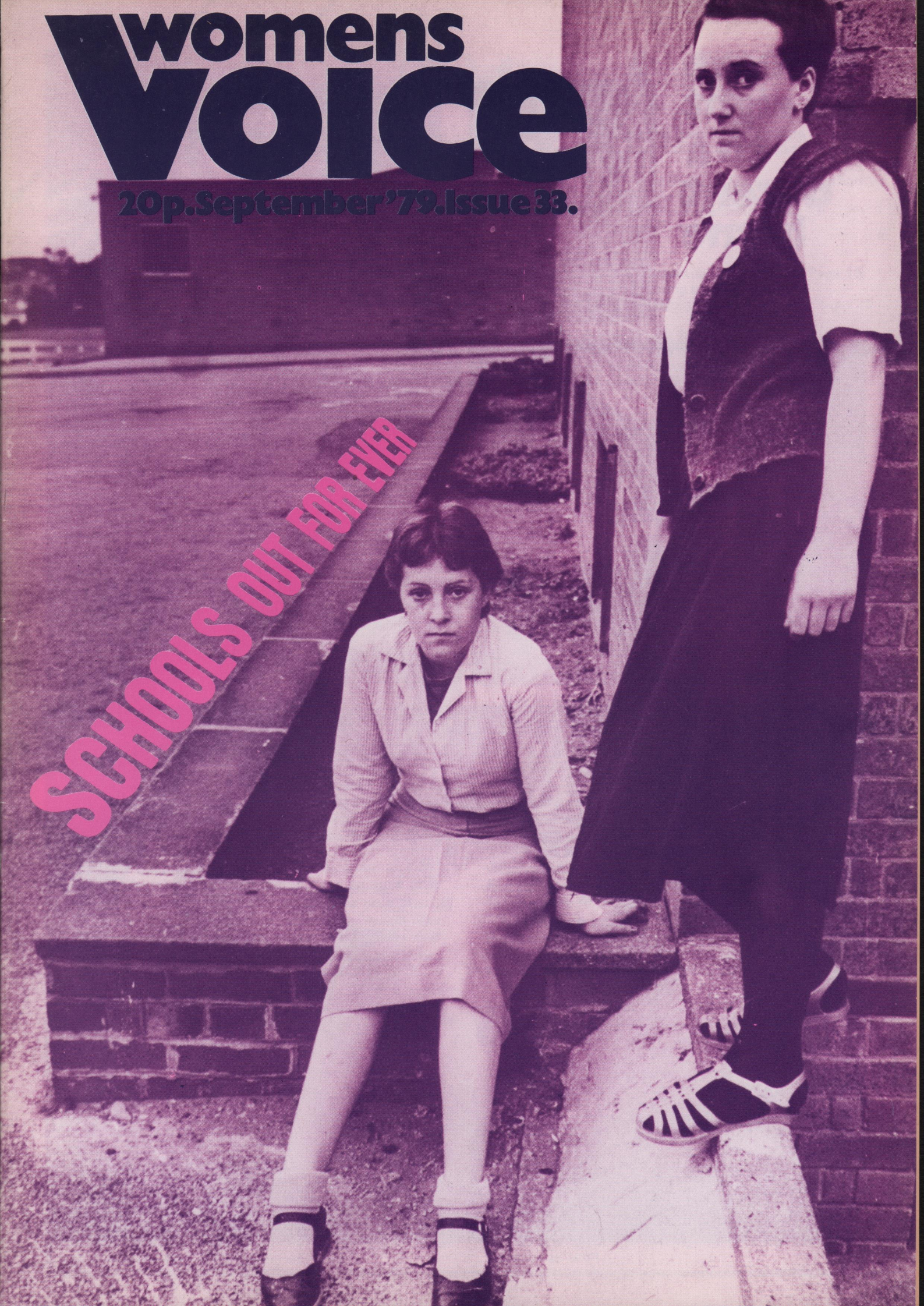


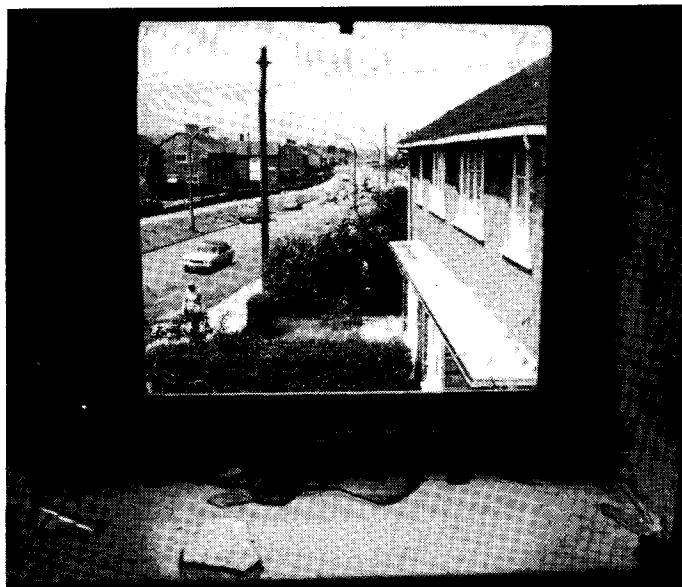
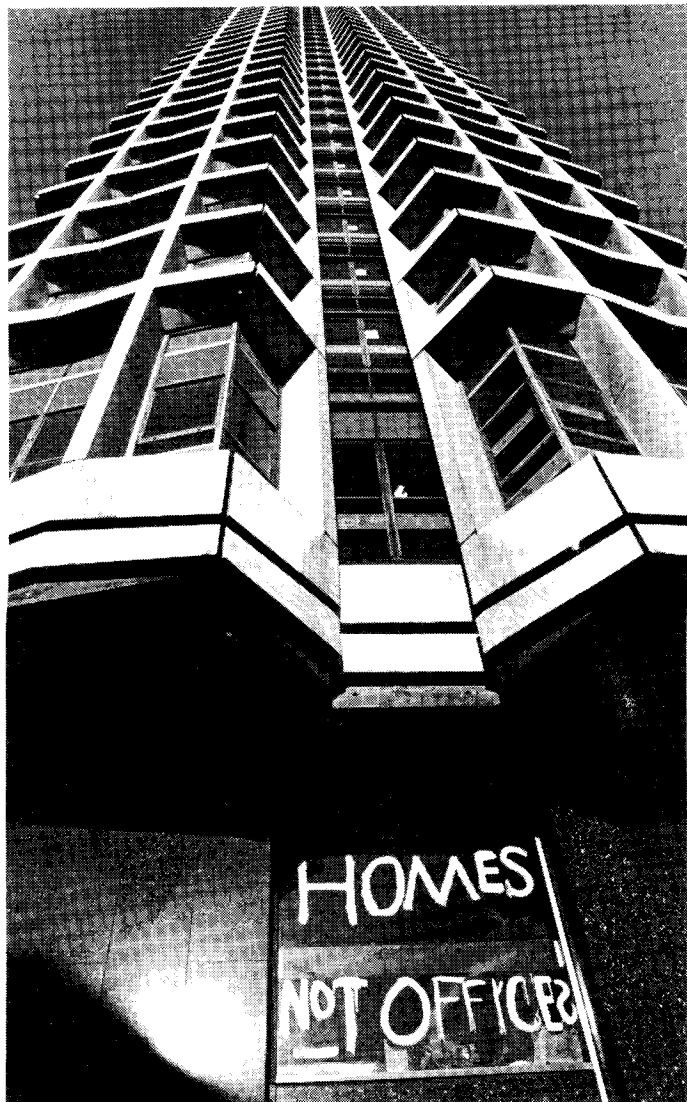
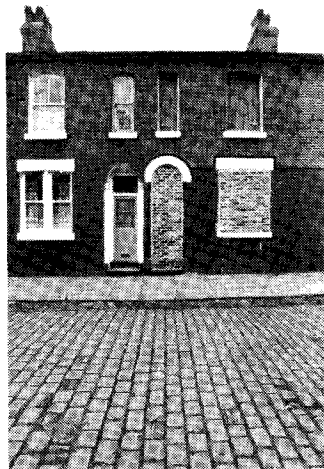
womens VOICE

20p. September '79. Issue 33.

SCHOOLS OUT FOR EVER



**We have
a right
to a
decent
home**



**OUR POINT
OF VIEW**

We refuse to give in!



If the Corrie Bill became law, what would it mean to you? Many of us will never personally be faced with the decision whether or not to have an abortion. Many of us, even in these times, could raise the £100 or so to have it done outside the NHS.

But for those of us who *need* a National Health Service abortion, this Bill would be a disaster. For women who don't find out that they're pregnant till two or three months have passed, for women who have to wait for the results of tests for weeks and weeks, for women without access to sympathetic doctors it is a matter of life and death.

Having an abortion is never an easy decision, even when it's the right decision. We need time to work through our ideas and our feelings, and the Corrie Bill will make this impossible.

The people who are going to vote in Parliament are mostly men, mostly middle-aged, and mostly just don't want to know how women feel about our right to control our own bodies. How can we hope to change their minds?

When the Suffragettes campaigned for votes for women, they were up against the same problems. Maybe we should take a leaf out of their book.

The Suffragettes simply refused to give in. They literally kicked their way into the headlines.

They smashed every plate glass window in Regent Street. Windows went in Downing Street. Paintings were slashed and pillar boxes set alight.

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Ideas, news, letters for the October issue must reach us by 15 September. If you would like to help on Women's Voice you're welcome to the editorial meetings. The next meeting will be on 29th August. Telephone 986 6222 for details.

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MP's were howled down both in Parliament itself and at every public meeting where they spoke—especially those who were opposed to the vote for women.

But it wasn't just headline stuff, it wasn't simply heroics. They organised very carefully at the grass roots, in the community at every level, with street meetings, public meetings, factory gate meetings and some of the biggest demonstrations this country has ever seen.

They forced everyone to come out either for or against them.

They forced everyone to come out for or against them

And we have to do the same. There were 242 MP's who voted for Corrie and 98 MP's who voted against. But there were MP's who didn't even bother to turn up for the vote.

Not only do we have to encourage those who voted against this dangerous bill, but we have to argue over and over again with those who voted for it, and more importantly, with those who abstained.

We have to do more than argue. We have to force them, every one of them to be aware that there are masses of women who are opposed to the Corrie Bill. Women who *demand* abortion as a right, who *demand* that they have the choice.

That means more than the national demo called by the TUC on October 28. It means local activity at every level. Demonstrations, pickets of local MP's, street meetings, public meetings, factory gate meetings, anything you can think of to gain publicity and involve more people.

It means enlisting the support of every individual and organisation possible—trade unions, womens groups, political parties.

If enough pressure is brought to bear, enough minds can be changed. The suffragettes did it in the end, we have to as well.

100 DAYS UNDER THATCHER

MAY 9

Social Services secretary, Patrick Jenkins, announces his intention to tighten up the rules governing social security, because of its 'abuse'.

Police force receive 20 per cent pay rise, with a further 15 per cent expected in September. A chief constable is now on £20,500 p.a.

MAY 10

1p price increase on a standard loaf; 2p on a non-standard loaf.

Armed forces receive 32 per cent pay rise.

MAY 15

Opening of Parliament: Price Commission to be abolished; go ahead to local authorities to return to grammar schools; wider use of private medical care; reduction in state-owned industry and National Enterprise Board; cutback in immigration.

MAY 16

500 workers at Falmouth ship repair yard (British Shipbuilders) are made redundant.

MAY 17

Gas and electricity prices rise by 8½ per cent to come into effect on June 1st. 6 million council and new town houses are to be put up for sale to tenants. A Bill is introduced to save grammar schools by removing the obligation on local authorities to go comprehensive. Freeze on local authority recruitment announced.



15 per cent; 3-4p on a pint of beer; 6p on 20 cigarettes; prescription charges up to 45p from 25p. Spending cuts include £210 million from industry support, £170 million from employment programmes and £55 million from education. Massive tax handout to the rich.

JUNE 13

Government announces expected inflation rate for November to be 17½ per cent. National Coal Board announces price increases, leading to expected 8 per cent on electricity bills. Bus and tube fares increase by 7½ per cent, with a further 13 per cent to come in September.

JUNE 17

Forecast of 2 million unemployed

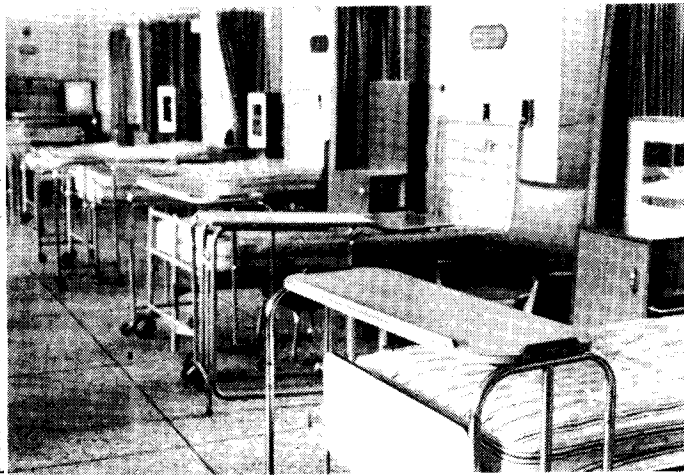


photo: EAMONN O'DWYER (JFL)

MAY 21

Bread prices rise again—2p on a large standard loaf.

MAY 23

Announcements that postal charges are to rise by 1p, and 10-15 per cent on buses and railways.

MAY 24

Petrol goes up by 5p a gallon.

MAY 25

Milk goes up by 1½p. Councils to be forced to sell council houses.

JUNE 5

Further pay rises for top people in armed services, law courts and civil service—an extra £3000 for top officers in the army.

JUNE 7

Government aid to Prescott Refrigeration is cut—another 1000 workers to join the dole queue.

JUNE 12

Budget day: VAT rises to a uniform

by next year.

JUNE 21

Government recommends a 74 per cent pay rise to MPs.

JUNE 25

Government announces intentions of encouraging pay beds and private medicine in hospitals.

JUNE 28

Price of petrol increases by 13p a gallon. British Steel intends to shut down their Shotton plant with a loss of 6000 jobs.

JULY 6

Local authorities draw up plans to close nursery schools, freeze teaching posts and shelve planned improvements and building projects.

JULY 9

Government make public their proposals attacking trade unions: to make 'secondary picketing' unlaw-

ful, to encourage secret ballots with money and to relax the closed shop.

JULY 12

Unemployment up by 120,117.

JULY 13

Second reading of Tory MP John Corrie's anti-abortion bill.

JULY 15

Keith Joseph proposes further closures to British Shipbuilders with a loss of 20,000 jobs.

JULY 17

Government announce that they intend to reduce aid to regional industry by £233 million over the next three years.

JULY 23

Cabinet agrees on £4000 million public spending cuts for 1980-81, including vast job losses in the Civil Service.

JULY 24

Projected closure of at least 1000 hospital beds in Greater London. Estimated 20,000 fewer teachers within two years.

British Gas announce their profits for last year—£360.7 million—and want to raise domestic prices by 20 per cent.

JULY 25

Post Office announce their profits of £375 million last year, and yet they insist that phone and postal charges must rise.

JULY 26

Electricity Council announce profits of £251 million, and that charges are going up *another* 8 per cent in September, totalling 16 per cent increase since May.

JULY 31

Local councils are ordered to cut £600 million from next year's budget, which will mainly hit education and social services.

AUGUST 1

Government suspends Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Area Health Authority for refusing to implement spending cuts of £5 million which would endanger patients' lives.

AUGUST 7

Announcement that £318 million is to be cut from the housing budget.

AUGUST 13

Revelation that Tories plan to keep out almost all immigrants.

Harriet Sherwood



photo: IAN McINTOSH (JFL)



Mrs Patel waits at home while her three young sons are about to be deported. Only after massive publicity a picket of the Home Office and the involvement of several MPs did the Home Office grant a last minute reprieve—of a few days. The children had lived in India with their grandparents, but they are now too old to look after them. The new Tory Minister for immigration, Timothy Raison, has steadfastly refused to allow them to live with their mother in this country. So much for the sanctity of the family!

