget who the scabs were. Scabs and management would prefer strikers to go and work elsewhere and they make this quite clear.

But the strikers are still strong even though they are back at work. At the moment they are winning and are determined to stick together until the union is fully recognised. Salford WV

NURSERY WORKERS CAMPAIGN

300 NURSERY nurses marched through Birmingham on May 31. They have recently organised themselves in the union (NALGO and NUPE). They wrote a leaflet to hand to people in the street explaining their case. They want better pay and conditions.

As one woman on the march said: 'This is only the beginning of our campaign.' Birmingham WV



John Sturrock (Report)

Nothing gained for most at Chix

THE MAJORITY of Chix strikers are without jobs after eight months on the picket line. The final story of the strike is a sorry but all too familiar one.

Chix management came under fantastic pressure during the strike. Blacking of supplies was taking effect and effective picketing was also hampering their business. They agreed to negotiate with the strikers' union, the GMWU. The eventual settlement which GMWU local official Jeremy McMullen accepted was that the union would be recognised, the women would receive a substantial pay rise, but that the evening shift would be discontinued and so those strikers who had worked evenings would gain *nothing* from the settlement.

The majority of strikers were

evening workers. They not surprisingly saw the deal as a total sell out. Chix are refusing to reinstate them but are still employing all the scabs who have started work since the strike began.

McMullen agreed this deal without consultation with the women. The first many of them heard of it was on the radio. When he heard their response he was taken aback and agreed not to call off the strike. But the reprieve only lasted a week.

A bit more redundancy pay for the sacked workers was agreed and that was all. That settlement was balloted and McMullen declared 21-19 in favour of the settlement. Mrs Brar, one of the strikers, protested and demanded to see the ballot papers but in the uproar they were torn.

NALGO women speak out

AT THIS year's NALGO conference in Eastbourne, the subjects discussed that were particularly important to women were about as scarce as the number of women delegates. But there were at least two debates that were very relevant to women members.

On the first day, the Local Government Group meeting passed a motion that encouraged action to improve pay and conditions for typists and secretaries. This was the result of a year's hard work by typists' groups in eight London boroughs, as well as Greater Manchester Council (who proposed the motion), Manchester Guild, North Tyneside and Liverpool branches, all of whom are at present pressing local claims through their own campaigns. It is going to take even more hard work and pressure from typists and their supporters to make this more than just a paper resolution.

A stormy debate on abortion was caused by a proposal from 14 NALGO branches that Nalگو adopts a neutral attitude towards the abortion issue and withdraws its support from the National Abortion Campaign. Delegates queued up to speak against the motion and there was strong feeling from the floor also against the motion which was opposed by the platform. The vote against it was overwhelming and reflected the majority feeling that NALGO should continue to support a Woman's Right to Choose.

A Womens Voice meeting with Joan Smith as the main speaker attracted over 70 people and led to a lively and interesting discussion.

Over 80 people came to the Nalگو Action Group meeting on fighting sexism at work. The meeting discussed how to develop the self-confidence to take on and defeat sexism in all its forms.

Pauline Alden

Anyone in the following opposing Nalگو branches who supports abortion rights should get in touch with Nalگو Action Group to continue campaigning against their restrictive attitude:

Knowsley, North Western Gas Board HQ, Wigan, Wirral Area Health, Wirral, Milton Keynes, Oxford Health, Aylesbury Vale, Middlesborough, Cheltenham, Dorset, Nottingham, Leicester, East Midlands Electricity HQ, Nalگو Action Group, 48 Forburg Road, London N.16. Tel: 01-249-4603.



Tessa Howland (IFL)

Camden - more about values than money

DAYCARE workers in Camden Council returned to work in June after four weeks on strike. They had been fighting to force the council to upgrade their jobs. Although they did not gain all their demands, the strikers have shown that a traditionally non-militant section of low paid mainly women workers can organise a strike in a way that puts many traditional trade unionists to shame.

The strikers talked to **Womens Voice** about their experiences.

Jo Woolf from Kentish Town Day Nursery said: 'We deserved regrading because our job had changed dramatically. Not only do we look after kids, we have to care for the parents. Camden Council treat women the same way as most right-wing councils would. They assume that men are the breadwinners and that we only work for pocket money.'

Carol Leathwood of the Adelaide Centre for disturbed adolescents said: 'The kind of work we do is specialised as well as being a strain. Most of us are trained teachers and would be paid much more in any other kind of work. We felt that we should be regraded in

the same way that field social workers were last year. We did devise our own regrading system but Camden Council ignored it.'

Many of the women were enthusiastic about the strike, but critical of the way that union officials had behaved. 'The support we got for the strike was largely due to our own organisation' Carol insisted. 'The union officials were negative. They tried to discourage us from going on strike.' **Penny McEnna** from the James Town Adult Day Centre felt the same way. 'I found that the union officials were just as bureaucratic as the management. But the good thing about the strike was that because it wasn't official, the strikers controlled their own strike.'

Angela Joyce from Fortune Green Play Centre said: 'all the workers at my centre were solidly behind the strike, and worked on the picket lines. It wasn't official and the workers controlled it.'

The need to control the strike at rank and file level has brought its bonuses as **Eileen Lanagan** explained: 'We have made contacts with each other through the strike. That is

tremendous. We now know that we can organise ourselves when we need to. NALGO is a bureaucratic union. Officials discouraged us from going on strike — trying to jump on the bandwagon once we had taken some action.'

All the women we spoke to felt that the strike had been successful despite certain of their demands not being met. They *have* won negotiations with the council and regrading from some of the workers. But the biggest gain of all is that they no longer feel isolated and unimportant. They plan to continue to meet together and maintain their organisation through a newly formed women's group. This has been formed to ensure that the mistakes made in the past are not repeated. They plan to organise so that next time they take Camden Council on they can ensure that all their demands are met.

As one of the strikers put it 'The strike was more about values than about money. And we had a good fighting spirit among the strikers.' The women's group has been formed to make sure we keep up the fighting spirit. **Maggie Dunne**

Chipping away

THERE WAS only one woman amongst the three hundred delegates at the conference of

the Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians, which met in Bournemouth at the beginning of June. There are few women employed in the construction industry.

GINNY Dunscombe, a carpenter and a UCATT branch secretary in London, is well aware of the problems facing women who want to work in manual trades.

'Women are consistently denied access to training and we are heavily discriminated against when it comes to getting a job. But Ginny likes her work as a chippie. 'It's a wonderful combination of mental and physical effort, a really creative job. I wouldn't want to be doing anything else' she added. 'But the cuts in public spending, and the reduction in training opportunities will make it more difficult for women in the future.'

We all know that women can do skilled work. But we need the opportunity for training, the opportunity to redress the



Mark Rusher (IFL)

**NALGO action group
WHAT
ARE YOU
STARTING
AT?**

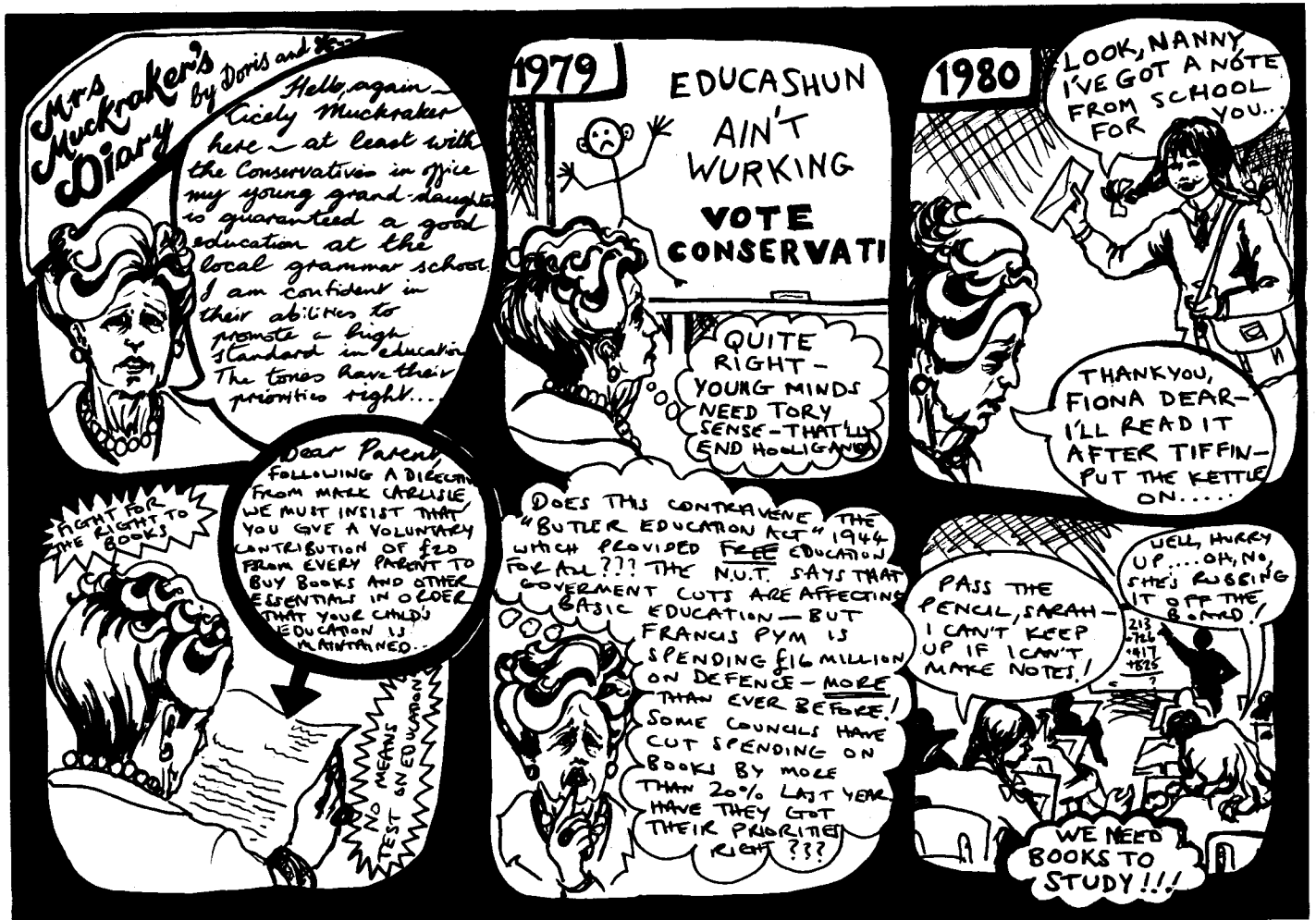
IT SEEMS sexism is always one of the most difficult political areas to tackle. But the Nalگو Action Group has begun a campaign against sexism and sexual harassment at work. They have produced a pamphlet which draws together people's experiences of trying to combat sexism in the workplace and points to concrete ways of organising to fight back.

Ruth Clapham

For pamphlets stickers and speakers contact Ruth Clapham 01 980 7755. Pamphlet 10p, stickers 20p a sheet.

emphasis on 'women's' skills which burdens the lives of most girls. Ginny successfully highlighted these problems during the UCATT conference, when she moved a resolution calling for the establishment of a working party to consider ways of improving training opportunities and employment for women and girls in con-

struction, and also to look at the position of women within the union. The resolution was unanimously endorsed and we look forward to the establishing of this working party—not the answer to all of our problems, but just one of the ways in which we can raise some of the important questions.
Marjorie Murphy



Answering back

Thatcher's not our sister

A LOT of women have been very upset recently at some of the anti-Thatcher slogans currently going around, such as 'Ditch the Bitch', 'Thatcher - first woman prime minister - and the last'.

They say that these slogans are used to attack her as a woman, not as an extremely right wing politician. They argue that she should be attacked for her policies and that to attack her as a woman is to degrade all women and to divide the trade union movement.

Womens Voice agrees.

However, it is not always an easy matter to argue. Whilst none of us would dream of calling a black man or woman 'nigger', to call someone a bitch or a cow is such an accepted part of the language that few people would think twice about it.

The use of words and phrases that denigrate women as insults is so much a part of our language, has grown into the language that it is difficult to find an insult that does not have a sexual basis, usually one that puts down women.

So much so in fact that many men, socialists included, when challenged will say but I don't mean all women when I say that, I don't even think about it, it's just a word.

It has to be argued sensitively and carefully, in the right place and at the right time. It is not an argument that we should get bogged down in or we will end up squabbling amongst ourselves whilst Thatcher is getting on with the job of making the lives of working class women and men more unbearable.

The important thing is to mobilise as many women as possible against what she is doing. And what she is doing is trying to turn our welfare state into a giant white elephant that those of us who need it cannot get near while those who don't, have the money to go elsewhere. She is trying to return us to the social conditions of the industrial revolution, where poverty, oppression, and disease are the lot of the workers while the wealthy few get fat off the backs of those whose lives they control.

That is what she is doing and that is what she should be attacked for. Thatcher may be a woman but she is most certainly not a sister and to call her a cow or a bitch is to attack, by implication, our sisters too.

The insults divide us and that we can do without so we must make sure that the arguments are taken up in such a way that they do not divide us further.

Who gets the gravy?

'GRAVY IS made in one room and is sent through pipes to fill pies in other parts of the factory! You always have to watch it in case the hot gravy spills over.'

One of the strikers at the Liebig meat factory in Stratford, East London, explaining what conditions are like. Over 100 workers are on strike for a 25 per cent wage increase. The company, part of the giant Brooke Bond Oxo, have offered them just over 14 per cent, plus 7 per cent they should have got in January.

Many of the women take home £42 for 40 hours. They say the factory has gone from being one of the best paid in the area to one of the worst. The company also wants to bring in agency labour, which the workers think will undermine their union, USDAW.

The factory makes Fray

Bentos pies, puddings and pie fillings. One woman told us 'They give you a free pie every Christmas. Last year I forgot to buy cat food so I gave the pie to my cat but even he wouldn't eat it.'

They are trying to get the strike made official which they are quite hopeful of doing, since one of the foremen attacked the union official on the picket line and split his lip. They emphasise that they aren't just fighting for wages but for a proper union agreement. Three quarters of the workers are in the union but they want all new recruits to have to join.

Brooke Bond are already known for the low wages they pay to workers on their tea plantations in Asia. These strikers are highlighting the lousy conditions their factory workers have to suffer too.

Lindsey German

SUPPORT NASIRA

NASIRA BEGUM is threatened with deportation. Why? Because she is a deserted wife and because she is from Pakistan. Nasira came to Britain in March 1976. She married in December. Three months later her husband left her.

In September 1979 the Home Office wrote to tell her that she could no longer stay in Britain. Nasira did not ever have the right of appeal because her application was made 3 days after her original visa had expired. Yet she had to wait three years for the Home Office to answer—and refuse—her original application. The Home Office say that they are 'not satisfied' that Nasira's marriage was valid in English Law. Yet they have not explained what is meant by this.

Nasira has lived here for the past four years, and has made her home here. She has nothing to return to in Pakistan. She has no family that could support her and as a deserted woman Muslim she would be an outcast. Because the Home Office have had to serve a deportation order on her, Nasira finally has the right of appeal. Nasira has only been able to remain in Britain because of an organised campaign in support of her. This must now be stepped up.

Demonstrate in support of Nasira Begum. Saturday July 19. Assemble 2pm Whitworth Park Manchester (by the university along Oxford Road).

All night vigil of the Immigration offices in Manchester on July 22. Nasira's appeal will be heard on Wednesday 23 at Aldine House, New Bailey St, Salford.

Send messages of support to: Friends of Nasira Begum, c/o 595 Stockport Road, Longsight, Manchester.

Irene Johnston



Armagh women fight on

ELEVEN WOMEN were arrested in March 1979 on International Women's Day outside Armagh Jail. The women, members of Belfast Women Against Imperialism, had been taking part in a peaceful demonstration outside the jail in support of their sisters inside.

In April this year, they were eventually fined a total of £290. The women were undecided whether to pay up or risk a spell in Armagh themselves. Several of them have since been arrested for not paying their fines, but only two are inside, Liz Lagrua and the playwright, Margaretta D'Arcy. Liz is serving two months for a £10 fine and Margaretta four months for a £40 fine. Both have joined the protest in Armagh jail. For a similar offence in this country you would serve between seven and fourteen days inside for refusing to pay a £10 fine.

Republican women prisoners in Armagh have been on the 'dirt protest' since February. Their protest is for political status, for recognition by the British Government that they have been jailed for their opposition to British rule in Ireland, not for 'criminal activities'.

They are locked up for 23 hours a day. In the remaining hour their cells are often turned over by the screws, and their chamber pots emptied over their beds. The women are very rarely allowed to use the toilets outside of this hour; to prevent its piling up, the prisoners have to smear their excreta as high up the cell walls as they can.

Sanitary towels are rationed to two a day however heavy a period may be. There is no means of throwing them away.

The women didn't bring the 'dirt protest' on themselves.

After they were attacked by 40 male screws on February 7, they were forbidden to use the toilet and windows and spy holes were boarded up. Even when they are allowed to use the toilets they are heavily guarded and frequently beaten. Sanitation is a right, not a privilege, so the women have adopted the 'dirt protest'.

In a letter smuggled out of the jail, a woman wrote: 'The dirt and grime is caked on our bodies. Many girls are finding that their hair is falling out and

the majority of us have infections which obviously through time will only worsen. Our skin has completely dried up and is flaking all over our bodies. Planning Conference for action, July 5. Methodist Church Hall, Lancaster Road, London W.11. (Women only). Saturday July 12, march in support of political status, and especially for Margaretta D'Arcy, 12.00, Crouch End march to Duckett's Common—women and men welcome. Sophie Cox

SOAP OPERA



THIS STORY is about the Time of the Enormous Economic Crisis when England was ruled by a bird called Mangey the Snatcher.

Mangey led a large flock of birds called Right Wingers. They were called this name because they were born without a left wing and they thought they had an inherent right to rule the country—the right way forward. Everyone lived in dire dread of their rule.

In the beginning of this Enormous Crisis (called EEC for short) there was a little village in Greater Womanchester called Dullford. It was so named because all the people who lived there had very dull hard lives working in the factories, and it was also named after a very famous dull American

bird.

