

Womens **VOICE**

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Issue 16



Rally together for women's rights

TOM ROBINSON BAND STEEL PULSE & X-RAY SPEX



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womens magazine of the
Socialist Workers Party

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Back cover

Letters, ads, news and articles
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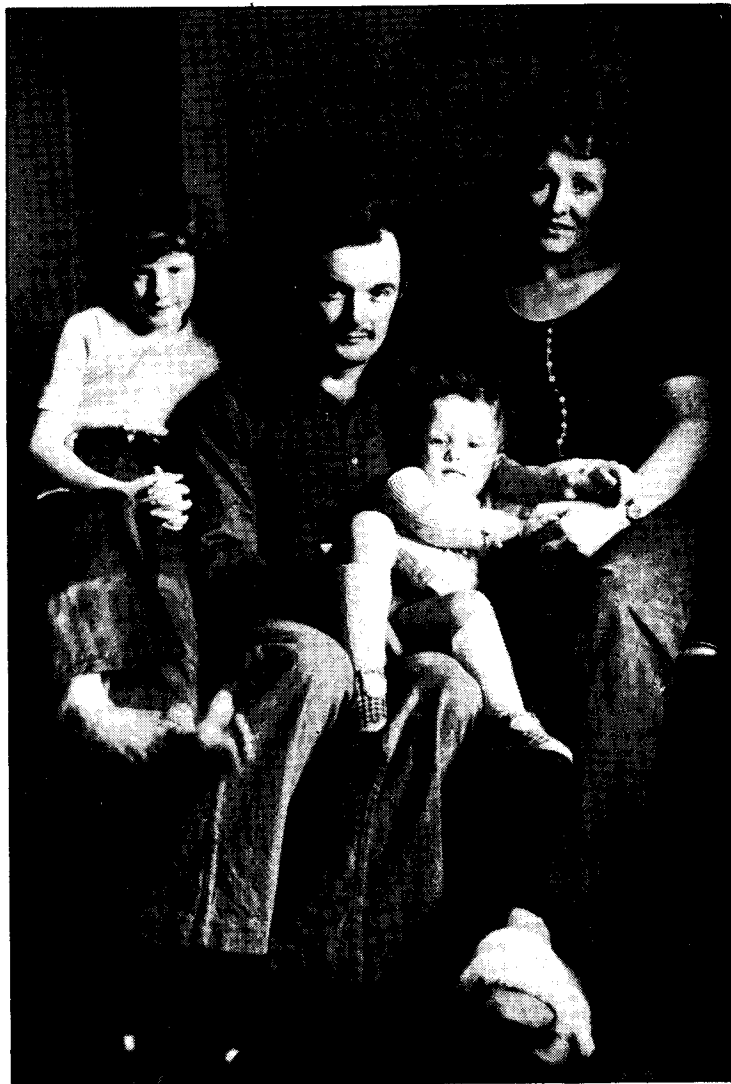
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Firemen' page 8.

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International Women's
Day—a time for celebrations
and a festival. A reminder of
our strength in the fight for a
future. But the ban on
political demonstrations in
London did not stop women
from marching on their day.
We'll keep the No-Future
Nazis off the streets, but we
are the future and we'll
march to show it! Pictures by
Angela Phillips (IFL)





OUR POINT OF VIEW **getting poorer under Labour**

APRIL is Budget month. For weeks past the Prime Minister, Jim Callaghan, the newspapers, the television have been promising that enormous tax concessions, running into millions of pounds, are going to solve all your financial problems.

Before you rush out to spend your new found wealth just take a look at a few figures.

At today's prices the average weekly income for a working man in 1974, when this Labour Government was first elected, was £70.40. That figure is after tax, and includes tax allowances, and child benefits.

Today, in 1978, the average take-home pay is £64.70. That's nearly £6 a week that has just disappeared!

At the same time every public service has gone up in price. School meals are already 25p and the Government has threatened to put them up again to 35p in the autumn. That's an increase of 50p per child, per week. Dental charges are up, so are spectacles.

The Government, of course, claims that it has the interest of working class families at heart. But the people who have suffered most for the last four years are families with young children. They spend a higher proportion of their income on basic necessities, like heating, rent, food, than anyone else. And those

are the very things that have gone up most in price.

The Government's answer has been to increase child benefits, twice. That's during a time when every other major social security benefit has been reviewed five times. That's better than the record of the Tory Government before them, but then it would be very difficult to do worse than the Tories.

The biggest scandal of all is that the Government knows that families are being hit worst of all. Two years ago some secret Cabinet papers were leaked which revealed that Mr Ennals, the Secretary of State for the Social Services, had reported all these facts to his cabinet colleagues.

Yet *they* do nothing about it. Individual families have found their own solutions to try to make ends meet. More and more women go out to work, even if there aren't the nurseries for the children. They work short hours, for low wages, to fit in, with school hours, or between tea and bed time.

Every working class family has become so much poorer under this Labour Government that no amount of jiggering around with taxes can possibly make up the money we have lost. We need pounds in our wage packets. We need a decent child benefit scheme now. We need a bit of that wealth that the Government is always saying it is about to share around, but never does.



SDA—BECAUSE OF YOU WE'RE ON THE BROO

HERE is a tale of how the government-run Scottish Development Agency moved into a business and ran it into the ground in eight short months.

The Scotfisco factory at Carntyne, Glasgow, was taken over by the state agency in June last year. One million pounds was poured into it before it closed with one day's notice on 24 February. Transport union steward Marie Roy tells the story:

'One of the management came down on 23 February to say that Scotfisco was closing and all 100 jobs were lost. He stressed that the firm was solvent and we would be able to get our entitlement—wages, holiday pay and redundancy money.

'While he was telling us that, the Receiver was sitting upstairs in his office. I feel they brought in the Receiver to con us out of our 90 days' redundancy money.

'Since the Scottish Development Agency took over this firm last June, they have made one mistake after another. They put in management who knew nothing about the history. They knew nothing about the outlets or even which seasonal product to buy.

'Despite their ignorance, they refused to take the advice of experienced workers. Yet when they moved in, we did everything we could to help, even to the point that the women were only on two shifts a week. Everyone thought: 'Ye cannae go wrong with the government.'

'We've discovered very different since then. The management made us lots of promises, like lockers, showers, central heating. But I was

more concerned about the approaching winter than promises and asked them what could they do to get us through. I'll show you what they came up with....'

Marie showed me the hut where the women used to work and which they occupied the day the factory closed. It's like a huge barn, open on two sides to all weathers. Marie continued harshly:

'The roof leaked, so management hung sheets of polythene to catch the rain!

'Two machines let out a freezing gas vapour, which swirled around our knees as we worked. The seafood had to be prepared under freezing water. Several women got frostbite. One may lose her fingers.

'Heating? They hung five heaters from the ceiling way above us. Oh, yes, management did bring in calor gas heaters—they were too expensive, so they took them away again.

'You remember how cold last winter was? Well, this is where we spent it. Night and day.

'When we picketed the SDA offices they came out and told us to be quiet. One man asked me not to embarrass them, they were a government agency and might want

to buy *other* small firms. By God, we'll embarrass them alright.

'The government has broken its own law and could try this in other places. We'll find out how other SDA places are being managed and get their support. I enjoyed our last little walk to the SDA offices—I'm 43 and I've never enjoyed myself so much in my life. We'll be taking another workers to join us.

'We've had no support from our union. Our official knew before we did that they were shutting the factory. They asked him not to tell us, so he didn't! We're fully paid up T&G members, but he won't get us strike pay, he even refused to get us a coach into Glasgow for the next picket line.

'Anything we do here, we do on our own.

'But we'll get through. We settled for 8½ per cent to help out—that's more cash they owe us. We'll be 'guarding' their machinery for them until we get it!'

• Two days after I talked to Marie, the Scottish Development Agency announced that 18 night shift workers at Braidwood Plastics factory in East Kilbride, near Glasgow, had been sacked. The men held a union meeting without the permission of the SDA management.

Christina Potrykus.



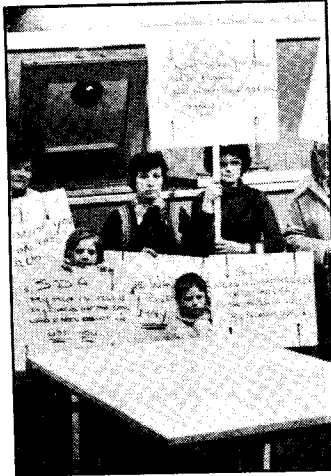
Continued from previous page

Shopfloor lawyer says:

IF THE workforce is 100 or over, under the terms of the Employment Protection Act (EPA) employers *should* give the workers' union 90 days' notice of redundancy.

If the employer does not give proper notice, then the workforce can get their union to apply to an industrial tribunal for a protective award. The tribunal *can* rule that the employer must pay them 90 days' money. If the employer is bankrupt, the workers can apply to the Secretary of State under Section 64 of the EPA. They can then be paid out of the State Redundancy Fund.

So what can you lose apart from



your job? First of all, the award is not an automatic right. The industrial tribunal can rule that there were 'special circumstances' which prevented the employers giving the right amount of notice. So even though the employers broke the law, the workers may end up with no money at all!

Even if the tribunal feels that there were no special circumstances, it does not *have* to make an award. If it does make an award, it only needs to be up to 90 days. It could be less.

Section 64 says that the Secretary of State only has to pay money that's due at the time the firm goes bust or the workers are dismissed. So if the award comes later the Secretary of

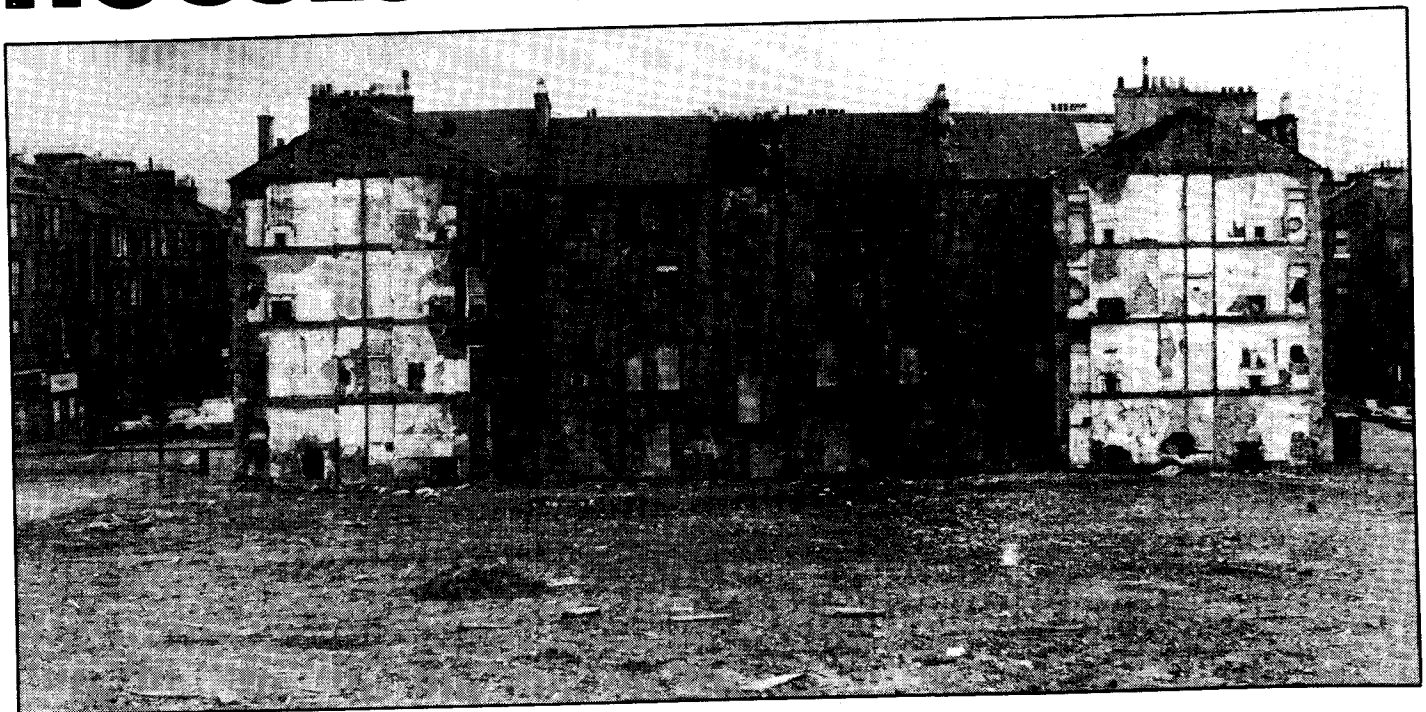
State can refuse to pay the money out of the state fund.