IMMIGRATION LAWS—NOT JUST RACIST BUT SEXIST TOO!

HAVE you got a foreign boyfriend whom you're planning to marry? Have you been married to a foreigner for less than a year? Are you the mother of a daughter who's 'fallen for' a non-Britisher? Then this concerns you!

As part of an immigration package, not to be formally announced until October, British women who marry foreign men will not be allowed to settle in the UK with their husbands. The ruling will apply to *all* British women—black or white—who are engaged or married to any foreigner—black or white. The only exceptions would be for men from Common Market countries (that is, France, Germany, Denmark, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Ireland, or, of course, the UK) or those born in Commonwealth countries who have a parent or grandparent born in Britain.

What this means is that if you marry a foreigner you may have to choose between staying in Britain on your own or living abroad in your husband's country to be with him. You may have to leave your job and way of life to live in, say, Spain, Libya, Turkey or some other male chauvinist society where opportunities for women are severely limited. It'll be goodbye to your family and friends at home, or goodbye to the man you love.

All this because you're a woman—the government don't

propose to change the law for *men* bringing foreign wives or fiancées into this country! Men have always been free to marry and live here with their wives, irrespective of the woman's nationality.

At the moment, male fiancés are granted 3 months stay on entry into this country, and on marriage, a further 12 months, after which, if the Home Office is satisfied it is a 'genuine' marriage, the man is allowed to settle here. The government wants to return to the situation which existed between 1 January 1973 and 27 June 1974. Foreign husbands would be allowed to join British wives or remain here with them *only if it was proved that the wife would suffer exceptional hardship if she left this country*. From cases brought to light when the ban was previously enforced, the definition of 'exceptional hardship' will be very narrow indeed. Most wives in these cases were exiled.

The government has said their proposals will not affect those 'permanently settled here' but whether this includes husbands who've been married less than 12 months, no-one is certain. So even if you're already married, you're not safe!

The government attempts to justify such measures by claiming there is an increase of Asian immigrants. *The figures do not show this*. The only 'immigration

problem' is one of racial prejudice and hatred. The Tories are ready to sacrifice women's rights in order to pander to the prejudices of their own right wing.

The reaction from women's organisations has been one of outrage and amazement—and a number are beginning to campaign against the ban. Help by writing to your MP or the Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, at the House of Commons, London SW1, saying you strongly oppose the Government's intention to ban foreign husbands and fiancés of British women from coming to this country to settle—and that you believe the measure would be contrary to the spirit of the Sex Discrimination Act. The Joint Council for Welfare of Immigrants (01-405-5527) will give individual advice. The National Council for Civil Liberties (01-278-4575) have a leaflet which you could distribute and are organising a lobby of MP's

on October 25.

This ban potentially affects *all* British women: if it goes through and you fall in love with a foreigner—you've had it!

Ann Beatty

WE NEED YOUR AID TO STAY ON LEMONADE

IN 1971 a government report on alcoholism said that 5000 hostel beds were needed for people with alcohol problems—there have never been more than 655. The DHSS which has been funding these services, have now said that the Local Authorities (LAs) must pay. Many LAs have already said that they won't be able to do this as the rate support grant has been cut.

According to DHSS figures, there are five hundred thousand people who have a severe enough drink problem to be called alcoholics.

Recent estimates show that there has been a dramatic increase in alcoholism among women, the ratio rising from one in five to one in three. Judy Graham from the Alcoholics Recovery Project said: 'We run hostels for alcoholics. They are mainly men because women tend to be put in psychiatric hospitals. We want to start a hostel for women but with our funds being cut it won't be possible. This means that women will stay in the hospitals. The project was started 13 years ago as an experiment. We have helped countless numbers of people but they still call us an experiment.'

'The Tories talk about law and order, cost effectiveness and self-help. The Home Office originally funded us in the name of cost effectiveness to keep alcoholics out of the courts and prisons and now the DHSS are cutting our funds. So the alcoholics will get no help and they'll be back in the courts and prisons.'

An alcoholic in the demonstration said: 'The majority of us start in a hostel and with the help of the alcoholic services we can get back to work and live in our own places. It's going to be very bad for us now.'

Don Brodie, from the 'save Alcoholism Services' campaign, says: 'In 1978 the government's income for excise, tax and VAT on alcohol was £2588 million. They spent £800,000 on services for alcoholics.'

'We need your aid to stay on lemonade' said one of the banners. The Tory government is driving us all to drink.

COME TO THE WOMEN'S VOICE CONFERENCE

The second WV conference will be held in Birmingham on the 29th and 30th of September. So it is very important that your WV group starts to talk about what WV nationally should be doing. What direction should we be taking? What are our priorities? Every group should now have a copy of the draft programme drawn up by the WV steering committee, along with other discussion documents.

Each WV group can send one delegate for every 5 members. So if you haven't received your WV membership cards yet ring the office today—01 986 6222. A creche will be provided.

Do you have a Labour MP? Does your union sponsor any MPs? Check this list to see which MPs voted which way. Write to those who voted for Corrie telling them why they are wrong. Write to those who abstained telling them why

they should vote against, and not waste their vote. Write to those who voted against and assure them of your support—remember, they will get plenty of letters from SPUC, so they need letters from us too, to help them stand firm.

ABOUT OUR MPs WHO DIDN'T VOTE (2nd reading)

HUGH BROWN Glasgow, Provan
 NORMAN BUCHAN Renfrewshire West
 NEIL CARMICHAEL Glasgow Kelvin Grove
 ROBIN COOK Edinburgh Central
 ROBERT HUGHES Aberdeen North
 MAURICE MILLER East Kilbride,
 MARTIN O'NEIL Strathgairn East and Clackmannan
 MIKE THOMAS Newcastle East
 ANDREW BENNETT Stockport North
 STANLEY BOOTH Barrow-in-Furness
 ROBERT KILROY-SILK Ormskirk
 KENNETH MARKS Manchester, Gorton
 MICHAEL MEACHER Oldham West
 GEORGE MORTON Manchester Moss-Side
 ERIC OGDEN Liverpool, West Derby
 STANLEY ORME Salford West
 LESLIE SPRIGGS St Helens
 JACK STRAW Blackburn
 ANN TAYLOR Bolton West
 STANLEY THORNE Preston South
 ROBERT CRYER Keighley
 JOSEPH DEAN Leeds West
 MARTIN FLANNERY Sheffield Hillsborough
 ALEX LYON York
 EDWARD LYONS Bradford West
 FRED MULLEY Sheffield, Park
 JOHN PRESCOTT Kingston-upon-Hull East
 KENNETH WOOLMER Batley and Morley
 TERENCE DAVIS Birmingham, Stechford
 BRUCE GEORGE Walsall South
 FRANK HAYNES Ashfield
 WILLIAM HOMEWOOD Kettering
 JEFFREY ROOKER Birmingham Perry Barr
 DENIS SKINNER Doncaster
 PHILIP WHITEHEAD Coventry S-E
 WILLIAM WILSON Birmingham Handsworth
 ALEC JONES Rhondda
 NEIL KINNOCK Bedwellty
 RAYMOND POWELL Gwynedd
 ROGER THOMAS Carmarthen
 NORMAN ATKINSON Haringey, Tottenham
 JOEL BARNETT Haywood and Royton
 SIDNEY BIDWELL Saling, Southall
 RONALD W BROWN Hackney South and Shoreditch
 JOHN CARTWRIGHT Greenwich, Woolwich East
 JOHN CUNNINGHAM Whitehead
 CLINTON DAVIS Hackney Central
 ERIC DEAKINS Waltham Forest, Walthamstow
 FRANK DOBSON Camden, Holborn and St Pancras South
 BRUCE DOUGLAS-MANN Merton, Mitcham and Morden
 ALFRED DUBS Wandsworth, Battersea South
 DAVID ENNALS Norwich North
 JOHN FRASER Lambeth, Norwood
 REGINALD FRESOON Brent East
 EDWARD GRAHAM Enfield, Edmonton
 STUART HOLLAND Lambeth, Vauxhall
 DOUGLAS JAY Wandsworth Battersea North
 RUSSELL KERR Hounslow, Feltham and Heston
 HARRY LAMBORN Peckham Southward
 RONALD LEIGHTON Newham N-E
 JOAN LESTOR Eton and Slough
 ARTHUR LEWIS Newham N-W
 IAN MIKARDO Tower Hamlets Bethnal Green and Bow
 ROLAND MOYLE Lewisham East
 STANLEY NEWENS Harlow
 DAVID OWEN Plymouth, Devonport
 LAURENCE PAVITT Brent South
 CHRIS PRICE Lewisham West
 REG RACE Haringey, Wood Green
 JO RICHARDSON Barking
 ERNIE ROBERTS Hackney North and Stoke Newington
 PETER SHORE Tower Hamlets, Stepney and Poplar
 JOHN SILKEN Lewisham, Deptford
 SAM SILKIN Southwark, Dulwich
 CLIVE SOLEY Hammersmith North
 DAVID STODDART Swindon
 JOHN TILLEY Lambeth Central
 KENNETH WEETCH Ipswich
 JOHN GARRETT Norwich South
 JOHN GRANT Islington Central

FRANK ALLAUN Salford East
 PETER ARCHER Warley West
 ERNEST ARMSTRONG Durham N.W.
 JACK ASHLEY Stoke on Trent South
 JOE ASHTON Basselaw
 GORDON BAGIER Sunderland South
 GUY BARNETT Greenwch
 BETTY BOOTHROYD Bristol S.E.
 ARTHUR BOTTOMLEY West Bromwich
 TOM BRADLEY Teesside, Middlesbrough
 JIM CALLAGHAN Leicester East
 JAMES CALLAGHAN Cardiff S.E.
 IAN CAMPBELL Middleton and Prestwich
 ROBERT CANT Dumbartonshire West
 DAVID CLARK Stoke on Trent Central
 DONALD COLEMAN South Shields
 DENNIS CONCANNON Neeth
 Mansfield
 BERNARD CONLAN Gateshead East
 HARRY COWANS Newcastle Central
 THOMAS COX Wandsworth, Tooting
 JAMES CRAIGEN Glasgow, Maryhill
 RICHARD CRAWSHAW Liverpool, Toxteth
 STANLEY CROWTHER Rotherham
 GEORGE CUNNINGHAM Islington South and Finsbury
 TAM DALYELL West Lothian
 ARTHUR DAVIES Accrington
 HUDSON DAVIES Caerphilly
 IFOR DAVIES Gower
 DONALD DEWER Glasgow, Garscadden
 JOHN DORMAND Eastington
 RICHARD DOUGLAS Dunfermline
 JACK DUNNETT Nottingham East
 GWYNETH DUNWOODY Crewe
 ROBERT EDWARDS Wolverhampton
 RAYMOND ELLIS Derbyshire N.E.
 IOAN EVANS Aberdeen
 JOHN EVANS Newton
 HARRY EWING Stirling, Falkirk and Grangemouth
 ANDREW FAULDS: Warley East
 FRANK FIELD Birkenhead
 EDWARD FLETCHER Darlington
 RAYMOND FLETCHER Ilkeston
 MICHAEL FOOT Ebbw Vale
 BENJAMIN FORD Bradford North
 JOHN FORRESTER Stoke on Trent North
 DEREK FOSTER Bishop Auckland
 GEORGE FOULKES Ayrshire South
 REGINALD FRESOON Brent East
 EDWARD GARRETT Walsand
 JOHN GILBERT Dudley East
 DAVID GINSBURG Dewsbury
 JOHN GOLDING Newcastle under Lyne
 HARRY GOURLAY Kirkcaldy
 GEORGE GRANT Morpeth
 WILLIAM HAMILTON File Central
 PETER HARDY Rother Valley
 JUDITH HART Lanark
 ROY HATTERSLEY Birmingham, Sparkbrook
 DENNIS HEALEY Leeds East
 ERIC HEFFER Liverpool, Walton
 FRANK HOOLEY Sheffield, Heeley
 JOHN HORAM Gateshead, West
 DENIS HOWELL Birmingham, Small Heath
 LESLIE HUCKFIELD Nurstree
 GREVILLE JANNER Leicestershire West
 JOHN BRYNMOORE Pontypridd
 JAMES JOHNSON Kingston upon Hull West
 WALTER JOHNSON Derby South
 BARRY JONES Flint East
 DANIEL JONES Burnley
 GERALD KAUFMAN Manchester, Ardwick
 DAVID LAMBLE Ayrshire Central
 JAMES LAMOND Oldham East
 HAROLD LEVER Manchester Central
 RONALD LEWIS Carlisle
 GEOFFREY LOFTHOUSE Pontefract and Castleford
 MUGH MCCARTNEY Dumbartonshire Central
 OONAGH McDONALD Thurrock
 ALLEN MCKAY Penistone
 WILLIAM MCKELVEY Kilmarnock
 ANDREW MCMAHON Glasgow, Goran

LABOUR MPs AGAINST CORRIE

LABOUR MPs FOR CORRIE

THOMAS McMILLAN Glasgow Central
 TOM McNALLY Stockport South
 JOHN McWILLIAM Batdwin
 BRYAN MAGEE Waltham Forest, Leyton
 EDMUND MARSHALL Goolse
 JAMES MARSHALL Leicester South
 ROY MASON Barnsley
 JOHN MAXTON Glasgow, Cathart
 JOHN MAYNARD Sheffield, Brightside
 BRUCE MILLAN Glasgow, Craigton
 AUSTIN MITCHELL Grimsby
 RICHARD MITCHELL Southampton, Itchen
 CHARLES MORRIS Manchester, Openshaw
 ARTHUR PALMER Bristol N-E
 GEORGE PARK Coventry N-E
 JOHN PARKER Barking, Dagenham
 GILES RADICE Chester-le-Street
 MERLYN REES Leeds South
 ALBERT ROBERTS Normanton
 GEORGE ROBERTSON Hamilton
 GEOFFREY ROBINSON Coventry N-W
 WILLIAM RODGERS Teesside, Stockton
 JOHN ROPER Farnworth
 ERNEST ROSS Dundee West
 JOHN RYMAN Blyth
 JOHN SEVER Birmingham, Ladywood
 ROBERT SHELDON Ashton-under-Lyne
 RENEE SHORT Wolverhampton
 JULIUS SILVERMAN Birmingham, Erdington
 JOHN SMITH Lancashire North
 PETER SNAPE West Bromwich East
 NICOL SPEARING Newham South
 ALBERT STALLARD Camden, St Pancras North
 ROGER STOTT Westhoughton
 GAVIN STRANG Edinburgh East
 SHIRLEY SUMMERSKILL Halifax
 JEFFREY THOMAS Aberdeenshire
 THOMAS TORNEY Bradford South
 ERIC VADLEY Chesterfield
 EDWIN WAINWRIGHT Deane Valley
 HAROLD WALKER Doncaster
 DAVID WATKINS Colchester
 JAMES WELLBELLOVED Bexley, Erith and Crayford
 MICHAEL WELSH Don Valley
 FRANK WHITE Bury and Radcliffe
 WILLIAM WHITLOCK Nottingham North
 THOMAS WILLIAMS Warrington
 DAVID WINNICK Walsall North
 ALEC WOODDALL Hemsworth
 IAN WRIGGLESWORTH Teesside, Thornaby
 DAVID YOUNG Bolton East

SCOTLAND
 ALLEN ADAMS Paisley
 JEREMY BRAY Motherwell and Wishaw
 DENNIS CANAVAN Stirlingshire West
 JAMES DEMPSEY Coatbridge & Airdrie
 ALEX EADIE Midlothian
 JAMES HAMILTON Bothwell
 NORMAN HOGG Dunbartonshire East
 JOHN HOME Berwick and East Lothian
 ROBERTSON Greenock and Port Glasgow
 DR. DICKSON
 MABON Glasgow, Queens Park
 FRANK McELONE Rutherglen
 GREGOR MacKENZIE Calhassie and Sutherland
 ROBERT MacLENNAN Glasgow, Shettleston
 DAVID MARSHALL Glasgow, Springburn
 MICHAEL MARTIN Glasgow, Pollok
 JAMES WHITE
 NORRIE EAST
 DONALD DICKSON Jarrow
 MARK HUGHES Durham
 EDWARD Harlepool
 LEADBITTER Teeside, Redcar
 JAMES TINN Houghton-le-Spring
 THOMAS URWIN Sunderland North
 FRED WILLEY
 NORTH WEST
 DALE CAMPBELL-Workington
 SAVOURS
 LEWIS CARTER-Eccles
 JONES
 LAWRENCE Leigh
 CUNLIFFE Liverpool, Kirkdale
 JAMES DUNN Manchester, Blackley
 KENNETH EASTON Wigan
 ALAN FITCH Ince
 MICHAEL McGUIRE Manchester, Wythenshaw
 ALF MORRIS
 GORDON OAKES Widnes
 ROBERT PARRY Liverpool, Scotland Exchange
 THOMAS PENDRY Stalybridge and Hyde
 HAROLD WILSON Hyuton
 YORRISSE
 STANLEY COHEN Leeds, South East
 PAT DUFFY Sheffield, Attercliffe
 WALTER Wakefield
 HARRISON
 KEVIN McNAMARA Kingston upon Hull, Central
 BARRY SHEERMAN AUT & ASTMS
 MIDLANDS
 MICHAEL ENGLISH Nottingham West
 GWILYM ROBERTS Cannock
 WALES
 LEO ABSE Pontypridd
 DONALD Swansea East
 ANDERSON
 DENZIL DAVIES Llanelli
 THOMAS ELLIS Wrexham
 ROY HUGHES Newport
 JOHN MORRIS Aberavon
 EDWARD Merthyr Tydfil
 ROWLANDS
 ALAN WILLIAMS Swansea, West
 SOUTH
 MICHAEL COCKS Bristol South
 BOB MELLISH Southwark, Bermondsey
 MICHAEL Islington, North
 O'HALLORAN
 NEVILLE Hillingdon, Hayes
 SANDLESON and Harlington

Around the groups

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

FLEET STREET WOMENS VOICE

On hearing of the Corrie Bill, our Womens Voice group for the first time leafleted the whole of Fleet Street advertising our meeting to discuss the issue. Eight new women turned up as a result.