In those days the birds were getting themselves and everyone else very dizzy and confused over their circular monetary policies. They thought that by cutting the number of workers more things would be produced. Then they realised that fewer people would be able to buy the products—so they put the prices up.

But the workers in Dullford cared because if they didn't work they couldn't earn money to live on. They knew this by looking at the unemployed sisters and brothers who were very poor living on the social (a now extinct term meaning no social security whatsoever.)

There was one particular factory in Dullford called Aunties, which was a soap

factory. A new boss-bird arrived at the factory and decided that some of the workers had to go if he was to stay in Mangey's circle. He decided that he would get rid of 300 out of the 700 workers now, and maybe another 100 later on.

The workers thought this was awful and about 20 of them went on strike to join the national Day of Action by the TUC (Tories Under Cover). But the TUC didn't know what to do about the Enormous Economic Crisis, and wouldn't give the workers any lead in fighting the Right Wingers. They hadn't even wanted there to be any Day of Action, but they felt they had to pretend they stood for better pay and conditions for the workers. The last thing they wanted was strikes, so the workers at Aunties felt lonely.

They were scared and demoralised. They didn't want to fight the Right-Wingers and they didn't know how to stop redundancies. In fact some of them thought that if half the workforce went, there would be more money for the rest of them.

They were very short-sighted which is why most of them wore glasses and why some of them took voluntary redundancy pay.

This made the deputy convenor very sad. 'Well,' she thought, 'Mangey is just doing what she said she'd do if she got into power. But I'm going to stay here and stick it out. Anyway, I've got no choice—there are no jobs anywhere else in Dullford and I need the money.'

Then she felt better because she knew most people were like her. They all wanted better pay and conditions, it was just that they didn't know how to go about getting them. The deputy convenor knew the workers had to organise together to fight the Right Wingers. She knew that the time would come when things got so bad that the workers would fight tooth and claw, or else die in poverty.

And of course one thing led to another and the workers decided that it was about time that they created things for need and not for profit, and so they took control of their creations. Things got a whole lot better.

Penny Simmons



Womens Voice gets going in Gosforth

NEWCASTLE WV has joined forces with a group of local women in the South Gosforth area to campaign for community based childcare including a nursery unit with flexi hours and after school care.

South Gosforth is the seedier end of a fairly affluent area and no nursery is being planned by the council for at least five years. People are desperate for some sort of provision now. While full state provision is the final aim, we also want an interim arrangement financed by the council for at least five years. People are desperate for some sort of provision now. While full state provision is the final aim, we also want an interim arrangement financed by the council, local firms and other sources.

There are obvious dangers in this approach. It could be a form of provision on the cheap and let the Tories and the council off the hook.

We held our first meeting recently. About 20 people came. The only voice of dissent came from someone who argued that the council had a good record of nursery provision and that there's no money anyway. The speaker was not a flower hatted Tory lady but a 'left wing' representative of the local Labour party.

They say there's no money

for childcare but there always seems plenty for cruise missiles which can kill our children.

We are hoping through the campaign to raise the argument against public spending cuts and against the idea that childcare is the sole responsibility of individual mothers.

We are working towards a big public meeting and are approaching the Trades Council and local workplaces. We would like to hear from other people who have campaigned round this issue.

Newcastle WV

Tottenham May 14th boost

Our demonstration was about 2,000 strong and I think nearly half were women, with a large contingent of teachers. We had our banner on the march, and handed out a leaflet which said 'Thatcher's no sister—but the Chix strikers are' and asking people to support the strike in any way they could. Afterwards, we went round Pymmes park, where people were assembling after the demonstration, selling WV and handing out our leaflet and talking to people. I think the day gave a boost to our WV group—we sold 20

WV and handed out over 1000 leaflets.

Save St Benedicts

St. Benedicts Hospital occupation will need as much support as we can give now. On June 4th the AHA made the final decision to close the hospital after a stormy meeting. So now there is an urgent need to establish a strong picket and our group is helping all it can. Staff are under more pressure than ever, since they are short staffed anyway. We are writing another hospital bulletin to encourage support from other local hospitals, and we are taking the workers around other workplaces.

Recently we have organised a local women's debate which was attended by over 60 women. A number of individuals volunteered to organise a Day Conference (including some women from our Womens Voice group) to continue the discussion on women and socialism. And on June 15th about 45 women attended the 'Wandsworth Women's conference'. Although the discussion was quite unstructured, the day went well and it was decided that rather than set up a separate womens organisation in the area, we would form a womens sub-committee of the local Trades Council.

We have had two talks over the

last month by Maggie Renn, one on writing for the magazine and one of Oliver Schreiner a pioneer feminist.

Wandsworth WV

Defend a woman's right to work

THIS YEAR there is a Right To Work march from Port Talbot to the Tory Party conference in September. You can join the march anywhere on the route. Phone Womens Voice for details. But also its important to get SUPPORT for the march. What you can do:

—take a collection sheet (which you can get from the Right to work campaign, 265a Seven Sisters Road, London N4) round where you work, or where you live.

—if you're in a union, try to get a motion through your branch calling for sponsorship of the march and a donation.

—as your local Labour MP and Ward Labour Party to sponsor the march.

Defend Our Unions is organising a demonstration against the Tories for the last day of the Tory Party conference, October 10. Start raising support for it now. Contact us or your local WV group for details.

Personalised insults

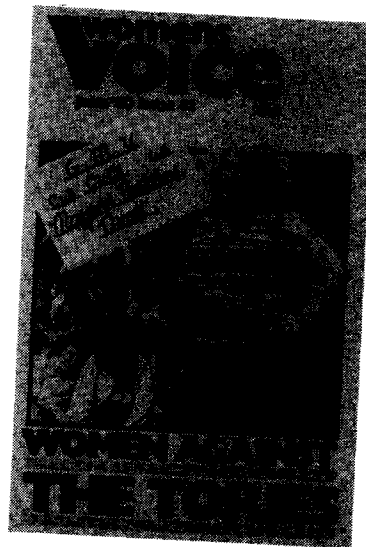
Dear Womens Voice,

We are writing to let you know that we have decided not to stock the June issue of Womens Voice.

In support of 'Fightback for Womens Rights' (a new campaign within the Labour Party) we deplore the 'personalised sexist insults' emerging from anti-cuts demonstrations and left anti-Thatcher propaganda. Which does not mean that we support Thatcher's government or policies.

However the tone and approach of the examples quoted in Spare Rib plus the cover of the current issue of Womens Voice (Cuts, cuts, cuts, Maggie Thatchers throat) are expressions of viciousness aimed at the *individual woman* and in no way contribute to an understanding or communication, of what we really abhor (*the government* she represents); nor help to bring about the possibility of genuine change, because it trivialises the real political debate.

Sisterwrite (womens bookshop)



WV replies

We were saddened to learn that you did not take the June issue of Womens Voice.

We too deplore the use of slogans and propaganda that attacks Thatcher because she is a woman (see Answering Back in this issue) but we can in no way accept that the cover of the June issue is an example of this.

The slogan 'Cuts, cuts, cuts, Maggie Thatchers throat' is indeed aimed at her as an individual but it can by no stretch of the imagination be deemed an attack on her as a woman. It would be equally as effective and asexual if applied to Keith Joseph or Jim Prior. Would you in all honesty be so concerned if it were?

We feel that in the fight against the Tories it is quite legitimate to attack individual members of that government for what they are doing, and Thatcher, simply because she is a woman, cannot be exempt from that attack, more particularly as she is the *leader* of the Tories.

We do not go along with sexist attacks but we do feel that your objections to the June issue are themselves trivial and divisive. We must take up the arguments against sexism in a constructive way, not in a manner that is destructive and serves only to divide us further.

We hope you will continue to stock our magazine as we are after all, sisters in the same struggle.

NEWS

Rainy Day Rip Off

IF YOU live or work in a big city, or if you read *Spare Rib*, you will probably have heard of a thing called a 'women's saving plan'. Two of the most publicised ones are called WISP (Women's Investment Savings Plan) and KEYPLAN. You might recognise them as they are the only things that assurance companies print on pink paper! But what is a savings plan, and why should there be a special one for women?

It works like this: some Life Assurance Companies have found and taken advantage of a loophole in the tax system (Sounds familiar!). The government gives tax relief on life assurance policies, if they last for ten years or more. If, instead of putting your spare cash in a bank or building society, you pay it regularly to a life assurance company, they will put a small part of it towards life assurance and invest the rest. So you'll get interest on most of it (about 15% at the moment), and because of the tax loophole you'll get tax relief on the whole lot (about 17½%). At the end of the plan (usually about 25 years) you get a large amount of money back. For this privilege, the company will usually pocket anything up to one whole year's savings, as well as taking a percentage of the rest.

The biggest disadvantage is that you have to keep paying for at least ten years, and for longer than that if you want to make any money out of it. If you stop paying in the first year, you lose all your money. If you stop paying in the first ten years, you lose the first year's savings, and the Inland Revenue will ask you to pay back all the tax relief you've had.

Anybody can have a savings plan like this but most of the people who do are men. The assurance companies say that this is because most men have families, and are saving to protect their wives and children. Women, they claim, don't have these responsibilities.

Financial institutions, as they are always telling us, are very generous. One or two of them realised that women were not taking advantage of their generosity, and so, with one eye on their profits, they decided to 'open the market' to women. So they developed plans with special 'attractions' for women - since in this day and age, as everyone knows, lots of women choose to work (does *anyone* choose to work?) and of course they all have money left over that they don't know how to spend!

WISP and KEYPLAN were both set up by the same group of three men, and you can just imagine them sitting round in the boardroom one day thinking 'what are women after? How can we get them interested in us?' The answers they come up with are fairly predictable...what women want is marriage, kids and a feeling of financial independence.

So, if you have a women's savings plan, you can have the added advantage of not having to pay your instalments if you're pregnant or if you just got divorced; you pay them back later, with interest. You can also transfer the life assurance to your husband's life without telling him (he dies - you get the money).

Naturally if women are to be given these special benefits they must expect to pay for them. How is this done? Well, the assurance company takes a bigger slice of your savings for itself (KEYPLAN takes the first two years' savings) as well as taking a percentage of the rest. What this means is that you stand to lose much more, because if you stop paying in the first *two* years, you'll lose all your money. And because they don't start investing until the third year, you have to save for much longer in order to make any money at all.

There are a few other benefits that come with the scheme, like not having to pay if you become permanently disabled, but none of these other options are unique to women's plans and yet you have to pay extra for them.

A growing number of women are being persuaded to take out plans like this by very persuasive representatives (desperate for commission), only to find that they can't afford to keep paying or else that they'd have paid less for a standard plan without the special options that they're not going to take advantage of anyway. To get the full benefit of what you're paying for, you should be single when you start, get married later, have three children, get divorced and preferably maimed for life, AND keep working the whole time (or have a rich husband) in order to keep up the payments! It seems obvious that very few women can have any certainty of being able to fulfil these conditions.

Most of us find it hard enough to save up for the things we need, let alone saving 'for a rainy day'. In this case there's absolutely no advantage in having a long term savings plan. As usual it's people who are rich already who can afford to make more money out of their wealth.

Shereen Campbell

WHAT WOMEN NEED BUT COULDN'T GET TILL NOW

Whether you are single or engaged, married or divorced, legally separated, deserted or about to re-marry... whatever your situation WISP will help.

What is WISP?

Women's Individual Savings Plan, designed by women, solely for women, with only the interests of women in mind.

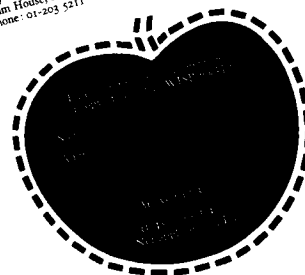
A comprehensive insurance-savings plan, designed by women, solely for women, with only the interests of women in mind.

Something which has never existed until now.

Before you change another typewriter ribbon, nappy or your mind, send or phone for the free WISP booklet now. It answers all the questions you didn't know who or how to ask.

For further information contact:

Dorothy Green, Langham Life Assurance Co Ltd,
Langham House, Holmbrook Drive, Hendon NW4 2NX
Telephone: 01-203 5211



Women's Individual Savings Plan-it grows

Germany's red years

At the heart of the struggle

Hamburg has everything—the smoke of the factory chimneys, the elephant trunks of the cranes with which the iron mammoths ravage the holds and full up stone depositories, the light gently sloping bridges criss crossing the new born ships, wet beds, the howl of sirens, the coarse yell of the hooters, the ebb and flow of the ocean that makes sport with the jetsam and the seagulls that settle on the water like floats, and the neat cubical dark red brick masses of the warehouses, offices, plants, markets and custom houses all built in straight lines and looking like oblong piles of cargo recently stacked by the dockers.

Armies and legions of workers are employed in these shipyards, on loading and unloading the ships, in the innumerable engineering, oil refining and chemical plants, the several large scale manufacturing works and the vast industrial installations that cover Hamburg's rear, that marshy, sandy hinterland, with an unbroken crust of concrete and steel.

from HAMBURG
Larissa Reissner 1923

LARISSA REISSNER, a socialist journalist, was describing an exciting city. In 1919 German workers had staged an uprising in cities all over Germany. In 1923 Hamburg itself was the scene where barricades were erected in the streets and pitched battles were fought between workers and police.

It was into that city that Gertrude Rast was born. She wanted to be a school teacher, but her parents couldn't afford to pay for her education. So she became a bookkeeper when she left school. And in 1912 she and her girlfriend joined the youth organisation of the SPD (the German Social Democratic Party).

It was the beginning of a long involvement in socialist politics:

"I was first sent to prison in 1917. We had been active in the anti war movement in

Hamburg. When the soldiers came home on leave we organised to persuade them not to go back. We distributed illegal leaflets and organised demonstrations against the war. We appealed for people to give up their ration cards so that we could use the food for the soldiers who we were hiding.

These activities were organised centrally, but every part of the town had its own active group. Several hundred people turned out to our demonstrations. But many people were frightened of arrest, and it was mainly young people who turned out to fight and demonstrate.

At the time I was working at Blum and Voss a ship building company. I was active in the union for clerical workers. We used to organise meetings in front of the trade union building. Sometimes several hundred people would meet illegally after work.

I spent from August until October in prison. After that I came out of prison and I started to go on demonstrations again. We had great food shortages in Hamburg, and we all suffered from hunger. Even unorganised people joined in the demonstrations because of poverty and hunger. Shops were looted. And there were police everywhere trying to get people under control.

There was a great need for workers, because all the men were away in the army. Women like me were sent to work in munitions factories in the outskirts of Hamburg. I was sent to work in a factory where we made soliders boots. Workers were forced to pay war credits. Most of the women paid by giving clocks, watches, and rings. I refused to pay and was sacked.

In 1918 two sailors were shot for opposing the war. After that a soliders and workers organisation was formed, 'Arbeit and Soldatenrate' I was very active in that organisation.

I was one of the first members of the KPD (the German Communist Party) when it was formed. When the revolution was on I was leafletting and organizing, trying to make people aware of the situation. Troops were sent out against the Arbeiter and Soldatenrate. 10,000 people were killed.

After that I went to work for a communist newspaper Rohte Fahne (Red Flag), where I worked for a short time, both as a secretary and as a journalist. I then went to work on another paper—Arbeit Zeitung.

Early in the 1920's I was sent to Moscow as a political representative of our Communist Youth Organization. I worked in Moscow for the Communist Youth International. We were writing articles and leaflets and letters to be sent to all parts of the world to get support for the International Womens Day celebrations.

Clara Zetkin worked in the same building. She was the woman who had led the German womens movement and was a founder member of the German Communist Party. She was very ill because of all she had been through. But she was still an extremely determined and strong character. I remember that we were talking about our work, and I said how much there was to be done and how limited we were by our work, and by our strength. She reacted fiercely to this saying how much was possible. We ended up doing more work than we ever thought possible pushed by her energy and determination.

I returned from Moscow to work at the international trade union organization for soliders, sailors and workers, which had been started by Zinoviev.

GERTRUDE LIVED through an exciting period. Germany had the strongest socialist party (SPD) in Europe before the First World War, at the time when she joined. It was supposed to be based on the politics of Karl Marx, but when the war came it abandoned its internationalism and, like most of the parties of the Second International, supported its own ruling class in slaughtering workers from other countries.

Europe was in turmoil at the end of the war. The Bolshevik revolution had already taken place in Russia. The old empires collapsed and were replaced by new republics. Workers revolution looked likely in several European countries and nowhere more so than in Germany itself. The Kaiser abdicated in November 1918. In the days following workers rose up all over Germany, establishing the workers, soldiers and sailors councils that Gertrude talks about.

The best people in the SPD horrified by the nationalism of its leaders and even more by the way in which they now tried to suppress the workers revolution by brute force, formed the new German Communist Party (KPD).

Almost immediately two of its leaders, Rosa Luxembourg and Karl Liebknecht were murdered by rightwingers. Uprising and fighting continued into 1919 and the early 1920s. The SPD leaders sided with the ruling class and enthusiastically tried to defeat the German revolution. They eventually succeeded. Their policy of disarming the workers did not solve the problems of German capitalism, which eventually turned to the Nazi party for its salvation.



Gertrude Rast



Clara Zetkin and Rosa Luxemburg

When Hitler started organizing, we moved our headquarters to Copenhagen. We were raided several times by the Nazis who tried to keep me in Copenhagen. I left to go to Paris where it would be safer. That was where I was caught. I was imprisoned on the first day of the war. I spent the whole war in prison, first in France and then in several prisons and concentration camps in Germany.

But through it all I remained a communist. I have never changed my opinions or my ideas. And I still organise for what I believe. This year I spoke at an International Women's Day meeting in Hamburg to which women and men active in the resistance during the First and Second World Wars were invited.

I made a speech. I spoke about the Communist Youth International and about Clara Zetkin and how we had fought for communism. Zetkin was a fighter. And that is important. For it is no good to be a communist who makes speeches and then does nothing. To get peace and communism you have to be active and fight for it."