No workers should think that these tribunals are an easy way to get a fair deal. Only a few people who sit on them are active trade unionists.

Your employer may have behaved badly, but if he can think up a load of technical reasons for why he did not pay the money then he can win the case. Less than a third of cases sent by workers to tribunals are successful.

So don't put your faith in the law. If you can use traditional trade union methods, do so. Never trust an employer's word. Get him to write down and sign any assurances he makes.

HOUSES NOT MORE ROADS



'THE CONDITIONS are no worse than the ones I lived in during the war years.' So says the Lord Provost David Hodge about Govanhill and Crosshill in Glasgow.

Well, we think they should be better than that! The Govanhill Tenants Association was set up 16 months ago to fight against the deplorable conditions.

The GTA believe that it has been a succession of council blunders that have caused the deprivation of this area—not vandals or tenants' neglect.

The GTA has grown in strength in the past year. 'Doors which were once slammed in our faces are now being opened,' say Mary Stevenson and Joe Adam, of the GTA committee.

The biggest success to date has been against the Roads Department. They wanted to knock down a block of houses—to make way for a road! The council have had to eat their words and postpone this for at

least two years.

The GTA also got the council to send someone to the estate with keys—so that people being rehoused can pick up keys more easily to view their new homes. Joe Adams showed us round his own home. The only heating he has is one two-bar electric fire—for the whole house. His is a temporary house, but he's been there since April 1977.

Most of the work the GTA deal with is complaints from people living in less than tolerable conditions. Only a quarter of the people living there own their own homes. The private firms that rent property not only make money from the rents they charge, but don't carry out any repairs.

The people of Govanhill know they could solve their own problems if left to it. Don't we all? But the system doesn't particularly want them to solve their problems—this might interfere with their redevelopment.

The GTA say, 'We feel we are creating a social service. We hope

through our efforts our work will spread throughout Glasgow. The power of the people is behind us and

the root is the people.'
Fay Hester, Glasgow Womens Voice Group

WE NEED ALL OUR SCHOOLS

TWO SCHOOLS will close in the Gorbals if the Glasgow education department have their way. At present there are six primary schools there—three Catholic and three non-Catholic. They want to close one of each. It's true that a lot of houses have been demolished and because of this there are fewer children in the schools. But in a couple of years, we'll be surrounded by new flats. At present, my school has children in it coming from high-rise flats, from the battered wives' centre, from the 'hotel' where evicted families are moved to and from really old tenement buildings. We also have a sizeable minority of Asian children, some of whom come to the school

with severe language problems.

Our argument is that we should be able to have much smaller classes so that teachers can give more individual attention to the children. The authorities want to close the school and transfer the children to the other end of the district. They would have to cross four main roads.

But we are starting to fight back. One parent got 500 signatures on a petition in two days. The parents' meeting was a stormy one, and we elected a delegation to meet the authorities. If the authority doesn't change its mind, it'll have a fight on its hands.

Kathy Fill, Glasgow Womens Voice



PICTURE: Cleaners and local trade unionists picket parents as they bring their kids back after the weekend. The six-week strike by the women domestic staff at the Royal Russell School Addington, near Croydon, goes on. The women—all members of the General and Municipal Workers Union—voted to stick it out until their demand for union recognition is met. Meanwhile the union is recruiting other

members of staff. Five matrons—some of whom were definitely anti-union at the start of the strike—marched down the drive, arms linked, singing the Red Flag, and promptly paid their first union sub at the gate. Messages and donations to: The Strike Committee, c/o GMWU, 205 Hoom Road, Chessington, Surrey. Phone 01-688 8019. Maureen Williams.



Picture: Colin Knowles

SAVE OUR SWIMMING



A WEALTHY county, Berkshire County Council is not noted for its generosity. It wanted to cut swimming lessons down to only ten lessons for each child per year, compared with 34 lessons per year only two years ago.

For schools lucky enough to have their own pools, the council proposed to foot the heating bill for only

four weeks per year—effectively closing these pools completely.

A campaign against the swimming cuts was mounted in Reading which included a picket by a group of women of the County Council. It seems likely that because of the campaign, the council has backed down on the issue.

Kate Gordon, Reading.

WE'RE PROTECTING BETHNAL GREEN HOSPITAL

THE WORKERS at Bethnal Green Hospital, East London, voted to make it a 'protected hospital'—that is, to ignore any decision for change of use, which is closure in disguise.

Bethnal Green Hospital looks after all the boring, ordinary diseases of the old, the poor and the badly housed population of the area.

These diseases don't need high technology, which the big teaching hospital down the road offers. Our hospital is needed by local people both for diseases and for accidents. Tower Hamlets has more than its fair share of sweatshops for furniture and garment making.

We are going to use the three-month reprieve against closure to organise support from the labour movement in the area, and from local people through their tenants' association and unions.

We are calling for a half-day stoppage on Wednesday May 10 and a mass lobby of the District Management Team to show that we're still fighting. We won't be swayed by a decision from the management—the majority of whom don't live here and don't have to queue five hours at our already overstretched Casualty Departments, or wait two years for routine operations.

MUMS TURN ON HEAT

ROMAN ROAD Infants and Junior School in Gateshead was closed for two months this winter. The heating system broke down before Christmas. So the kids would go to school in the morning and be sent home at 9.30 am! You can imagine the hardship it caused—especially for one-parent families. Those kids lost two months schooling! And they would have lost more. But one of the

mums, Mrs Halliday, got some other women around her and went down and demanded to see the Director of Education. They got to see the deputy in the end, and he said it would be fixed the next day. Well, it wasn't fixed then. But Mrs Halliday and the others got on local television three nights running.

They caused a real fuss and the heating was fixed in two weeks. Pat Barlow, Newcastle.



STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS

JENNIFER Davies fought for—and won—important rights for unmarried women. The House of Lords ruled that *she* had the right to stay in the flat she shared with her boyfriend. *He* is to be evicted because he beat her up and threatened to kill her.

In the past only married women have been able to get their husbands evicted in these circumstances. But as Jennifer argued, 'Why should a marriage certificate make any difference to our rights? It's just a bit of paper.'

She has not moved back to her flat for fear that the man will return. But now the case has been won, she will be able to get a transfer to another council house—in her own name.

She told *Womens Voice*: 'The man I was living with beat me up, threatened me with a screwdriver and then showed me a big knife under the bed. I'd had trouble before from him. He had a big chopper before. I made up my mind

after I saw that knife to leave.

'It's very hard when you have kids. I have a little two-year-old girl. But you have to, because in the end, they suffer. My girl saw him beat me up. She talks about it all the time. She goes up to people in the street and tells them.

'I didn't give up fighting for the flat. I thought it was unfair that he had a two-bedroomed flat and we were in the Chiswick refuge. Because it was a joint flat—in both our names.

'It took six months. It started from Brentford Court. I was terrified. I had never been in court before.

'I went to Brentford twice, Shoreditch Court once, then the High Court, and then to the Lords. It's worth it now.

'The only thing I can say is that if any woman has been through what I have been through, I think she should do something about it. I don't think she should put up with being beaten about.'

RECLAIMING THE NIGHT

'Yes means yes and
No means no
However we dress
Wherever we go'

□ This was sung by 80 women as we walked through the streets of Finsbury Park on the night of Saturday March 11.

We were 'reclaiming the night'—saying that women should have the right to walk at night without being afraid. This right has been taken from us by those men who think it is their right to cat-call, whistle, kerb-crawl, insult us or offer us their 'protection'.

The harassment of women goes on in pubs, at the cinema, at work—but it is in the streets at night where this is most frightening. It is on the streets, where the ultimate threat of rape seems most real.

We carried bells, whistles, clappers, anything to make a noise and we carried flaming torches to light our way.

We felt confident. We stopped the traffic and got motorists, as well as pedestrians, to take a leaflet explaining what we were doing. Lots of women waved and smiled at us through their windows—other women told us of their reluctance to go out at night.

Anne Gibson

□ CANTERBURY WOMEN reclaimed the night last Monday.

Since there is no specific red light district, we decided to go round the town and leaflet all the pubs.

We got thrown out of some, and hissed and booed by the customers. But others were alright.

One man followed us out of a pub, and got in his car. At first we didn't realise he was behind us. Then when we went off the pavement, into the road, he started to drive towards us. If we hadn't jumped out of the road, he would have hit us.

He got out of his car and tried to get one of us. He was quite big. We shouted at him and he went away.

We also plastered the council offices with leaflets. They spend thousands to light up Canterbury Cathedral, but they are cutting back on

street lighting.

It was really fantastic. We never thought we would get so much reaction!

Lynne Sedgmore.

□ A Reclaim the Night march took place in Plymouth down 'Union Street'—famous gathering ground for sailors and marines.

The march was cheered on by groups of women who gathered on the pavement to watch.

FIGHTING NAZI FIREMEN

I WENT out in a hurry and forgot to turn the gas stove off. The frying pan went up in flames and started a fire in my flat in North London.

When I got back I looked around and the damage didn't seem too bad. Then I saw an NF sign (National Front) written on the wall above the Stuff the Jubilee poster. The poster had been torn.

I knew it had to be the firemen who did it because the girl who lives upstairs had been looking after the flat, and no one else had been in it.

We had a lot of posters against racism, so they probably thought there was a black person living there (which is true).

Five of us decided to go to the fire station to complain. Of course they denied it. We saw five of the firemen. One of them was very nervous and jumpy. I am almost sure he did it.

Coming home to find a fire is bad enough. But that made me sick. I don't know how anybody could be so low.

We explained how we had tried to raise support for them during their strike. They apologised and we came home. I didn't want to call in the police. I don't think that fireman will do the same thing again.

Jo Penlerik, North London
Womens Voice.

FOR BETTER FOR WORSE

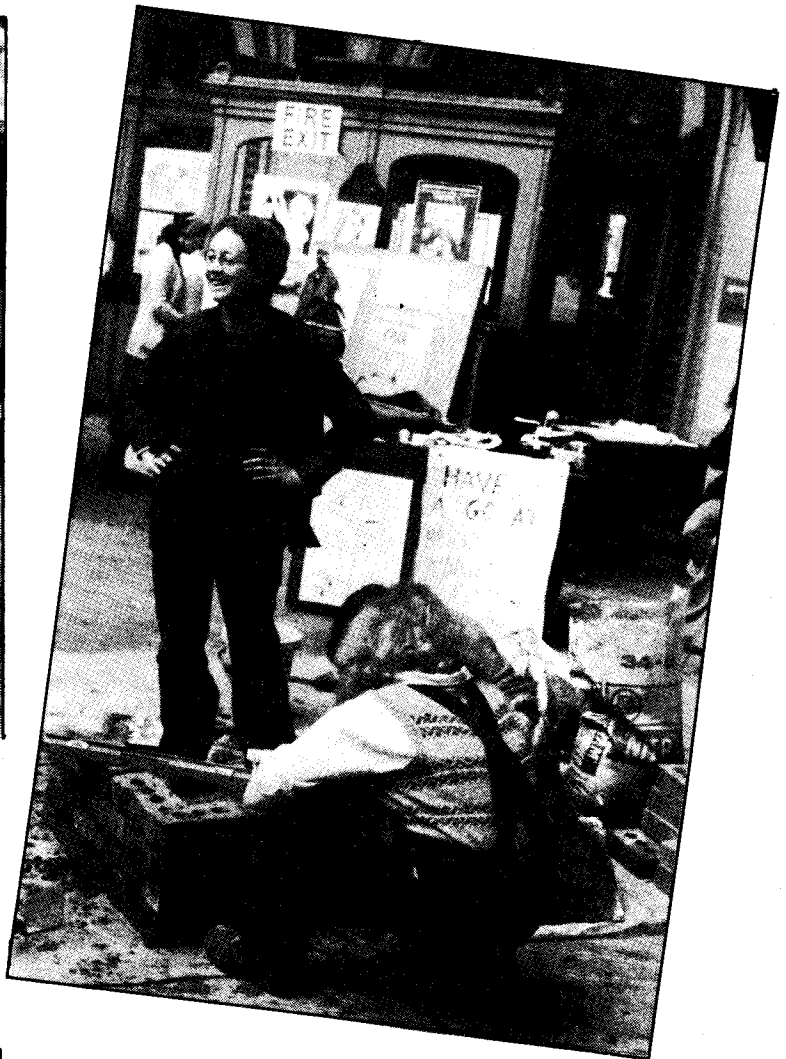
IT TOOK three policemen to hold Mrs Lesley O'Connor down while a fourth policeman forced her wedding ring off her finger. She was then accused of criminal damage in Brentford police headquarters. She was found guilty and given a year's conditional discharge.