The first thing we decided was to order some of the NAC petitions and publish a second leaflet to distribute while collecting signatures. Now we meet every Tuesday and Friday lunch time, divide into small groups, and station ourselves outside each of the various newspaper offices talking to people about the campaign, inviting them to sign and to get involved in the campaign.

We are also printing resolutions to our chapels (work-place union branches) getting donations for the campaign, as well as getting individual chapels to affiliate to NAC. One of our group not only got such a resolution through her chapel, but also got a stand set up in the canteen to collect signatures.

We've called for a mass meeting and petitioning on September 3rd. at 5.30 in Ludgate Circus, to try and get some publicity in the National Dailies. We hope to get support from all London Womens Voice and NAC groups. We're also having a social on September 14th, and our efforts are building up to a public meeting in early October where we shall focus on not only abortion rights but the other issues affecting work and family under attack by the Tory government. For more info about our activities ring Maggie Rutter (day) 822 3780 or (home) 985 0847.

WALTHAM FOREST

Our Womens Voice group held a meeting to decide what to do about the Corrie Bill. We decided to set up a NAC group and the first NAC meeting was held on August 8.

About thirty people came, from the Labour Party, the Communist Party, Womens Voice, and the SWP.

A woman from the Trades Council agreed to press them to support NAC and the TUC demonstration. Two journalists from the local paper joined and agreed to sit on the steering committee we set up to organise an action.

Already Womens Voice has been petitioning in the local High Street with great success and NAC will be petitioning again in

Walthamstow, Leytonstone and Leyton. There's a lot of enthusiasm for the campaign so we're expecting to organise a large number of people to fight the Bill and to demonstrate on October 28.

HASTINGS

On Saturday 14th July a demonstration was held against the Corrie Bill. It was the first time in Hastings that such a demonstration had taken place and shows what can be done even in an apathetic conservative place like Hastings. About 20 people came although many more had promised to come. An article had been written for the local paper, and the local Family Planning Clinics and the Library had been contacted.

We started by demonstrating outside the local newspaper offices, handing out leaflets and collecting signatures for the petition. We talked and argued with people as they went by and soon there were many small discussion groups being held on the pavement. We found that many women did not realise how important the bill was, so the demo was good in that it helped to point out the arguments to women and show how oppressive the bill is.

The response and interest shown was good, quite a few magazines were sold and about five women showed interest in coming to WV meetings. After a while we went into the centre of the town where the Carnival Queen was selling raffle tickets for charity—we persuaded her and her friends to sign the petition! All in all it was very successful and has attracted more women to the struggle, we learnt quite a lot and have gained much more confidence.

Yvonne Wicken

READING

Here in Reading Womens Voice, supporters have produced a leaflet explaining the threat of the Corrie Bill, and urging people to join the campaign to defeat it. We've been distributing it outside a factory, on an estate, and in the main street, along with our Womens Voice sales. Incidentally, the other side of the leaflet told of our campaign around a local strike against redundancies, and gave news of the council's plans to sell houses and up rents. and we advertised forthcoming meetings on rape, and on the new technology.

Colleen Ridgeway

HACKNEY

Eight of us in our Womens Voice group have begun our abortion campaign in earnest. We went armed with posters, petitions, stickers and copies of Womens Voice down to the local market. The posters which we displayed on a billboard attracted a lot of attention.

Some of us were nervous because we hadn't done anything like this before. But we were soon encouraged by the response. Dozens of people were eager to sign the petition, and many more signed after we explained the details of the Corrie Bill to them. We were delighted to find only a few people were hostile.

We ran out of leaflets, filled page after page of the petition, and sold sixteen Womens Voice in two hours. Six women asked to be kept informed of forth-coming meetings and activities for the campaign.

Our experience has really boosted our confidence to build the campaign over the coming months.

FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN:

POSTERS

25 for £1

STICKERS

25p a sheet

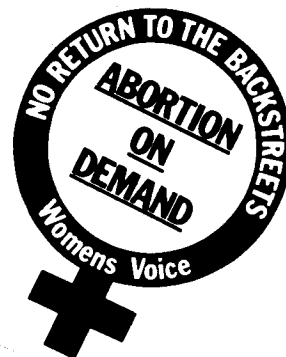
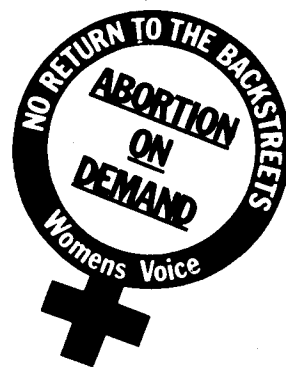
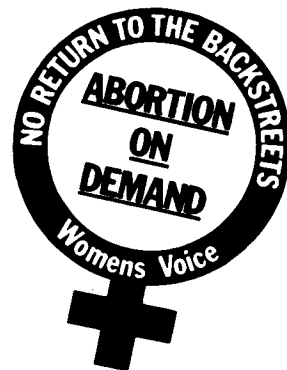
FACT SHEETS

£3 per 100

LEAFLETS

£5 per 1000

All available from Womens Voice, Box 82 London E2. Please send money with orders.



LAST winter saw the rebellion of the low paid. Hundreds of thousands of workers employed in the public sector were forced to go on strike. Many of them were women who had never been on strike before. Appalling wages had forced the low paid to take action.

The press and TV had a field day. 'Selfish workers risk patients' lives' they screamed. (The same papers have precious little to say now about the effect of cuts on patients' lives).

The union leaders agreed to settle for an increase of 9 per cent plus £1 for full-time workers with the promise of more. How much more was to be decided by the Clegg commission.

The job of the Clegg commission was to compare jobs in the public sector with the equivalent jobs in the private sector and then make up the difference. The problem for women is this: if you compare next to nothing with next to nothing—you get nothing.

And nothing is exactly what Clegg has given the low paid women workers in the public sector. Most of them are going to get £1.76 a week if they work full time—less if they work part time. How far is that going to go with prices rising at 20 per cent a year? It's a disgrace.

Local Authority Manual Workers

There are well over a million manual workers employed by local authorities, and nearly three quarters of them are women. Four out of five of these women work part time.

Local authority workers work in schools, social services, parks, housing departments, roads, transport and dustbin collection. Most of the part-time women are doing jobs like cleaners, kitchen assistants, toilet attendants, school dinner supervisors and so on.

Even full-time workers doing these jobs are earning well under £50 a week, so that the part-timers are getting a lot less.

How much has Clegg given them? Less than £2 a week.

Over half of all local authority manuals are in the two bottom grades A and B. These are the rates for full-timers:

A Current rate £46.90. Increased rate £48.66. Increase 3.8 per cent.

B. Current rate £47.30. Increased rate £49.60. Increase 4.9 per cent.

Remember—part time workers will not even get this much.

PROMISES WON'T PAY THE BILLS



Photo: LAURIE SPARHAM (JFL)

The union leaders got us into this—they agreed to comparability instead of fighting for a decent minimum wage. Even now when it is clear that comparability will not solve low pay they are doing nothing. Charlie Donnet, national officer in charge of the public sector for the General and Municipal Workers Union was more than honest. He said 'there would be no question of any difficulty in selling the deal to our members.' His union had accepted the Clegg commission

as a solution to last winter's disputes 'because we were up to our necks in it and looking for something to save the national interest.' What about the interests of his members?

Hidden in the Clegg commission's report was another shameful attack on working class people. Even these miserable rises are supposed to be paid for—by us, with our jobs. There's not a penny extra coming from the government, so they'll try and cut our jobs. The fight against low pay just can't be

PRIVATE!

RECENTLY the electricians union signed a deal which included subscriptions to a private medical scheme for their members. Other trades unionists were shocked. Why? Why shouldn't workers get their employers to pay for private medical care?

Private medicine drains the resources from the National Health Service. If we do not fight wholeheartedly and unitedly for our health service it will be eroded.

National Health Service Ancillaries

There are about 270,000 ancillary workers in the NHS—nearly three quarters of them are women. About two thirds of the women work part time.

They are mostly domestic assistants, catering assistants, and ward Orderlies in hospitals and clinics.

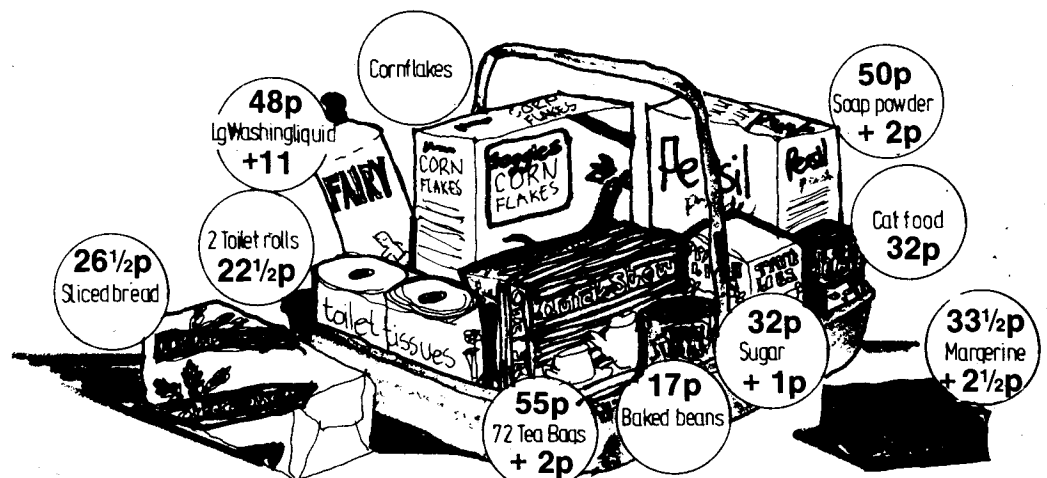
Three quarters of the NHS ancillaries are in the bottom three grades. These are the rates for full timers:

1. Current rate £46.90. Increased rate £48.60. Increase 3.8 per cent.
2. Current rate £47.42. Increased rate £49.60. Increase 4.6 per cent.
3. Current rate £47.98. Increased rate £51.12. Increase 6.5 per cent.

separated from the fight against the cuts.

Comparability is no solution to low pay. Women everywhere get rotten wages—comparing them with each other won't help. It's like the failure of the Equal Pay Act—comparing low paid women workers with low paid men workers still leaves you without enough money.

What we need is not comparisons but more money.



Price in August 1979 £3.30 This months total £3.48 Increase of 18 1/2p

Joanna Blythman of Edinburgh Women's Aid speaks to Penny Packham about the campaign

to free June Greig, and about the horror of battered women's lives.

FREE JUNE GREIG



'On 31st May the Scotsman printed an article. It was headed "Six years in prison for killing 'monster' husband." June's monster husband had consistently abused and beaten her up over seven years of marriage. He kicked her in the stomach when she was pregnant, slashed her ear and neck with a ghirka knife, burned her with cigarettes and she and her daughter had frequently been beaten and punched.'

'June has three children of her own and looked after his four by his previous marriage, which broke up because of his violence.'

'June had had enough. He came in drunk and angry. She knew by the look in his eyes that she was in for it and she started to make the tea. Then she said to the children, "I'm going to kill your Daddy." By the time the kids had run upstairs to get the neighbours, she had done it. She stabbed him twice. In passing a sentence of six years, the judge, Lord Dunpark, justified the severity of the sentence saying it was a "deterrent to all battered women who may be tempted to kill their husbands." The plea of self defence was thrown out, the court said that the crime was premeditated, proved by her statement to the kids.'

'What nonsense. Battered women who retaliate are so terrified that they are not going to stop and think

about prison sentences. The anticipation of violence is often more terrifying than the real violence—the sickening lurch in your stomach when you hear his key turning in the door—like it must have been for the woman waiting trial in Newport. Her husband used to wind up the alarm clock and inform her that when it went off she was going to "get it". Most battered women know that fighting back usually means a worse beating. She isn't likely to be successful on account of weight and height. If a woman is driven to kill her husband it's likely to be "premeditated", when he's in the bath or asleep. A lot of battered women say they have thought of killing their husbands because it's the only alternative, this says a lot for the alternatives. One woman told me that she always knew when she was "for it", she said "I used to grind up Valium into his tea to make him more docile, I used to wish I could do it properly so I could kill him."

'She herself had attempted suicide.'

'Did you know that 25 per cent of all violent offences reported to the police are wife assault? Few cases are reported, women are too scared to bring charges, you can imagine what the real statistics are. It is not just physical beatings that women

suffer, they suffer sexual humiliation, a broken bottle in the vagina, a woman who was peed on with her head pushed down the lavatory, a man who had intercourse with his wife after beating her, his way of getting turned on.'

'One of the reasons that Women's Aid is supporting June Greig is to defuse the myth that wife battering is just a "slap in anger" or "the rough and tumble of married life". It is severe, systematic violence. This violence would never be tolerated anywhere except within the confines of marriage. It's like rape, people say, "she must have asked for it," battered women, "must have done something wrong, a nagging wife who drove her husband to violence". People say it takes two to start a fight. Believe me, it doesn't.'

'The police are notoriously unhelpful. They rarely intervene in "domestic tiffs". Unless the assault results in hospitalisation it's unlikely a batterer will get charged. If he is, he waits for his trial as though it's for a parking offence. Meanwhile the woman has to go on living with him, knowing he'll make life hell if she presses charges.'

'Why didn't she leave? Why did

she put up with it? People always say. If you are married with children, your husband controls the money, it's difficult to make a break and leave the home you've made.'

'You go to relatives, it's OK the first time, but your husband will find you. You might be lucky and find Women's Aid, get a place in a refuge but there aren't enough places. You could try the housing department but you'd probably get slum accommodation. Making the break means making sacrifices as well as escaping. And above all imagine the emotional pressures on a woman to go back, so the kids still have a father and to try again with the marriage.'