Gertrude is 83 now. She has been active in politics for 68 years. It is a remarkable and inspiring achievement. Yet she sees herself not as an individual who survived, but simply as part of a movement. When *Women's Voice* went to talk to her, she emphasized that it was organization and activism that mattered.

Her own contribution was something she thought hardly worth talking about. "Please don't write about me" she insisted "Write about Clara Zetkin. She was a great woman and a great leader."

But we wrote about her all the same. We wrote about her and not about Clara Zetkin, because Gertrude Rast is what the socialist movement is all about. Leaders are important, but it is the persistence of people like Gertrude Rast which lies at the centre of the struggle for socialism.

Interview: Anna Paczuska and Gina Schmidt

FIGHT CONTINUES FOR ABORTION

THE RECENT NAC conference made lots of plans about how to carry on the struggle, now that the Corrie Bill has fallen. Although NAC groups have obviously got smaller, many are determined to continue actively campaigning for our right to choose.

Large numbers of women and men trade unionists showed their active opposition to Corrie. We must use the period ahead to speak to those trade union branches and groups that we didn't talk to or convince before. We should start building now for the NAC trade union conference next spring. NAC has made two videos for use with young people and adults in this education drive.

Many people don't realise that we have by no means won yet. The '67 Act doesn't guarantee a woman an abortion, even if the doctor is sympathetic. The next obstacle is the lack of abortion facilities in the NHS. Both the cutbacks and the increased influence of anti-abortionists within the NHS are decreasing our services. NAC is calling for mandatory facilities on the NHS, which means that every woman with the agreement of her doctor should be able to proceed immediately to a free, safe abortion. The earlier an abortion is performed, the safer it is; it also reduces the emotional strain on the woman concerned.

Other issues central to the right to choose are sexuality, contraception and child care. NAC will be holding a day school on contraception. We must push for woman-centered, not profit-centered research into methods of contraception. We must be able to make informed decisions about our own fertility control.

NAC is discussing introducing a pro-abortion bill in Parliament. Women's Voice argues that there should be no law on abortion, it should not be considered a crime. But while the Tories are in, we are building on our support, and fighting the health cuts.

Celia Shalom

I said we've got to be careful

THIS WAS made especially for young people. It shows four older people looking back and talking about their early sexual experiences. These interviews are linked by a story about a young nurse who discovers she is pregnant.

Through the experiences of the older people, the film shows the pitfalls that especially the young fall into. The nurse who gets pregnant doesn't know what to do. She tries to get in touch with her boyfriend but he's always out! We don't

know what she decides in the end.

The video will promote questions and discussion with groups of young people. The teachers' notes have information about abortion techniques, where to get advice and points for discussion. It is well worth getting and showing to young people. I'm sure there will be some interesting results.

A day-care abortion

EARLY, SAFE day care abortion is what we are fighting for. This film was made for adults, to demystify the whole process of abortion. It starts with Professor Huntingford of the Tower Hamlets Day Care Clinic. He points out the advantages of day care: it is safer because you can choose a local anaesthetic, and quicker as the patient is only in the clinic for 8 hours instead of three days in hospital. It is also less traumatic for the woman.

Then we see an abortion. This only takes eight minutes, and Huntingford talks to the woman during this time. After the abortion, the woman talks about the experience.

In the discussion afterwards an interesting point came up. Most of the men felt that Huntingford was condescending to women, while the women were simply glad to hear someone who was sympathetic.

The video is worth seeing for a realistic insight into day care and gives us good arguments in our fight for safe and early abortion.

Both video cassettes are produced by Liberation Films with NAC. They cost £6 each to hire and £22 each to buy. Each has discussion notes with it. For more information, comic strips and a kit, and to book these, contact NAC—278 0153.

Lindsey Short

TWO VIDEO PROGRAMMES

ABOUT ABORTION

Virginia Domingo has been living and working in this country for seven years. She came here from the Philippines where she was unemployed. An agency in Manila found her a job and arranged for a work permit as a resident domestic after hearing the story of her hardship in trying to support five children.

Under the British immigration laws resident domestics are 'granted their freedom' after four years of working — they are free to change jobs and to find somewhere of their own to live, rather than live in, and they no longer need a work permit.

In 1977 Virginia applied to the Home Office for her children to join her. Her application was turned down on the grounds that she could provide no suitable accommodation for them.

Virginia tried to find a flat to rent, but she was turned down when owners found out about the children. For two years she worked from seven o'clock in the morning until eleven at night and managed to buy a house in North London. She still has to work those hours to pay her mortgage and send money to her children.

She re-applied to the Home Office for her children to join her. This time an immigration official told Virginia that she is here illegally.

Work permits for resident domestics should only be given to single, childless persons, the Home Office said.

It was the first Virginia had heard of it. In February this year they took her passport away from her and said that it was likely she would be deported. Since then she has not heard a word.

Virginia Domingo is very frightened. She knows that if she has to go back to the Philippines she will not be able to get work and that she and her children will live in extreme poverty.

'I did what I was told', she says. 'I bought a house for my children and now I'm alone in that house. I have to work all the time to pay my mortgage and send money to my children. I like my job, I've got friends here — this is my home. I'm happy here, and I don't want to go back — but I want my children.'

Virginia's story is not unusual amongst Filipinos who have come to this country as their only hope of earning enough money to live on. Other women have families in the Philippines, but are now too frightened to tell anyone.

In the last twelve years over 14,000 Filipinos have come to work in Britain. Most of them take jobs as domestics, in hotels, hospitals and restaurants. They come because employment opportunities in the Philippines are few. Over half of the total population of 46 million work in agriculture. The average daily wage for industrial workers is estimated at 98 pence. In 1975 an estimated 48 per cent of Filipino families were living below the poverty line.

Filipinos are encouraged by their government to emigrate in order to find work. The foreign currency which Filipino migrants send home to their families is

FILIPINO WORKERS



They live here in fear

very important to the economy. At the same time, the industries in which Filipinos find themselves employed in Western countries rely on cheap immigrant labour. The wages for resident domestics are appallingly low, but compared to the wages in the Philippines they are incentive enough.

Most Filipinos are recruited to jobs in Britain through agencies in Manila, the capital of the Philippines. These agencies usually charge a fee for placing someone with a job and obtaining a resident domestic's work permit. They often do not tell the applicants of rules governing work permits. Filipinos have arrived in Britain and found that their contracts are fake and that they don't possess proper permits. In January of this year the Labour Minister in the Philippines was bringing 43 complaints of illegal recruitment against 14 different employment agencies.

Filipinos coming to Britain are told by the agencies what their wages will be. What they are often not told is that tax and national insurance will be deducted from the figure, plus repayment of the air fare — initially paid for by the employer. Often they are not told of the hours they will have to work in order to earn a living wage. Both legal and illegal agencies in the Philippines frequently work in co-operation with British agencies.

Most of the Filipino women now working in Britain did not know about the rule in the immigration laws about children. Many of the recruitment agencies ask applicants to sign blank forms and leave the necessary paper work for the agency to do. Others tell women that employers merely prefer women without children. The British embassy in Manila used a visa application form for some time which did not require applicants to reveal the existence of children unless they were to accompany the parent.

Last November the Home Office brought a test case against a Filipino woman who had applied for her children to join her in Britain. She was unaware of the no children rule. The Court of Appeal ruled in favour of the Home Office obtaining a work permit as a resident domestic when one has children is entry by deception — whether or not the person concerned was aware that facts had been concealed. The very fact that women have applied for their children to join them shows that they were ignorant of their so-called deception and of the immigration rule concerning resident domestics.

The government's attitude to immigration and immigrants shows itself in other ways. A few years ago Britain was crying out for cheap imported labour; now it wants to be rid of the same people.

One Monday 2 June Ceferino Sales went to the Home Office to extend his work permit. He handed over his passport, current work permit and his police book. He waited for his number.

The Home Office had already extended his visa for 1981. A year ago Ceferino made an application for his wife, still in the Philippines, to join him in this country. The Home Office had said they needed to check his references first.

After applying for an extended work permit on that Monday, Ceferino inquired about progress being made on his application for his wife to join him. Two hours later the official told him that he was to be interviewed by an immigration officer. Ceferino was then questioned for a lengthy period.

The history of Ceferino's case is this: Between 1969 and 1972 he worked as a waiter in the Philippines. He then went back to his home town and took another job as a waiter. He found he was not making enough money to support himself, his wife and two children, so he found part time work as a tailor. Ceferino worked from 9 am until 5 pm as a waiter; he did his tailoring from 6 pm until 10 pm at night. He found he could make more money by tailoring, and so did it full-time for a number of years.

It was then, in 1977, that he decided to come to Britain to work for a steak-house chain. When he applied for his wife to join him, the British Embassy in the Philippines interviewed her. They asked what his job was when Ceferino left the Philippines. A tailor, she replied.

In order to get a job and a work permit as a waiter, the applicant has to have worked as a waiter in his country of origin and provide references to that effect. Ceferino had complied with both requirements.

Now the Home Office are saying that Ceferino faked his references and is an illegal entrant because his wife said, quite truthfully, that he was a tailor when he left the Philippines. The matter is made worse by the fact that the owner of the restaurant in the Philippines told the British Embassy that Ceferino had not worked there, but admitted his mistake to Ceferino in the course of a long distance phone call.

The Home Office are holding Ceferino's passport, police book and work permit, and he has to report to an immigration officer every week.

People who have come to this country to work are now being threatened with deportation after they have made their home here. It is not only Filipinos who are being intimidated by the Home Office and the immigration laws; the same applies to Latin Americans, Portuguese and people from other countries.

All these people had the right to come here and live here when this country needed them. Now, it seems, they no longer have that right because of the racism of Britain's governments and immigration laws. They have always been exploited; they have always been the lowest paid and the most badly organised. They now live in fear of being thrown out of their homes on the whim of the Home Office. Their rights have to be defended, and many are too frightened to speak out

themselves. Only when all immigration laws are written out of the statute book will they be able to live as they want to: peacefully and quietly in a country which they have made their home.

Harriet Sherwood

Campaigns

More information can be obtained from: *Migrants Action Group*, c/o 68 Chalton St, London NW1 (publish a pamphlet — 'Migrant Women Under Threat', price 40p).

United Filipino Association, 1 Cambridge Terrace, London NW1.

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, 44 Theobalds Road, London WC1. *Catholic Commission for Racial Justice*, Church Hall, 1 Amwell St, London EC1 (publish a report — 'Filipino Migrants in Britain', price 10p).

Letters should be sent to the Home Office (Timothy Raison MP, Minister of State, Home Office, Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1) protesting about this treatment.

Stop the deportations

NORMA BARNARDO has been living in Edinburgh for three years. She is under threat of being deported back to the Philippines.

Norma first decided she wanted to come to Britain in 1972. She was recruited by the Foreign Manpower Agency which worked to bring Filipino girls to British hotels.

She wanted to separate from her husband, but not to divorce because of the children. The agency advised her to use her maiden name on her application. 'They didn't tell me it was illegal or anything like that — just that that was the best thing to do. So of course, that's what I did.'

Apart from charging a fee for their services and for the training they gave, the agency also made money on the plane fare. 'They tell you the ticket costs, say 9,000 pesos when it is really only 8,000 pesos. And the fee is 300 pesos. The training was hard. They taught you to do heavy work.'

In May 76 she came to Britain and worked in a hotel in Cumbria. 'I was upset all the time — I missed my children. We had to scrub the rooms so much our hands bled. There were six of us there. We got £72 a month for working 5 days a week, from 7 am to 3 pm and 6 pm to 10 pm. In the end we left together because of the wages. The employer threatened to report me to the Home Office because of my permit saying I was single. But I couldn't stay there any more.'

Norma came to Edinburgh. At the hotel where she started at the beginning of May 1977 things went better. Norma managed to send money home to her family. Also by sheer hard work she managed to get a small house which she shares with the man she lives with.

Then on 25 April this year, three years later, an immigration officer came to her work. 'He asked me many many questions — about the names of all my brothers and sisters — everything. At the end he said "Aren't you wondering why I'm asking you all this". It's true, I hadn't asked him, with these authorities you know, you don't want to cross them. Then he said a friend of mine had written to them and reported me about not being single. I just cried. I was amazed — I had been a good friend to her and let her share my room. I still can't understand why she should do it.'

They took away Norma's passport and she got a letter saying she was an illegal immigrant and to report to the airport on 23 May to leave. When she saw the immigration officer again on 15 May she told him about the house. He said she could have another month to sell it. Then Norma went to the Filipino Chaplaincy for help and they contacted her MP. Now the deportation has been deferred until a decision is reached in the light of this intervention.

So now she is waiting. Her only crime was to follow the agency's advice by saying she was single. The Immigration Authorities are extremely slow and obstructive about letting people into this country, but amazingly efficient when it comes to finding technicalities to deport them on. That is, of course, if they have dark faces.

Womens Voice members should get messages of support to her MP Ron Brown (Leith Constituency), write to their own MPs and circulate petitions.

Rosie Smallwood, Edinburgh WV



PHOTOS: Helen Dady

HOLIDAYS

A life of ease

IN THE eighteenth century, women of the upper and middle classes lived a life of ease, waited on by servants. Partly from boredom, partly from a desire to vacate the stifling smells of large cities in the summer, they developed the habit of taking rest-cures out of town. Probably another big attraction of these rest-cures was the chance to get away from their husbands.

Spa towns—where you could 'take the waters' of natural springs—boomed. Places like Cheltenham and Bath achieved great prosperity with the rise of the leisured middle classes in the eighteenth century, and quickly became notorious cattle markets where ambitious mothers would parade their daughters of marriageable age. A second wave of spa towns was planned by early nineteenth century speculators, such as Leamington Spa, but by then tastes had changed. Snobbery has always played a big part in people's choice of holiday resort.

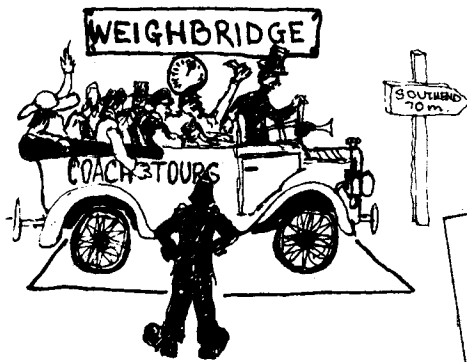
The Prince Regent had made Brighton a fashionable place and other royally-patronised resorts—Lyme Regis, Bognor Regis—followed suit. Coastal towns previously sustained only by fishing or by being market centres mushroomed throughout the nineteenth century. Hotels and guest houses flourished, and then in order to compete with each other, piers and other artificial attractions, cashing in on the growth of leisure. A new industry had been born—the holiday industry.

Sun-tan

THE LAST thing a fashionable woman of the eighteenth century wanted was a sun tan. She took great care to shade her face, in order to look pale and helpless and nothing like the common girls who worked in the fields, growing ruddy in the sun and wind. Now it's just the opposite. Being pale makes you look like one of those common people who work in factory or shop—so the fashion is to look bronzed and brown, as if you spent all your time surfing or lying on the beach. Daft, isn't it?

A day at the seaside...as long as you weren't too heavy

IN 1911 in Homerton, now part of Hackney, a certain Dr. Jelley opened his surgery. He quickly became known as 'the threepenny doctor' because that's all he charged for a consultation.



(Memories of local people in 'The Threepenny Doctor', published 1974, available from Centreprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, London E.8.)

shillings or half a crown. He was a strange, eccentric sort of a man, described as looking like Nevil Chamberlain, but the local people, especially the women, came to feel very grateful towards him. For in those days to fall sick was a disaster, and women worn down by too-frequent pregnancies, and the year-in-year-out effects of poverty, could rarely afford to seek medical help, being totally uninsured.

Doctor Jelley was to help women in other ways... he went to prison for administering an abortion on one occasion... but one thing he is most remembered for is that he used to run day-trips to Southend for local women who'd never had a day out in their lives. It was a tour-operator's nightmare... 'When he came home (from prison) he bought a broken down old brake to take the women of Homerton to Southend as they needed a holiday. It was such a shambles that it gave the police a good excuse to keep an eye on him. The police put a restriction on him that this coach could only take a certain weight before it went on any of his jaunts. Harold, his son, was the driver. The coach had to be weighed and this weight kept strictly in line. Now there was only one place for this to happen, for him to drive from Homerton after collecting his passengers and go to the weighbridge at the dust destructor in Millfields Road. It was a sight that will live forever with me... the sight of the coach coming down the road at about ten miles an hour to pull into the dust destructor... After getting his weight if it was too much then someone had to drop out...'

'... it wasn't the essence of luxury. They were hard wooden seats and mother said that when she looked through the floorboards of the coach she could see the road. Half way there the coach broke down and they had to go into a garage to have it seen to and by the time they got to Southend, owing to this delay, it was almost time to come back. Mother said that everyone enjoyed themselves, it was one scream, because people were singing and wanted to throw tomatoes but they dare not because of the return journey...'

'... When they got down there on one occasion, he gave them instructions to be back by six o'clock. But they'd all been out on the booze and they never came back, so he went home without them.'



A day in the country...if the bailiff didn't see you off

IN 1871 four bank holidays were declared for the working people of England and Wales (Scotland was left out). Victorian reformers had begun to recognise in a very small way that if you give people holidays they are healthier, happier and liable to work better because of it.

The one thing everyone wanted to do was to get out of town, either to the countryside or to the seaside. Whereas previously holy-days were church festivals, now they were quite openly secular occasions, for having fun. But where to go to? Clearly some organisation was needed if the wage slaves were to be let out on parole for the day, otherwise they might start marauding!

London found at least one solution. In 1878 the City of London took over the large tract of common land and former hunting chase to the north east of the city known as Epping Forest. All of the ancient rights and duties of the forest were vested in the corporation, giving them unique powers of management, so long as the forest was kept open for public recreation. The Epping Forest Act of that year marked the creation of the first ever open space designated for public recreation in Britain, significantly different from the ancient right of commoners to graze their sheep and collect herbage from common land.