The Chief Constable of West Yorkshire has announced that in future rings will not be removed unless they are sharp. Mrs O'Connor said, 'I am very happy with the change. It will prevent others suffering the same indignity.'



An 'International Women's Day Fair' was held at the Corn Exchange in Leeds, last Saturday. Along with various stalls selling handmade crafts, magazines and some beautiful 'macrobiotic' foods, was a pile of bricks and cement where visiting women could try out for themselves the traditionally male activity of bricklaying. Yet another sexual barrier went down as the girls demonstrated that construction is not so much to do with brute strength as it is with skill and style—talents which are not a genetic property of either sex exclusively.

Stephanie Garrett.



DEAR MR. DRAIN

WOMEN'S VOICE reprints part of a letter to Geoffrey Drain, the head of Nalگو, the local government employees union, from Jayne Nelson, Greater London Council.

Dear Mr Drain,
AS A member of Nalگو I am disgusted that you of all people are apparently unaware of the fact that over 40 per cent of our membership is female. I refer to your letter in which you say: '... many members, their wives and families ...'

Are you deliberately ignoring almost half the membership or are you suggesting that the female members have all got wives and families too?

This inherent, embedded discriminatory attitude shows all too clearly just what the struggle for women in trades union is, and I think that an attitude of positive discrimination should be *actively* adopted in Nalگو—with the lead being given from the top to support the struggle going on at the bottom of the Nalگو hierarchical pile by the women themselves.

I enclose a paper just produced

for circulation at our Branch Executive on Monday next. This was supported by a Memo to Branch Office which stated:

'Page 6 of the Guide for Departmental Representatives reads: 'Don't become "just the chap who collects the subs". You are in effect the "shop stewards".'

I would like to point out that all the shop stewards in Inner London Education Authority polytechnics are female apart from a couple! This sort of bias is embedded throughout Nalگو publications and is indicative of the attitude that prevails in the minds of male dominated committees.

Your letter was an ironical, extremely depressing confirmation of this. Where do *you* stand on the matter of Nalگو and Sex Discrimination, Equal Rights and Pay etc? Are *you* prepared to act 'positively' yourself?

Women are nearly half your total MEMBERSHIP as well as being half of the population of the world!
Yours sincerely,
Ms Jayne Nelson/GLC Nalگو

ABORTION

NEW Zealand has just passed an anti-abortion law. From now on rape, damage to the unborn baby, and the mother's living conditions

will *not* be considered as grounds for abortion.

Abortions will be given only if there is serious danger to the life, physical or mental health of the woman. And she must go through a lengthy procedure to get permission.

And now for the good news ... Here in Britain, Bernard Braine's anti-abortion bill was aborted in the House.

MISS HACKNEY PICKETED

ON THURSDAY 9 March about 25 people from Hackney Womens Voice and the local Nalگو Action Group picketed a 'Miss Hackney' competition. Local dignitaries had been invited by a local businessman to publicise banquetting rooms he leases off the council. We gave leaflets to those going in, and where possible asked them what they thought of the competition.

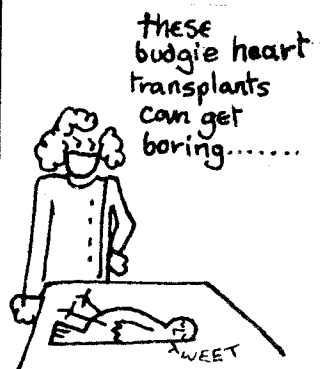
The Mayor of Hackney refused to talk to us; the Mayor of Haringey didn't even know what function it was - he was merely there for the beer.

In a borough with chronic housing and unemployment, especially among young girl school leavers, with appalling nursery provision and a low number of NHS abor-

tions, we consider it a real insult that our real needs are ignored while we are used to promote some profit making venture.

The girl who did win, did not even live in Hackney (her aunt does) and was using the competition to notch up yet another win. She was runner up in a Miss UK competition.

Liz Balfour



□ A WOMAN vet in Solihull, Miss Catherine Flannigan, has won equal pay. The men vets wouldn't let her treat farm animals, only pets. And they paid her £450 less. The Industrial Tribunal ruled that she should be paid the same—£4,950 a year.

WOMENS TUC

MISSING from this year's agenda was the usual motion to abolish the women's TUC. Many of the unions who had supported this move in the past have decided to boycott the conference instead.

A pity because most of the delegates obviously got a great deal out of discussing their problems and experiences with other women trade unionists.

As one AUEW delegate put it: 'It's mainly the white collar unions who have tried to abolish this conference in the past. We women in the manual unions know it's all we've got.'

Nevertheless you can see very early on that this conference doesn't commit anyone to anything. Fairly radical motions on equal pay, sex discrimination, unemployment, are all passed with hardly any dissent.

It's only when the motion calls for some definite action that the Women's Advisory Committee will oppose it or ask for remission. For instance, abortion on demand is fine, but when there might be a commitment to trade union demonstrations every time there is a threat to tighten up on abortion law, the committee wants it remitted.

The motion was passed. And despite a gruesome full colour leaflet circulated by members of Life, the anti-abortionists did not attempt to speak during the debate.

WE SAT all day in the conference hall at Scarborough, discussing womens equality.

Then came the evening. The Mayor of Scarborough had a treat in store for delegates to the 48th Women's TUC. A conjuring act.

The Duvals they were called. All sequins and glitter. He, teeth flashing, pulled animals out of hats ten to the dozen to bursts of applause.

While she tended to his every need, rushing around with tables, hats, hoops and animals. Dress so tight she did well to carry the stuff and walk at the same time. This lady not only has to do the donkey work, she must also look pretty. And smile!

Not that you'd expect anything more sensitive in the way of enter-

tainment from Scarborough. After all, this is the town where the Campaign for Homosexual Equality were banned from holding their conference.

The town has lost about £1 million since most organisations are now boycotting it. All except the Womens TUC and NALGO (coming soon).

The council have given in a little. They say that CHE can meet here— but without the Civic Reception. (I'm not sure who got the worst deal, us or them). In other words, come along and spend your money, but we'll snub you once you're here. CHE have declined.

Then there are the people who work for Tory Scarborough council. 'We don't have any unions here,' said the women who poured the tea.



Picture: Laurence Sparham (FL)

And: 'Don't eat too many sandwiches, your leftovers are our evening meal.' said another. Marie Patterson and Ethel Chipchase sat at the 'top table'—table cloths and all—drinks laid on, chatting to the Tory mayor. For the rest of us it was formica table tops, queueing at the bar and a mad dash for the egg rolls. Like Ms Patterson said herself, only that morning: 'Inequality is an obstacle to the aspirations of all workers.'

DOCTOR Judith Gray spoke during the debate on cancer screening. She gave some idea of what health facilities for women could be like.

'Women should be able to walk into 'well woman clinics' and family planning clinics at any hour. They should be accessible to women at home and in industry.

'Warm, friendly places, welcoming places, where people can get proper advice from properly trained people.

'We have got to get away from the kind of false economic arguments that are destroying the health service.'

Or as one COHSE delegate put it: 'To provide the number of well woman clinics we need would cost about £40 million. That's just two days' defence expenditure.'

TUC report by Jean Grey

WRITE ON SISTERS

FIFTEEN women from Nottingham, Reading, Newcastle, High Wycombe, Birmingham, North London and Lea Valley met in Birmingham to discuss their bulletins.

The Nottingham, Reading, and Newcastle women came looking for guidance, and are starting their bulletins this month. We swapped stories and found it very useful.

We decided that we should do the bulletins regularly—every month. And the same people who write and produce the bulletin should be the ones to give it out and sell Womens Voice the next day—before they forget about the bulletin.

We felt it was best to have the same team doing it all the time, so we can get to know people. It may take a year to build up contact in a factory, if you're doing it where you don't know anyone. Don't be discouraged. Rome wasn't built in a day!

Sheila from Birmingham said

that a tear-off slip is essential at the bottom of every bulletin. Put your name and address there so they can get in touch with you.

We had a big argument whether you should put in a Womens Voice bulletin or a rank and file bulletin. It has to vary with the situation, I think.

We had a practical session at the end on how to use ordinary stencils and electostencils, how to use cartoons to break up the type, and how to make a bulletin look nice—to spread out the writing.

Everyone thought it was very useful but thought we ought to have regional schools.

Di Watts, North London

• Please send us three copies of every Womens Voice bulletin you produce. Add a note to say what the reaction was—were they queuing for Womens Voice the next day? Did they throw them on the floor? Did you meet anyone in the factory? Womens Voice Bulletins, Box 82, London E2.



NOSE TO NOSE WITH THE UNION OFFICIAL...

WOMENS VOICE SCHOOL BULLETIN number one

Still no union. Still no regular union meetings.

Why is it that other girls' breasts manage to have both, yet we have neither?

How are we supposed to feel part of the union, when we don't even have union cards? How are we supposed to know what is going on in the factory, if we don't even have union meetings?

The union doesn't belong to me or the Shop Stewards, it belongs to all of the union members in the factory.

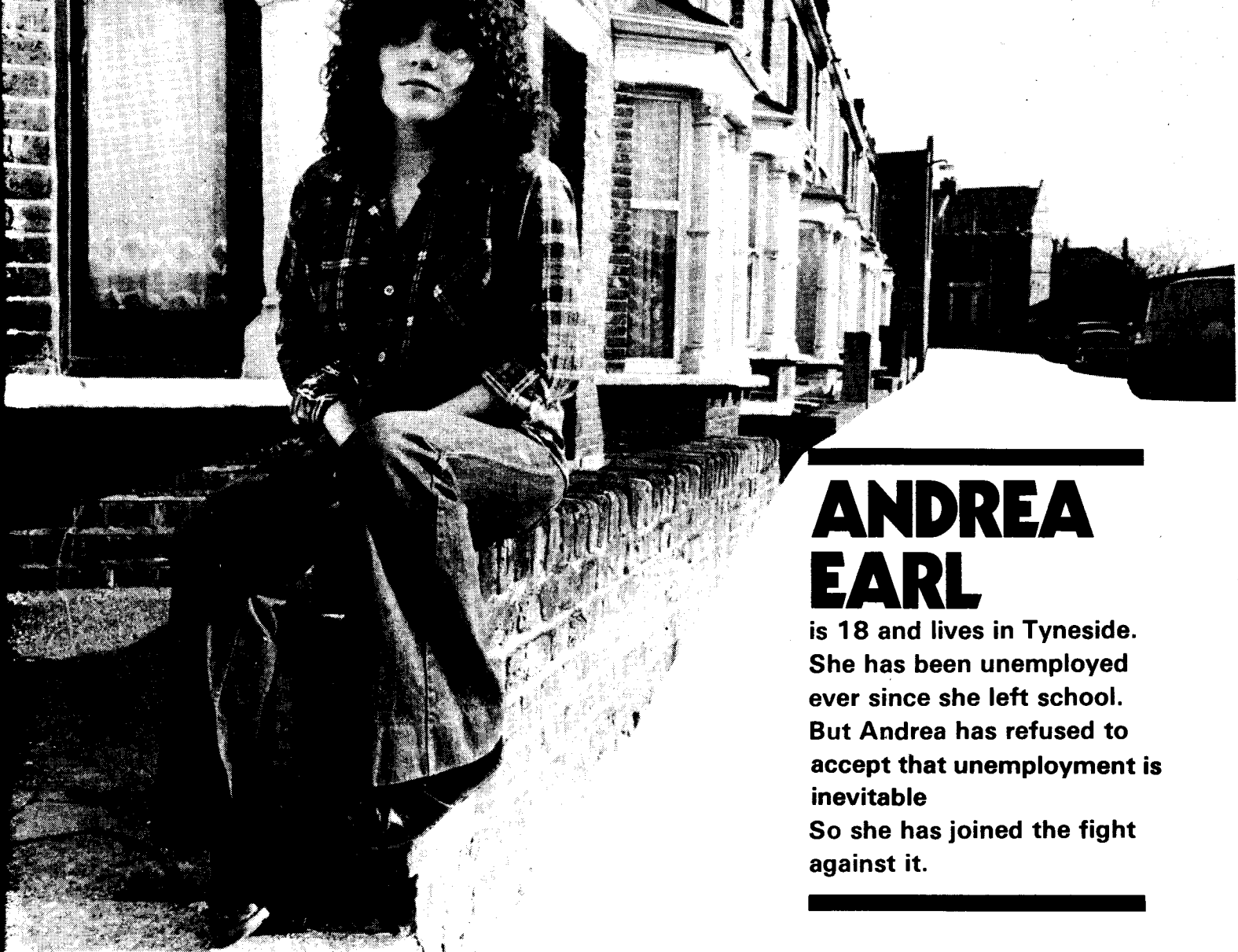
It's our union, and we want to know what is going on. We are not asking for much. As union members we are supposed to have cards and be able to prove that we are card up members. It's not a matter of life or death, but we entitled to them, and we want them.