'It's not that these men are psychopaths or that it only happens in problem families. It's far too widespread to be dismissed like that. It's marriage, the institution itself, although of course unmarried women get battered too.'

'But enough is enough. We are determined to get it over to the judges in June's appeal in September, that an awful lot of people are really concerned about June Greig, and the principles of the case.'

Kay Kelly from Scottish Gas Womens Voice has known June all her life. She lived across the road from her. She had this to say about June:

'June isn't a violent person, she's really timid and kind hearted, she's a really good mother. She not only had to bring up her own 3 daughters but his 4 sons from his first marriage. All 9 of them lived in a two bedroomed house. He battered her all the time whether drunk or sober. She tried to commit suicide several times and tried running away but there was nowhere she could go. The kids were so afraid of George that Kelly, the eldest one, would wet herself with fright when he shouted her name. He used to tell June that he wished she had died of cancer instead of his first wife and often taunted her about being fat in front of other people. Sometimes he chased her with knives, it fascinated him.'

'Scottish Gas Womens Voice has taken up the campaign. We've had a meeting with a speaker from Women's Aid and we are trying to spread the campaign through NALGO. Other NALGO members in London are trying to organise a bus to come to the picket on the day of the appeal, September 27 or 28.'

WHAT WE CAN DO

The provisional date for the appeal now given is either the 27th or 28th of September. This is quite far off, but in one way it gives us time to get support from all quarters. What you can do . . .

1. Write a letter to the Lord Advocate, Rt Hon Lord McKay of Clashfern QC, and the Solicitor General Nicholas Fairbairn QC MP at Fielden House, 10 Great College Street, Westminster, London, registering your anger at the sentence passed on June and saying that you support the campaign for her release. If you are a member of any group or organisation, get them to send a similar letter or support resolution.

2. Get any group or organisation that you are a member of to write to the campaign with their support so that we can use this on a press

release to let people know how wide the support for the campaign really is.

3. Write an individual or group letter to June in prison expressing your solidarity and backing for her. c/o Cornton Vale Prison, Cornton Road, Stirling, Scotland.

4. Join in (if this is geographically possible) the all night vigil outside the Appeal Court on the night before the hearing and come to the mass demonstration outside the court on the day. Ask any group that you are a member of to be represented at either or both of these.

5. Ask any groups or individuals you know to send money for the running of the campaign.

Contact the campaign c/o Women's Aid, 88a George Street, Edinburgh.



SACKED FOR FIGHTING RACISM

ON THE night of 31 March, 180 anti-racists turned out to picket Polyanna's, a Birmingham nightclub. The picket had been organised by BACARIC, the Birmingham Action Committee Against Racism in Ctubs.

The racist quota systems operated by the club owners provoked an investigation last November by the Commission for Racial Equality, (CRE), following which the club was served with a non-discrimination order under the 1976 Race Relations Act. The club owners refused to obey this order, and continued refusing entry to blacks. The CRE is now seeking an injunction in the County Court to halt the club's discriminatory practices.

The picket began peacefully with a small police presence, but it was violently dispersed with the arrival of Chief Inspector Postans and the SPG. Seven anti-racists were arrested on charges ranging from assault to threatening words and behaviour. According to police statements in court, this offence is more easily committed by women; it seems to be more threatening when 'young ladies' swear!

The police bias became obvious during the three day trial in July. The two police inspectors who were directing operations that night admitted that they knew the club owners personally, and that they believed that the conclusions of the CRE investigation were wrong. The club was not discriminatory, they said, as there was a black bouncer on the door. It became clear from their evidence that they were not at the picket in order to keep the peace, but to defend the illegal

policies of the club. Despite this, and the contradictory evidence of several police officers, all seven were convicted, with fines totalling £1,800.

For Bridget Parsons, a local maths teacher charged with assault, the consequences are likely to be far more serious. The day after the trial, she was subjected to a vindictive attack by the local press. No mention was made of the flagrant defiance of the law by the club owners, or even of the conclusions of the CRE. According to one editorial Bridget Parsons 'turned outside a Birmingham nightclub which she conceived to be operating some kind of colour bar' ... Following her conviction 'the Birmingham Education Department has a clear duty to the community ... She should be sacked.'

She has now been suspended pending an emergency meeting of the Board of Governors. Bridget's alleged offence, occurred after an incident which, as he admitted in court, Postans grabbed her by the throat. Another woman arrested was subject not only to physical, but also to sexist verbal abuse by the police. It seems that women with children become unfit mothers when they act politically.

Bridget Parsons is in danger of losing her job and career because she is opposed to racism. If this is allowed to happen, it would constitute a threat to all those who are prepared to actively demonstrate against racism in this country. BACARIC is trying to raise £1800 to pay the fines. Messages of support and donations to BACARIC, c/o 9 Park Avenue, Birmingham 13.
Kate Sherwood

THERE'S NO SUCH WORD AS CAN'T

LAST year when members of our campaign to save the children's ward at Greenwich district hospital in S.E. London, went to a meeting attended by the local Area Health Authority (AHA), we asked them 'Why don't you refuse to cutback or just tell the government to p*** off?'. 'We can't' they bleated.

When I was young and my mum asked me to do something that was difficult, I used to say 'I can't' her reply was always 'there's no such word as can't'. Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham AHA have proved that my mum was right all along. This AHA was told to cut even further back, this time a massive £5 million. They refused to do it.

The DHSS promptly suspended all the AHA members and replaced them with five 'commissionaires'. I went along to the public meeting that the local labour council and labour party had called. There were five men crowded round a table, on a stage, with a microphone and stage lights shining on them. They posed every time a photographer took a snap. Each one of them made a 'little' speech which went on and on and on ...

The only thing that was funny about anything they said was the slugging off of the Tory party and their statement that the local Labour MP's were going to argue the case in parliament. One of the local labour MP's is Roland Moyle (sponsored by NUPE). He used to be the man who pointed the finger at the areas of the NHS which were to be cut. It was the same man that our Women's Voice group visited about the closure of the children's ward, he said—he could do nothing about it, that anyway we didn't need so many hospital beds any more and that women can look after the sick at home!

Contributions from the audience at the meeting were pretty good. Doctor Kirby, a member of the Socialist Workers Party, told us that patients have already died in Lewisham hospital, where he works, because of the cuts that have

already been carried out. A woman from the local campaign against Corrie spoke about the fight to keep the abortion facilities that would be lost (this is one of the areas due for cuts).

The Labour council has advised its members not to co-operate with the 'commissionaires' but this alone will achieve nothing. Nor will a campaign that's controlled by councillors and MP's. The campaign has to be run by US—the people who work in the hospitals and the people in the community. Only we can mobilise, hold street meetings, petitions, pickets and occupations. The campaigns in Greenwich show that hospital campaigns run by councillors and MP's achieve nothing. They are only involved for their selfish reasons—they want to win votes.

You only get things for yourself when you fight for them yourself. That's what women's liberation and socialism is all about—self activity. Things that are 'given' can always be taken back, like a health service, council housing, abortion and maternity rights. It's up to US.

Peggy Eagle.

Did you know?

- Did you know that market research organisations divide us into three sexes — men, women, and housewives?

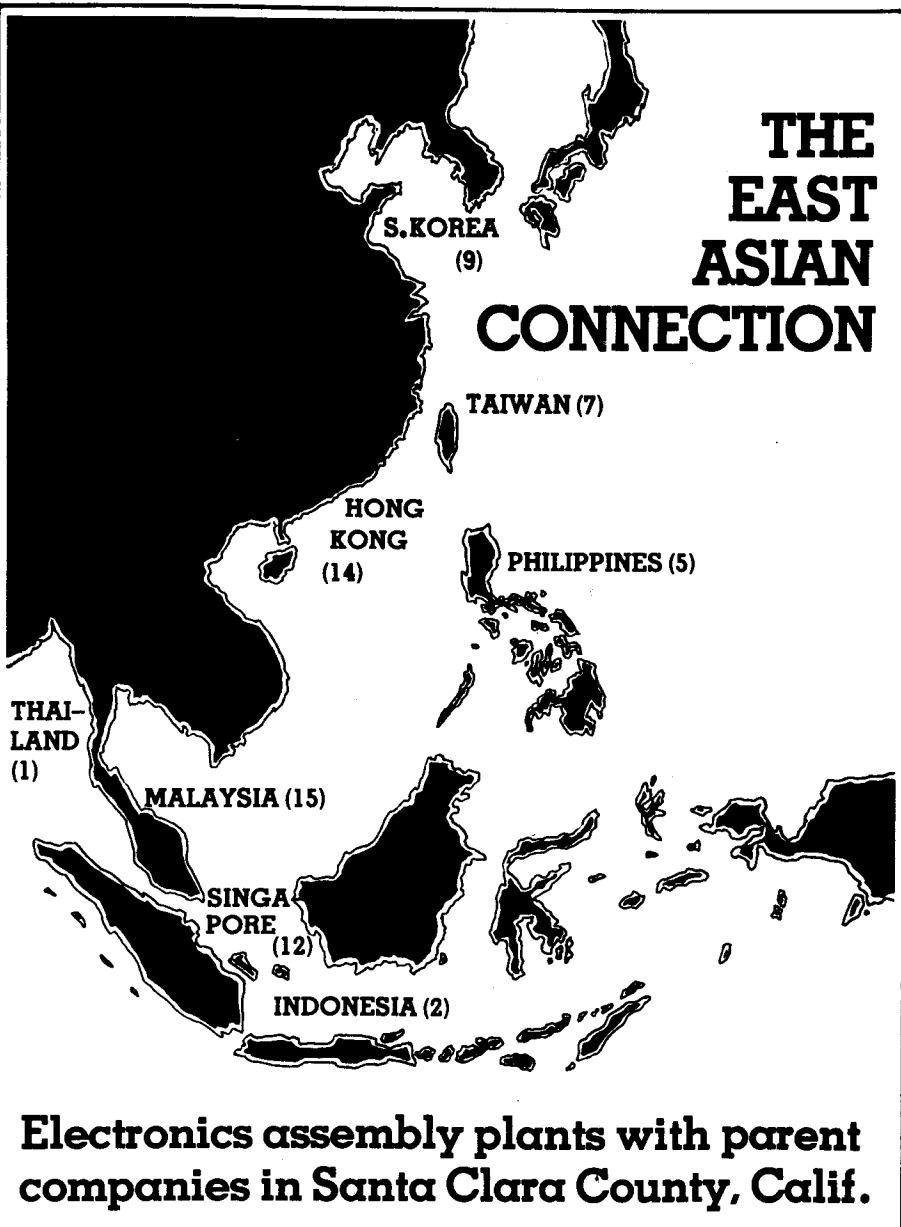
- Did you know that the number of deaths and injuries in accidents at work is rising sharply as productivity deals and speed-ups are forced through? The number of deaths rose from 514 in 1977 to 641 in 1978. The number of reported injuries rose from 325,000 to 340,000. Thousands more didn't get reported.

- Did you know that 19 out of the 21 members of the Cabinet went to public school, and 17 went to Oxford or Cambridge?

Job Massacre at the Office

Word processors:
What they are
how they work
the threat of jobs
loss of skills
health hazards
How to Fight Them
25 pence each plus 15p p&p
Four copies for £1 post free
From Womens Voice, Box 82 London E2 8DN.





A BED AND A CUPBOARD - THE GOOD LIFE IN S.E. ASIA

WHILE women in Britain face the threat of losing their jobs because of electronic equipment, women in South East Asia are working for poverty wages in dangerous conditions, making the electronic components. Over a million South East Asian women now work for American companies, assembling the tiny components. Few of these women will keep their jobs for more than three or four years: they can no longer keep up, and then they will be sacked. Their wages are as low as 40p a day.

• Written by Ellana Dallas

Electronics is the fastest growing industry in South East Asia. Virtually all the major electronics companies have sought cheap labour to do the repetitive, semi-skilled, labour intensive part of their operations. They have found that cheap labour in Asia, where women assemble the tiny components of products ranging from digital watches to multi-million dollar computers.

For the women on the production lines, wages are often below subsistence, even though these women are expected to contribute substantially to their families. For the first six months they are called apprentices, and paid less even than the legal minimum wages, even though they learn the job in a week, or at most two.

Instead of paying proper wages, com-

panies use bonuses as a means of putting pressure on their workers. To get the bonus, a worker must have perfect attendance and punctuality, and fulfil all the production quotas. A single absence in a month, or any breaking of company rules means loss of the bonus.

In Malaysia, where wages and living conditions are better than in most of these countries, electronics workers live in boarding houses. Four to eight women usually share a room. In a typical hostel, each individual possesses a bunk space and a two-foot cube of cupboard. The kitchen, outfitted with 19 kerosene stoves, is shared by 50 women.

They don't rent rooms, because they can't afford to. They rent the bed and the cupboard and have no control over the other

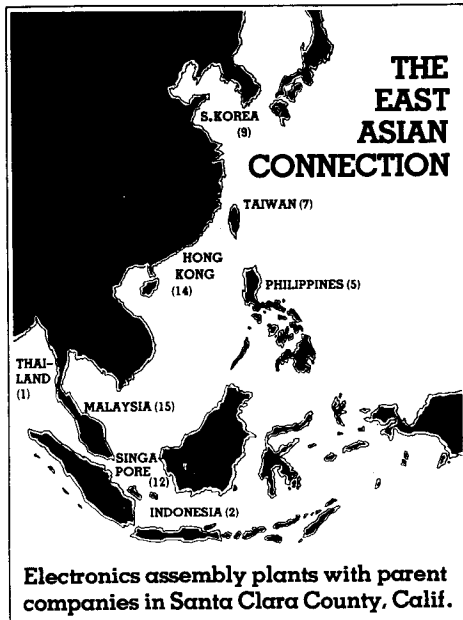


women who rent beds in the same room. The physical living conditions are sometimes not much worse than those at home, but for women who have always lived in families and stable communities where people have known each other for generations, the loneliness and lack of privacy creates stress.

TABLE: WAGES (INCLUDING BONUSES)

| | Starting/ week | After two years | Weekly expenses* |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Indonesia | £2.40 | £3.60 | £3.25 |
| Philippines | £4.25-£5.70 | £9.40 | £4.60 |
| Malaysia | £6.80-£7.50 | £12.50 | £5.62 |
| Hong Kong | £7.50-£19.00 | £23.40 | £15.40 |

Weekly expenses for one person for rent (bed or floor space in room with four or more occupants), food and transport



JOBS

Asian governments have done everything in their power to encourage these firms to set up in their countries. In 1970 the Malaysian government changed the law so that women could work night shifts, while in the Philippines legal maternity benefits were reduced from 14 weeks to just six weeks. This is backed up by laws in most of these countries prohibiting strikes in 'vital' industry, which includes foreign-owned manufacturing plant.

While the companies have brought thousands of jobs to South East Asia, their requirement for young, educated female workers has meant that they have brought a new category of people into the workforce, rather than reducing the ranks of the unemployed. A recent survey in Malaysia found that over two thirds of the workers had never worked before, and came from families where no women had ever before worked for wages.

Until recently it was the men who came to the city seeking wage labour when farming could no longer support the family, while the women stayed behind to run the household and continue the farming. Where the family lost its land, all its members would accompany the father to the city. When women migrate to look for work, however, it is daughters, not mothers who go. They send money home, but their families do not accompany them.

For the companies the newness of the workforce they are creating is a great advantage. The young women are more obedient than older women or men, and since they are not expected to be supporting families, their wages can be kept lower, and they can be laid off more easily.

THE SACK

The ability to sack workers at will is essential to the firms, because the work is always temporary. After three or four years peering through a microscope, a worker's vision begins to blur, so that she can no longer reach the production quota. The unspoken expectation of the company is that she will marry and 'retire' by the time she becomes unfit for the work, but she will be sacked in any case.

The nature of the industry requires an unskilled workforce, because the fierce competition means each company ex-

periences strong ups and downs. Some will survive only a few years before going under, but in the meanwhile, they have employed large numbers of Asian women.

WHY?