It has not always been easy to open up

the countryside to those of us forced to work in town and city. Yet it seems to be a very basic part of our make up that we long for the open spaces we lost when the industrial revolution forced our forebears off the land. Very often the right of public access has been fought by wealthy landlords and their armed bailiffs, and socialists have organised to protect footpaths and rights of way. The Ramblers Association was, in its early days, full of radicals who took on such wealthy land-owners as the Duke of Devonshire, to force them to respect ancient rights of way. That fight still goes on today.



The camp with no beer

LAST MONTH, when Billy Butlin died, there were many obituaries in the press describing how he'd built up his holiday camp business in the press all around Britain.

But did you know that the first family holiday camp of all was started by a socialist? It was called "Dodd's Socialist Holiday Camp", and it was at Caister, just outside Great Yarmouth in Norfolk.

John Fletcher Dodd was a member of the Independent Labour Party (ILP). In 1906 he bought a couple of acres on the Norfolk coast, erected some green bell tents, ran up the ILP flag and started organising holidays for fellow socialists and dockers from the East End of London.

The first morning after the families of campers arrived, they were treated to a talk on socialism from Dodd himself, speaking from the platform of the dining room. In the course of their stay they also had seminars led by various Labour luminaries such as Herbert Morrison and Clem Attlee.

Like many socialists of his day, Dodd was quite a puritan, and he ran the camp along strict lines. Alcohol was completely forbidden, rowdies were expelled, regulation bathing costume had to be worn, and everyone was required to be punctual. Later on, he even began to fine people sixpence for neglecting to keep their tents tidy!

But at least prices were modest (22 shillings, or about £1.10p, for full board per week in 1914). And there was an air of participation a bit different from the organised fun and games of holiday camps today. Campers in those days engaged in debates and amateur theatricals, and they were encouraged to bring along their own musical instruments. One thing, though, certainly wasn't encouraged: single men were placed on one side of the camp and women on the other, with families as a sort of buttress in between!

Eventually Dodd became a bit of a

capitalist, the ILP flag was taken down, and in the thirties the name on the gate was changed to "Caister Holiday Camp". It's still there, though much altered, now owned by Ladbrokes with five bars and a great big central betting shop.

A working holiday

THE ONLY way that many London families ever got a break in the first part of this century was to go hop-picking or fruit-picking in the fields of Kent, "the

So what's it got to do with Capitalism?

ONE OF the most important features of the industrialised capitalist system is that it separates off parts of our lives instead of letting us be whole human beings.

For example, we are regimented into working a set number of hours, at the same time every day. In the rest of the time, after work, we are expected to eat, sleep, amuse ourselves, raise our families and do everything else that is 'not work'.

In other words, work is a totally alienating experience, which we do to earn money. It doesn't fulfil us, nor do we have any control over it.

Away from work, we are expected to blossom into contented human beings, educating our children, improving our homes, relaxing, and enjoying ourselves (as well as voting tory). Unfortunately, the very nature of the work we do often leaves us so totally worn out and uninspired that we slump in front of the television set and let it all wash over us. Or we engage in frantic 'leisure' pursuits, like home decorating and mending the car, first to save money and second to give ourselves a sense of achievement. Higher up the social scale, there's not this rigid division. Businessmen claim to work better over big lunches; they make deals on the golf course.

For most women, it's even worse.

Garden of England".

In the summer months the whole family would pack up, kids and all, and hike out to the farms in the Kent countryside. There they got paid by piece work, so the children worked too, and they stayed in primitive shacks and huts arranged barrack-like on the edges of the fields. It was hard work. But for many children of those generations it was their only taste of the countryside, of fresh air and open spaces and streams to swim in after the grime and hemmed-in streets of London.

None of our work at home 'counts' and we certainly don't get statutory paid leave. How many times have you seen women on camping or caravanning holidays, still doing the cooking, making the beds, watching out for the children while dad stretches out in his deckchair. (NB Self-catering equals mum-catering).

In a socialist society we would break down the rigid division between 'work' and 'leisure'. The working day would be much shorter, designed to suit workers, not the other way round. Every work environment would be made as pleasant as possible with decent canteens, rest areas and open spaces. There would be paid educational leave and sports and cultural activities. Heavy work and light work would be shared more equally—as would work in the home, so that the bad jobs didn't always fall to the same people.

Capitalism makes you a wage slave most of the year, then lets you out on parole for a few weeks. Little wonder that holidays are so important to most of us and we go without other things all year to try and afford a good holiday. It's the one bit of freedom and opportunity the system extends to us. Why shouldn't we have much more?

JUDITH CONDON



Hidden from

Chartist Women

■ The original Charter for the reform of parliamentary elections in the 1830s included a demand for votes for women. Although this was soon dropped, women continued to be active in the campaign. There were special Chartist women's groups and "Female Political Unions", like the one in Newcastle which produced a petition in 1839:

'We have seen that because the husband's earnings could not support his family, the wife has been compelled to leave her home neglected and with her infant children work at a soul and body degrading toil... our husbands are overworked, our houses half-furnished, our families ill-fed and our children uneducated...'

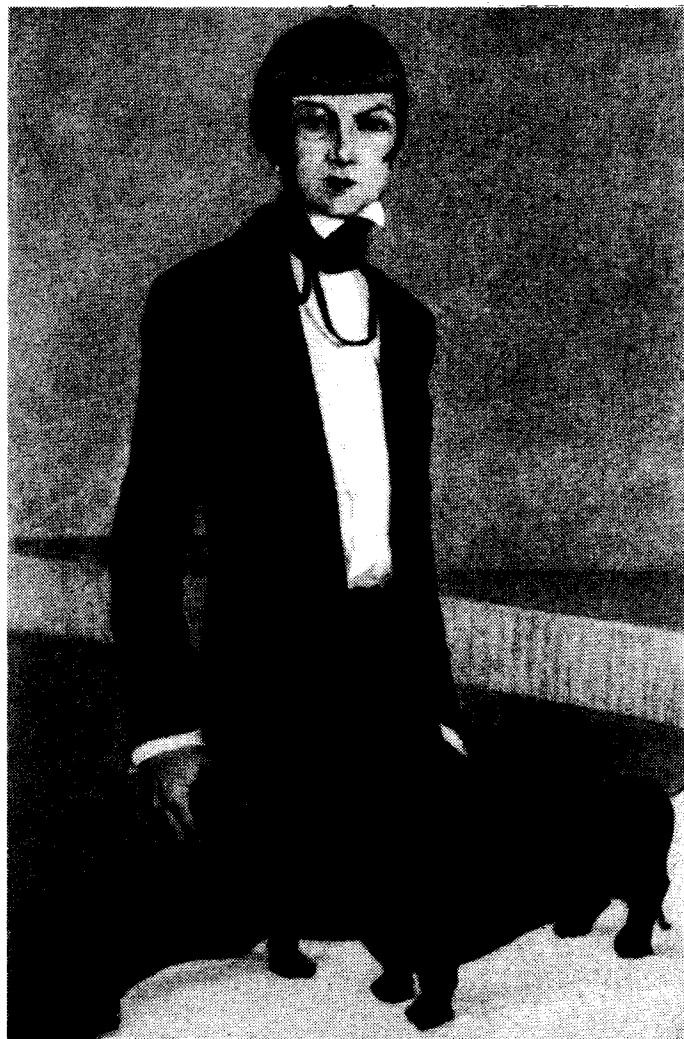
Women didn't just petition. They took part in the street fighting as well. At Llanidloes, in mid-Wales, a crowd of rioters managed to rescue a group of Chartists who had been arrested by police brought down from London for the purpose:

'Some of the women who had joined the crowd kept instigating the crowd, kept instigating the men to attack the hotel - one old virago vowing that she would fight until she was knee-deep in blood, sooner than the cockneys should take their prisoners out of the town. She with others of her sex gathered large heaps of stones which they subsequently used in defacing and injuring the building which contained the prisoners...'

We don't know the names of the chartist women. The old woman's voice is an anonymous one, caught for a moment above the roar of the crowd, and then lost again. But her words, and those of the Newcastle women, should be familiar to us. We don't have to know their names to recognise our sisters.

Inessa Armand

■ Inessa Armand was the first director of Zhenodetl - the Bolshevik women's department which was set up in 1919. Along with Alexandra Kollontai, Inessa Armand was a pioneer of women's emancipation in the Russian workers' state. Born in Paris in 1874, she married at 18 and had 5

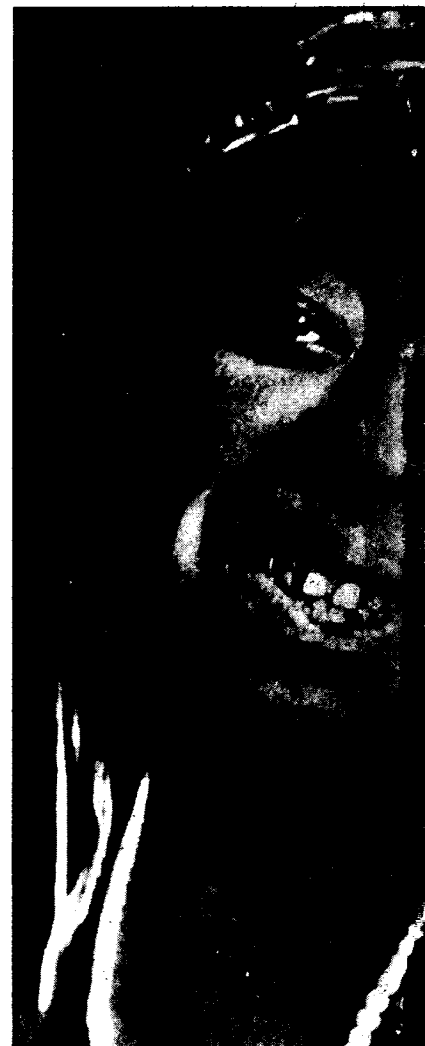


children. She became a feminist. In 1900, she joined a feminist charity in Moscow, formed to help prostitutes. She left disappointed at its futile efforts. But she was one of the few revolutionary women who had been an active feminist first. In 1904 she left her husband and joined the Moscow organisation of the Social



Democrats. Activity in the 1905 revolution led to persecution and exile. In 1910 she met Lenin in Paris. Together with Krupskaya, his wife she planned a Bolshevik paper for women.

Rabotnitsa (Woman Worker) appeared in 1913 and then again in 1917. It had a circulation of 50,000. Bolshevik women organisers supplemented its work with local campaigns. Inessa set up a group in Moscow around a journal called 'Life of the Woman Worker.' Propaganda teams from Zhenodetl travelled round Russia on agit-trains. They stopped at remote villages with posters, song and dance groups, and speeches. They were organising women for socialism. During the civil war Inessa used Zhenodetl to mobilise women in support of the Red Army. She worked 14 to 16 hours every day. In 1920 the Party ordered her to take a holiday. She did, caught cholera and died.



Ma Rainey

■ Ma Rainey sang in the circuses and vaudeville theatres of the American South in the early years of this century. She was known as the Queen of the Blues. She sang in the travelling vaudeville shows, often playing as the 'after act' in circuses. It was Ma Rainey and those who came after her, like Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday, who sang the open, raw songs expressing what it meant to be black and to be a woman. George Melly wrote of the blues:

'Through the classic blues we sense, stripped to its bare essentials what it means to be a woman. In most male blues women are objects of sexual gratification. When they cheat it's the male pride that's hurt. There is little love, little feeling for others. The despair is a self despair, sex, like drink is a palliative against the hardness of an insufferable situation. But in the women's blues there is a

Women's History



defiant belief in the possibility of human joy ... a direct concern with the exact placing of emotion in a concrete situation.'

There aren't many good recordings of Ma Rainey, but the songs are bleak and lyrical, drawing on her own experience. It is that which makes them so easy to relate to.

Radclyffe Hall

■ Radclyffe Hall was a woman novelist famous in her own time and forgotten in ours. In 1928 she finished work on her novel 'The Well of Loneliness.' She believed, wrongly, that her own reputation as a writer was well enough established for her to be able to publish a novel which told something of the real life lived by homosexuals. Her views were radical: she thought men should be allowed to marry men, and women marry women, and openly live together as other couples did. Jonathan Cape agreed to



publish the book, but the heavy hand of the law, bigotry and the Home Secretary of the day - William Joynson-Hicks - all descended to see that it was not.

Joynson-Hicks declared the book obscene without even reading it and sent it for trial. The Director of Public Prosecutions refused permission for the judges deciding the case to read the book.

The attempt to suppress it gave it the publicity it might never otherwise have had, and the first 6,000 copies printed in Paris were soon sold out. Within five years the book's American publishers had printed 17 editions.

Kathe Kollwitz

■ Kathe Kollwitz was born in 1867 in Prussia and was to become an outstanding artist and one of the most powerful political propagandists of this century. She is not given much prominence in the history of art

because she is a woman, and because her work is considered too morbid and subjective. Hardly surprising as she devoted most of her skill and creativity to expressing her views on women's oppression and the conditions of the working class. She learned to use a printing press and produced



lithographs and posters, believing that in this way she would communicate with the mass of people. She was a socialist, although not a member of any party, and

From left to right:
Lady Troubridge,
lover and biographer
of Radclyffe Hall.
Ma Rainey and Louise Michel

Karl Liebknecht, the German revolutionary, was a friend. Her picture of Liebknecht lying in his coffin with the mourning figures and workers around him shows how she felt about his brutal death at the hands of the German police.

Most of her pictures have women as the central figures, whether it be in the weavers uprising or the peasants revolt, or her famous poster 'Never again War'.

In 1919 she was elected as the first woman member of the Berlin Academy, but was expelled by Hitler when he came to power.

Les Petroleuses

■ Les Petroleuses - the women incendiaries - were the women who fought in the Paris Commune in 1871. Organised groups like the "Union des Femmes" and individual women built barricades, cared for the wounded, fired rifles and set fire to buildings. They were part of the last desperate fight to save the Commune from the attacking forces of the Versailles government. Seamstresses, laundresses, bookbinders and even prostitutes - the women of the Commune were recruited mainly from the working class. Many were taking part in political action for the first time ever. Their achievement was particularly remarkable. Even radical thinkers of the time, like Proudhon, thought that women were physically, mentally and morally inferior to men. After the defeat of the Commune Government troops launched an hysterical attack against women. Many poorly dressed women carrying boxes or milk cans were shot or battered to death on suspicion of being "petroleuses". Leading women like Louise Michel were tried publicly. Defiantly she told her accusers 'I do not want to defend myself, I do not want to be defended. I belong entirely to the Social Revolution.' She claimed that there were no petroleuses only 'women who fought like lionesses'. They were the women who 'set Paris on fire'. They fought for the Commune, for equality, freedom and justice. They were sentenced to death, deported and imprisoned.

'LABOUR ISN'T working' said last years Tory posters. They didn't say that their policies would make unemployment even worse. Predictions put unemployment by January 1981 at 2 million. Most school leavers and college leavers have little chance of getting the sort of job they want. In some areas they have little chance of getting a job at all.

Scotland, South Wales, the North East of England and Merseyside all show a similar picture. Traditional industries close down with massive job losses. The 'new industries' which went to the depressed areas in earlier years are also announcing redundancies. In many areas they are a daily occurrence.

Even in the prosperous south east, and west Midlands, unemployment in inner city areas is well over ten per cent. All young people have to look forward to is a life on the dole. For older workers faced with redundancy the future is just as bleak. Their jobs have been sold for good. The people with money to invest get a better return on banking, property or land—anything but industry.

This is the time of year when tens of thousands of young people find out the reality of unemployment. *Lindsey German* talked to a school student in Edinburgh about the prospects facing her and her friends and to a 17 year old in Middlesbrough, Teesside about her failure to get a permanent job over a year after leaving school, and what she feels the future holds for her. *Judith Davies* looks at the devastation which is South Wales and what that means in human terms.

CHRIS from Middlesbrough hasn't worked regularly since she left school a year last May. The town, in the heart of the steelworks and chemical plants of Teesside, has unemployment well above the national average. It is particularly high on many of the large estates surrounding the town, like Pallister Park where Chris lives and Berwick Hills where she visits the youth club in which we talked to her. That night the local news was full of a new factory processing frozen food to be built in three years time in Tyneside, 40 miles away. It will provide 1000 new jobs — but nearly that many are being lost every week, in the N East. 'I ALWAYS wanted to be a hairdresser but there aren't any jobs for inexperienced hairdressers. When I was at school I went on a work experience cutting hair for two weeks but they didn't take me on.

Then I went to a government scheme at ICI Wilton where you keep getting sent on placement and in between they teach you sums and spelling. I went to a shop and then an office for two weeks and packed it in after that. Then I worked at John Colliers making clothes but it closed down five months later.

I go down the careers office every two weeks but there's no jobs. I get £18.50 a week and give £8 to my mum. Every day I look in the papers. I tidy up for our mum. Come over here every week night, then Fridays I go out. At the weekends I babysit. On Tuesday and Friday I go to the club during the day as well.

It get me down sometimes. But I wouldn't go into a factory again — I hated it. When I was at John Collier I'd never see daylight. It was dark when I went in in the morning and when I got out at night. I know I'd like hair-dressing though.

But the jobs don't seem to be there — everythings closing down. If I have kids there'll be no jobs at all by the time they grow up. And the government schemes are useless. You get £23.50 but I spent 88p a day travelling and £1 on dinners — it wasn't worth working.

I wish it was like when I was a kid again — my mum never used to have to worry about the cost of a tin of beans like she does now.'

KATHY COONAGH is 15. She is the Scottish organiser for the National Union of School Students. She talked to Womens Voice about the problems of school leavers in Scotland today. 'THREE OR four years ago everybody thought they'd get a job. Now all hope of getting one has been demolished. For women there are no prospects in Edinburgh, no jobs in the factories. My

best mate is doing seven O levels and she says she can imagine herself on the broo for the rest of her life.

I want to be a plumber — I'm hoping to work at it over the summer. Careers guidance is so bad it's unbelievable. Denise, my friend, talked to a guidance teacher who told her she should get a job in a factory. No one's expected to get anything better — or else they're going to be unemployed. The school expects you to be unemployed, they don't prepare you for it at all. Out of 15 people I knew who left last year, I reckon only two got a job and now they're unemployed again. The whole school is geared to people being on the broo, unless you're in the A stream, when they expect you to go to university.