We are also supposed to have regular meetings. We know that not everyone is going to go to every meeting, but at least those people who are interested would be able to get involved in their union.

Is there some good reason why we don't have cards or meetings. Perhaps someone would be good enough to tell us how what it is.

WOMENS VOICE SCHOOL BULLETIN

WOMENS VOICE



ANDREA EARL

is 18 and lives in Tyneside. She has been unemployed ever since she left school. But Andrea has refused to accept that unemployment is inevitable So she has joined the fight against it.

“ I went to a Catholic secondary modern school. Unemployment was never mentioned there. All we had were careers lectures about being air-hostesses and secretaries.

When I was in my last year at school, I knew people who had left the year before and were on the dole. I realised it would be the same for most of the people in my class.

They always used to crack down at any sign of rebelliousness. The head even called us sluts for talking to the boys at break time. They used to cane some of the girls or slap them across the legs or the face. One teacher once bruised my face.

‘I wanted to do an apprenticeship but my dad wouldn’t let me . . . I wanted to do mechanics but my dad made me go to secretarial college instead.’

In the fifth year religious lessons consisted of telling us how disgusting

abortion was and how we should all have lots of children. There was an anti-abortion march in Newcastle and the teacher tried to get all the girls from our class to go on it. But we refused.

Usually you couldn’t argue back with the teachers. If you said what you thought you’d get thrown out of the class.

My leaving report was pretty bad. I was described as disruptive. It was a useless report for getting a job with especially on Tyneside where unemployment is very high. I can’t use it for anything.

I wanted to do an apprenticeship but my dad wouldn’t let me. I had a brother who already had an apprenticeship at Vickers doing fitting and turning. I wanted to do mechanics. But my dad made me go to secretarial college instead.

That was disgusting and terrible. There was an option called grooming and deportment. The teacher was always saying how you had to look smart for your boss. I once got angry and stood up and said that women weren’t just there to be parading themselves about like peacocks for the benefit of men. Well that did it. I was now blacklisted at college as well.

When I left college I went on the dole. I was offered a job as a trainee dental assistant. It sounded quite interesting.

The hours were 9-5 and the wages £14 odd. That was ridiculous. I was getting 40p a week more on the dole.

I told the careers officer that I wanted to do some kind of apprenticeship. So she just put me down for ‘clerical’ work. The only jobs I ever got suggested were clerical. But they had always gone when I went for them. Often they had gone 2 or 3 days before. Sometimes they had gone two weeks before. I think they leave the cards in the Job Centre window just for show.

‘The hours were 9-5 and the wages £14 . . . ridiculous, I was getting 40p a week more on the dole.’

Then I heard about the Right to Work Campaign and got involved straightaway. I gave out leaflets on the dole queues saying you can fight against unemployment. We had to do something ourselves because the government and the trade unions obviously didn’t care about us. We tried to get other teenagers involved. The first day, about 20 signed to come on the Right To Work March.



Picture: Jackie Garston

us. A big posh bus pulled up. Seven Labour councillors and Albert Booth walked out and we started shouting 'What are you doing about unemployment?' But they just ignored us. So I started shouting at Albert Booth. This great Labour councillor turned round and hit me. He must have picked on me because I was small and a woman. But he got a shock when I climbed onto the wall and towered three feet above him. And I shouted at him for bullying the unemployed. He got embarrassed and tried to shake my hand. But I pushed his hand away. And he had to walk away red faced and embarrassed because I'd stood up to him.

"It's important to have women involved. A rank and file movement can't be a real rank and file movement unless the women are involved. That's what is different about this and the marches in the thirties. They were all men."

When they all came out of the community centre we jumped on their bus and occupied it singing and chanting. One Labour councillor told the bus driver to go to the police station. So he did. But when we arrived there were no police there at all. So we jumped off and marched through Sunderland with our banners. The papers headlines were

'Hijackers make a quick getaway at the police station'.

60 of us went on the Right to Work March from Newcastle, we had two coaches to take us to Liverpool where the march started. It was a lovely atmosphere. They were mainly 800 unemployed teenagers like myself. We slept in big marquees. The food wasn't fantastic but it kept you going. After you've walked 20 miles you eat anything anyway. Everybody helped with the jobs that needed doing.

One of the best things was that there were lots of unemployed girls there getting themselves organised. It's important to have women involved. A rank and file movement can't be a real rank and file movement unless the women are involved. That's what's different about this and the marches in the thirties. They were all men. The women just sat at home and let the men do all the fighting. Today it's different.

Now we're making a film about the 1977 Right to Work march. It will show people how we are organising. And it shows that women are organising too. There was this one bloke who was a shop steward in the shipyards in Newcastle. His attitude to women really started to change when he saw me and Sandra and Ann going around and organising. Women had argued with him before, but he'd never seen women organising. Seeing that we could do it really changed his mind. It's the most effective way to change people's minds—showing that you can do things.

It's no good just arguing. You have to get up and do it.

Interviewed by Anna Paczuska



More girls than boys signed and they felt very strongly about it. In the end more boys came because parents wouldn't let girls come. It's a problem being a girl. Parents don't expect you to do that sort of thing.

One girl helped right through the campaign and wrote all our leaflets. But her dad locked her in the house when it came time to go on the march. But in Newcastle it was girls who organised the campaign. We went round the factories trying to get support and money for our march.

The very first factory we did it was dinner time and all the blokes just rushed past us and into the pub across the road. I wasn't going to let it go. We went in the pub and there were all these blokes sat there with pints in front of them. I got this table and put it in the middle of the pub and stood on it and started speaking. Everyone was just shocked. And I said 'We're fighting for everybody's jobs, but we're unemployed and we can't fight on our own'. Then they all put money in our box and wished us luck.

Then we heard that Albert Booth was coming to open a community centre in Sunderland, and to talk to some young people who were on these 'dead end' Job Creation Schemes. So we organised a Right To Work picket outside the community centre. There were thirty of



working is dangerous to your health

SAFETY FIRST

This is just an outline of the hazards facing working women. Look out for 'Health and Safety - Now is the Time to Act', next month.

EVERY DAY millions of workers enter a battlefield. There are about 1½ million accidents at work every year in this country, and only a third are ever reported. It's the big bangs, like Flixborough and Seveso that hit the headlines, but who knows about the lost fingers, bronchitis, headaches and backaches that are caused by bad working conditions every day? From mechanical accidents to noise, from chemical dangers, known and unknown, to stress and ruined personal lives, work is bad for our health. The bosses will go to any lengths to keep profits up. They put THEIR profits before OUR lives and health.

Last month Womens Voice reported the struggle of the women in British Leyland who were forced to lift dangerously heavy weights in return for equal pay. We reported the fight of office workers in the Halifax Building Society against the introduction of word-processing machines, which cut jobs and introduce new stresses and health risks.

These article will give you information about the risks we all face at work and about the ways in which we can organise and get better conditions.

All women who work are at risk. No just those in heavy industry.

In 1974 there were 12,000 reported accidents in offices, which employ one-third of all women workers. There are an average of 25 fatal accidents a year in offices. Factory workers are obviously at risk in many of their operations—but many hazards are not obvious. Even nurses are at risk—from exposure to infections and chemicals, such as anaesthetic gases.

Backache

The commonest of all health problems arising from work today is backache. It can be caused by badly designed seating, and may result in permanent deformation of the spine. Other causes are continuous repetition of the same movements, and lifting heavy weights. The International Labour organisation suggests that the maximum weight lifted should be nearly 9 stone (55kg). That is far too heavy for most people.

The people doing the work should decide on the limits.

Noise

Constant noise, even at low levels, can cause severe stress, headaches and lead to deafness. A survey by the Alfred Marks Agency for office employees found that 50 per cent of all machine operators suffered from severe headaches. Ear-muffs are often seen as a solution. They are useless for audio-typists, and can

you imagine wearing them in a noisy office? The tedium and isolation would be so acute that you might as well BE a machine. Machines can be redesigned or withdrawn.

Chemicals

Printing inks, photocopiers, correcting fluids, hairdyes, detergents, and many kinds of dust can be poisonous, cause cancers, genetic defects, or lead to continual nausea and dizziness. The 'safe' limits for concentrations of these substances are often no more than guesses, and are usually defined in terms of the 'average fit male' body.

Time and time again the 'safe' levels are found to be unsafe. Only a

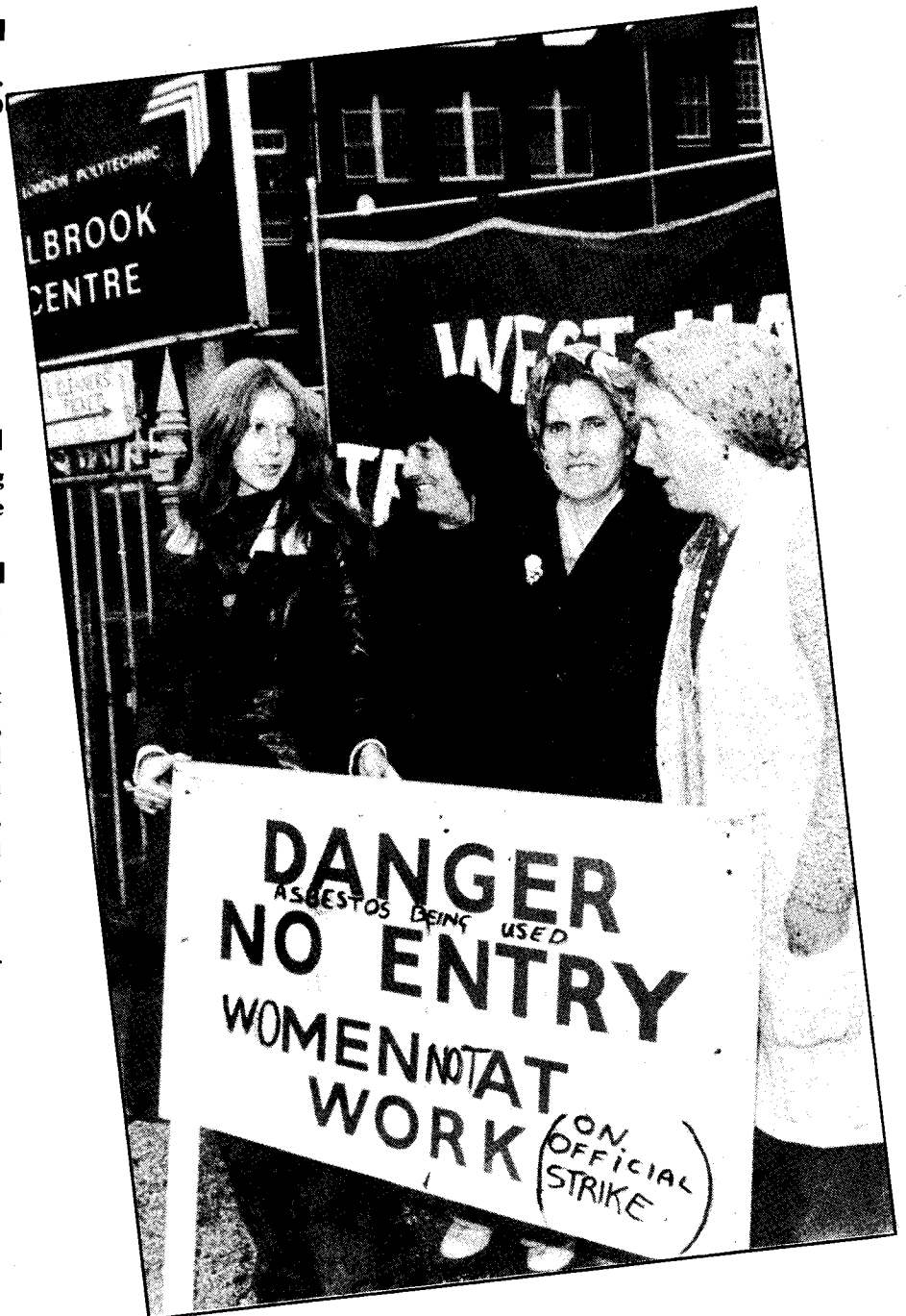
vigilant and militant workforce will force manufacturers to pay for the necessary research into truly safe levels or alternative substances.