Why do the women work in these conditions? Women come to work in the factories because their families need the income their wages will contribute to the household. But the women also come for the freedom. They talk of the freedom to go out late at night, to wear blue jeans, high heels and make up, to escape the watchful eyes of fathers and brothers and the sheltered lives they would lead with their families in Malay villages and small towns.

Complementing the sense of freedom is the opportunity to sample a bit of the consumer society which is their image of the West and modernity. On pay day the factories arrange for sellers of cosmetics and costume jewellery to come in during the lunch break. 'Clothing salesmen are not allowed in, because try-ons would take more than the half-hour lunch break. Whatever we do, we don't disrupt production time' explained a personnel manager.

CONTROL

A great deal of effort has been put into developing a whole battery of methods to manipulate and control the women workers. These methods combine rigid discipline with sophisticated human relations techniques. Qualities like passivity, submissiveness and sexual desirability are deliberately encouraged, in order to forestall the rise of any sense of independence or unified strength among the women workers.

Beauty contests are the most dramatic example of how electronics factories manipulate traditional concepts of femininity. There are also singing contests, sports contests, talent contests—competitions of every sort. Competition 'develops incentive and motivation' says one personnel officer: it pits workers against each other.

Production competitions, also billed as 'fun', barely mask speed-ups and increasing quotas. Like the other contests, production competitions take place at all levels of the organisation. They range from individual contests based on the individual daily charts hanging beside each worker, to competitions between subsidiaries in different countries. Individual winners usually receive a special mention in the monthly company magazine—another source of images of women as sex objects and passive provider—and a box of candy or some money. Departments win trophies or an outing.

UNIONS

Management representatives throughout South East Asia say the same thing: 'If management operates well, it is my hope that a union will be unnecessary.' 'Unions only set up an adversary relationship between workers and management.' 'Intel doesn't believe in unions. We believe in finding out what workers want. We conduct twice yearly attitude surveys with workers.'

An executive back in California was more specific. He explained that the industry stresses human relations to prevent unionisation, because it would raise wage costs and 'rigidify' the size of the work force. The industry wants to retain its ability to hire and fire at will.

TENSIONS

The arrival of the electronics industry has dramatically expanded opportunities for

young women to play independent economic roles. While the families welcome their daughter's income, it is often difficult for them to accept her greater independence. This tension becomes acute when she flaunts the alien lifestyle so actively encouraged inside the factory.

The Western manners and consumption patterns often make it difficult for women workers to fit into their communities: when their period of employment in the electronics factory ends, many will find it difficult either to get another job or to marry. Many have found no alternative but prostitution to support themselves.

Despite all the obstacles, the lack of unions, the divisive and individualistic management techniques, resistance is beginning. Regular reports of protests, sit-ins and work stoppages come in. Not for very much longer will personnel managers be able to say: 'We hire girls because they have less energy, are more disciplined, and are easier to control.' (Intel Corporation, Malaysia).

HEALTH AND SAFETY

A photograph of the inside of an electronics factory is striking for its sense of immaculate order: a spacious well-lit room with rows of women dressed in white leaning over gleaming microscopes. A photograph does not show the sickening smell of the chemicals, or how looking through a microscope quickly brings on dizziness and headaches.

'Hey, Grandma!' Young women greet their slightly older co-workers at the factory gate. In Hong Kong most workers over 25 are called Grandma because they wear glasses. In 1975, just three years after the first electronics plant opened in Penang, nearly half the workers there complained of deteriorating eyesight and frequent headaches—the result of microscope work. Most workers suffer at one time or another from conjunctivitis, a painful eye infection.

'After some time we can't see very clearly; it's blurred. We'll be looking into the microscope for over seven hours. We have to work with those gold wires, very thin like our hair'. Virtually anyone who stays on the job more than three years must eventually wear glasses. Companies usually refuse to pay for the glasses—although they require 20-20 vision when they hire.

Caustic chemicals, all poisonous and many suspected of being cancer causing, sit in open containers beside many workers, giving off fumes. They include TCE, xylene, and MEK, all dangerous acids and solvents used extensively through the production process. Workers who must dip components in acids and rub them with solvents frequently have serious burns, nausea, sometimes even losing fingers. It will be ten or fifteen years before the possible cancer-causing effects of these chemicals will begin to show.

The information in this article comes from Changing Role of South East Asian Women. Issue 66 of Southeast Asia Chronicle. PO Box 4000-D, Berkeley California 94704 USA.

THOUGH we usually think of hospitals as places where people go to get better, for the people who work in them (the majority of them women) they can be dangerous.

With a new round of cuts on the way, likely to mean a reduction in staff and conditions, workers will be under more stress and more prone to accidents and infections.

Many of the injuries to staff in hospitals can and should be avoided. But with the pressure on staff at its present level it's going to take a hard fight to get the management to improve safety measures and handling procedures. Even though hospitals being Crown property, are not liable for prosecution under the Health and Safety Act 1974, with the backing of the unions and the safety reps, it can be done.

So what are the dangers and how can we fight them?

Dangers to hands

One of the most specific dangers to workers in hospitals is to their hands. Hands are the source of a person's livelihood as well as the most likely source of cross-infection. There are two main dangers:



HISTORIC HOSPITAL MOMENTS NO. 1:
NURSE WATSON POINTS OUT THE SHARP BOX
TO PROFESSOR SIR ARTHUR FFOOTHERINGAY-
SMYTHE-BLOUNT

Sharps

Major injuries to hands—such as gashes and burns—are obviously harmful. But even minor injuries are dangerous in hospitals since there is a greater risk of infection. Skin is a very effective barrier against most bacteria and viruses. However even a tiny break in the surface (from a hypodermic needle, broken ampule, scalpel etc) will allow infectious organisms to enter the body. These may include the virus that causes serum hepatitis from a kidney dialysis unit or from blood specimens in the lab.

Herpes Simplex virus, which causes painful skin sores, and Staphylococcus bacteria commonly infect health workers. Nurses also suffer from a painful skin infection called Herpes Whitlow, which is caused by contact with infected sputum.

In hospitals where accidents have been studied, the most common injury to porters was from hypodermic needles which were improperly disposed of. Although most

WOMENS HEALTH

HOSPITALS— DANGEROUS PLACES?

hospitals provide some sort of *sharp boxes*, injuries from needles, scissors and scalpels account for over half the lacerations to hands. Broken ampules or bottles and other equipment make up the rest. Why are there so many accidents with sharps? The main reason is that some staff do not regularly use the boxes, though badly designed boxes or an insufficient number of them also contribute to accidents.

All sharps should be replaced in their container and placed in strong, metal bottomed sharp boxes. Sharps should never be placed in rubbish bins or plastic containers. Sharp boxes should be disposed of only by someone trained in safety techniques, and not allowed to become too full. All accidents from sharps should be noted and used to improve working conditions.

In the Central Middlesex Hospital where workers have threatened to sue for negligence over inadequate sharp boxes, better ones have quickly appeared. All injuries to hands should be carefully dressed in the hospital to reduce the danger of infection.

Dermatitis

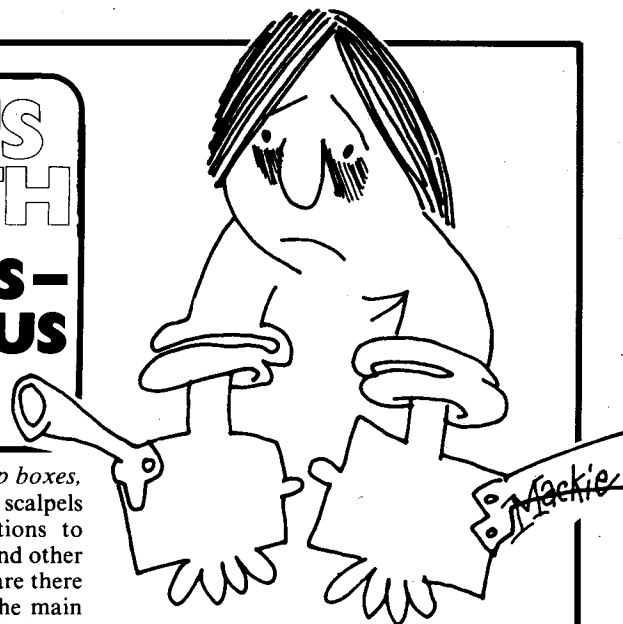
'Most of the women I work with get some kind of skin rash'. Sally, ward orderly, Wandsworth Hospital.

The other main danger to hands is dermatitis. Dermatitis can be caused by anything from cleaning powders to penicillin. Substances can be divided into two groups: those that have a direct, immediate effect on the skin, and those which people become 'sensitised' to. These do not produce their effect until after many exposures and are not just confined to the skin area exposed.

Industrial dermatitis is a recognised disease but it is very difficult to prove when the substance has been used over a long period of time.

Hospital work and cleaning accounts for up to half the cases of industrial dermatitis. It starts off with the going red, then blisters may form, which then open and become septic. And the more a person is exposed to a substance the worse it will get. They may even get a reaction to similar substances after a while.

If a substance is suspected of causing dermatitis it should be withdrawn while tests are made. If this is not possible the person affected should not be asked to continue using the substance, and should not be victimised because of this. Obviously union backup will be necessary. The safety rep has the right to find out the constituents of any substance used, under the HSWA 1974 (Section 6) and this right should be used.



DISHPAN HANDS

Nurses may wash their hands 50/60 times a day, or more in intensive care units, and domestic kitchen and laundry staff are constantly in contact with hot water, bleach, strong soaps etc. Many of the chemicals used in hospitals are extremely strong. As the skin loses its protective oily layer and elasticity through constant washing, so the danger of dermatitis grows.

Where rubber gloves are issued to 'protect' the worker, it can even make the problem worse, by trapping heat and sweat inside the glove. Dangerous materials should be withdrawn rather than gloves having to be used.

In any case of dermatitis action should be taken before more people become affected. 'Patch testing' where small amounts are tested on skin to find out which is causing the reaction, can be carried out by a doctor and the record checked to see if other people have been affected by similar substances.

Substances commonly used in hospitals which can cause dermatitis include: Cetavlon, Cidex, Hibitane, enzyme-containing powders and detergents, food preservatives.

The struggle for workers inside the hospitals is not just for better wages and conditions but for greater safety. All dangerous materials should be contained and handling techniques taught in different languages, to make our jobs as safe as possible. Hospital management will not give us better conditions as a gift. They are rights we have to fight for through our union organisation.

Kath McKay

• Much of the material contained in this article comes from **Hospital Hand Hazards** produced by the Hospital Hazards Group, 9 Poland Street, London, W1. They also produce a really good **Women and Work Hazards** kit.

Other useful publications:

Women's work and Women's Health: Pantheon Books, 1977, New York (\$2.60)
The Hazards of Work, How to Fight them: Kinnersley, Pluto Press.

USA: ABORTION RIGHTS THREAT

a 17 YEAR old woman, seven months pregnant, and mother of a two year old child attempted suicide last month. She shot herself in the stomach because she could not afford the \$600 for an abortion. The woman lived, but the foetus was destroyed. If the anti-abortionists in the United States have their way, this young woman would be prosecuted. *Some right-wingers believe in capital punishment for women who have abortions. And if these people have their way, more women will be dying from illegal abortions or committing suicide.*

Stories such as this one in Cleveland are becoming more frequent as the US Congress busily slashes federal funds which pay for abortions for poor women.

In 1973 the US Supreme Court ruled that abortions were legal. Prior to this ruling a million women a year had illegal abortions. An estimated thousand died, 80 per cent of them were black or Hispanic. When abortions were legalized the number of women dying from abortions dropped 99 per cent.

As soon as the Supreme Court legalized abortions, right-wing forces in the country began to mobilize, misnaming themselves *right-to-life* or *pro-life*. They have been successful in passing state legislation which all but makes abortions impossible. In Akron, Ohio, for example, a law was passed which states that before a woman can

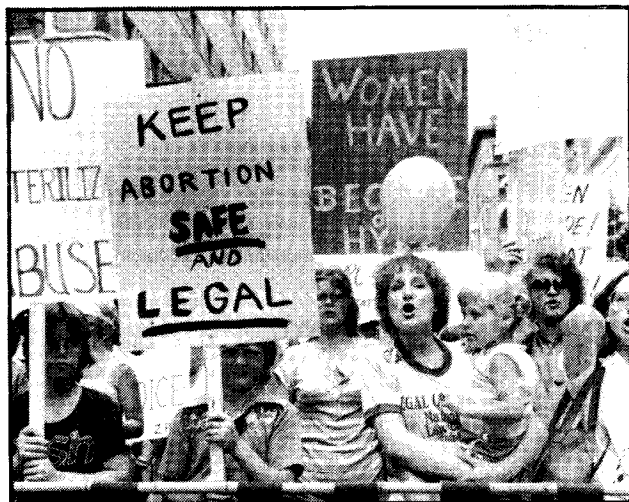
have an abortion she must be told that a foetus is a human being, she has to see slides of foetuses, and she also has to be told that many women commit suicide after having an abortion.

Where legislation fails, the anti-abortionists resort to terror. Already 20 clinics have been firebombed. One in New York and one in Cleveland Ohio were bombed while women were in the operating rooms.

These anti-abortionists issue threats against the lives and safety of prominent pro-abortionists, women who work in abortion and family planning clinics, as well as their children.

In 1977, Republican congressman Henry Hyde introduced a bill, which cut off federal funds for abortions. Already six women have died as a direct result of the Hyde amendment. *Planned Parenthood* estimates that the figures will go into the thousands as poor women are forced again to go to the back street butchers.

State legislatures are following Hyde's example. Ohio has passed the most vicious law. It cuts off funds except in the case where two doctors testify that the woman will die unless she has a therapeutic abortion. No abortions will be performed in any state hospital (the only hospitals that poor and working class people can afford); abortions cannot be performed even when the foetus is malformed or has a fatal disease such as Tay Sachs.



On 23 June 1500 people from 50 different organisations marched in Cincinnati Ohio against the 'Right to Life' convention. The demonstration marked a significant revival of women's organisation in the Mid West. But the movement is going to have to do a lot more in order to stop the right-wing assault on women's reproductive rights, not just for free safe and legal abortions, but also against viciously racist forced-sterilisation programmes.

I WAS twenty, it was the summer of 1959, the year I left university. The whole time I was at university I didn't know anyone who had birth-control. We just used to refuse to sleep with men for that reason. There was the whole business of refusing, and worrying about it, and you never talked to other women about it, only the particular bloke.

Anyway, it happened at a party after my finals. It was not a nice evening, not a nice experience. We were both quite drunk, really one of those horrible situations, I wasn't even sure if we'd actually done it. I went up to Mallaig to work as a waitress in a hotel. Literally a month later, there I was sitting on a beach in Skye, and I realised my period hadn't arrived.

I couldn't believe it, I was completely shattered.

There were only two things I could think of. First of all I'd had this boyfriend once, and the girl he had before me had got pregnant, and he'd paid for an abortion, then someone told him he could have saved his money, if she'd drunk half a bottle of port and sat in a hot bath, the night her period was expected. Half a bottle, I remember it exactly. And then I had a vague memory of hearing that my step-mother had had an abortion years ago. Those were the only two bits of information in my head, all the knowledge I had.

There I was. I didn't like the bloke. I'd just left university and needed to work. There was no way that I wanted the child.

I went home to Edinburgh and phoned him. 'I hate to tell you, but I'm pregnant'. 'Oh Christ!' That's just how it was. He said he knew a doctor and would make enquiries. It's funny, it was automatically the bloke's responsibility, financially and legally. A sort of convention. And men must have had this network, telling each other what to do.

After a week he came and told me he'd found a doctor, it wouldn't take long, and he'd come with me. In the meantime I'd been to my own doctor, told him my period was late, and he'd given me some pills which would bring it on if I weren't pregnant. But of course, I was. I'd also decided to tell my parents, who were communists, progressive people, who I knew I could count on.

In the end the guy and my step mother both went with me. The doctor took me to a consulting room, and laid me on a couch. Then he took a long steel hook—I can see it now—he gave me two tablets, which made me feel woozy, and then inserted this long steel hook, basically like a knitting needle.