People are really fed up but they feel there's nothing they can do. It's why I think political youth organisations are so important, because we'll never get permanent full employment in this society. After joining a political organisation you feel a bit more hopeful about changing things.

NUSS should try to organise for better careers guidance and grants for over 16s at school. Everyone's trying to keep quiet about people not getting a job — they don't want to tell people there'll be 2 million unemployed by next year when they leave school. People don't want to talk about it. But we need to make school students aware of it and see where it goes from there. The Right to Work campaign is important for people just leaving school.

People don't seem to realise what causes unemployment. I've always grown up assuming that a section of the population won't have jobs.'

L MINING WAS the last job fathers who had spent years working down a pit wanted for their sons ten years ago in South Wales.

Today in the valleys school leavers are queuing up for jobs at the pits – encouraged by their fathers. Usually it is only those who have relatives working in a pit who can get a job there.

With manufacturing industries closing down daily – this week the Cynon Valley lost 500 jobs – the pits are no longer the last resort for work for many, but the only chance of a job.

For girls the picture is even bleaker. The Treforest Estate, built in the 1930's to counter the mass unemployment caused by the rundown of the coal and iron industries is fast becoming a wasteland. The estate which seven years ago employed 16,000 people in light manufacturing industries, now employs just over 7000.

Since the Tory Government has been in 1700 jobs have gone in Treforest alone – all in light manufacturing industries.

With cut throat competition for the lowest paid factory job, the estate which is the central employer for the Rhondda valleys and Pontypridd now employs just 100 girl school leavers.

This is the picture before the Government even begins massacring the steel and coal industries which experts say will cost South Wales another 50,000 jobs. Unemployment is a published 10 per cent, with pockets at the far end of the valleys as high as 18 per cent and much higher among school leavers.

While they scour the valleys looking for any sort of job, some kids find they're scuppered even before they've left school because their parents are unemployed.

A woman living near Cardiff who's bringing up three children on her own on social security of £30 a week couldn't send her eldest child to school for two months because he didn't have any shoes to wear.

His feet had grown to a size 14 shoe and the shoes had to be hand made. There was no way she could pay £30 for a pair of hand made shoes so the child couldn't go to school.

Several families with three or more children often keep one child home from school for a week at a time because they can't afford to send them all to school. The cost of busfares and school meals can't be managed on the dole.

Going without things is only one side of being unemployed though. For a person who's worked for 20 years the effect of having to get used to being unemployed is shattering.

Ken Cross worked for 20 years at a factory on the Treforest Estate till it closed down a year ago. An SWP member he's been involved in the Right to Work campaign for five years and his experience as convenor at the factory ensured he knew the ropes for negotiating and claiming.

'But,' he says, 'it's not much help when you have to go down to sign on. I've had one temporary job which lasted a few months in the past year. There is nothing about.

'You don't realise what it's like to be unemployed till it happens to you. The first few months you're hopeful of finding work and that keeps you going.

'It's after that the strain begins. When all you've got to do is think all day and hang round the house you get all

E keyed up. The tension builds up and you get headaches and strain. There's people who were working with me, normal people who'd never taken pain killers or sedatives in their lives, who are now under the doctor being treated for nervous tension.

'The kids feel it. I get just over £30 a week with related earnings for my wife and two kids. Being unemployed means that when we go to town now, we can't just go into a cafe and have a Wimpy and a coffee. The kids don't ask for anything, because they know you just can't afford it.

'You pass a shop with balloons in or something that catches their eye and they'll look and just give a sideward glance over the shoulder. They know.

'The faces at the dole queue are getting very familiar – you see the same people day after day except there are always more. My father was made redundant from his factory a few weeks ago and that's how it's going – whole families without work.

'The thing that makes me bitter about it is that it's not an accident.

'The Government know the unemployed are their biggest weapon in helping keep wages low and unions divided – there's always a hundred people to replace just one job.

'Trade unionists should wake up to that and maybe they'd fight redundancies a bit harder.

'As far as I can see the Right to Work campaign is the only attempt at getting the employed and the unemployed together. It's a way we can organise and get through to people working, that it's a class war we've got, not an accident of nature that we've got two million unemployed.

'Unfortunately some of them only realise that when their job has gone.'



By the time you read this there will be 200,000 schoolleavers out of work. The figure is so vast that it is difficult to take in. The sort of long term unemployment that people thought had disappeared with the 1930s is becoming a common reality for many people.

In September there is a march of unemployed from the South Wales coalfields to the Tory party conference in Brighton. If you are unemployed why not go on the march to show your anger at the Tory government's policies. Even if you are not unemployed yourself, join the demonstration against the Tories in Brighton on October 10. For further details contact the Right to Work Campaign and Defend Our Unions, 265a Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

“Woman has the task of being beautiful and bringing children into the world...the female bird preens herself for her mate and hatches her eggs for him”— Goebbels.

Fascism's 'real' women

RECENTLY IN Italy I saw a fascist poster with a picture of a woman holding a baby. The slogan: “The woman gives you life...oppose terrorism!” It was a strong image. In fact, it is a central theme of fascist and right-wing thought.

Women's importance to fascism is our biology and “feminine” role. The nuclear family is seen as the germ-cell of the state. We are wives, mothers, widows, or else we are nothing. We have social status only through our relationships to men. So a woman who stays single, or loves other women, is treated as a freak who endangers this fixed order in society.

Fascism believes in every group knowing its place—and staying there! The extreme example is racism, which states that the colour of your skin or your ancestry gives you a superior or inferior value and intelligence. If your nation is “superior” then you have the moral right to invade and oppress the “lesser” peoples.

Fascism couldn't exist without a strong sense of hierarchy: that some are born to lead and most are born to follow. All right-wing groups will say that the socialist aim of changing society into a truly democratic, equal and free one is an impossible dream. If we didn't have our laws and the state, police and army to enforce them, there would be chaos and an end to “civilisation and morality”.

The ideas of fascism are those ideas that justify capitalism, taken to a logical conclusion. Workers are told we are stupid, incapable of taking informed decisions about economics and affairs of state. Yet we find it hard to see outside the borders of our “own” country and identify with foreign workers. Nationalism and patriotism

bind us to “our” rulers. We suffer and die fighting their wars for them.

Both Hitler and Mussolini appealed directly to women for support, by giving them a sense of value as “real” women. In Italy the Catholic Church's control over morality meant that fascism had to be very religious. The Church's rituals, like weddings and funerals, took place in public—in the service of the state and the Duce. As part of the mourning for 600,000 Italians killed and a million wounded in World War I, Mussolini organised the wives and mothers into a death squadron. They wore black coats with skulls on the breast, and attacked communists with knives and hats.

Mussolini's “Wedding Day” was a massive occasion. Women lined the streets, giving up their gold wedding rings in exchange for iron rings symbolising marriage to Mussolini! The gold was smelted down in aid of the Fatherland.

Women's sexuality had been twisted and repressed for a long time by the church, now it was being slaughtered. Women were given a fantasy. Their only emotional identity was through self-denial. Of course, Italian fascism also stole women's rights. Contraception, divorce and abortion were made illegal; the right to paid work was restricted. And this was all done by the disgusting team, the Pope and Mussolini.

German women had won the vote in 1918, and by the First World War had some access to education and white collar work. These gains were being lost before the Nazis came to power, especially when unemployment and men's return from the trenches threatened women's

right to paid work. The trade union movement did not defend this right. When nazism came it simply continued to ‘put women in their place’.

Perhaps the most important aim was to breed Ayrans. The birth rate must increase; the nation must be strong. Many laws were passed to strengthen marriage and encourage the fertile family.

The macho lifestyle of Nazi soldiers often involved a brutalised form of homosexuality, based on male supremacy and contempt for women. The Nazis had to stop this behaviour because it threatened the family and breeding. But what really threatened the Nazis were sexual relationships involving communication and mutual enjoyment. These hold the potential of smashing the family system, of rejecting “morality” and the limits it lays down. Fascism is hung-up about sex; sexual “degenerates” include gays, Jews, commies. The only acceptable sex is within marriage.

The Nazis were clear about women's role as wives and mothers. The first meeting of the Nazi party agreed that no woman should ever be in the leadership: none ever was. Once in power the Nazis said it more clearly:

“The new political reality is so constructed that the German woman will from now on live in a state formed and led by the masculine spirit...a state on whose being, for a long time, she will not have direct influence as formerly...not hostile to women but friendly, since its whole basic position implies the restoration to woman of her own life sphere and the life and security that she needs.”

In Britain today, two fascist

groups are prominent: the National Front and the British Movement. The NF is in crisis. It has suffered a lot at the hands of the Anti-Nazi League. The NF vote shrank and many members have either resigned or are demoralised. But the British Movement seems to be growing. Young thugs now paint up BM insignia. It is an outwardly fascist and militarist organisation; just like the Nazis they blame Jews and trade unionists for economic decline.

The NF have said they want a return to traditional gender roles, that the use of contraception and abortion by white women would be restricted, while fertility control over black or Jewish women would be the opposite.

The fascist groups build on people's fears. Fears about increasing crime and violence in society, offering as a solution even more repression and thought control. In Birmingham the NF marched against black rape of white women, following some rapes in the area. In London they campaigned against the schools video, “Somebody's Daughter”, which is about a white girl and black boy's relationship. They stir up racism, holding up black people or Jews as the causes for violence, unemployment, poor housing, inadequate education and services. The Tories are in power, and we are seeing a strengthening of right-wing views.

Fascism has to be fought on all fronts now. We have to understand and expose the basic right-wing beliefs about men, women and “nature”. We can defeat them by opposing sexism and appealing to people's yearning for freedom, love and life.

Celia Shalom



John Sturrock (Report)

A YEAR after the Southall anti-National Front demonstration which ended in the death of Blair Peach at the hands of the police, Celia Stubbs is still fighting to bring his killers to justice.

For fourteen months, she has been on view to the public. Her lifestyle, her personal problems, her appearance and her relationship with Blair Peach have been probed and derided by the press and the media.

One thing they have all quietly ignored is Celia's politics, yet her long-standing commitment to socialist ideas has been the driving force behind her work for the campaign. 'My relationship with Blair is irrelevant' she says. 'That is a personal grief; what makes me go on fighting is that this could have happened to anyone who was trying to protest against the Nazis.'

In April 1979 Celia Stubbs was a member of Islington NALGO, a committed anti-racist and a member of the Socialist Workers' Party. At the weekend before Southall she demonstrated against a NF meeting in Islington Town Hall, and

“..This could have happened to anyone trying to protest against the Nazis.”

travelled to Leicester to join a counter-demonstration against a NF march. On Monday 23rd April she went to Southall to join the community protesting against the NF 'election meeting' due to take place in the Town Hall.

Her impressions of the demonstration have been echoed by many other people. 'I was amazed at the number of local people on the streets. Local people outnumbered white 'outsiders' by more than 10-1. It was quite obvious that this was a community under attack.'

By the time Celia arrived in Southall on Monday evening, the Asian community had spent four weeks using all possible peaceable channels to stop the NF meeting from going ahead. They had sent deputations to Council meetings to ask that the Town Hall should not be let to the NF. They had handed in a petition of thousands of names protesting against the meeting. With the memory of the death of Gurdip Singh Chaggar, murdered by fascists in Southall in 1976 still fresh in their minds, they marched to Ealing Town Hall, 5000 strong, to demand that the meeting be banned.

In the face of this massive protest, Scotland Yard police took control. The meeting was to go ahead. The peaceful sit-down protest agreed between the local community leaders and the police was deliberately made impossible by the deployment around the Town Hall of thousands of police, mounted and on foot, with riot shields and truncheons drawn. Celia described the attitude of the police: 'It was as though they were NF stewards themselves, they were quite definitely there to protect the Front.'

In the violence that inevitably ensued, Blair Peach died, murdered without provocation by a member of the Special Patrol Group carrying what was probably a lead-weighted cosh.

Since then, Scotland Yard have spent 30,000 hours in internal investigation. They refuse to publish the report (the Cass report) which resulted. The inquest into the death finally returned a verdict of misadventure, having been strongly directed by the Coroner that this verdict was applicable 'if the jury considered that the police had killed Blair Peach... and that the force they used had been reasonable'.

Celia feels that it is unlikely that the demand for a public inquiry will be met. 'Southall could easily happen again. The only effect of this hard year's work has

been a slight stirring of the public conscience.'

Nothing much has changed in the SPG either. Some cosmetic moves have been made — a bit of re-organisation, a clearing of lockers — but essentially 'the inquest verdict means that the SPG now have a licence to kill. Things will now be much worse for people attending demonstrations or picket lines. They now have a real fear for their lives.'

The public have been bombarded with opinion and comment. On the one hand, from the police, who deny against all the evidence that they killed Blair Peach or even hit anyone over the head at Southall. On the other from the Anti Nazi League, friends and family of Blair Peach, who are still convinced that the SPG are murderers. And in between, the media, who have spent hours dissecting the case in an attempt to lay responsibility at the feet of so-called 'outsiders' and 'left-wing extremists'. (The Daily Mail tried to set up an interview between Celia Stubbs and the wife of one of the fascists who was at the Southall meeting.)

The fact is that the police/National Front operation at Southall last year was a blatant attack on the right of a whole community to protest peacefully, and even their right to be living there in the first place. It was an attack on socialists and anti-racists everywhere who come to the support of their sisters and brothers. It was a defence by the State of the openly racist and fascist NF.

Celia explained: 'The Council could have stopped the meeting. This was done in Brent and other places. The Police could have stopped it. But they wanted to teach the immigrant community a lesson.'

There is only one way to prevent a recurrence of what happened at Southall. In Celia's words: 'We can have no faith in legal procedures or the courts. They are not on our side. This battle can only be won on the streets.'

Susan Pearce

The Anti Nazi League and the Friends of Blair Peach Committee are campaigning for the following demands:

- Disband the SPG
- Hold a Public Inquiry
- No cover-up — publish the Cass report
- Oppose the fascists of the NF, British Movement etc wherever they appear

Please send donations to the campaign to 'ANL, P.O. Box 353, London NW5 4NH'



I LOVE MY VERA

By Eddie McFadyen

THERE'S hardness and sadness in Vera's old eyes. She was sitting in a pub in the Isle of Dogs and Dave, the man she lives with. He had an arm dropped casually over her hunched shoulders. Dave tries to look winning, he winks, smiles, says "You're all right love," at regular intervals. As the beer caught up with him, he made more of a show of Vera. "My Vera, I love my Vera, don't I Vera? He repeats this litany, Vera nods wearily. "Yes, Dave, that's right." He insists on shaking my hand, saying, "You're all right love." Their friend John smiles incessantly. "He's a bit, you know, soft, cuckoo," says Dave. "Eh, John, our son, you all right?" John smiles showing stumps of rotten teeth. He engages me in a conversation. "I'm from Holland," he says three or four times. "You're a nice girl," he repeats. "I used to work for Interpol, see this," he tugs at his red and white striped jersey. "Red and white, Christmas Day, you're a nice girl." I smile, he gives me a cigarette. "Interpol, Christmas Day.... don't like me now do you?"

I have gone to meet Vera because someone told me she wanted her story told. I knew a little about her and Dave. I thought it would be a simple matter of taking down her story, going home and writing it up. A love story—love surviving despite abject poverty, an unusually kind man to protect a helpless ageing woman

The pub we are in is friendly enough, the violence that intermittently erupts is dealt with swiftly. A wild looking woman is gently evicted, two men fall on the floor, they're separated. "Come back

when you're sober," says the landlord. Vera ignores the brawls and tries to ignore Dave's constant interruptions. He tells me and her how much he loves her, "My Vera, she's mine, she's lovely, best girl in the world," I fall for it. I feel a certain reassurance, there are men who go on loving older women. Heartwarming.

"We lived rough for a year, walked the streets, sleeping out. Lived on a piece of cardboard under the flats in Aldgate. Had it very bad. Then I got done for begging—three weeks Holloway two and a half years suspended—on top of the three years I got for nicking some ham and bread—Well, I was hungry, didn't have no money what do you do?" "My Vera, I got her out—went to Hastings, got her out because I got us a fixed abode—a hotel."

"Yeah, couldn't afford that could we? Came back to London. Then we got a flat, squatting in it. They wouldn't rehouse us—said we didn't have enough points, you've got to have points or go on the waiting list—and that means waiting and waiting and waiting."

I asked what they were living on now. "Well, Dave had a job, but he got laid off, sick. We got mugged, three fellas, I got six stitches in my head and Dave fractured his hand." "Fought them off didn't I. Got my hand smashed on the wall," Dave showed his stiff hand. "So I went to sign on, signed on as a single woman, well we weren't sharing the bed were we. They wouldn't give him nothing, said his stamps were wrong or something. I got a book for three weeks and suddenly they took it away. I go down the SS and the fella says, "Mrs O'Leary, Booth 5". The supervisor is in there, "Mrs O'Leary," he says, "You've been seen holding hands with Mr. Bradley in The Love Inn." I looked at him, "Holding hands" I say, "Me? I'm 60, come off it. "Took the book away, gave me £4.60 three weeks ago and that's the last they give us."

Dave's still looking sweet and affectionate, cradles her against him. She looks frail, she's small and thin. But there's a certain toughness. "We been begging since then, totting, ragging, begging, selling rags and old iron—eating vegetables from the gutters in Spitalfields. Haven't had a bit of meat for ages," says Vera. It's closing time. Vera suggests I come back to their flat to do a taped interview.



Their flat is about a ten minutes walk from the pub. Dave and John are some way behind as Vera and I walk ahead.

"Lucky with that suspended for nicking the food, wasn't I? I said to the judge, (she puts on a posh accent) 'Your honour, m'lud, Ay nicked the grub because Ay was cold and hungry. What do you expect a poor old woman to do?' She laughs.