Shift work

Patterns of work are a major cause of stress, anxiety and family breakdown. Shift-work; monotonous, repetitive movements; rapid production lines; 'music while you work' and bonus schemes, are all designed by manufacturers in the interests of profitability, to get as much as possible out of the workers. Work measurement keeps workers under the stress of a constant "big brother". Flexitime makes people work longer hours during busy

periods without overtime pay. Mothers who look after sick children can find themselves with an increasing debt of hours to make up.

The list of health hazards is endless—heating, lighting, ventilation and dangerous machinery are some more of the danger spots. But our health is of vital importance to us and we can fight for healthy working conditions. Information compiled by Judith Hamilton; with thanks to the Women and Hazards Group ('Hard Days at the Office — Hazards Bulletin, March 1978), and Sybil Cock (Womens Voice — May 1976). Both these articles are really worth reading for more detailed information.





WOMEN'S FR

FOR WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND SOCIALISM ! That's what we're fighting for, not at some time in the future, but now, today and tomorrow.

Will you join us in the fight ?

We want decent wages and equal pay, better maternity leave. We need nurseries for our children and a decent education for them as they grow older. We want the things that will make our lives, now, much better than they are. Womens Voice is more than just a magazine. It's an organisation for women who want to do something to change the world they live in. If that includes you, then come to our rally.

different subjects. There will be plays and films. Bring your children. We'll look after them too. See you on Saturday 10 June, 11.30, Top Rank Suite, Sheffield. Entrance 50p. Tickets available now from Womens Voice, Box 82, London E2. Enclose 50p for a single ticket; we will send more if you want some to sell to friends and work-mates.



WOMAN'S VOICE
NO RETURN TO
BACK STREET
ABORTIONS

ARE NOT JACK
YOU ARE

GIVE
BEECHING
PALACE
THEM NOW

KEEPING
US A
TIGHT
SECURITY

WOMEN'S
CHOICE

WOMENS HEALTH

TB the poverty disease

UNTIL five months ago I assumed that TB had been conquered once and for all. That idea was shattered when, having been admitted to the local hospital for a minor operation, I was told that I myself had caught TB.

I am a geography teacher in a large secondary school in Lanarkshire, Scotland. Part of my job is to give the children an insight into the tragedy of world health. For example, how the average lifespan of people in the Third World countries is about 25 years less than our own, and how poor diets and living conditions lead to the spread of infectious diseases like yellow fever, malaria, cholera, and of course TB.

In our own area, TB was a mass killer in the nineteen thirties. Lanarkshire was full of small mining communities, badly hit by the depression. The average size family was seven, living in poverty-stricken, overcrowded two room houses in the Miners' Rows.

Mass unemployment in those days meant that families could barely feed themselves, let alone afford a balanced diet to keep them healthy. So in Lanarkshire, people remember the names of the sanitoriums, because they remember the many who never came out alive.

I was glad that every second-year child in my own school now has the chance to be vaccinated against TB. I was glad that we had progressed so far.

But there I was suddenly, in the infectious diseases ward myself. Mine was not the most virulent form of the disease, but it was enough to keep me off work for three months, and on drugs for a year.

My experience has exploded a number of myths in my own mind about health in our society.

Myth number one: that tuberculosis belongs to the past. The hospital I was moved to specialised, among other things, in the treatment of TB. I was astonished to learn from the nurses that the number of TB outbreaks, especially in large towns and cities, has increased dramatically in the last few years.

Myth number two: that the living conditions where TB breeds no longer exist in Britain. The nurses made no secret of the fact that the present rise in TB was a direct result of the recent deterioration in living standards.

Inflation, low wages, and unemployment mean that many working class families have drastically cut their spending on protein foods. One patient told me that she could no longer afford to buy butchers meat as regularly as in the past. Now she filled her children up with cheaper stodgy food, or she went without herself so the children could have more.

When it comes to housing, you have only to look around you. There are still all too many slums, both of the old and modern varieties, with all the old problems of overcrowding, damp and a lack of basic amenities. There are also many thousands of people without homes at all, a large proportion of them suffering from chronic chest diseases.

I can vouch that I met no directors, nor MPs, nor landowners, during my stay in Ward 3.

Myth number three: That improvements in public services have made TB a 'safe' illness.

Diet and overall health have a lot to do with your resistance to TB. In 1931 in Lanarkshire, an experiment was conducted. One group of children was given a pint of milk a day. A second group was given none. After a few years the children in the first group were found to be pounds heavier and inches taller than those in the second group. That's why school milk was introduced.

We all know what has happened more recently to the school milk programme. And then look at the scandal of school meals. In 1967 the cost for three children for a week

was 75 pence. Now the figure is £2.75 pence. No wonder that half the second and third year children in my school are smaller than primary school children were ten years ago.

The last myth I came across is the most obnoxious of all. One doctor who examined me said that the increase in the incidence of TB was due to coloured immigrant bringing the germs into the country. When I pointed out that the town in Lanarkshire which has the highest rate of TB in the whole of Britain has no coloured immigrant at all, he had nothing to say.

A recent television report focussed on Viewpark, where mass X-ray units have been brought in to screen the whole community. Here the doctors have reached the same conclusion as me. TB, they say, is on the increase because of longer dole queues, soaring food prices, cut-backs in house repair schemes, and the cuts in the health and social services.

That is how we pay for the crisis not only out of our pockets, but with our health. Like every other one of our 'basic rights' in this society, our good health is one of the things we will have to fight to defend and improve.

Helen Blair:

WOMENS HEALTH

TB the poverty disease



Picture: Andrew Ward (Report)

GOLDA MEIR, ex-prime minister of Israel, once said it was 'a land without people to a people without land.' With those words she denied the existence of a whole nation, the Palestine people.

The movement called 'Zionism', which sought a homeland for the Jews, claimed Palestine for its own in 1948. The Palestinians were forced out of their homes to make way for Jews coming from all over Europe. They sought refuge in Gaza and the West Bank, the only parts of Palestine that did not get taken over by the new state of Israel.

In 1967, when the Israelis advanced into these territories, the Palestinians were once more forced to flee from their homes. In 1970 thousands more who had found refuge in Jordan were slaughtered by the forces of King Hussein.

Then in 1975, the right-wing Christians in Lebanon turned on the Palestinians, most of whom are Moslem, because they felt their fragile rule was threatened. Since then, Israel has courted the right wing Lebanese Christians. They have armed and fed the Christian forces who have plundered Arab villages.

No wonder that the Palestinians have been driven to acts of terrorism in despair. They see no other way to win back what they know is rightfully theirs.

In the last thirty years, generations of Palestinians have grown up in vast refugee camps, the notorious 'tent cities'. In some cases whole villages moved into the camps, maintaining their old family structures.

This has meant that life has been particularly hard for women, in the camps. Women are expected to maintain the old traditional roles. They were expected to venture out of their homes only for domestic duties. The woman's function was to marry early, and have as many children as possible. No education is provided for girls beyond primary level. So even in the camps theirs has been a double oppression.

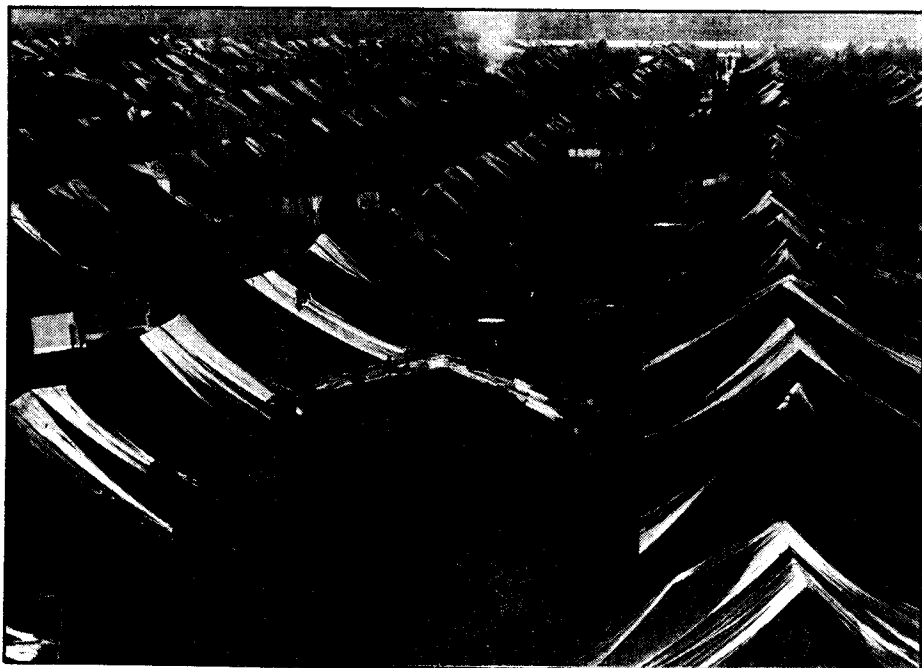
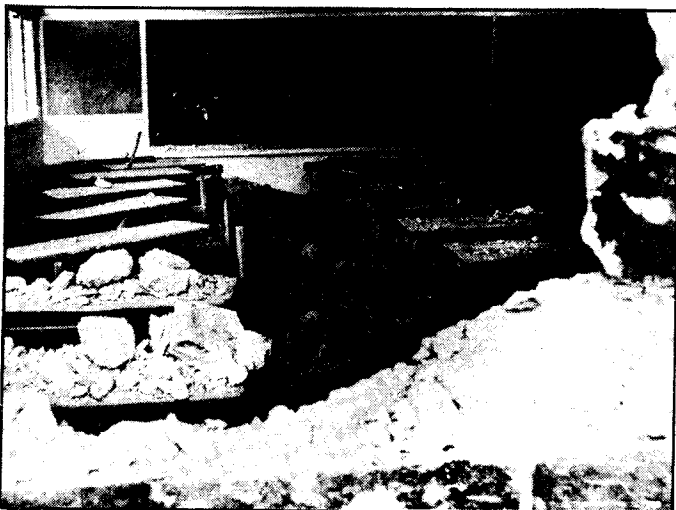
One woman who joined the resistance in 1967 told us, 'A Palestinian woman used to spend her life being someone else's property. She belongs to her father and her brothers until she belongs to her husband, just as in the rest of the Arab world.

'But our history as Palestinians could not but lead to changes. Take my own story, for instance. When I was still at school my brother used to meet his friends at our house and spend hours discussing with them. We women would be in the kitchen, waiting for them to leave so we could go to bed. One day I found a pamphlet in the room and I read it very carefully,

THE WOMEN OF PALESTINE



we're fighting for our homeland



THE WOMEN OF PALESTINE



we're fighting for our homeland



doing my best to understand.

'I was amazed at all the information it contained, about our country Palestine, and the rising Resistance movement.'

'When I asked my brother about it, his reaction startled me. "That's men's duty," he said. "Don't poke your nose into our activities or I'll tell your father".'

'But eventually I joined the movement secretly.'

Many such women have had to overcome all kinds of obstacles placed in their way.

But there have been important changes in the last few years. To begin with, the Palestinian Resistance movement came out into the open for the first time in 1967. This led to considerable changes within the social structures inside the camps.

Women are still pressurized into early marriage, but many go out to work, at least before they marry. Once they are contributing to the family income, they tend to become more independent, and to be treated more equally.

Of those women who join the resistance, many undergo a very thorough military training, which does not discriminate in any way. As one woman put it "We're all the same in the eyes of the enemy, so ..."

Then the massacre in Jordan and the war in Lebanon convinced the Palestinians that they could not depend on the established Arab regimes. They realised that they had to rely on their own forces and this meant women as well as men.

The organising force behind the rise of these women was the General Union of Palestinian Women, a branch of the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

During the war in Lebanon, collective kitchens were set up. Women also undertook hospital work. Nurseries were opened. Gradually as the women gained confidence in their new public role, they were trained by volunteer doctors in first aid. And they were given military training.

Since then there has been a programme to combat illiteracy among women. Child minding has been organised inside the camps so women can attend meetings. Clinics have run educational courses on health and hygiene to attack insanitary conditions and set up cleaning projects.

This does not mean that Palestinian women have overcome all the difficulties placed in their path to liberation. The revolution is already undermining the old structures of traditional Arab society. But liberation for these women, will only come with their liberation from imperialism.



REPORTING A STRIKE

LAST MONTH we gave general hints about writing for *Womens Voice*. This month, as promised, we turn to the subject of reporting an industrial dispute, and interviewing women on the picket line. Many of the following points also apply to reporting any other kind of activity, for example among tenants, or to save a hospital.