I remember feeling the most appalling pain and screaming and screaming, I went on screaming so

much that my mother and I burst into the room. The doctor was frightened and very pale. I was lying on my back, my womb contracting, and I was expelling clots of blood. I needed a taxi, he couldn't keep me longer in the room as the police would have an eye on him.

So there followed this taxi-ride home, and I was

... but I should say I didn't do it or he'd go to prison.

MY PARENTS had to go to hospital the next day. So I lay there all day, and the next three days I was there, in real pain, bleeding, and on the third day I was so frightened I finally called my mother. She was white as a sheet and I was in pain. Finally the doctor came and I was terrified. *I was bleeding.* He said we had to get me in hospital as quick as possible, but I should say I didn't go myself, or else he'd go to jail.

I was taken to the emergency department. What had happened was that I had gone septic. I was on antibiotics and they gave me a blood transfusion. It took me ten days to recover from the most serious bit of that. There was a lot of fuss, but they didn't do it badly. I remember hearing the young gynaecologist discuss the case with the young doctors in the corridor. How much pressure they should put on me, morally, to make me tell the truth. They didn't believe my story.

Eventually he came to me and I must tell the truth. I'd been told when I came in, but if someone had done it, and he'd killed me, he might do it to someone else and kill the real dilemna for me. I said I had time to think.

Looking back I know I had mixed emotions about losing the child. It was only one point in the day when I despair when I thought I should have married and had the child as a sort of penance. But the time I was certain I couldn't go through with it.

I'm afraid I did tell the truth, who the abortionist was, and I thought it couldn't be a sin to abort women that we didn't know to this day whether it was the right thing. Later I heard that a woman gave evidence against a doctor, and he went to prison for a year. I wasn't asked to give evidence, I assumed I was also guilty. I could give evidence anonymously.

That's the dilemna. If you're pregnant, you needed the

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He said I'd
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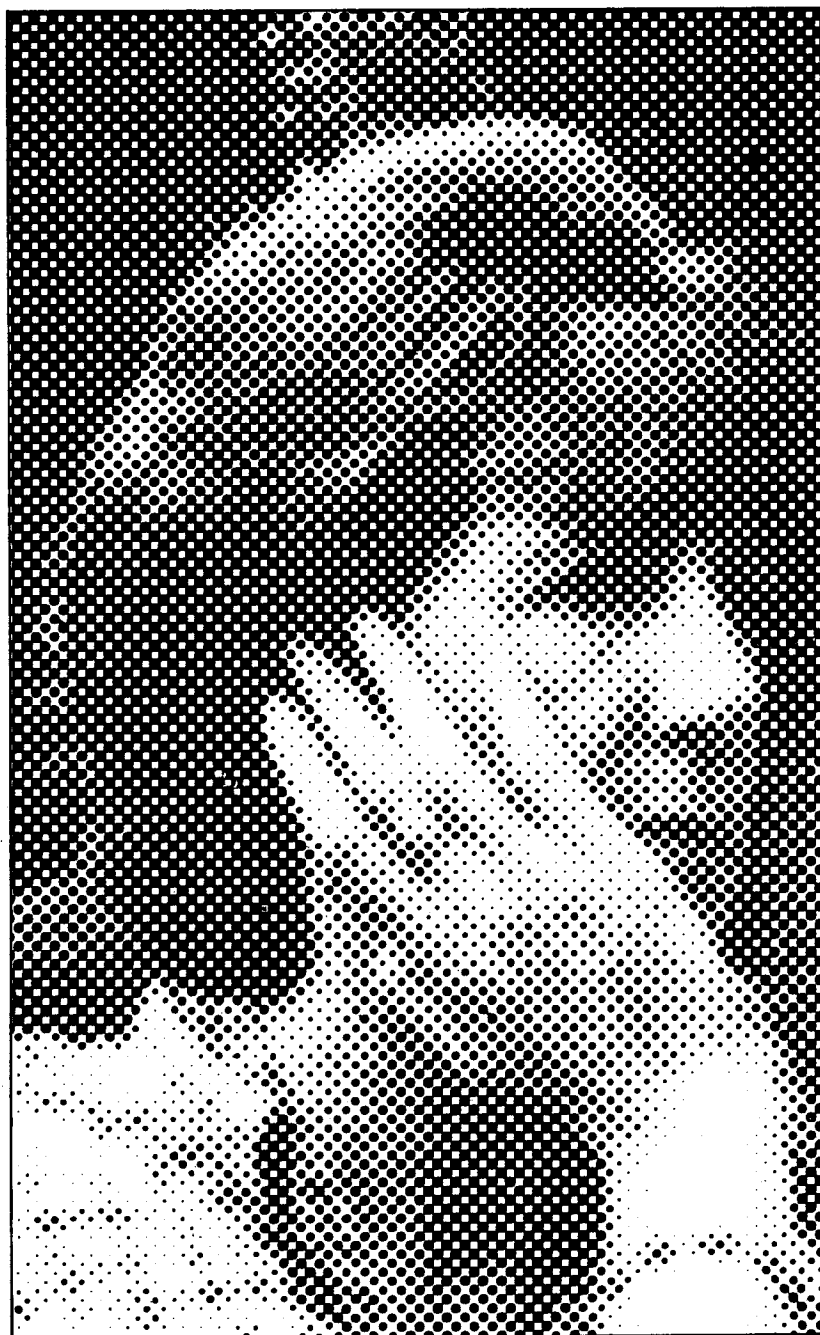
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'I ALMOST BLED TO DEATH'

The woman interviewed here by Judith Condon is a mother, a teacher and a writer. She was prepared to have her name printed

but, after consideration, we thought it best to save her any further anguish by letting her remain anonymous.

man. On the other hand, he could be some kind of maniac who could kill you. My bloke paid £150 for that abortion, which in 1959 was an awful lot of money.

My condition cleared up quickly, apart from the horror. But I do think it damaged my tubes. I had a very nasty burst ectopic pregnancy, I just collapsed in a street in Rome, and would have died then but for marvellous emergency medical treatment. Finally, though, I did successfully bear one child I wanted very much.

████████████████████
One was treated as a human being... with support and help
████████████████████

AS THINGS turned out, I needed a second abortion much later, after my daughter was born, and after the Abortion Act of 1967, making abortion legal. The contrast with that first experience couldn't have been greater. One was treated as a human being. It was a straight-forward medical procedure. I remember the enormous relief expressed by other women, working class women, with two or three kids, also having abortions in the same ward.

In many ways it was more emotionally harrowing, as in many ways I wanted that baby. But I was given every support and help.

Looking back on that first experience I can only think I had a bloke who had £150. What of those women who didn't even have that, but aborted themselves with just a dirty knitting needle. It was only because I was fairly strong and healthy that I recovered. As for the bloke, he was fantastically *gentlemanly*, we didn't disagree. That was the roles blokes played. They paid the money, they found out how. Women had nothing else. It was all secret, just as sex, and contraception were secret subjects. It was such a short time ago, and yet things have changed so much. I asked my step mother for comfort, but it wouldn't have occurred to me to go to other women friends. In the more recent abortion I certainly did. Before it was always so sordid, so secret. It was to do with criminals and stomachs and bleeding, horrible bleeding and guilt. I didn't come from a religious family, my family in no way condemned me. But I still felt, somehow I've killed, I'll never conceive again. I feel we should speak these things in the movement, that we should tell the truth about how it was, about the difficulties that persist.

IRELAND: WOMEN AT WAR

THE HISTORY of the Irish Women's Movement goes back to 1876 and the first suffragettes. It is a history studded with the names of brave and fearless women, like Countess Markiewicz and Maud Gonne, who fought against the oppression of the British, the oppression of the church and the oppression of the state. If a newly emerging women's organisation is to influence the course of contemporary history and politics, it will need not only heroines, but an effective movement which can succeed in bringing political and sexual freedom to Ireland. One group trying to do this is called Women Against Imperialism. Anne Marie Loughran spoke about the group, about herself and about life for women in Northern Ireland.

PART OF my reason for joining a women's group was from bad personal experiences with men and the pressure of being alone with four kids. I was political before and I wanted to make a nursery around here with the women on the estate but the struggle against British imperialism comes first. High ideals are great, everything can be brilliant in theory but you've got to relate to practice. We won't be able to organise any community creche until there's a society where that kind of thing can happen. In 1972 and 1973 the struggle was at its peak. The Brits would actually come up to the door and say 'Anne Marie, aren't you going to make us a cup of tea? Aren't you going to blow your whistle?' I'd say 'You'll get no tea but will you wait while I get the arsenic?' Now they come and they take a P Check, a head count, taking the names of your children. They stop you in the street, 'Where are you going? Name? Address?' The Republican Movement has grown, it's more mature and it's tighter knit. Its ideas are more progressive more revolutionary. Take the stand on women for example. There have always been women who did as much as the men, but the women never united as women, there was a lot of sexism and chauvinism. It's gradually changing, they've written in Republican News about women. They see that we in *Women Against Imperialism* are right and they support us in everything we do. We started *Women Against Imperialism* in March 1978. We were with the Socialist Women's Group and there was a split—they are now the Belfast Women's Collective.¹ We believe you should work in working class areas where



women are the hardest hit, especially in West Belfast in the Catholic ghettos. It's really tough for them. Turf Lodge, Ballymurphy, Shortstrand, all wee pocket areas and especially Short Strand and Ardoyne. It's Orange all round them, they're really isolated. There are different political shades within *Women Against Imperialism*. You get PD², IRSP³, Sinn Fein⁴, Red Republican Party. Most of the women are working class, got a load of kids. It's because of what's happened to us through the struggle that we've come to where we are today, there's no doubt about that, we'd have been content to sit in our wee houses. One woman's husband was interned for two years. She was completely on her own. Before, they'd had the nice wee house, nice wee kids, wee car. He'd had a nice wee job and she stayed at home. She's completely changed now. She is really fighting, questioning everything.

Most of us are in the *Relatives Action Committees*⁵. Women in the RACs are ordinary working class women, they've got squads of kids, maybe their husbands sons or daughters are inside. They're living on the little they get from the SS and they're really militant. We as feminists are in the RAC's and they know us, we live in the same areas, we're brought up the same way, they can joke with us, they don't look on us suspiciously as trendy lefties. We are working class people and we know what we are talking about. Womens Groups before tended to work around purely women's issues—contraception, abortion,

nurseries—and they were in middle class areas and mostly from middle class backgrounds. They would have been hostile if we were campaigning around those women's issues only and they're thinking 'Christ, my son's inside, my husband's inside, the Brits are raiding my home, my kids are being lifted and beaten up and it's a question of I've got to survive.' Obviously we campaign for abortion and contraception, but the first and foremost struggle is against the British; that's how we see it.

Sinn Fein women were always strongly anti women's liberation and now they see we are genuine, not academic about things. They are becoming more interested and a few of them want to join the group.

Sitting and talking won't change anything, we have to change things by doing, by being active. For example we've taken up the issue of the women in Armagh Jail.

We've had two pickets of Armagh Jail. The first one was wild, Jesus! It was a brilliant success. We could see the women inside, their hands waving and they were yelling and singing and shouting out 'We support the men in H Block!' We were moving off quietly and within a few minutes there were five jeeps waiting to pick us up. The RUC were going frantic, they all had their rifles pointed at us. One came up to me and said he would arrest me if I didn't move off, before he'd finished saying it, he arrested me and threw me in the jeep. It was really rough, really tense. They grabbed us and pulled us. We were taken away and kept in separate rooms and

interviewed. We ended up singing the Women's Army is Marching, 'Oh sister don't you weep, don't you mourn... the Women's Army is marching.' They charged us with riotous behaviour, assault, obstruction. We didn't sign any statements and we refused to give our fingerprints.

On one picket an RUC man called us whores. I yelled back at him, 'We're not whores, we're socialists, we believe in giving it away.'

On the second picket, 50 women came up from Dublin and there were 50 from the north. We got their support after a women's conference in Dublin.

I'M ON the *Payment of Debts Act*. I've been reduced to £18.50 for myself and four kids. They're taking money for rent and electricity arrears. Electricity costs three times as much here as it does in England. It's completely out of your own hands. They just take the money, however much they decide. Do you know that the Electricity Board come into people's houses, forcibly, and rip people's meters out? One woman had already made the voluntary agreement to pay her arrears and they ripped it out and she was without electricity for a week and then she'd to pay about £20 to have it put on again.

I have £16 family allowance which goes on bills, coal, milk, bread and food. My kids are 3, 5, 7 and 8. We eat sausages, sausages, mince and sausages; if we're lucky eggs, chips, bread. We don't eat meat at all. I put some chops in the fridge

once and one of the kids said, 'What's that?' It's really monotonous eating that stuff. I could really go to war on the Catholic Church! In Ireland, the whole thing about male chauvinism is completely different because first and foremost of the partition. The Catholic Church really got its grip, it's got its teeth in. Myself being anti-church means I get visits from the priests. I had a monk here, a missionary, a big six footer from the South. He was talking to the kids saying things like, 'Has Mummy been to the mission? And what about Daddy?'

'Daddy doesn't live here,' I said. 'Oh, separated are you? Well maybe you'll get together again. Children, maybe Mummy and Daddy will get together again.'

'Fat chance,' I said.

He looked round at my plaques and posters. 'You're political are you?' he said.

'I'm in a women's group,' I replied.

He asked me my name. You get really distrustful, Christ, it wouldn't have surprised me if he was from the Special Branch. He went on.

'Oh, you believe in abortion do you?'

'I certainly do, I believe in the right of any women to choose. And I certainly don't see you've a right to say anything about it as a curate and even less as a man.'

'Oh, tut, tut, tut!' he said, 'Do you mind if I say a wee prayer?' I was laughing by then. 'OK. If you want to, go ahead.'

'Ah, dear God, please get Mummy and Daddy together again, for the four lovely children, and bless the little darlings.'

Little darlings! They're little devils! He told me the kids would suffer because I didn't believe in God. They certainly aren't suffering for that.

We had a centre in Ballymurphy but it was raided. The Brits came in and ran amok with dogs and all our stuff was taken. Then it was flooded and we couldn't use it. We need financial support to open it up again. We want to open it and let women come in and use it when they want to. We want them to be able to come in with problems, say they've been beaten up or they want some help over the PDA. Or they could just come in for a chat.

I think the ways in which women in England can support us is they should go out and protest and be constantly at it. It's important to realise how women here have to cope with so much.

1. *Belfast Women's Collective*. The BWC although more traditionally 'feminist' in its concerns and programme, works together with Women Against Imperialism.
2. *PD*. People's Democracy. A small, Marxist democratic centralist organisation. PD were largely responsible for starting the Derry Civil Rights Movement in 1968.
3. *IRSP*. Irish Republican Socialist Party. This is a split from the Official Sinn Fein.
4. *SINN FEIN*. Political wing of the IRA. It means Ourselves Alone.
5. *RAC*. *Relatives Action Committees*. These were started in 1977 and are locally based with one central committee. They campaign mostly for the political prisoners.

PUBLICATIONS

Saorbhean. (*Free Woman*). Paper of the Women Against Imperialism.

Women's Action. Belfast Women's Collective newspaper.

The Irish Prisoner. Newspaper of the Prisoner's Aid Committee.

An Phoblacht/Republican News. Weekly paper of the Sinn Fein.

Troops Out. Paper of the United Troops Out Movement (UTOM).

The British Media and Ireland. A pamphlet by the Campaign for Free Speech on Ireland.

British Soldiers Speak Out on Ireland

WICCA. The paper of the Southern Irish Women's Movement.

Belfast Workers' Research Unit. They bring out regular bulletins and of special interest is Issue No 5 which is about women.

Send for it from BWRU c/o 53 Broadway, Belfast 12. The bulletins are different prices so you'd need to check up.

State Research Bulletin No 12. All of these publications except the BWRU No 5 are available from most left wing bookshops and all are cheap.

Specially recommended is the *Ireland Socialist Review No 5* which has an interview with the Women and Ireland Group.

Women and Ireland, slide show and talk. Contact through a Woman's Place, 48 William IVth, London WC1.