We climbed up five flights to their flat. The block they live in is condemned, the walls covered in racist slogans, the balconies thick with debris, old beds, odd shoes, rags, cans, drains overflowing. When we got to the door, Vera suddenly turned to me and said, "He's a rotten bastard..beats me all the time. Those stitches—mugged my arse—he did that—furious because I sold the three piece suite for £6 instead of £10, wasn't my fault, the fella give me the money, £10 I said, and I never counted it. He got me on the landing there and beat me. Hurt his hand when I moved." At this point Dave arrived. "Nice cup of tea, eh Vera? My Vera, beautiful girl"



We went into the flat. I felt uneasy. Vera and I went into the kitchen, I said I'd help her make the tea. She spoke to me rapidly in a whisper. Dave was showing his tellies to John who was still muttering about Interpol. Dave had four tellies in the front room.

"Him and his tellies," Vera said, "and he makes me go out begging every day, I get £10 or £15 on a good day—he takes the lot—drinks it. I've been selling valves down the lane of a Sunday, coppers come and move you on, it's freezing cold, 'No Licence they say, move on' Bastards.

I tried to leave him, a few times he comes after me, says he's in love with me, beats me threatens me, brings me back. I ask her how she copes "I'm hard love, but I had a good training, army, I'm hard, I can go through anything."

Dave shouts from the other room "Vera where's my tea?" He's drunk and in his own home, the loving husband bit is wearing off as the drink takes an ugly hold.

"Coming," she yells back, and sighs, narrows her big old eyes, mouths, "Bastard, but I'm getting out—Thursday."

Slowly while pouring the tea she tells another story, very quietly. "One time I left him—went to the seaside—found a gentleman. He took me to a hotel asked me into his room for a drink. Well, I'd never tried prostitution before but I had nothing, no money, no clothes except what I was standing up in. Know what he did? Threw me down and stuck it up the back passage. I screamed and got away, ran through the hotel starkers, bleeding, terrified awful pain.Dave got me back then."

In the other room Dave was shouting for his tea. We took it in.

"Dave love," Vera began coaxingly, "We're going in the other room, she can't make tapes with all the TV's going. Dave was engrossed in his TV's. We slipped out. Vera and I sat on the bed in the other room, which was lit by a single red light bulb. She told me how her first husband left her. "The second baby was a cross baby, never stopped crying for six months, I broke down. He never took me back, he put the babies in a convent. They wouldn't let me visit them said I had a bad effect on them. My second husband, O'Leary, he was a beast, knocked me about broken arm, broken leg, fractured jaw. I had six children with him but I had to leave him, he'd have killed me."

At this point Dave come in. "Make the other bed for John," he ordered her.

"I can't, you do it, I can't get over the tellies, there's too many of them."

"Vera! You get in there and make that bed—I'll give you five minutes."

"I can't get over the tellies, you make it."

"No way, me make a bed, you fucking get in there or—" He grabbed her frail arms and shoved her into the other room. Vera came back, "See what I mean? Bastard isn't he?"

Dave had gone back to his chair in front of three of his tellies. John was smiling wildly at nothing. Vera and I went into the front and sat by the clattering broken fan heater.

"Now you tell her the story about the housing, Dave said.

"They won't rehouse us without the certificate."

"What certificate?"

"Got to pay £2.50 for the medical to get rehoused."

"Don't lie," Dave said menacingly. Vera wasn't lying. Dave didn't care what he said, he was drunk.

"Tell her about me," I already knew about him, but he didn't know that.

"Now look you, what's your name? You watch, you talk too much, you interrogate my wife...my Vera, I used to be a boxer me. Fought that whatsisname? Vera!

"What's his name?"

"Cooper?"

"Don't be silly."

Brian London?"

"No."

"Muhammed Ali?" I said thinking a joke might relax him. It did, he turned with the irrational alacrity of drunkenness. "You're a nice girl isn't she Vera? Conteh!" He said and smiled at me in self satisfaction. "Used to get a thousand pounds a fight—I never benefited—his first wife did."

"My first wife came from Bradford. Never even visited me in the nick."

He looked sorry for himself. "Tell her Vera, tell her about my wife."

"She was beautiful, Know that Marilyn Monroe what killed herself? She looked just like her. Well, Dave was working nights. One night he come home early and caught her in bed with another man. He killed him. Got ten years for manslaughter."



Carlos Augusto (IFL)

"Seven," yelled Dave, "Seven for good behaviour." He thundered.

And this girl here, my Vera, she come to see me in the jail, didn't you Darling?"

"Yeah," said Vera wearily, the faintest contempt in her tired eyes and then while he closed his eyes for a second in a habitual expression of self satisfaction she sneaked a grim wink at me.

"But Vera doesn't tell lies? do you darling? Do you?"

"No,"

"See we got it hard love, you're a nice girl, you write that we got it hard—" Dave said.

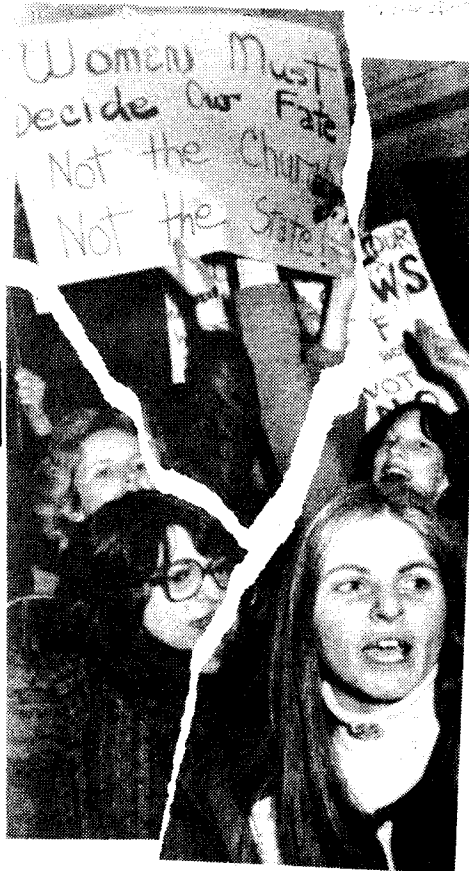
"Yeah, it's hard," Vera said, looking straight at me, "I'm with the one I love he does his best but what can we do? You

can't live on love can you?"

"That's my girl, I love my Vera."

Vera stood up, little and thin and dignified. She held her hand out to me, shook it firmly, Dave lurched to his feet. "Nice girl, I'd like to give you a kiss," I was near panic, looked at Vera, Dave stood very close to me, "Go on, give us a kiss," Vera inclined her head, narrowed her eyes as if to say I'd better do it. I turned a cheek towards him and quickly made for the door. She came with me, and said, "I'll be out of here Thursday morning," I briefly held her hand and wished her luck. There wasn't time to tell her about Women's Aid, he was there falling against her. "My Vera, I love my Vera."

How we get beyond the fragments



LAST SUMMER, three women who had been active in the women's movement and in various socialist organisations produced a pamphlet called *Beyond the Fragments*. It drew general political conclusions based on their experience of these organisations; it was advertised in the left and feminist press; and it sold out almost immediately. A second, enlarged edition has now been brought out by Merlin Press. They are holding a conference in August, which will attract many people. What lies behind their ideas, and their appeal?

A book must be quite special to appeal to such a wide spectrum of people. *Beyond the Fragments* does have something for everyone who has ever felt vague yearnings of dissatisfaction with the existing order of things and aspirations for 'something better', some sort of socialism. It expresses these vague yearnings perfectly.

More precisely, it also captures the mood of those who have acted on these feelings to join a revolutionary organisation and who have become disenchanted. It's not 1917, this isn't Russia, Lenin is dead and the meetings of most groups have the same pattern of tedious routine, abstract jargon and unspoken undercurrents of tension, resentment and desire among the small band of activists.

As the book explains, a lot of people were drawn towards socialist politics in the excitement of 1968, when revolution was in the air in Europe for the first time in decades. But gradually, the flame dwindled and now they claim, it is to be found in 'the fragments' — women's groups, tenants' groups, alternative bookshops, and so on.

The new women's liberation movement

generated excitement. It challenged accepted ideas about a 'woman's place' and the 'natural' relations between the sexes. And it did lead to a redefinition of what was political. Abortion ceased to be a private matter; it was discussed in trade union meetings; the TUC and NAC called a demonstration for abortion rights.

Lynne Segal, Hilary Wainwright and Sheila Rowbotham start from the new methods of organisation developed in the women's movement and go on to argue that these point the way forward for a new kind of socialist organisation.

The assumption is that the Tory victory means that the Left has failed. Much of the book is devoted to side-swiping at the Left groups in a way which can only confirm the 'Citizen Smith' image dear to the hearts of the bourgeoisie. The problem then is to find some way in which the various autonomous groups, Left groups and the Left in the Labour Party can co-operate together to transform consciousness in order to struggle for power, a struggle in which 'a parliamentary majority will be important, but only on the basis of, and accountable to, a strong extra-parliamentary movement'.

But has the Left failed so miserably? It is significant that the first edition hardly mentioned *Womens Voice*, while the second discusses it solely in terms of gossip about the SWP. *Womens Voice* shows that a hard Leninist organisation was capable of responding to the challenge of the new women's politics, of discussing orgasms and unions in the same magazine without hiding behind jargon. We're not making any great claims for our circulation and our success, but we are

saying the *Womens Voice* represents an important departure for socialist politics.

Perhaps more important is the argument about the Tory victory and the failure of the Left. It's true that a large number of workers did vote Tory last May, and that this does represent a failure. It represents the hopes pinned on the false promises of the Labour Party failure, who in office behaved like the Tories with one difference.

They cut spending on welfare, used troops to break the firemen's strike told us to tighten our belts in the national interest. For most people in this country, 'socialism' doesn't mean the SWP, it means the Labour Party — Callaghan and Shirley Williams as well as Tony Benn. And given the record of the last Labour government, it's not surprising that people voted in disgust for Thatcher and a change.

So what is the way forward? The authors of *Beyond the Fragments* claim not to be offering one. They put forward tentative suggestions, and criticise Leninists for their inflexibility. They say that our theory acts, not as a guide to practice but as blinkers which prevent us from seeing the world.

We'd agree that times are hard. The media push out Thatcher's message for her. People are overwhelmed with worries about rising prices and keeping their jobs, if they have them. They don't believe that things can change for the better, still less that they can help to push change along. In this atmosphere of gloom and despondency, the ideas of *Beyond the Fragments* are attractive, because it does seem unrealistic to be a revolutionary. But however difficult it is to be a socialist in the 1980s, we can be certain about some things. We know what happens to mass extra-parliamentary movements which are used as stage armies for parliamentary majorities. They are crushed as they were in Chile. We know the capitalists and their state won't surrender without a fight.

It is being dogmatic to insist that we know the cost of failure? *Womens Voice* and *Socialist Worker* do not claim to be the complete alternative to all the Fleet Street papers, to the false promises of the Labour Party and the naked threat of the Tories. We're trying to build that alternative, because we believe that we do have two choices — socialism or barbarism.

Like the authors of *Beyond the Fragments*, we believe in learning from our experience. The lessons that revolutionary socialists draw on go back from 1917, through the rise of fascism in the 1930s to the fall of Allende in 1972. And they show that there are many roads to defeat. Lynne Segal, Sheila Rowbotham and Hilary Wainwright seem to suggest that we should just sit down at the crossroads or else just muddle along, certain only of our doubts.

Lin James

WOMENS HEALTH

Breast cancer What chance for survival?

IN WESTERN Europe and North America, cancer of the breast is the cause of one in every twenty five of all deaths among women. More significant than this is the fact that after accidents and suicide it is the biggest killer of very young women (aged 25 to 34), and the biggest killer of all women aged 35 to 54 years.

One fact which makes doctors think that this could be prevented is the great variation in the number of women who get the disease in different parts of the world. When looking at death rates in different countries you have to take into account the fact that women may live longer in some places than in others. But the studies which show the international variations in breast cancer are 'standardised for age' so we can say that these differences are due to something other than the ages of women in the different countries.

The 'less modern' of the industrialised countries such as Eastern Europe, Italy and Portugal, have rates varying around 15 death per 100,000 women per year. Highest rates are found in the USA (22 per 100,000) and England, Wales, Netherlands, Denmark and Scotland (around 26 per 100,000).

There is one nation which stands out, and this is Japan, which has an age-standardised rate of only 4.03 deaths per 100,000 women per year, despite the fact that it greatly resembles the high-risk countries in so many ways. One reason that had been put forward for the higher rates of breast cancer in industrialised countries is that women are able to control their fertility and have fewer babies, and are less likely to breast feed because they go out to work more often. This sort of explanation has always seemed a convenient way of blaming women themselves for the disease, and of saying 'Well, you have to pay a price for being freed from the kitchen and the cradle.' But women in Japan do not have more babies than English or American

women, nor do they start their families earlier, nor breast feed more often. Yet there are six times fewer breast cancer deaths in Japan.

Some investigators have become interested in the relative amount of animal fat in the diet of different nations, as this seems to be a major difference between Japan and other industrialised nations. It does not seem likely that the cancer is caused by a virus, because there is no obvious reason why this virus should flourish better in more modern countries (that would be the opposite of all other viruses, which tend to be kept at bay by modern sanitation and better nutrition).

A study reported in 1975 concentrated on single women only, looking at the comparison between countries which are members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The OECD keeps food statistics for all its members. Limiting the study to breast cancer among single women ruled out any differences between countries caused by fertility differences. This study found little difference in rates of breast cancer between single women and married women, so that having a lot of babies did not seem to be protecting women particularly well. Another very recent study reported in 1979 that in countries where a high fat diet is consumed women are more likely to develop breast cancer even when there is no difference in height, weight and the age at which they started their periods.

As yet there are no ideas as to HOW a high fat diet could influence the risk of getting breast cancer. It may be that certain polluting substances tend to be concentrated in animal fats. It is a fascinating but little known fact that even women who are not breast feeding secrete a 'breast fluid' which is very high in fatty substances and which gets contaminated very heavily with substances from the woman's environment, just as breast milk does. For example, nicotine is found

in the breast fluid of smokers, and barbiturate in the fluid of women taking sleeping pills.

Research workers have not yet reached the stage where they can give very positive advice on prevention of breast cancer. It is widely agreed that, for OTHER reasons such as the prevention of heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and diseases of the bowel, our diet should be higher in vegetable matter. It has also been shown in many experiments on *animals* that large doses of vitamins such as those found in fresh fruit and vegetables can protect them against the development of tumours. But researchers are cautious about comparing animal and human results.

Another thing that the medical research workers do not take into account is that it is hard for working class British or American women to have access to fresh foods of the type some of them recommend. Fruit and the more appetising vegetables are becoming a luxury, and another luxury for many women is the proper sort of storage place and the time and energy to prepare them. Advertising directed at children is much more concentrated on junk foods such as high-fat MacDonalds hamburgers, fried chicken, pizzas etc than on simple fresh produce, fish and grains. The more processed, tampered with and concentrated a food is the more profit there is to be made from it. It SHOULD be a simple sort of piece of advice which can do no harm and which may in the future be proved to be very beneficial, that every woman and man can easily take advantage of: eat more fresh fruit and vegetables. But the politics of food make it not so simple.

In the absence of any reliable method of avoiding cancer-producing agents, women have to rely upon early diagnosis and treatment. There is now little doubt that many tumours of the breast need to be found as early as possible to give the best chance of survival.

The British Breast Group is a group of physicians and surgeons prominent in the areas of research and treatment of breast diseases, including cancer. They are dismayed at the great variation in services available to women in different towns who have found lumps and been sent for investigation by their GPs. Women often have to *wait* to be seen in hospital. The highest standard of equipment and trained staff to diagnose the lump and treat it if necessary are not available in all parts of Great Britain. The Group recommend that every major hospital set up its own Breast Clinic and that GPs should be able to give *immediate* access to these clinics at the first moment of suspicion. The catch is that, as a recent screening programme in Edinburgh has shown, in order to detect cancers at the earliest possible moment, the health service would have to spend around £6000 pounds for each case detected. What chance can we have, therefore, of getting improved chances of survival for any woman who contracts breast cancer under present economic policies?

Mel Bartley

REVIEWS

Kramer v Kramer The Sober Reality

KRAMER VS KRAMER is a memorable film. Poignantly scripted and memorably acted, it involves you whole-sale right from the beginning. The end of the Kramers' marriage and their fight over the custody of their son Billy is presented in a way that forces you into an emotional reaction. You watch, and in spite of yourself you are seduced into sympathy for the deserted father who so clumsily beins to look after his son. Your admiration grows with his dedication. Eventually the film carries you into resentment towards the wife's solicitor. You understand why the father refuses to appeal when the decision goes against him—for that would mean putting Billy into the witness box. Yet you feel sad. And you fell sad again at the end of the film, which has you almost in tears when the wife who has won the divorce case realises that she cannot take her son away from his father and the "home" they have together.

It is a great performance from Dustin Hoffman and Meryl Streep. It's a double

success—a box-office hit and a shrewd chunk of pro-male propaganda. Essentially beneath the tears and the pain, behind the heavy court-room dialogue, assumed in every heaving and beautiful close-up, is a struggling vision of male excellence. The advertising blurb on the posters tells you that this film is about three people. But that's nonsense. It's really a film about only one.

Dustin Hoffman gets all the best lines, Meryl Streep as the wife has little more than a walk-on part. There is nothing about the circumstances which forced her to desert her husband and son. We are given only a hammy glimpse in a letter to Billy in which she talks about having to find out what sort of person she really is.

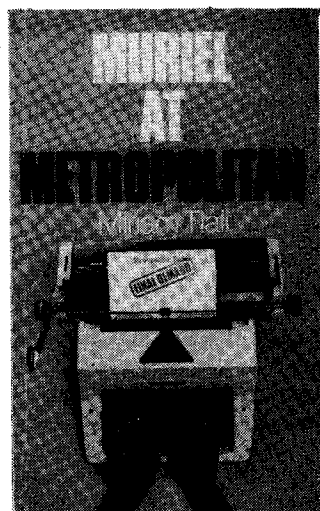
It's all rather unlikely, as is the behaviour of Dustin Hoffman. We're asked to believe that this advertising whizz-kid changes overnight from an insensitive careerist who drives his wife out into an child-oriented super-dad who loses his job because of his domestic commitments. I'd like to think that it was

possible. But single dads at that level are more likely to have to work and employ a childminder just as most women have to. Dustin Hoffman is playing out a male fantasy that comes on somewhere between the fourth and the sixth pint. It's miles from the sober reality.