Most of us are naturally shy and timid about approaching people we don't know. But this is something you *can* overcome.

First, you may hear that some women are on strike. Equip yourself with a pen, and a notebook. The spiral-bound type of notebook is best, because you can turn over quickly and it will lie flat.

Now you are ready to go. Remember to take some copies of *Womens Voice* with you. Explain it is a magazine for working women and that you have come to report their dispute.

Often there will be one person who acts as spokesman for the strikers—and it may well be spokEMAN. By all means talk to this person, but talk to the others too.

Let them see that you are writing down what they say. Ask each one who speaks her name, so that you can quote directly from her. Ask if you are unsure of the spelling. No one will be surprised if you ask them to repeat or go over something. They are as anxious as you that you get it down correctly.

get the names right...



talk to the women...



What are the things to ask?

First you need to get the *relevant facts*.

- What exactly is the dispute about? And what triggered off their present action?

- What is the company, what work do they do, who is it owned by?

- How many women and men are involved in the action?

- What union are they in? Has their action been made 'official'?

- How is the strike organised? Do they have a committee; a bulletin; when do they hold their mass meetings? (Sometimes by asking these questions, you can help give people an idea of the things they might be doing).

- What support are they asking from other workers in the industry or the local area?

Then you can ask other questions not directly related to the dispute.

- What is the factory or office like?

- What pay do they get? How is it negotiated?

- What is the relationship between the women workers, in particular, and the union?

- What do their husbands think about their being on strike?

These questions may really get the women talking. The more exactly you can get down their words, the better your report will be.

Often it is the odd things, the unusual things people say which bring a report alive. They may say something like 'We've learned not to be ladylike since we've been out here on picket duty'. Try to capture an impression of how they are feeling. Are they turning back delivery vehicles? Have they made up any songs? What are they planning to do in the coming week?

Before you go you need to ask for an address to publish, where money and messages of support can be sent. It is also useful to get the telephone number or address of the steward, or one or two of the others, so that if you get home and realise you have forgotten to ask something, you can check it later.

Finally, show them, by your response to what they say, that your report will be written out of sympathy. Offer them any support you can gather locally. Most people will be only too happy to talk to you providing you—

- look neat and presentable
- take a genuine interest in what they say
- appear efficient, not trying to hang around and get in the way for a long time.

borrow a camera



Give them back issues of *Womens Voice* if you feel this would be helpful. Promise to return and to bring the article to show them once it is published.

Once you are home, try to write the report straight away. For sending in to us, please type your report if at all possible, using double spacing between the lines, leaving a large margin round all edges, and numbering the pages.

Remember to read it through as if you had never heard about the dispute before.

- Are all the facts clear? The dates, the names, the demands?

- Have all the direct quotations been attributed to the right people?

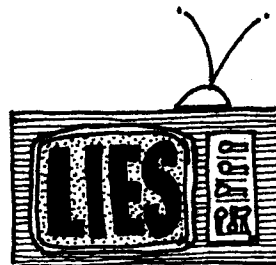
- Have you done everything you can to recapture the atmosphere?

- Have you included the address for donations? Last but not least, please send in a photograph if you possibly can. Not colour, but black and white. If you don't have a camera, ask someone else to help you. Or ask the local paper if they have any photographs you could have, promising to credit them.

Then send it to us first class, with your name and address, and a telephone number where we can contact you. Well done! Now what are you going to write for us next?



D.I.Y. D.I.Y. D.I.Y. D.I.Y. D.I.Y. D.I.Y. D.I.Y.



Esther Waters
Serialised on BBC2,
Sundays 8.05pm

ESTHER WATERS, brought up on ignorance and religion, inevitably falls when she goes as a kitchen maid to the house of a nineteenth century gentleman. She is seduced, becomes pregnant, and returns home to London in disgrace. But this is not merely another moralistic tale of the 'fallen woman'. It is the story of Esther's courage and her struggle against the bigotry and desperately unfair class divisions of Victorian England.

Part 2 was particularly good. With no money and no family, she goes out as a wet nurse to the house of a middle class lady. The house is rich and the nursery well stocked with every comfort.

Esther's baby however has to go out to be nursed elsewhere and the difference in situations is appalling. Washing, other babies, cooking and eating all crowd the restricted space in a dirty kitchen.

It was not uncommon in those days for the baby of a wet nurse

such as Esther to die whilst the mother was nursing some other, richer, woman's baby. When this threatens Esther, she demands *her* right to bring up a baby, alive and healthy. The wealthy should not ensure their children's well-being at the expense of the babies of working class girls. Their lives are not expendable as the horrified lady may Esther suggests the rich lady, strong and healthy as she is, could nurse her own baby. She shivers in disgust at the very idea. Middle class women were taught, then, to regard any physical contact with revulsion. Sex was an animal instinct enjoyed only by men and the lower classes. The children of the lower classes were expendable.

Esther stood out against all this. She rescued her baby from the sick atmosphere of the cellar kitchen leaving her employer to nurse her baby as she would.

'Esther Waters' is a serial worth watching. It shows up the glorious days of Empire and Britain rules the waves in all their true brutality. Rather than make me grateful for the improvements we have today, it makes me all the more determined that what remains of those conditions will be wiped out and will never occur again. Mary Stuart

THE CAUSE

IF YOU think women are treated unfairly today your mind will positively boggle when you realise how far we've progressed in the last 150 years. Thanks to the single mindedness, and often sheer bloody mindedness, of the women prepared to fight for The Cause.*

Women like Florence Nightingale, Elisabeth Garrett Anderson, Millicent Fawcett. Mostly middle class,

but determined that their own lives and those of their sisters should not be frittered away in idleness.

Josephine Butler campaigned against the Contagious Diseases Act. This law gave the police the right to arrest *any* woman in a particular district who would not agree to undergo a medical examination for venereal disease. This crude attempt to stamp out VD among the armed

forces assumed of course that sexually transmitted diseases are somehow only transmitted by women!

The law was an insult to *all* women, said Josephine Butler. In 1869, to begin the campaign for its repeal, she caught a train to the nearest large town. Crewe, and there spoke to the railway men. With their help an organisation of working men sprang up all through the Northern towns.

'The Cause' is full of

stories like this. Portraits of women who have otherwise been forgotten, or whose names are remembered because they have been given to hospital wards or girls schools.

Those women most able to kick against oppression were of course middle class women, with time on their hands and a little bit of influence. But that's not to say working class women weren't prepared to fight. They did.

Although the Chartists quickly dropped women's suffrage out of their demands, because 'several members thought it's adoption might retard the suffrage of men', a large number of Women's Political Associations were formed to fight for the Charter. They even organised women only meetings, often of considerable size.

Apart from a brief mention, the history of working class women is not told here, which is a

LOOKING FOR MR GOODBAR

THERESA (played by Diane Keaton) is a single girl living in a basement flat in New York. She teaches deaf children—very warm, understanding, patient.

She tries to lead her own life—not like her Catholic parents who tell her to leave home if she wants to stay out late, and then moan at her when she does leave home.

In her first sexual encounter with her English lecturer, she is open and relaxed and enjoying it all. He eventually jilts her, but her attitude to sex is good. She hasn't been completely frozen up by her Catholic upbringing.

She tells a man who offers to move into her flat, 'I'm *not* lonely, I'm alone.' And that's the way she likes it—to be independent. She's involved with a very

nice Catholic social worker who is ever so sweet ('So why don't you marry him?' her parents complain), and a lively, unpredictable, exciting ex-Vietnam vet, and finally a crazy Southern boy who's worried about his manhood who gets her in the end.

This is a true story. It is a very upsetting film. Upsetting because it cuts too near the bone.

A woman living on her own—even if it's not terrifying New York—gets followed down the street. If you do smile at people and make conversation, and get picked up, you put yourself at risk. If you don't, then you're alone—and lonely sometimes. Looking for Mr Goodbar is a film worth seeing.

Jenny Jackson



Josephine Butler

pity, and the book's weakness. But there is much to enjoy and it is very readable. And who knows what our lives would be like today if those women hadn't been prepared to fight with all their worth for the rights of women.

Margaret Renn

* *The Cause*, by Ray Stracey. Written in 1928 and republished by Virago, price £2.95.



Elizabeth Garnett Anderson

This is my life

By Pat King—a Sheffield factory worker. Aged 27 years. A member of the Transport and General Workers Union.

LOTS OF kids run away from home, for different reasons. I ran away at 11, because my Dad was so strict. He was ex-army and worked as a security policeman. I ran to London with an older girl. We roughed it for a month. Finally I gave myself up to the police and I was taken home. But nothing had changed. It was a real dead end with nothing for kids to do.

So I kept running away, and at 14 the authorities took me into care. I was sent to an approved school without ever having committed a crime. After rebelling again, and trying to run again, I was moved to a confined approved school for a further eighteen months.

This place was an old army barracks in Edinburgh. The conditions were terrible with no heating. For six months they kept me in solitary confinement, let out only for exercise, which is supposed to be illegal. But I've seen lots of kids around eleven kept in solitary for weeks.

At age 16, I was sent home. I just didn't give a damn about anything then. I just felt like jumping in the nearest river. When I ran to London, I was picked up for loitering by the police and flown back to Edinburgh in hand-cuffs, back to the remand home for eighteen months. They'd about hammered me into the ground.

When I was released I went home and met a bloke. You know what it's like, he was sympathetic and understanding. I became pregnant and he bugged off. Our house was already overcrowded. My mum completely took over the baby.

After the baby was born, when I was working as a waitress, I got so depressed. I had a row with my dad over the baby, got drunk, and ran out under the nearest car. Unfortunately it happened to be an unmarked police car!

So again began the round of borstals, and solitary confinement. I had my hair chopped off, I was made to work in kitchens for 35 pence a week. Yet I still hadn't committed a 'crime'.

I'd been rebelling on my own for such a long time. But it's like banging your head against a brick wall. I knew there was one law for the poor and none for the rich. But I'd never met anyone who fought the system in an organised or collective way.

Then last summer I bought a Socialist Worker from a lad in the shopping centre. I'd never heard of it before. I went somewhere for a cup of tea, and I started reading it from cover to cover—twice in fact. It was full of Stuff the Jubilee. It said exactly what I'd been thinking, in a way I could understand.

The next week I bought it again, this time from a lass. She also sold me Womens Voice, and told me about the meetings. I never realised before there are so many women fighting—women like me who are militant and angry and trying to change their lives. You'd never think that from reading those magazines full of fashion and how to get your man.

Suddenly, from being on my own and helpless, I was surrounded by people who cared about what happens to ordinary workers, who were doing something about it.

Now in the SWP, I know I'm in an organisation where I can fight as a woman and my voice will be heard.

YOUR VOICE

Have anger will write

Dear Womens Voice
In the March Womens Voice you say if you care about something, tell us—so here goes.

I've made this collage out of bits of Post Office staff newspapers because I think it shows what the bosses' attitude to women really is—even in jobs like mine which have had equal pay and opportunities for women since 1936.

We're exploited equally with men as workers, then we're exploited again as mothers, and houseworkers. Then as a final insult we are exploited as sex objects—a pair of tits and a bum for the boss to use to sell his product—in this case National Savings and Giro. It has nothing to do with being attractive—after all attractive people come in all sizes, shapes colours, ages and both sexes! Can you imagine, 'pretty salesboys captivating the women with their charms'? YEUCH! No, as women we have no sexuality of our own so there is no MR GIRO 1978—all we are is sex on legs to lure men into buying the Post Office 'product'. And the freedom to leer at women is just about the only 'freedom' for male workers that the bosses encourage since they can exploit it for their own ends.

Incidentally, the Post Office describes their four senior female officials as 'groupies'. My dictionary defines this as 'a young girl who follows rock musicians especially to make

Royal leeches and a bunch of bananas

Dear Womens Voice,
Yes Judith Condon, we do think you've gone bananas! It's disgusting that you should try and evoke even the tiniest morsel of sympathy or understanding for any of that bunch of royal leeches.

You inexplicably refer to Princess Anne as 'one of the more "liberated" royals'. We can't think what you might be talking about in this context.

In fact all of that foul bunch are liberated—liberated that is, from work, drudgery, squalor, social responsibility and to a large extent, the law. In their obscene, perverted splendour they are entirely liberated from all the unpleasant things that make working people old and sick before their time.

The worst they have to put up with is the fawning press scrambling after them to write stories about how marvellous, witty, chic and hard-working they are. So it's tough is it, that one can't have a drag on one's fag without some uncouth type taking one's picture—What bullshit! It's a small price to pay for privilege, privilege, privilege!