**Oh sister
don't you weep,
don't you mourn
...the Women's
Army is marching**

Answering back

Last month a Scottish sherriff made a ruling that shocked women everywhere. He said that a mother should only get £1 a week maintenance from the child's father, because she had not been on the Pill. She was guilty of 'carelessness', and so was not entitled to any more of his money.

Answering back

He made it perfectly clear what he meant: women alone are responsible for contraception. A man can sleep with whom he likes, when he likes, and never mind the consequences. Sex for men means pleasure, sex for women must mean the ever-present fear of unwanted pregnancies.

No contraceptive is 100% safe, or is acceptable to all women. The Pill can be medically dangerous, and many women find it makes them depressed or uninterested in sex, while the coil can bring intolerably painful periods. For those of us who don't like taking a drug every day, or having a piece of metal lodged in our insides, there is go guaranteed alternative.

Answering back

Society forces women into being financially dependent on men. The way we're brought up, the way we're educated, the things we learn to expect and want, they all lead us to relying on a man's income for our survival.

Financial dependence means women cannot live their own lives or explore their own possibilities fully. Women's Voice fights for a woman's right to work not because most jobs are enjoyable in themselves, but because having our own money is the first step towards living our own lives.

Answering back

We want not only jobs, but jobs that pay properly and satisfactory child care. Rotten pay for women at work and lack of decent child care can't be separated from the fact that in this society women are expected to bear the main responsibility for bringing up children.

As long as this is so, we have to defend a woman's right to insist on sharing that responsibility—financially at least—with the father of her children.

Answering back

If a woman becomes pregnant, she is usually faced with having to give up her job in order to look after her family for several years at least. If she is left holding the babies, she has no choice but to rely on the financial assistance of the man. The chances of a woman earning enough to keep a family are small, and social security just isn't enough for a decent standard of living.

Answering back

Of course individual lives are often much more complicated, but the principle must stand. Children are not the sole responsibility of women.

In a socialist world, the care of children will not come down to individuals. Whether children live with one or both parents, or in groups made up of children and adults, the burden of their physical care will not fall on one or two people.

Answering back

The basic needs like food, clothing and housing will be met by society as a whole, and women and men, young and old, will be able to explore the joys of being with children. Without the worry and pain of trying to squeeze survival money out of an unwilling partner.

'Many school students feel angry about having to wear school uniforms. School uniforms are just one of a conspiracy of trivia which maintain the authority structure of the educational system. This month thousands of young people go back to school. Many of them will be obliged to wear school uniforms. Sue Moss talks about uniform, about rules, about school.'



'We had to wear a white shirt, black skirt, a tie, a blazer and black or white socks. Tights had to be tan coloured. No high heels, no boots, no plimsolls. If you wore the wrong skirt or jumper they sent you home. If you had ink on your socks you had to take them off. I used to get sent home all the time. I just wouldn't go back.'

'It was the same for the boys. Teachers used to walk up and down the dinner queue and check that their socks were the right colour. You weren't allowed to wear jewellery, except plain rings and studs. If you had nail varnish on, this silly old bag in the medical room held your hands down and scrubbed it off.'

'They said that if you dress up, the boys will chase you. It shows they think girls only wear make up and nice clothes to attract boys.'

'Their excuse was that you're there to learn, not to look how you want to look. You're there to sit and write all day. It really showed how sexist their attitude was, they said that if you dress up, the boys chase you, it shows they think girls only wear make up and nice clothes to attract boys.'

'In the sixth form we were allowed to wear trousers, but only black regulation ones. We had to go out in break, all

except the sixth formers, unless it was really pouring with rain.

'I question a lot of things at school. We got the National Union of School Students in the school, over uniform and break to start with. We said we should choose what to wear and when to get fresh air. At the time of the NUPE strike we went to the Headmaster and asked why the teachers weren't supporting it. The HM said that the teachers were there to teach not strike. We brought the kids out, 200 of us. We had a picket and everything.'

'I questioned why we had to have lessons without any say about the content, why I couldn't sell the Socialist Worker at school, loads of things. We leafleted the school and had NUSS meetings and the Head and his crawlers broke them up. They began to victimise me. They followed me all the time, to see where I was going.'

'I used to go into the girls' toilet and stay there for an hour. There was one bloke who used to sit outside and wait. I'd just tell him I'd been having a slash. They kept phoning my mum and telling her my education was in grave danger. It got really bad at home.'

'My mother thought I was a degenerate, I wasn't allowed out. I couldn't go to any political meetings, she burned all my leaflets and posters. I left home. I didn't have any money, the other kids at school gave me money and someone gave me a room in a flat.'

'THE HEAD SAID I NEEDED PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT...HE WAS SCARED, WE WERE MAKING THE PUPILS AWARE.'

'They threatened me with expulsion. When they started following me I decided to leave. They wouldn't let me leave. I walked out. The headmaster said I needed psychiatric treatment. He thought I had a mental illness. He was a part time psychiatrist and made out his analysis was a big favour. There were some good lefty teachers. One helped me by telling me that they were making reports on me behind my back.

'It's the trivia that gets you ... things like not being able to wear "Black and White Unite and Fight" badges in a school fifty per cent black.'

'I knew why the head said that—to get at me. But I was a bit upset. He was scared, he knew we were making his pupils aware, we'd had the strike and the picket. We'd sold loads of Socialist Workers and 50 copies of Rebel would go in 15 minutes. Everybody was questioning things and so he got scared. The school was getting too political, in other words thinking for itself.

'He refused to allow me to come back for my A levels. I'd been at the school for seven years. I was due to take the exams in June, in geography, german and history. It was February. I threatened to write

to the education authority if he didn't let me take them. He said I could take them after all, as long as I paid £20. I'm on SS, I get £13.90 a week.

'It's the trivia that gets you ... things like not being allowed to wear badges, Black and White Unite and Fight for example, in a school fifty per cent black. And why should it only be sixth formers who get coffee at break? Everyone should.

'Schools should be totally changed, there should be no streaming, no reactionary teachers who don't bother with working class kids, but shit teachers must be shit for some reason, we need to be able to talk to them, make them see sense. Uniform should be abolished. We should picket lessons of racist teachers and boycott stupid lessons. Our history teacher only used to talk about the love lives of kings, I refused to go to her lessons.

'The kids are the ones who know who the bad teachers are, they should decide what to do about them. We should have sex education not just biology films on intercourse. Religion should be optional. We should be involved in the allocation of funds. In my school they had a video tape recorder. It was never used. They bought another one! Some classes the kids had to make do with six books between thirty.

'Class size should be reduced so that all the unemployed teachers have jobs. In big classes the teachers are either zombies or God, students need

a close relationship with teachers. And army and police recruitment in schools should be banned. And all that standing up, good morning Seig Heil stuff has to go, and assembly too.

'I don't think school should be optional. If it was, all the brainy ones would go to school and the others to work. All should go to school, but school must be changed. I think people have got to be educated for what lies ahead.

'I blame my sense of rebelliousness on the Socialist Worker Party! When I started reading the paper I started to think about things, Socialist Worker makes you think. You accept things at school, you're underneath, you're told what to do ... you leave and you accept working under someone for shitty wages. I joined the SWP after the first carnival. It was the Clash that did it!

'The thing about uniforms is that they aren't the only thing that have to go, they're not the top of my list because my list is parallel. It's bollocks that the difference between rich and poor is got rid of by having uniforms. The poor kids are still wearing the same uniform in the

fifth year as in the first, their arms and legs sticking out of their sleeves and trousers.

'They get you in the uniform and the class becomes a big mass, you lose your individuality, it's school, not people, just uniforms. They want to keep you together—like being in the army or the police force.

'There should be no streaming, no reactionary teachers who don't bother with working class kids.'

'I want to be a teacher because of everything that's happened to me in school. I want to teach in the East End. Everybody thinks tough rebellious kids are mental. I think they're the best kids around. Personality should be encouraged, not put down.' Sue emphasised that there were a handful of sympathetic teachers who helped and supported her. But what kind of education are people getting in school when they are told they need psychiatric help because they are aware enough to question what goes on around them?



REVIEWS



photo: VALARIE WILMER

In the Ditch
Buchi Emecheta
Allison & Busby
£4.95

A colourful and important book about life on social security for the Single Parent. Although written in the early 70's (and reprinted this year), the situation has hardly changed.

Adah, the main character, a Nigerian with five kids, has to give up her good Civil Service job as she's criticised for leaving her kids at school at 8 a.m. (and not being home in the holidays or when they return in the evenings presumably). For the 5 to 14 year olds there is still inadequate provision to enable a mother to keep on working and, the alternative for the single parent, to be on social security can be hardgoing and demoralising.

The book's additional interest lies in making you understand what it is like to be a Nigerian in a society where all black people are lumped together as the same, no matter the huge difference in the cultures of the West Indies and Africa.

Problem families were dumped together on one dilapidated estate, which of course created more problems. Fortunately there's a happy ending as Adah moves to a block near Regent's Park, having turned down accommodation in high-rise flats. What would she have done when lifts broke down, or she had to leave her children for a moment, alone, so high up?

She regrets however leaving 'The Ditch' as the people were spontaneous, bursting in on a conversation, not waiting politely for you to finish (as in the British Museum), and there was support for others in a like situation.

Anne Schlatter-Johnson

The Joys of Motherhood
Buchi Emecheta
Allison & Busby
£4.95 1979

At last the story of the mother of the emaciated child with the extended belly of the Oxfam posters. Indeed Nnu Egu and her oldest boy, Oshia, are only saved from death by a kindly neighbour gradually serving them stew, with tiny bits of meat in. Despite her non-stop efforts, Nnu Egu can barely provide a daily meal of garri—a maize-like mixture.

Nnu Egu conceives nine children, the last, at the age of 40, she pushes out, alone, ashamed, as there's no way of feeding it—a far cry from her pride and happiness when first she gave birth, thereby fulfilling her destiny, as seen by her people. We are reminded that in some parts of the world, a woman's only value is through her fertility, particularly in producing a male child.

As if all this weren't enough, when her husband's oldest brother, dies, Naife takes over the wives (and children) and Nnu Egu has to suffer the hurt of hearing another woman enjoying her husband in their bed, in their one-roomed home.

Naife can only earn a pittance, and, with that, considers his responsibility ended. In addition he considers it his right to drink every night. He looks forward to an early retirement, but Oshia breaks with tribal customs and won't give up the scholarship he has won to study at University in the United States. His daughter, too, deprives him of a bride price by marrying out of their tribe.

We see from a Nigerian's eyes how they were exploited under their British masters, to being rounded up in the streets and forcibly conscripted to fight in India, as Naife was.

At last a black woman writer who knows Africa and England. Read her and you'll step outside the limit of Western culture and see with new eyes.

Anne Schlatter-Johnson

Wifemistress
Director: Marco Vicario
Distributed by Columbia
EMI Warner

I went to see *Wifemistress* with the man I was living with till that night. One of those 'socialists' who believes in women's independence, except that of his own woman. I wanted to be independent and free, but not if it hurt him. *Wifemistress* is about every situation in which a 'liberated' man thinks he can help his woman become a 'fulfilled and complete' person, while relying on her for an image of himself that he can admire.

It is set in Italy, sometime in the past,

about an aristocratic lady, Antonia, who is married to Luigi, an anarchist who writes and publishes material on female emancipation, atheism and other political matters. She thinks he is only a travelling wine salesman and is so depressed by being ignored by him that she takes to bed with imaginary creeping paralysis. To cheer her up about not being allowed to travel with him, Luigi buys her a recording of train noises! When Luigi has to go into hiding, convincing everyone that he's dead, Antonia jumps up and takes over his job.

Now begins an agony of suffering for the hypocrite hiding in the house next door, where he can see into the rooms of his old home. Antonia does the wine rounds and discovers, samples, and dissects all her husband's secrets. Not only the wine but the lovers, male and female, the writings and the printing press. He is tearing out his hair while she puts into practice his principles of free love, atheism, and land reform. When she starts implementing his plans for hospitals, schools and roads for the peasants on her land (the politics of this wasn't raised) he fumes, 'It will never work, It's too expensive'.

When she chucks out all the religious objects in the house her paternalistic husband is distraught, 'Antonia is infantile, she needs religion, she has no other outlet, no ideals or convictions'.

His main objection to what she is doing is that she doesn't need him. He had been content that their sex had been disastrous as he had other outlets. If she enjoyed it, she might find other 'outlets' too.

The strong, determined, fresh Antonia is a different woman. Luigi is no longer spying on his wife but on 'the person I wanted to make her'. He is desolate that she could only become this without him.

The line that sums up the film for me is when Antonia says to her beautiful, idealistic young doctor lover, who wants her to come away with him and be his, 'I don't belong to anyone anymore.'

Apart from the storyline, which I think portrays very simply, a universal problem

(felt particularly by feminists and socialist men in their relationships with each other?), the film is beautiful. The women and scenery make perhaps an over-romantic picture in the soft focus, autumn colours and Italian lace. However this is a pleasant change from the starker, feminist films we see. The sex scenes are very well done, encompassing masturbation, troilism, voyeurism, hetero and homosexuality, also a great discussion of female orgasm.

I haven't told you the whole story so go and see it. It won't necessarily precipitate the bust-up if it's been coming, but go with someone who you want to talk about these questions with. I don't belong to anyone anymore!

Jill Wallis

Six of One
Rita Mae Brown
W.H. Allen
£5.50 (Hardback)

Ask your library to order it for you as it hasn't yet been published in paperback.

Rita Mae Brown, of Rubyfruit Jungle fame, has done it again. Her recently published novel, *Six of One*, is the funniest book I've ever read... Honestly!

The main theme of the book is the relationship between two sisters. The antagonism between them started when they were very, very young. Even so, as the years stretch on and the antagonism deepens so does the humour.

The fascinating aspect of this book is Rita Mae Browns' brilliant ability to put her finger on that unknown quantity that bothers us all from time to time. How to relate to others. She deals with relationships between friends, lovers and family with unbounded insight.

Be careful though! This book is dangerous stuff... Definitely not to be read on the underground or bus—unless of course you don't mind total strangers witnessing your collapsing into a wobbly mound of hysterical giggles!

Gail Cartmail



Hard Feelings is an anthology of fiction and poetry from Spare Rib, edited by Alison Fell. It is £2.50, published by the Women's Press. It is well worth buying. Here's a poem from it by Susan Wallbank.

If I Come.

If I come
 I'll be more than a hole
 for your stick
 picking a way through layers
 playing my parts
 indiscriminately.

If I come
 I'll have to bring her with me.
 The child.
 She comes and goes.
 You'll see her
 when I laugh too loud
 or cry.
 She was denied before
 and so comes back
 for more.

If I come
 my mother will come too.
 Sometimes silent
 Often cold
 holding back on you.
 And father
 arthritic now
 he cripples me
 we use the same bad leg.

Now you see
 why I still hesitate.

For
 If I come
 I can't bring only me
 but bring to you
 this multiplicity
 of we.



LETTERS

Pointless torture

Dear Womens Voice

Some of your readers may be interested to know of the following interesting

experiment. A cat is placed on a brick in a tank of water. When its head drops in slumber its nose touches the water and it is jerked awake. Object of the exercise? To find out how long a cat can be kept awake before it goes mad. Answer: 70 days.

This is one psychological test among thousands performed in vivisection laboratories.

'LAIR' is a group of feminist women, vegetarians and vegans, who oppose the exploitation and oppression of non-humans in vivisection

laboratories (often allied to the drug industry), on factory farms which turn low price fodder into high-price flesh, in the shipping of animals alive for slaughter abroad, in blood sports, in the lucrative fur trade and exploitive circuses and zoos, etc. etc.