Many marriages break up. The result is that thousands of women are coping alone with their kids. No-one marvels at their achievement. And they can't count on Hollywood to project their efforts in blushing technicolour. Women's liberation may have got women out of rotten marriages, but it's a partial success. For women left with kids to bring up are in the worst of all worlds—unprotected and unliberated.

When you go to see this film try to look at it from the woman's point of view. If you succeed you'll not need Kleenex to join the sniffles around you. You'll feel angry that so much talent can be directed towards a myth that has been going strong for 2000 years.

Anna Paczuska



We don't need your education

'CHILDREN OF SOWETO' BY ROSALYNDE AINSLIE AND LISA KOOPER, SOUTH AFRICA RACIAL AMITY TRUST, 89 CHARLOTTE STREET, LONDON W1 (40p)
'MURIEL AT METROPOLITAN' BY MIRIAM TLALI, LONGMAN DRUMBEAT (95p)

"WE DON'T need your education. We don't need your thought control." 'Another Brick in the Wall' by Pink Floyd is the marching song of the coloured (mixed race) students in South Africa. It has been banned. Students in Capetown, first, and now in Johannesburg and Durban have been on strike for a month. They are protesting about their rotten, second-class schools.

For white children education is free. The state spends 605 rand per white child. It spends only a quarter of that for each coloured child, and one fifteenth (39) rand for each black child.

These kids are facing tear gas and bullets—the full wrath of an armed police force. Yet they are still on strike, still in the streets. 854 pupils were in court in one night after a demonstration in Johannesburg; 758 face charges under the Riotous Assemblies Act.





Why? Why are they putting their very lives on the line? If you want to understand it better, buy two little books—'Children of Soweto' is a 30 page book. It is the story of a typical family and their problems. Alongside each part of the story, there is a page of information and facts. There are beautiful woodcuts.

'Muriel at Metropolitan' gives a deeper view. It was written by Miriam Tlali and is her own story.

It's best to just quote a bit of the book: "I am no authority in the study of human behaviour. I do not profess great knowledge. I am not a writer. But I do not have to be any of these to know about Africans, their feelings, hopes, desires and aspirations. I have read a lot of trash by the so-called 'authorities' on the subject of the urban Africans—those who spend most of their lives with the whites in their business places and their homes; who travel with them day and night from place and place all over Southern Africa, who toil side by side with all the other races in all walks of life to make this country the paradise it is said to be.

'The Republic of South Africa is a country divided into two worlds. The one, a white world—rich, comfortable, for all practical purposes organised—a world in fear, armed to the teeth. The other, a black world; poor, pathetically neglected and disorganised—voiceless, oppressed, restless, confused and unarmed—a world in transition, irrevocably weaned from all tribal ties.'

'I have come to realise that the more you are ready to give, the less you are likely to receive. That people often

take you for granted. That sooner or later you will be forced to demand what should have been given to you without persuasion. This rule (if I may call it that), holds for most commodities, material and abstract.

'Miriam at Metropolitan' describes the *constant* aggravation that a black in South Africa faces. But children these days don't laugh and shrug their shoulders. They see the victory of the freedom fighters in Zimbabwe. And they want that freedom too.

Jenny Jackson

Motherhood

MATERNITY LETTERS FROM WORKING WOMEN Edited by Margaret Llewelyn Davis. Virago. £1.95

THIS IS a collection of letters from working class women sent in response from the Women's Co-op Guild at the beginning of this century to be used in a campaign to improve the virtually non-existent maternity and infant care then available to poorer women.

At the time the subject matter was amazing and almost unmentionable. It was the public revelation of unpalatable facts. Pressure from the guild helped to secure the inclusion of 30 shillings maternity benefit in Lloyd George's National Insurance Act and in 1913 the benefit was accepted as legally the property of the mother. This didn't of course

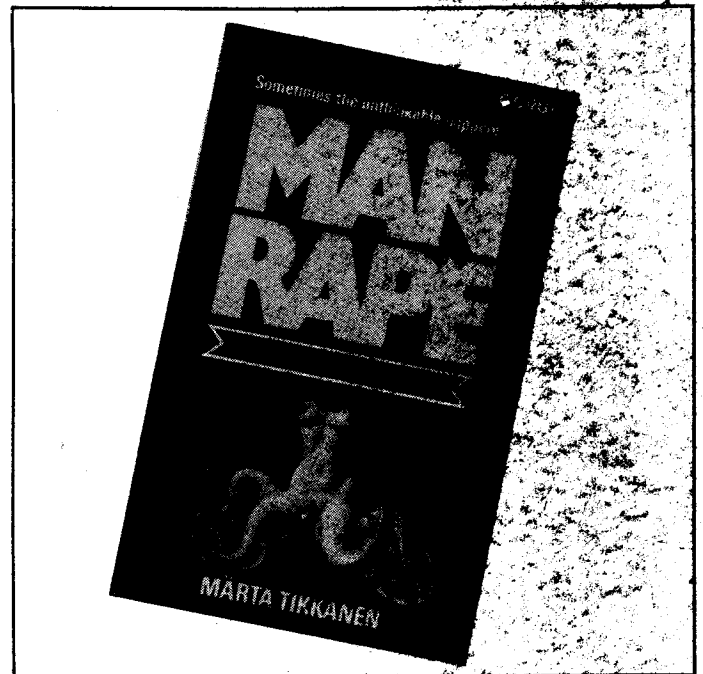
get to the heart of the problem—negligent medical care, poor feeding, ignorance.

This is a book of individual women's feelings. It gives an overall impression of exhaustion, resignation, despair and endurance. There is frequent mention of abortion, commonly referred to as 'drugs' — epsom salts, castor oil, pennyroyal, all kinds of things which rarely produced an effect other than nausea. These were all available over the chemist's counter.

Infinitely more dangerous were the remedies based on a lead substance. Those who took them were effected by symptoms of severe lead poisoning often leading to

insanity or death. Mention of birth control is relatively infrequent. By 1914 there had been improvements in some of the bigger hospitals but this high level of care was not the common experience of the letter writers and they tended to be relatively better off than their poorer sisters. One little snippet because I could go on forever: "All the beautiful in motherhood is very nice if one has plenty to bring up a family on, but what real mother is going to bring life into the world to be pushed into the "broodery of the world" at the earliest possible moment?"

Read it! There are obvious parallels to life today. Maggie Burns, 'Pupil Midwife Oldham'



Man Rape

MAN RAPE BY MARTA TIKKANEN Corgi, 95p

DESPITE THE cover and title, "Man Rape" is not a cheap, sensational story. The book is a mixture between a novel and an essay. The more fictional part involves a woman, Eva Randers, who is violently raped by a man. It is about the horror, disgust and confusion she suffers as a result of this. Eva is confused by her own response: she feels an overwhelming need and desire to hurt and humiliate that man in *exactly* the same way in which she has been hurt and humiliated. She wants him to understand fully how she felt. She sets out to rape her rapist....

"Man Rape" is an ambitious piece of writing, exploring many themes. Its major theme is sexual violence and society's attitude that it is largely a male prerogative! The book is about the dishonest and dehumanising way in which men and women are often encouraged and conditioned to relate to one another.

"Man Rape" is a serious work which contributed to our understanding of male violence against women. It smashes some of the myths like 'nice girls don't get raped' or 'women ask for it'. It also shows that men often don't know they're violating women. We really must try to impress on men that yes means yes and no means no. Read this book—it's interesting and positive.

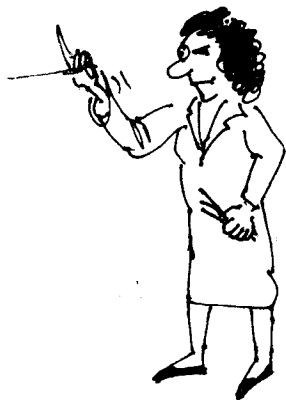
Christine Denn
Tottenham AWV

Acupuncture we've plenty to lose

Dear Womens Voice
 About the acupuncture article in June WV. Sorry Tessa, but we do have plenty to lose. £5 to £12 for a start. The National Health Service. Our pride... if you are poor... indeed! Our consciousness. Why bother to support those fighting health cuts, as on page 4 of the same issue, when we can all toddle off to the private quacks our acquaintances have recommended? What is this? Some kind of alternative Women's Journal?

Save your money sisters. Save it and send it to Hammersmith WV, the Camden and Islington Campaign against the Health Cuts, Birmingham WV.

They need acupuncture like a stab in the back.
 Jeffer Clements
 Gravesend.



20 June 76



Fighting health cuts

...the article in the June issue of Womens Voice...
 ...the article in the June issue of Womens Voice...
 ...the article in the June issue of Womens Voice...

DEFEND OUR UNIONS

...the article in the June issue of Womens Voice...
 ...the article in the June issue of Womens Voice...
 ...the article in the June issue of Womens Voice...

LETTERS



Mental illness social disease?

Dear Womens Voice
 We found Theresa Brown's account of life with her 'schizophrenic' mother (*Tales We Tell Our Sisters* June 80) very moving. We are a group of women who work in a Psychiatric Day Centre, and felt that the article provided a useful springboard from which we could put a discussion of 'mental illness' into a feminist and socialist perspective.

There is a tendency to believe that the people our society calls 'mad' or 'schizophrenic' are suffering from some kind of illness. We are told that some of us, particularly women, blacks, the working class, are somehow predisposed to 'mental illness' in the same way that some of us are vulnerable to T.B. or cancer. We are also led to believe that given the right 'cure' — be it ECT, drugs or lobotomy — the problem will disappear.

What we as feminists and socialists must realise is that what we are told is a form of illness, with physical origins is in fact a response to the social conditions we are forced to live with.

It is accepted that women are 'more prone' to mental illness. Far more women take psychotropic drugs (tranquillisers, antidepressants etc) than men and far more women (one in 12 males, one in eight females) spend time in psychiatric hospitals. We must realise that this is not the result of female hormones or genes

but is directly related to our position and role in society. Women are oppressed in the home and at work. Society expects women to be passive, to repress their anger and frustration, and to bear the burden of having and raising children in isolation. Is it any wonder then that many women become depressed, feel persecuted or take refuge in an alternative reality?

Mental suffering is without doubt produced by the society in which we live. What we call 'mental illness' is caused by a system based on making profit for the few.

People spend most of their life doing mindless jobs in bad conditions for lousy wages in order to produce useless goods. Both inside and outside the workplace we are isolated from each other. The unemployed face boredom and frustration (in Corby the suicide rate is four times the national average). Indeed, the whole value system clearly puts strains on the individual. We are constantly told that we must consume and conform in order to be happy, to be socially desirable, to have a good sex life. We are taught that we should accept our lot in life.

As long as we view mental suffering in isolation, divorced from its social causes, we continue to scapegoat individuals and in so doing protect the interests of the society that oppresses us.
 Liz, Penny, Ruth, Ragnhild,
 Sheila
 Acton, West London.

Childminders - a realistic alternative

Dear Womens Voice
 I feel I must write to protest on behalf of a group of women much maligned by the rest of the media and now, apparently, by yourselves also. I mean childminders. In your article about the closure of Nightingale Lane Day Nursery, you state 'Childminders are not a good alternative to nurseries'. In all other things, I thoroughly support Annette, the closure of such a good nursery on the spurious grounds of underuse was no surprise to those of us working in Wandsworth, and serves only to underline the lack of both understanding and humanity of the Tory Councillors. They supposedly view childminding as a cheap alternative to day nurseries and must be fought on this front. However, to dismiss the service that is offered by childminders as you have done shows a lack of thought and sympathy which I am disappointed to find in your pages.

Childminders like most other (female) homeworkers, work long hours for relatively little monetary reward. While it is sadly true that there are minders kept in employment by desperate parents who, if they applied to register today, would be considered unsuitable, this ignores the large number of minders who offer an excellent service to children and to their parents. Minders are also open all year round and can offer a more flexible service than day nurseries to parents whose working hours do not fit neatly into 8 am to 6 pm.

What we should be fighting for is more day nurseries and more support for childminders so that parents can be offered realistic alternatives when seeking day care for their children. (Not every parent views a day nursery place as preferable as you seem to assume).

Perhaps you should contact a few Child Minding Associations so that they could put their point of view in your paper.
 Hilary J. Sergeant
 South London

What kind of men?

Drop in and size up a new town's assets



Paula Hitching

Pauline Chan

Kate Shroob

REVEALED — Aycliffe's Angels. These are the eight girls who Development Corporation chiefs hope, will attract new business and new jobs to the town.

They will feature in a glossy brochure which is being issued. A 'look at our town' which should be distributed at the

The Development Corporation has issued a brochure of the town's assets and prospects. It is hoped that this will attract new business and new jobs to the town.



Christine Wray



Louise Adams



Mandy Pick

But they won't be baring all

A spokesman for the Development Corporation said: 'The girls are being featured in a brochure of the town's assets and prospects. It is hoped that this will attract new business and new jobs to the town.'

Dear Womens Voice
What kind of men must run Aycliffe development Corporation to need women's bodies to get trade for the town? Do businessmen really look at a good figure and decide to take their firm there?

My local paper has made me wish I was not a woman for printing articles like this.

**Kath Kay
Darlington**

Sick of sexist sport

Dear Womens Voice,
I have just been watching the competition to find the Junior Gymnast of the Year on TV. The sexism of such a competition sticks out like a sore thumb.

How much longer do our female gymnasts have to carry on being denied entry to certain events solely on the grounds of their sex? I'm referring to events like the parallel bars and the rings. Similarly, how many men get the chance to use the asymmetric bars or the beam?

Holding the Olympics in a country of 'equal opportunity' won't help much either. I very much doubt whether Moscow will provide us with a women's marathon, pole vault event or weight lifting competition.

Even when both sexes do enter the same type of event, their styles are likely to be judged in different ways. The womens floor gymnastics is

far more interesting to watch than the mens and the style of most of the male competitors is decidedly more inhibited than that of their female counterparts, yet they still score the same, so are we to assume that different standards are expected of men and women?

These sexist rules disgust me enough not to bother with sport any more. Does anyone else feel this way or am I alone in this desire for equal opportunities in sport?

**Zoe Pitt
Nottingham**

TIME TO THINK ABOUT NURSERY WORKERS TOO

Dear Womens Voice
Although the article *Taking your children to work* made some valuable points about setting up a workplace nursery like Kingsway, it didn't mention an equally important issue, the workers. As past workers at Kingsway, we would like to express our feelings about the lack of support from management (parents =

Typist's day of rebellion

Dear Womens Voice

I really enjoyed the article in May's issue of *Womens Voice* in Tales We Tell Our Sisters.

I too have just finished my audio TOPS course and can really sympathise with the humiliations that are very much part and parcel of this type of course.

I am using my audio as a 'temp' for the time being, and during my last booking had a small inspiration while typing one afternoon. The poem I

wrote is enclosed, and I really hope you will be able to print it as I'm sure a lot of women in my position will relate to it.

Against my will, I was forced to use a word-processor at this job, they might as well have given me a lobotomy! At least I had my own quiet rebellion, on my last day I erased a very boring standard letter off the machine and recorded my poem in its place. Do you think they'll get the message?

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A TEMP

Typing, typing, all day long,
The lonesome 'temp' struggles on and on.
The writing's illegible, the tape's unclear,
'Excuse me, please, so sorry to bother you,
But can you explain this here?'

Boss raises his surly eyebrow, and in a patronising note
Mumbles his explanation in the midst of cigar smoke.
You can't help it, you're only a 'temp'
And a woman at that,
Back at the typewriter, your bottom grows fat.

You must be efficient, you must be fast,
But not so clever as to object to a task.
Another coffee, lunch time soon,
Where to? she glanced around the room.

She took her sandwiches, just in case
She did not get a lunchtime date.
At one o'clock, silence, as the typing ceased,
The 'temp' chewed on a lettuce leaf.

'Don't forget the three o'clock post' he wailed,
She never did find time to file her nails.
Not long now, just one more hour,
Fingers flying, typewriter on fire.

Her identity lies somewhere outside that door,
Oh by the way, we don't need you any more.
Such a shame we didn't get to know you better,
Before you go, just type this letter.

**Joy Anderson
South London**

management) especially when issues of pay and conditions were being discussed.

We totally agree with parental involvement, but not to the extent of treating the people who look after their children with the attitude 'you're here to work, that's all you need to know'.

Well, we know that nursery nurses have always been

treated appallingly — low wages, little say in policy making and lack of recognition for the very important and worthwhile job they do. So we urge people when setting up nurseries to take a more progressive move for the nursery workers now and of the future.

**Anne Cohen, Toni Mackay,
North London.**

Dear Jane

My daughter wouldn't like it

'YOU SHOULD see her, making an exhibition of herself, every Saturday in the middle of the High Street too. What really gets me is when she stands up on a chair in the market place and starts making speeches about abortion. My friends give me some stick about her, none of their mothers do things like that. Then she's always asking me if I want to go with her to these weird places, see strange groups play, listen to boring speeches, and go to discos where there are only women.' And some of the people she goes around with ... she just makes me want to die with embarrassment.'

For many adolescents one of the worst things that you

can possibly do to them is to make them conspicuous, make them different, the worst accusation they can make to you is that you have 'shown them up' in front of their friends. On a superficial level it can be mild embarrassment that young people feel when their parents don't seem to fall into the role and mould that they suppose parents should be. At worst it can be a hurtful and bitter experience that can badly damage relationships.

Part of the cause is in the parent child relationship itself. Young people are often not encouraged to think of adults as individuals with separate personalities and identities. I remember being quite surprised when I

first realised that my parents had quite distinct personalities from each other, previously they had seemed to act as this well co-ordinated and rather repressive parental collective! Adolescents may also have very romantic and idealised ideas about adult relationships, and it can come as shock or a disappointment when they realise that parents as adults make mistakes, maybe very big ones.