And as for Princess Margaret and her tragic romance with Townsend. On the one hand he's been leeching off it ever since—poor tormented soul—and in any case if they had really wanted to make a go of it they would have found a way.

But there again if Maggie had run away with lover-boy she'd have had to leave behind some of her privileges wouldn't she, and that perhaps would have meant even greater torment. If it's true that she sacrificed her love for the rotten establishment then perhaps she might deserve some pity for being twisted enough to put her position of splendour and riches and that of her rotten satiated family before human relationships. But all the ruling class tend to suffer from this mental sickness, and we can have no pity for them because we in turn suffer from them.

We hope this has helped to put the whole thing back into perspective. Stuff the Royal family.

Liz and John McSorley

sexual conquests!

But enough of my rage at this patronising and offensive rubbish. Equality is meaningless in this sick society—the only way is to work towards the sort of society in which we will all be accepted for what we ARE, and not used for someone else's money-

making ends. Which is why I've written this letter—you're right. It's not nearly so hard once you get started and if I can do it I'm sure there's thousands more women out there who can!

Yours in sisterhood
A Post Office Worker
South East Manchester
Womens Voice Group

The pains of childbirth

Dear Women's Voice
I'm sorry it's taken me so long, but I feel I must reply to the letter about induced births in Issue 13.

I'm a mother of two. My first child was induced for medical reasons (placenta praevia) and I had spent weeks in hospital beforehand. Yet I found it an enjoyable rewarding experience because I received such encouragement from the hospital staff involved. My husband was present throughout, and although I felt a bit done down at not having done it all myself, he was elated by the whole process.

However, when it came to the birth of my second son, a natural delivery just seven months ago, this personal contact with the hospital staff was missing and I found the delivery an upsetting, traumatic definitely off-putting event.

To start with I had to travel 25 miles to Exeter, due to the closure of local cottage hospitals. At Exeter they literally could not cope with all the women now being sent to them.

I was examined by a midwife who refused even to look me in the face, let alone talk to me, and I was treated as a complete fool. I was then left for three hours, and after frantic bell-ringing by my husband I was reluctantly taken into the labour ward and placed in a bed without even pillows.

A pethidine injection that I didn't want then left me flat out and unable to co-operate while my son was being born moments later.

Then there was no bed to put me in, so I was stuck into a make-shift one in a store room.

Luckily I was soon transferred to a cottage hospital in Okehampton where I spent a few days getting to know my child and I happily overcame the emotional problems caused by the manner of his birth.

What must be realised is that every birth is a personal, completely individual experience. If every birth were treated with sympathy and encouragement, the experience



would become a more pleasurable one in a woman's life.

Childbirth should not be an ordeal. Yet I have spoken to many other mothers who have had similar experiences. Large hospitals are not able to cope yet small ones close all the time and home births are not encouraged.

Keep up the good work and features.

In sisterhood,
Anthea Smidmore
Devon.

And the Pleasures

Dear Womens Voice I find myself slightly disappointed with your writer in issue 14 on the subject of the closure of a certain maternity hospital.

My wife and I consider ourselves fortunate to have been blessed with a second daughter in such pleasant surroundings. This is exactly the sort of hospital that made most of us grateful for a National Health Service back in the late forties.

Don't be shy. Why not name names? The hospital under threat is Bexley Maternity Hospital.

M. R. Condon
Kent

Cookery Teacher

Dear Womens Voice I am a home economics teacher. You'd never believe how odd it can make you feel.

For instance, it's become quite clear recently that my head sees us as a department to make rock buns for school functions. And to fit girls neatly into their place in society.

I am definitely not popular as I opposed being used as a resident caterer on the grounds that I'm a teacher and other women need the catering jobs.

If anyone reading this does the same job, I'd be glad to hear from you, via letters page.

Anne
Southeast London Womens
Voice

Front Page

Dear Womens Voice Womens Voice is attractive and the contents are good. But in trying to sell out in the streets I feel it needs a better front page. We need some slogan, perhaps in connection with an item from inside. For example, 'Women Against the Nazis' in big enough print to catch someone's eye. Or 'Womens Voice: our answer to Womens Own!'

Of course the back up with

YOUR VOICE

street meetings, petitions and bulletins all helps, but a good front page is essential. It needs to make people who have never seen the magazine before curious enough to want to read it. Why not two front pages instead of a wasted back page?

Sheila Matheson
Glasgow West
PS Please put us on the map!

'stay' which could well imply that she believed that coloured people should only be here on a temporary basis.

This information was obtained from my father who works side by side with this man in Crossley's factory.

Gwenda
Halifax

Mrs Thatcher the carpet maker

Dear Womens Voice I would like to correct an error in one of the letters in the March Womens Voice—under the headline 'The Evils of Racism'.

Mrs Thatcher did in fact interview a coloured male worker at the John Crossley and Sons carpet factory.

Originally this man was 'threatened' with loss of overtime if he did not appear peacefully talking to Mrs Thatcher on television. During the interview Mrs Thatcher asked the worker whether he had enjoyed his stay in England.

She put the question in the past tense, instead of using 'are you enjoying?' or 'are you happy?', and also used the word

New Address

Please keep sending your letters in, but keep them as short as you can. We don't like cutting letters, but we reserve the right to do so if it means squeezing some more letters in.

Letters for the May Womens Voice should reach us by April 21. Don't forget we have a new address. Write to Letters Page, Womens Voice, Box 82, London, E2.



What - in my condition!

Dear Womens Voice

I was six months pregnant when I went into negotiations for maternity leave. I was on the Joint Negotiating Committee at Rawlplugs in Glasgow.

I felt like being sick over the lot of them. You get all the men sitting there laughing—the management and the union officials. You are arguing against men who don't have a clue. It all ends up a big joke.

Management acted as if they were giving us a big concession—allowing us to take another four weeks—unpaid of course—after the 29 weeks maternity leave the government allows. We get six weeks full pay, nothing else.

When I was four months pregnant I was called in for a final warning about bad time keeping. It was the middle of winter. I went in. The personnel manager was a man. The superintendent was a man. The foreman was a man. The convenor was a man. When they asked for an explanation I said that I felt embarrassed in front of all those men. (I wasn't really). Well, that was it. The convenor laid into them. How dare they have a go at me in my condition? So they said I could come in late. And on the way out, I said, 'By the way I had better get away early as well.'

You really need somebody to be pushing it. Pregnant women before hadn't got any special treatment. Now other pregnant women got it too.

We got the easy jobs. If we wanted to lie down, we could. But the convenor supported us. Most men would, I think. They know what their wives have been like when they were pregnant. They wouldn't upset you, either.

It's alright saying fight for maternity pay. A lot of women are embarrassed and wouldn't say anything! But that's just what you do have to do!

Angela McHugh

ITS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THEM HAVING BABIES





YBA WIFE

OPEN DOOR is a new regular spot in *Womens Voice* where we invite women from different campaigns to tell us all about them. If **YOU** would like to publicise **YOUR** campaign, please write to us, remembering to mark the envelope.

MARRIAGE seems to offer economic security because it's so hard to make it on your own, particularly if you have children. You may be able to get a better roof over your head. But on the other hand, you usually end up having not so much money of your own. And the law treats you as a dependent.

There are many areas where women are discriminated against.

First, there's tax. A married woman is not treated as a person in her own right. For tax purposes, a married woman's entire income belongs to her husband. A married woman is not allowed to fill in her own tax form. Everything has to go on the husband's form, so he has to know all about her income, whilst she may know nothing about his. Only married couples with a very high income benefit from separate assessment.

We are printing stickers which say 'This form insults women', to make a protest when you return your tax-form. Then there's Social Security benefits. Married women and 'cohabiting women' are not entitled to Family Income Supplement, Unemployment Benefits, Supplementary benefits, Invalid Care Allowance—and that is particularly ridiculous because it is women who usually take care of invalids.

There is also non-contributory and invalidity pension. A woman has to show that she can neither go out to work *nor* do 'normal daily work'—housework they mean! And they insist on coming to measure whether you can do housework, even if you are in a wheelchair or

otherwise disabled!

We have a petition calling for the end of discrimination in tax and social security benefits and we hope that local groups will take up the campaign in their area. We are selling 100 leaflets for 50p, and we'd like womens groups to get them to give to women in shops and launderettes. We hope women will get on local radio and in the local papers too. We are using a cut-out slip in womens magazines, for women to protest. We want to build this into a national campaign.

We're not saying it's stupid to be married—many of us are—but if you are married, does that mean you have to play the traditional wife's role?

Badges saying **Y B a Wife?** (10p), stickers saying **Is There Life After Marriage?** (75p for 100), leaflets and the petition (50p for 100), and a comprehensive Discussion Kit containing notes, booklets, campaign suggestions, a book list and useful address list (50p plus 15p postage), all from: 214 Stapleton Hall Road, London N4. Tel. 01-720 9403. Send a stamped addressed envelope for orders.



YOUR QUESTIONS...

Dear Womens Voice
I am a married woman with three kids, my husband left me five years ago. I have a boyfriend who is a lorry driver and he stays with me once or twice a week. I am afraid that my social security will be stopped because of this? Should I stop him coming to see me?

Mary Ridley.



Dear Mary,
Don't worry, your money can only be stopped under the cohabitation rule if 'you are living together as man and wife in the same household'.

However you may well be hassled by a Social Security investigator to see if you are cohabiting. He may watch your house, ask your neighbours or kids questions, and pay you a visit. If he does visit you at a reasonable time of the day you should allow him to look around but say as little as possible. Even if he sees your bloke leaving none of this is proof that you are actually cohabiting. If an investigator is to prove that you are actually cohabiting he would have to prove:

- As above . . . that you are living together as man and wife in the same household. As your bloke only visits you, you are

okay on this score. You may need proof that he does live somewhere else.

- The SS have to prove that the relationship is a stable one.

- They will have to prove that he gives you money.

- They don't actually have to prove that there is a sexual relationship but many women are questioned about this and should refuse to answer.

- If your children were the children of your bloke then this would be taken as a strong indication that you were cohabiting.

If, however, the SS did try to stop your money under the cohabitation rule then you should appeal immediately, make a new claim, seek the help of your local claimants' union or Law centre. When your appeal comes up get your bloke to go with you with the evidence that he lives elsewhere. Or if he is away get him to make a written statement.

Don't worry . . . go on seeing your bloke but be prepared for the accusation that you are cohabiting and be prepared to fight it.

ANSWERED

WOMENS WORLD

by Judith Condon

ABORTIONS AND ELECTIONS

'I HOPE it won't become an election issue,' says Shiona Farrell, candidate for the ne'er-do-well Scottish Labour Party. That's her trying hard to dodge. But no one can dodge this time. **Abortion is already the key issue in the Garscadden byelection.**

Why? Because the Catholic lay apostolate council has told the faithful they must vote for an anti-abortion candidate. And in Glasgow, folks, that means a lot of votes.

Funnily enough it would normally mean voting for an orangeman . . . Tory candidate, Iain Lawson. Only nowadays you've got to reckon with the rising star, Scottish Nationalist Candidate, Keith Bovey.

Bovey is a man of many colours. What's more he wants badly to win. So he's recently discovered a heartfelt objection to abortion. Being a lawyer helps, of course. You get used to defending any side in an argument.

But Bovey's campaign slogan 'Experience, enterprise, integrity, and service' has seen more of the world than that. At seventeen he was an army volunteer. He rose to be an officer. Now he's a pacifist and chairman of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in Scotland.

Before the byelection most of his colleagues thought he was in favour of a woman's right to choose. Not at all, says Bovey. Anyway, it's a politician's right to change his mind.

Right-wing Labour candidate Donald Dewar, also a lawyer, is having a rough ride. He only just managed to win the nomination.

You see vicechairman of the Scottish Lay Apostolate Council's fellow lawyer and Labour Party comrade George Crozier who also just happens to be chairman of the British Pro-Life Association, umbrella for all the anti-abortion groups. Naughty boy Dewar has a skeleton in the cupboard. He used to be MP for Aberdeen. And he voted for the 1967 bill to legalise abortion.

So, my goodness he's had a lot of ground to make up. Yes of course he opposed the Labour Party conference vote in favour of abortion on demand. Yes of course it's all a big mistake.

But Crozier isn't impressed. He was rooting for fellow Dunbarton Labour Party member Iain Leach, also a lawyer, also an active campaigner against abortion.

Now it looks like plenty of Labour Party big-wigs are going to be actively opposing their own candidate. What does the Tory say? He says 'I may be a bastard, but at least I'm consistent.' Or words to that effect.

In fact, the only candidate giving their full support to a woman's right to choose are those of the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Party.

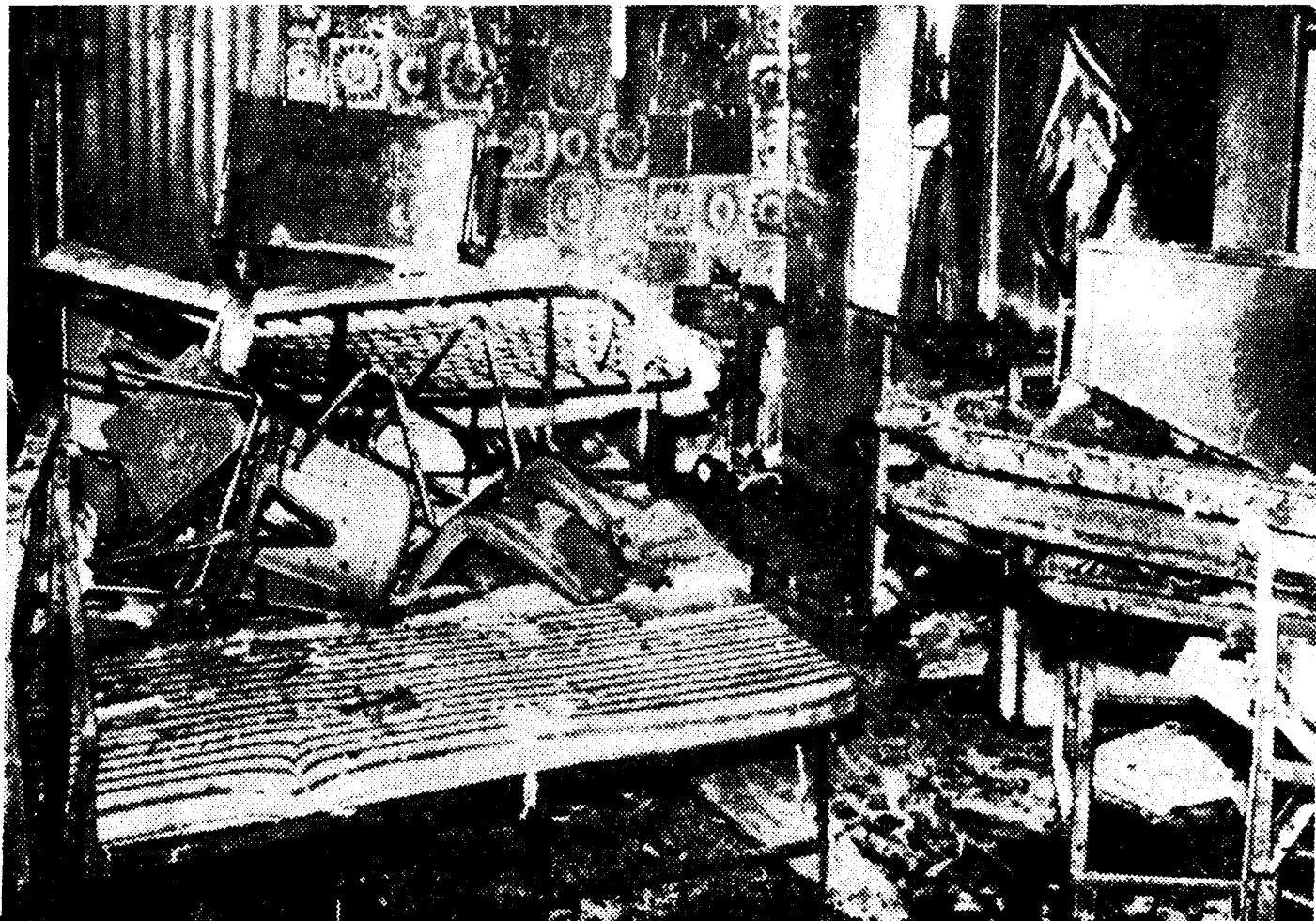
IN THE United States the anti-abortionists have been even busier. They've started throwing petrol bombs into abortion clinics.

It started with picketing. They used to stand outside and try to persuade women from going in. Well, SPUC have already done a bit of that over here. But their American comrades have really outdone them now. They've taken to physical attacks and petrol bombs.

Our picture shows the inside of the Cleveland Concerned Women's Clinic. On February 28th a 'pro-life' passed their way. Staff member Aurelia Elliot, aged 48, had to be treated for burns on her face and chest. A patient undergoing an abortion at the moment the bomber struck had to be rushed to a nearby hospital.

This follows similar attacks which have destroyed the Ladies Clinic, Omaha, and the Vermont women's Health Center, and badly damaged the Planned Parenthood Clinic, St Paul, Minnesota. Then there are several other cases of bombs being thrown but failing to explode.

Here's a good slogan. 'Right to Life today. Instant death tomorrow.' Well it's a bit punchier than all that stuff about integrity and service, don't you think?



Cleveland Concerned Women's Clinic after firebombing.

WHAT IS GOING ON?! meetings, plays, discos, badges, pamphlets, campaigns, concerts.

WV Meetings

● **Aberystwyth Womens Voice** Discussion groups: every other Tuesday. Farmers Side bar.

● **Black Country Womens Voice** meets fortnightly, Sunday afternoons. 2.30. at 27, Glen Court, Compton Rd, Wolverhampton. Children very welcome. Phone Wolverhampton 23233 for information.

● **Brighton Womens Voice Group.** Meets every Tuesday. Phone Sue 21060 or Manuela on Henfield 3843. Baby sitters can be provided.

● **Cardiff Womens Voice Group** meets Thursdays every fortnight. 7.30 pm at Union Books, 58, Bridge St. If you need a babysitter, phone Bronwen at Cardiff 43470.

● **Edinburgh Womens Voice** for information about Womens Voice contact Susie at Book Marx, 130, Morrison Street, Edinburgh. Open 10am-6pm.

● **Hackney Womens Voice Group** Monday April 17, **Women and the Social Security.** 8pm. Dalston Library, Dalston Lane. Speaker Ruth Lister. Monday May 15. **Pornography - who exploits whom?** Speaker Alison Kirton

● **Lampeter Womens Voice** meet Tuesday evenings in college. Details from Womens Voice seller or write c/o SDUC Lampeter, Dyfed, Wales.

● **Lea Valley Womens Voice Workshop** Meetings. Monday 10th April. 27, Nelson Rd, N.15. 8pm. 'Socialism or feminism' For more information and baby sitters ring Mary 802 9563.

● **North London Womens Voice Group.** Saturday 22 April. Street-Meeting 'Women against the Nazis'. Outside Sainsburys, Holloway Rd, N.7. 11 am. Monday April 24 Public Meeting 'Women against the Nazis.' Venue to be confirmed. 8pm. Speaker from the anti-Nazi League. Fri 28 April Womens Voice Dinner. Details from Alison 251 3175.

● **North Manchester Womens Voice Group** meets fortnightly April 3. Meeting to discuss rape contact Maureen 061 205 2867 evenings only for further information.

● **Reading Womens Voice Group.** Meets the first Wednesday of every month. For further information and details of other activities, phone Reading 62150.

● **Southeast London Womens Voice:** Women Hospital Workers Meeting. Women and the Union. Speakers—Joyce Philpott, (NUPE shop steward, Memorial Hospital) and a Womens Voice speaker. Charlton House, Charlton Village, SE7. Thursday 6 April 8p.m. If you need a babysitter, please phone Ann, 855 1920 evenings as soon as possible.

● **Southeast London Womens Voice** meets fortnightly. On Thursdays. 6 April, 20 April.

● **South London Womens Voice Meetings.** April 4th. Biology V Environment. For further details contact Nicky. 737 1791.

Gay Groups

London S.W.P. Gay Group meets on alternative Tuesdays at the Prince Albert Pub, Wharfedale Rd, N.1. For further information ring Paul. 348-3881.

Leeds S.W.P. Gay Group. Meets once a fortnight in Leeds. For details ring Rob, Leeds 700343.

Conferences

● **Socialist Workers Party Conference for Women Teachers** Saturday 6 May, Manchester. Morning: Women and the NUT, Anna Paczuska, Women, Rank and File and Womens Voice, Jeffer Clements. Afternoon: Sexism and the school curriculum Exhibition of sexist and non-sexist books. Please bring your most hated school books! For further information ring Jeffer Clements 0474 57095

Womens Voice Public Meeting

Maternity Rights in Nalگو

Saturday 15 April, 1 to 4.30pm

Reading Room, Polytechnic of Central London, 309 Regent Street, W1 (nearest tube Oxford Circus). For more details contact Anne Derby, 01 855 1920. Open to all women in Nalگو.

Plays

● **North London/Lea Valley Womens Voice Groups** ATTENTION! ATTENTION! Counteract presents their play on rape, 'She Asked for it' on **MAY 8**. We had advertised this for April 3 but were let down at the last minute by the managers of the place we had booked. Sorry if this messed you about but try and come this time - it's a great play. Phone Mary 802 9563, Alison 251 3175 or Faith 985 0891 for all details.

● **She Asked for It.** If you are interested in booking the play please contact Debbie or Dave at Counteract 27, Clerkenwell Close, London EC1R OAT Tel. 01 251 4977.

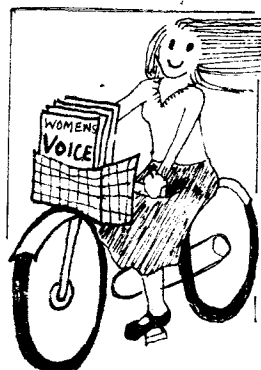
Films

● **St Albans Womens Voice.** 'Union Maids,' a fantastic film about how three women organised at work in the 30's in the USA. Tuesday 4th April 7.30, Beehive Pub., Watson Row, off the London Road. Box 82, London E2.

● **Womens Voice** needs your help.

Can you
type
drive
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draw
write

Do you have a few spare hours a week to help us? Please, we need you. Ring us or write.



Womens Voice

THIS ADVERT DEGRADES WOMEN!

'This Ad Degrades Women'. Womens Voice Stickers. 50p for a hundred. Money with orders. Write to Womens Voice, P.O. Box 82. London E.2. 8DN. (Please note change of address.)

● **Womens Voice Posters.** Red heading: Womens Voice with blank space for your own meetings £2.50 for a hundred, £1.50 for fifty including carriage or postage. Money with orders

Irish Women United Fundraiser

'To help pay printers bills and open a women's centre in Dublin.'

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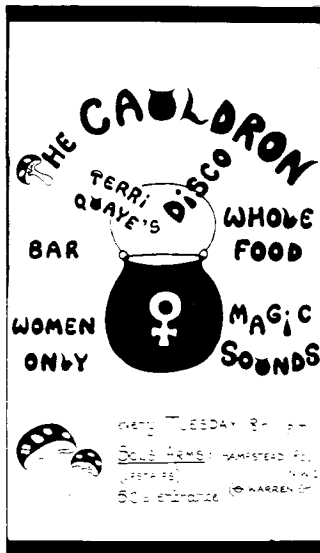
April 14

8 till 12pm

at The Waterloo Action Centre, 14 Baylis Road London, SE1.

Admission 80p (50p claimants)

Women only.



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

To fight for these changes is only a beginning. Womens Liberation means we have to free ourselves from the grip of the rich and powerful whose oppressive rules and ideas are fostered on us from our earliest years.

This means we have to fight for socialism too, to free us from a society divided between those who have and those who have not.

FIGHT WITH WOMENS VOICE FOR WOMENS LIBERATION AND SOCIALISM.

East End Womens Action Festival!

April 10-15 '78

Spitalfields Community Centre Hanbury Street E1

Fun, action, chats, cups of tea, workshops, slideshows, films, theatre, exhibitions, musical evenings.

For more information contact 515 1174

womens rights... NCCL

Pregnancy, Maternity Rights and Trade Unions

A one day conference organised by the National Council for Civil Liberties, cosponsored by the Political Committee of the London Co-op. Saturday 22 April Polytechnic of Central London, 115 New Cavendish Street London W1. Conference fee: £2.50 includes lunch, coffee and tea two NCCL publications Maternity Rights for Working Women and Abortion—the Evidence. For booking form write to NCCL 185 Kings Cross Road London WC1.

Rape Crisis

Centre. If you have been raped or sexually assaulted and want someone to talk to or need legal or medical advice the Rape Crisis Centre runs a 24 hour telephone line. Contact us anytime day or

night on 01 340 6145 or PO Box 42 London EN6 5BU.

Lesbian Line is a new phone service for women operated entirely by women and offering help, advice and information. 2-10pm, 01 794 2942.

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Yes! I'll join the fight

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