Single parents may find that their children are moralistic and censorious about them meeting new partners, and apply a different set of standards to their parents than that which they might accept from other adults and their peers. The effect that their disapproval or outright hostility may have upon their parents is something that younger people often fail to grasp. A parent may feel torn between a lover and wanting to maintain a good relationship with their child.

I think that perhaps the only way to try and overcome this problem is to attempt to break down the barriers on both sides of the relationship. It has to be a two way process, if the adult treats the child as an equal individual when discussing their own relationship, and their relationships with other people, what they both think and feel about that, then the young person may quite reasonably expect that this should extend into other areas of life as well.

Adolescents get conflicting messages about what their attitudes and behaviour should be all the time, the 'grow up and behave responsibly' kind, and the 'you're too young to know/understand/do that' as well. Both parents and children may find that it is a difficult process to work out what their changing relationships with each other are to be.

JANE FOSTER

Yours Worried

Kevin—how could you?

KEVIN, KEVIN, how could you?

Back with a splash you may well be but have you left all self-respect in Hamburg?

Worshipped by millions for his footwork on the field, Kevin Keegan is a real twentieth century hero. The pleasure many felt at the news of his return to an English club was not simply born out of jingoism, but out of the anticipation at seeing so much more of one of the best footballers in the world.

And for many there was more. One of the most appealing things about Kevin Keegan is that despite his success, he's stuck to his roots. He's a working class lad, always will be, doesn't deny it and is even proud of it.

There was a TV interview not long ago when he spoke about his childhood in Doncaster. He recalled how his Dad—the whole household in fact—hated

the Tories. How during an election campaign once, the Tories wanted to pay his Dad for the use of his front room as a campaign centre. But he wouldn't have it. Even at a time when they were really short, he wouldn't have Tories set foot in his house.

And that still meant something to Kevin. Wealthy he may be but his heart was always in the right place.

Which is why so many fans must have felt pretty sick at the sight of their Kevin Keegan

kissing—yes kissing—Margaret Thatcher.

Of course there's always publicity. That's what keeps it all going, keeps the press on their toes and the money rolling in. And Kevin cannot opt out.

But let me ask you this Kevin:

Would you have kissed Jim Callaghan when he was in No 10? Kissed him for a front page picture and a spot on ITN?

Yet you kiss a Tory prime minister simply because she is a

woman. You kiss her despite the fact that her cuts in education probably mean that schools may have to do without footballs because they can't afford 'luxuries', despite the fact that sports grants are cut, sports centres forced to close and thousands of kids kick their balls in the street because there's no-where else to go and nothing else to do and their chances of becoming a star like yourself receded further every day under the onslaught of Tory rule.

I'm surprised you can sleep in your bed at night. But perhaps it's easy with a few million cushioning your pillow.

Of course the fans will keep coming. They'll shout for you and love you and pay your wages as ever but I think there will be not a few who will look at you in a different light now. A jaded light, a cynical light. It's easy to sell out when you're at the top, predictable even and mostly we lay no blame, but how could you stoop quite so low?

Kevin, Kevin, how could you?

Helen Francis

SPORT

Playing with fire

by
**Christine
Fellowes**

GOD, WHY can't she hurry with those pots...what excuse can I make to hang around any longer...I was trying to be casual...yeah that's the word, casual. Put yer make-up on again, then, by that time, she'll have finished washing up, and you can casually walk out the door with her...

I didn't usually walk up our road with me mum, but today was...well...different...

Exit, through the front door and into the road. So far, so good.

"What you been hanging about for our Chris, what's up?"

Oh god, ere goes...casual...remember...

"Mum, you busy tonight? Will you come to the doctor's with us?"

"Why, you been having more of those headaches?"

"No, not exactly"....

"You're not having a baby our Christine are you?" (mum always calls me Christine when she's being serious).

Talk about hitting the nail right on the head, and scoring the jackpot first time! I couldn't hold them in any longer, and floods of tears came running down my cheeks, mascara and all.

"I'm not sure, but I think so, it was the first

TALES WE TELL OUR SISTERS

time mum, honest" (you rotten liar, Christine how could you lie like that, its more like the first hundred times.....)

Ever noticed that when you're trying to get somewhere in a hurry, the bus always stops at every stop. In fact I'm not too sure that they weren't putting up new stops that day, as we went along! Christ, we're here. Dr Mort's surgery. Bloody good name for a doctor that isn't it. Looking round half of them in here look like death warmed up. Wonder how long we'll have to wait. (They didn't have appointments in those days).

"Next please", receptionist smiles, mum smiles, doctor smiles, everyone is smiling except guess who.

"Now then, what can I do for you, got a cold have you Christine...(must have been the red nose that put him on that idea)

"Not exactly, doctor, she's been playing with fire. ...(mum has this strange habit of thinking that I am suddenly struck dumb, in the company of others.)

"It looks like she's gone and got herself pregnant, with that silly boyfriend of hers. (subtle me mum)

"Oh dear, now when was your last period," Oh, he's talking TO ME..."er,...about five weeks ago"

"Dear, dear, and have you been taking precautions..."(what are them?)

"It was her first time doctor," good catholic me mother.

"Well don't worry Mrs Hadfield, it's only the good girls that get caught"...(good, bloody 'ell I bet I could make their hair stand on end...)

"Right, well take these tablets, one today and the rest each morning for the next three days..if nothing happens (I think he was expecting a miracle)...don't bother coming back until she's got herself married, and then we'll arrange a nice appointment at the ante natal clinic for her in her new married name, save her the embarrassment of using her single name, and not having a wedding ring on....the boy will marry her won't he...?"

"Thanks for your time doctor, anyway, come on Christine (she was being serious again)

No doubt the receptionist was busy on the

tom toms, with the news. We got the tablets and one was shoved down me throat immediately. "Now look love, you go to work, and mind you, not a word to anyone, I'll tell your dad, he'll stand by you love, he'll be shocked but don't worry we always stand by our own."

I was feeling pretty sick by this time, both mentally and physically. What could I do. I'll try and be casual again....

"You don't suppose it might be better if I had an...."(long pause)

"Go on love..."

"...an abortion"

"Well I'll go to our house, we'll have none of that talk. You don't go worrying your silly head about things like that. And besides, who'd pay for it? His tight fisted mother? Fancy talking hypocrite!" (Pay for an abortion...God she'd bloody do it for me to save her baby boy's reputation...)

"Now don't be worried about coming home, tonight, I'll talk to your dad, and nothing more will be said about it. OK love?"

It makes you wonder doesn't it looking at your parents, how they ever got round to having you, 'cos they always seem to think that if you don't talk about things they go away...have you noticed? We both parted until tea time, at least one bit of it was over...only the worst bit now to contend with, telling HIS parents. I can just hear them, "I told you they're all the same those girls from the council estates, after a nice lad like you. I knew it would come to this, would have thought a girl from the grammar school might have had a bit more sense...what will the neighbours say?"

It seems funny now, looking back on all that. It was nearly ten years ago, and my little girl will be nine next week. I've got a little girl five too, and yet when I talk to my daughters about babies, and where they come from, I always tell them about the pill, and how it stops me from having any more babies. I wish somebody had told me. It may seem stupid at 17 to get pregnant, but I always thought it wouldn't happen to me. I've been divorced nearly four years, now, funny too, 'cos I always thought that would never happen to me either!

WHAT IS GOING ON?

WV groups

● **ABERDEEN** Womens Voice for more information telephone Liz 51059

● **ABERYSTWYTH** Womens Voice meets regularly. Contact c/o Students Union, UCW, Aberystwyth. Babysitting available.

● **NORTH BIRMINGHAM** Womens Voice meets fortnightly. Phone Maggie 021 449 4793

● **SOUTH BIRMINGHAM** Womens Voice meets fortnightly. Phone Jill 021 459 1718

● **BLACK COUNTRY** Sundays fortnightly. 2.30, 27 Glen Court, Compton Road. Children welcome.

● **Bradford** Womens Voice group meets fortnightly. Kids welcome. Contact Janet c/o Textile Hall, Westgate Bradford or phone Trish 306447.

● **Bristol** Womens Voice every Wednesday, 7.30pm, at The Inkworks 22 Hepburn Road (off Brigstocke Road), St Pauls. Ring Katrina Bristol 46875.

BURTON ON TRENT WV meets every week. Details from Kim 33929.

● **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 991 0443.

● **ECCLES AND SALFORD** Womens Voice. For information ring Jennie 707 2557 or Ann 737 3800

● **EDINBURGH** Womens Voice meets fortnightly on Sunday evenings. Phone Penny 557 0731 for details.

EDINBURGH

Womens' Voice street sale, 1 Saturday every month, meet in the Cafe Royal 1pm 7 June.

● **Enfield** Womens Voice meets every other Monday, 8pm, at SCOPE Community Centre, 232a Ponders End, High Street. For details ring Gill 340 7272.

● **GLASGOW** Womens Voice. For information ring Clare 959 8041 or Dorte 423 1185.

● **GLOSSOP**, Derbyshire Womens Voice meets second and fourth Tuesday of every month at 110 Victoria Street, Glossop. Phone Glossop 64287 for Carol.

● **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 11am -12.30pm. Co-op arcade on the Precinct.

● **HAMMERSMITH** Womens Voice meets regularly. Contact Kate 748-7336 for details and babysitter.

● **HARLOW** Womens Voice meets fortnightly on Wednesday at 8pm. Ring Pat, Harlow 28022.

● **HIGHBURY** Womens Voice. Details ring Elana 359 0842 (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 regularly. Ring Morag 348 2060 or Pauline 586 5693 for information and details.

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

LANCASTER Womens Voice meets regularly—ring 36196 for details.

● **LEEDS** Womens Voice group meets every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 8pm in the Central Station Hotel, Wellington Street. For more information contact Gilda 622 800 or Bev 457 098.

LEICESTER Womens Voice meets alternative tuesdays. Contact Fiona 0533 62855.

● **LEYTONSTONE** WV group meets fortnightly. Please ring Annie (556 5595) or Pam (558 1509) for details.

● **LIVERPOOL** Womens Voice meets on alternate Tuesdays at 8pm in the County Hotel. For further information phone Jane 727 1182

● **LUTON** Womens Voice meets alternative Wednesdays. Details and babysitters. Ring Jane 421266

● **MANCHESTER** University Womens Voice meets each week at 5pm in the students union.

● **MEDWAY** Womens Voice meets regularly. Telephone Lici, Medway 571628

● **NEWCASTLE** Womens Voice meets regularly. Phone Liz 854 782.

● **NEWHAM** Womens Voice. Ring Pam 534 1417

● **NORWICH** Womens Voice for more information write c/o 56 St Benedicts St. Norwich.

NOTTINGHAM WV meets every other Monday at the Womens Centre, Street. Details Chrissie Langley Mill. 62358.

● **OXFORD** Womens Voice meets fortnightly. Phone Oxford 50437 for more details.

● **PIMLICO** area Womens Voice—phone Helen 730 7983 or Leslie 834 0760 for further details.

● **READING** Womens Voice meets fortnightly. For details phone Shirley on 585554

ST HELENS WV meets alternate Mondays. Phone Carol, St Helens 28178.

● **SHEFFIELD** Womens Voice meets fortnightly at the Prince of Wales. Division Street. For details ring Sue 613739

● **SOUTHWARK** Womens Voice—anybody interested should contact Kirsten Ross on 732 4604 for further details.

SOUTH LONDON WV meets alternate Tuesdays at the Tate Library, Brixton. Ring Sally, 720 5768 for details.

● **SOUTH WEST LONDON** Womens Voice. All welcome. Information and babysitters contact Marion 947 0560.

● **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

● **TOTTENHAM** Womens Voice meets regularly. Phone Mary for information and babysitters, 802 9563.

TOWER HAMLETS WV meets fortnightly. Phone Helen 980 6030 for details and babysitters.

● **WALTHAMSTOW** Womens Voice meets alternative Tuesdays at 8pm. Phone Pauline 521 4768 or Mary Ann 520 3025.

● **Wrexham** Womens Voice Group meets fortnightly from 17 March. Telephone Heather 87293 for more details.

WV public meetings

Womens Voice **WOMEN IN HISTORY** series. 7pm **The Roebuck pub, Tottenham Court Road. (Warren Street/Goode Street Tube).** Friday nights.

Sept 5 Eleanor Marx - *Lindsay German.*

Sept 19 Kathe Kollwitz - *Anna Sullivan.*

Oct 3 Inessa Armand - *Anna Paczuska.*

Oct 18 Sarah Dickenson - *Lin James.*

Oct 31 Clara Zetkin - *Yolanda Bystram*

Nov 14 Mary MacArthur - *Linda Quinn.*

Nov 26 Rosa Luxemburg - *Marnie Holborow.*

Dec 12 Catherine Chidley - *Nora Carlin.*

ACTON WV Public Meeting. Employment Bill and Women. Sunday 6 July 3pm. Contact Ruth or Jude 740 6660 for venue details.

BRIGHTON WV meets fortnightly on Tuesday at 8pm at the Queen's Head. For information phone 696897. June 24 - Women in 'men's' jobs.

Thursday July 3 - Sylvia Pankhurst - Jan Nielson (Resource Centre).

July 8 - Sexism in Schools. July 22 - Childcare.

August 5 - Women in Unions - Yolanda Bystram.

Small ads

TYPISTS CHARTER new edition.

For information about typists making claims across the country for better pay and conditions. 10p each. Postage free on orders over 10. Write to Typists Charter, 48, Forbury Road, London, N16. Or phone Pauline Alden 01 986 3266 extension 438.

NATIONAL CHILDCARE CAMPAIGN

National Conference. Saturday 5 July, 10.30 to 5pm, Queen Mary College Student Union, Bancroft Road off Mile End Road, London, E3 (between Mile End and Stepney Green stations on Central or District lines). Creche, low cost food, pooled fares. Fee £1.50 or 75p unwaged. Details from London Nursery Campaign, 11, Trendell House, Dod Street, London E14. Tel 981 1221 Myra, 231 3033 Carol

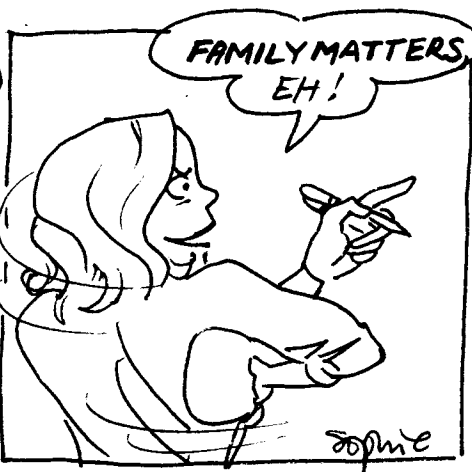
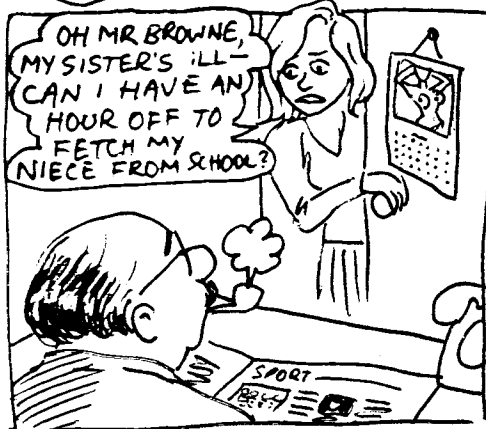
COUNTERACT Theatre Co, presently touring: **DANGER WOMEN AT WORK** New show about working conditions on the shop floor in a tights factory as work gets slacker after Xmas. For bookings phone Jane Lyndhurst, Counteract, 27, Clerkenwell Close, EC1 0BT. 01 251 4977.

BRISTOL SOCIALIST FEMINISTS

July 10 Public Meeting 7.30pm at Inkworks, 22, Hepburn Road, St Pauls. Speakers from Organisations of Women of African and Asian Descent and from Chix sweet factory.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES STUDY TOUR TO CUBA being planned for Spring 1981. This will be mixed, but there will be a woman only sub-group to look at the role of women in Cuba and woman's health. For details, write Nancy Worcester, 2 Westwick Gardens, London, W14.

SANDRA



Your nearest Womens Voice Group meets

Join Womens Voice...

join the fight

Womens Voice is an organisation that fights for women's liberation and socialism.

We fight for:

Equal pay

Free abortion and contraception

Maternity leave and child care provision

The right to work

Against all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, or race.

Women's liberation is only possible through women organising and fighting for themselves.

Women's liberation can only be achieved by linking its struggles to those of the working class and overthrowing the capitalist system.

Womens Voice supports the aims of the Socialist Workers Party. It is organisationally independent but based on the politics of the SWP.

I want to join the fight...

Name _____

Address _____

Send to Womens Voice
PO Box 82,
London, E2

'We will smash this prison'

Indian women
in struggle

This book and a FREE subscription for just

£3

Gail Omvedt explains in the first sentence of her book, 'We Will Smash This Prison', that 'the first time I ever gave a speech on Womens Liberation was to a group of illiterate, ex-untouchable, agricultural labourers in India'.

How on earth, I thought, could an American feminist make ideas of womens liberation relevant to some of the poorest, most exploited and oppressed women in the world. And what would they make of her?

The story that follows, the interviews and discussions with different groups of Indian women, their songs, their experiences of Indian politics, bring alive the complex political life of one of the largest countries in the world.

Most of the interviews were made during 1975 and 1976 and the political scene has changed much since then, but an Afterword, written in 1979, brings events and the author's analysis up to date.

It's one of those books which you should read even if you don't have a particular interest in Indian politics because it shows how even these most downtrodden women have a vision of the future and know they have to fight for it.

It's not that difficult for socialists to convince those around them that society has to change. What it is often impossible to do is to persuade them how it can be done. This is one of those books that does the persuading for you. It is the story of very courageous women.

**We'll take our children on our hips
And go to join the revolution
We'll face police batons and guns
We'll become dark in the sun**

**We are the wives of peasants
We are wives of workers
We are working women.**

Women's song of the national movement from the 1940s.

by Margaret Renn

(first published in Womens Voice February 1980)

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Please send me a copy of **'We will smash this prison: Indian Women in Struggle'.**

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