In the pyramid of oppression, animals are next to the ground. Electrocutations, skinning alive, traumatisation, testing of products in vaginas, crushing of testicles, rotation in centrifugal drums with protuberances designed to break limbs, confinement in small boxes for psychological tests, blinding, deprivation of human and non-human contact, induced cancer and cirrhosis of the liver, sewing up of the end of dogs' intestines so they are unable to defecate (we kid you not). Over five million experiments a year in the U.K. Eighty per cent of them are performed without anaesthetic. We oppose factory farms where calves are made into sick animals for pale veal for 'gourmets', calves so lacking in iron they strive to lick their own urine but are prevented by confinement from doing so. Pet-stealing for vivisection laboratories is an organised racket (see LAIR No. 3) Need we go on. We leaflet, demo, exhibit, write and publish a bimonthly mag 'LAIR'. Contact 'LAIR', 75 Agar Grove, London N.W.1.
Norma Benney
Editor

No extended family please

Dear Womens Voice

None of us could have anything but admiration for Martha Ford of Namibia, featured in May's Womens Voice. However a word of warning is necessary. Martha speaks of communal childcare in Namibia. There is the 'extended family', grandparents (grandmothers?) will look after



the children so that mothers can go out to work. That is what continued to happen in Russia after the revolution. Thank you very much! I'm a granny.

I live in remote countryside and one of my nearest neighbours who lives half a mile away, told me that instead of living with one of her four children, she came out here to escape baby sitting, and lives alone in her little cottage. She was always expected to look after their children when she lived with them.

Women who have worked hard all their lives and brought up children want in their retirement to develop those hobbies they never had time for. Is this selfish?

We do not want the 'extended family'. The nuclear family is bad enough without extending it. We want free, communally controlled childcare (4th demand of the Women's Liberation Movement) and it is up to socialists to discuss the best ways of achieving this.
yours in the fight
Kathleen Jones

Women only

Dear Womens Voice
I was sickened to find that Hull's Womens Group is for women only and I ask myself whether any Women's Voice groups are degrading the cause for which they are fighting by discriminating against males?

I stopped reading Spare Rib because of their women only line. Do you take a similar view?
T. Shepperd
Yorkshire

School uniform

Dear Womens Voice
I think some items of school uniform should be kept, and some should be abolished. Blazers cost £25 and don't keep you warm. I think they should go. But we should be allowed to wear trousers and polo necks and in my school, we aren't. It's really impractical. If the blokes can wear trousers why can't the girls?

But there are some good reasons for having school shirts. For example, if there is no uniform all the rich 'soul trendies' are in nice clothes and the poor kids have to wear the same clothes every day. It makes the poor kids really depressed. They go home and ask for clothes and then there

are arguments and the home could even break up.

It's difficult though, because even with school uniform you get competition, i.e. wearing a flared or a pencil skirt or blokes wearing pegs or flares.

All in all I'd say that one or two items of uniform should stay and shoes, socks, skirts, trousers and jerseys should not be uniform.

Ruth Gluckstein

No sympathy for Thatcher

Dear Womens Voice
Anti trades unions, anti black, anti council tenants, anti welfare state, anti freedom of speech ... just a few of the things my sister Thatcher stands for.

For police brutality, army terrorism, elitism, private medicine and education for racialism, oppression, unemployment, nuclear power and recognition of illegal regimes.

And Ms. Pauline Maniscalco defends her because she is a woman! I love that logic. If I were black and living in this country, I wouldn't vote for Idi Amin as my MP.

Thatcher deserves about as much sympathy as an enraged Doberman heading straight for a jugular vein.

If my left wing colleague wants to discuss Mrs Thatcher she is welcome to contact me.
Yours in solidarity
Sandra K. Wright

Loose morals?

Dear Sisters
I thought you might be interested in hearing about the contempt two male members of the law gave a woman who had been raped in Bristol.

Defending the man, who had admitted rape, Det. Con. Michael Chipping claimed the woman had 'loose morals' because she was hitch-hiking at night. The judge, Kenneth Jones, then summed up saying that anyone 'seeing this girl at a service station at that time of the morning would come to only one conclusion—that she was waiting to be picked up' and added 'even a woman of this type can refuse for a man to have intercourse with her'.

If rape victims manage to get the rapist to court, the law will find the necessary excuses to defend the rapist.

Yours in solidarity
Jon Lucas
Bristol

Claimants union

Dear Womens Voice

We are writing to you on the advice of Bournemouth Womens Voice who seem to be getting quite active. They contacted us asking for information on claiming and have since started a claimants' union themselves. Bristol Claimants' Union is trying to co-ordinate claimants' unions more effectively in the South West, we would like to hear from people in the hope of creating a stronger regional organisation.

Anyone wanting to start a c.u. or to join one we would be glad to hear from you, in the hope of creating a stronger regional organisation. Anyone wanting to start a c.u. or wants to join one we would be glad to hear from you.

In solidarity
Bristol Claimants' Union

Close this nazi club!

Dear Womens Voice

If you fancy a night out in Stockport, don't go to the Blue Waterfall Night club!

Recently two women who had previously spent a year in Stockport Women's Aid Shelter, went to the club. Women from the shelter often visited the club but what they didn't know was that it was run by NF members who don't like the idea of women standing up for themselves and trying to gain independence from their husbands.

What is also very disturbing is the way the club organises under 18 discos. As it is a recruitment ground for the NF, the idea of a kids disco stinks.

We in Stockport Womens Voice are very angry about what is happening in the club

and want to see the place closed down. People should be able to enjoy a night out without risk of being beaten up or indoctrinated with Nazi filth.

Pat Jones
Stockport.

Underwear factory stripped bare

Dear Womens Voice

I thought you might be interested in the enclosed cutting from our evening newspaper.

'A Yarmouth underwear factory was mysteriously stripped bare of its assets over the weekend and the Dutch managing director has vanished.'

'When the 24 women employees turned up for work as usual this morning they found the doors locked.'

'Through the window they saw to their disbelief that every machine had been removed.'

After it was printed, investigators located the 'flying Dutchman' at his home in Holland. When questioned about his hasty retreat he had nothing to say!

The women are suing him for compensation.

Will keep you informed.
Sandra Birnie
Norwich

Is fat a feminist issue?

Dear Womens Voice

I am a dancer and though I'm not really overweight by normal standards, my eating habits are very irregular due to a history of dieting and thinking I am fat.

I have recently read 'Fat is a Feminist Issue' by Susie Orbach and it has made me aware that my problem isn't at all the same and I think it would help to discuss it.

Joanna B

WRITE TO
WOMENS
Voice
BOX 82
LONDON E2

Dear Jane

CIRCUMCISION— AN UNKIND CUT?

Is circumcision the unkindest cut of all? Or is it a sensible and hygienic procedure which doesn't affect a man's quality of life?

I have been surprised by the number of questions from women who have young children, or who are about to be parents, who are seriously thinking about whether or not to have male children circumcised. It is a practice that has been carried out for thousands of years in some cultures, and is increasingly popular in Western countries.

What is circumcision? Circumcision is the removal of part of the foreskin from the penis. The foreskin is the hood

of skin that covers the glans of the penis. There are two main reasons for this operation. Firstly for religious or cultural reasons. Jewish male children are circumcised in the first 8 days of life, and Muslim boys anytime from birth to 15 years old. In some tribal rites of puberty or manhood, circumcision is an important part of reaching manhood.

The second reason is medical or hygienic. It is quite common in young male children for the foreskin to be tight and this may produce difficulty in peeing, or keeping the penis clean. Circumcision is a simple operation, which can be done quickly with a local anaesthetic.

It does mean that there will be pain for some days afterwards. The older a man or boy is, the more painful it is.

I asked a few men about their views on circumcision, whether they thought it was good or bad, or important. The word circumcision produces an instant wince in most men, followed by remarks like, 'I wouldn't want to be parted from mine,' or 'who knows what you're missing or gaining, if you didn't have a choice in the matter'.

There is some medical evidence to suggest that women may benefit from male circumcision. This is because amongst Muslim and Jewish women there are fewer cases of cervical cancer. The theory is that cancer may be associated with lack of sexual hygiene in men, and that circumcision prevents the build-up of

smegma (dead skin cells and secretions) and makes sexual hygiene that much easier. This is however only a theory at present, and is not substantial enough for women to urge their partners to rush and be circumcised!

Nature provided the foreskin as a protection for the sensitive glans on the penis. The movement of the foreskin over the glans provides some sexual stimulation, but opinion seems to be divided as to whether or not circumcision increases or decreases sexual feeling.

I think that it is preferable to teach boys about the importance of personal and sexual hygiene rather than simply opting for circumcision, but for some, it may be a question of necessity for reasons of comfort and hygiene.

Jane Foster

You're Worried

Sitting glued in horror to the TV, I watched the British Grand Prix motorcycle event at Silverstone the other week.

Twenty eight laps at unbelievable speed, on two wheels.

Round and round. American Kenny Roberts and Barry Sheene led the pack most of the way, fighting for the lead. Down the straight they came, approaching a corner changing down into fourth, third gear, taking the bend at 130 miles an hour, leaning body and bike only inches from the track.

At 130 miles an hour.
It was more terrifying than Psycho.

What makes these men race to the brink of death in this suicide sport? Is it fame, fortune, the thrills, the crowd, there were 100,000 at Silverstone? All of these and none of them it seems.

Afterwards there was an announcement that 40 of the world's leading riders were opting out of the circuit next

LEADER OF THE PACK

year and organising their own competition.

I wanted to find out more. I like the idea of athletes taking their sport into their own hands.

They're doing it for three reasons. Money, yes. Kenny Roberts for example gets £100 per meeting during the 1979 courses and riders can be railroaded into riding for nothing when they're trying to make their name.

And safety too. Riders have been killed and maimed since the sport began and they have no say over conditions. When a rider is killed, the attitude of the

organisers is often that, well, they were not obliged to race.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, is control, over both of these other things.

Their efforts are admirable, and I wish them luck, but what sort of safety is acceptable and is there really a price?

Barry Sheene said before the Silverstone meeting that he was going to ride to the very best of his ability but that he was going to take no risks—except of course the risk of riding a corner at 130 miles an hour, wheel to wheel with the rider in front.

I used to ride on the back of a

motorbike and it terrified me. I remember racing down the motorway at 80 miles an hour, buffeted, deafened, clinging on, desperately singing songs to the wind to divert my mind from the knowledge that a bump from the side, or head on, which would mean a scratch on the paintwork of a car, could mean violent death on a motorbike.

I drive a car now and nothing, but nothing, would persuade me to get on a motorbike again.

I don't understand, can't understand the sport. What is this love that riders seem to have?

Kenny Roberts, initiator of the rebellion, said when told his prize money for one event was dropped because the gates were low, 'Then what the hell are we doing here?'

What the hell are they doing there, on the race track or indeed on the road? Perhaps someone could explain but it would take a lot to convince me.

Mary Ann Stuart

SPORT

TALES WE TELL OUR SISTERS

'Of course they'll fit Madam, they're huge. (a lot of emphasis on huge).

Hmm-well, I know better. Still never one for cowardice in the face of the enemy, I obediently tread that familiar path to the changing rooms.

Why is it I wonder, that all changing rooms are either tiny with Paladium style spotlighting, or, communal with wall to wall mirrors: always full of painfully *thin* women? Why is it that everybody else's undies are always sterile white while mine have gone grubby grey in the wash?

Anyway back to the point. Here I am again in the torture chamber (changing room to the uninitiated) sweating.

Humph! The jeans look aggressively at me from their shiny hanger. I'll soon put an end to their game. Wriggle . . . Ouch! The zip's just scratched my knee. Would you believe it, they're actually fighting back. Over the knees. Now the tricky bit—will they or will they not make it over my thighs (not my strong point my thighs). I give them one almighty hoist and, yes . . . they're over. Right now for that zip . . .

The zip wins. The usual three inch gap between the button and its hole rests on my belly gawking at me.

It's at this point, especially, if it's not the first changing room I've visited that day, that I have to control a surge of frustrated tears—

get a grip and hand back the ever triumphant pair of jeans to the sales assistant.

Why I get so outraged and carry on with this seemingly masochistic search is that I'm *not* fat! I'm not slim either—I'm average. Odd that really. There are thousands of us walking the streets of shopping centres. Strange that we don't meet up in those hellish communal dressing rooms. I know for a fact that there are other women with washed out undies—I've seen them in the launderette.

I sneaked a look at myself in one of those huge mirrors ... EEK!

If I had a penny for every time this has happened to me I'd be well off enough to have jeans made to measure.

The only time that I've bought a pair of trousers that actually fitted, comfortably, it had to be pointed out to me that I resembled an oversize pillar box. The fact that they fitted was enough for me. I didn't pay much attention to the colour—that was a joy short lived.

It isn't just jeans either. Recently, in a bid to look respectable for job interviews, I went

on the wild, hectic, late night shopping, Oxford Street nightmare. Going into the shops after the gruelling tube journey, I was confronted by endless, monstrously thin, super cool, mannequins, draped in clingy, revealing flimsies. I felt as if the fashion giants were against me, Ms Average.

A friend had come with me for support. Risky business that. I've known beautiful friendships flounder because of shopping trips.

Everyone in the big stores seemed amazingly glamorous. I sneaked a look at myself in one of those huge mirrors . . . EEEK! From then on I was doomed. Everything I fancied the look of was too expensive, too short, too long, too shoddy.

There was no way I was going to give in to the lure of Marks and Spencers. I compromised. I went back to the store which I knew catered for the over 9 stone. I made a bee-line for a really big, comfy looking pair of dungarees. They fitted! I can bend over, jump, even get over the odd wall if I suddenly feel like it. In short, I can move!

Don't fashion designers want us to be able to move? Is it that mobile women can't be attractive, passive and quiet?

I don't want any Levis anyway—did you know that the United States Army was kitted out with Levis in the Vietnam war?

Gail Cartmail



WHAT IS GOING ON?

WV groups

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

● **ACTON & HARLESDEN** ring Carrie 993 0356 or Pete 969 9812

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

● **BURY** Womens Voice meets every other Wednesday. Ring Lynn 061 764 6659 for details.

● **BLACK COUNTRY** Sundays fortnightly. 2.30, 27 Glen Court, Compton Road. For Information 23233. Children welcome.

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

● **CANTERBURY** Womens Voice meets every other Tuesday at Jolly Sailor Northgate. Phone Barbara (Lyminge 862742).

● **COVENTRY** Womens Voice meets every other Wednesday, 8.00pm, at the Hertford Tavern, off Queens Road (near the Butts). Coventry 618956

● **CROYDON** Womens Voice meets alternate Tuesdays. Phone Maureen 660 0989 or Yvonne 664 3768.

EALING Womens Voice meets regularly. Phone Jenny or Caroline 567 7676

● **ECCLES & IRLAM** Womens Voice meets fortnightly at the AEU Social Club, Mather Road, Eccles. For information ring Jennie 707 2557.

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

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

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

● **FINCHLEY & BARNET** Womens Voice meets fortnightly, for information contact Anita 883 4968 or Glenis 346 7627.

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

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

● **HACKNEY** Womens Voice phone Pauline 985 3086 or Chris 806 6198 for information and babysitters.

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

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

● **HIGHBURY** Womens Voice. Details ring Elana 439 3764 (days).

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

● **ISLINGTON** Womens Voice meets regularly. Phone Sandy at 802 6145 for details.

● **KENTISH TOWN** Womens Voice meets weekly. Ring Gail 458 0954 or Vera/Di 267 5059 for information and details.

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

● **HORNSEY WOMENS VOICE: No Sale of council houses, speaker: Jill Brown.** Monday 3 September, 8pm, Hornsey Junior Library, Haringey Park, London, N8. Phone Alison 348 0356 for more information and babysitting.

● **LEA VALLEY** Womens Voice meets regularly. Phone Mary (802 9563) for information and babysitters.

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

● **LUTON** Womens Voice is being set up. If you are interested please contact Jane 421 266.

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

● **SE MANCHESTER** Womens Voice meets at the Albert, Rusholme, 8pm, every other Wednesday.

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

● **NEWHAM** Womens Voice meets Tuesdays and Thursdays fortnightly. Phone Wendy 790 2373. Babysitters available.

● **NEWCASTLE** Womens Voice meets regularly phone 29129 for details.

● **NOTTINGHAM** Womens Voice group meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in every month at 8pm, 118 Mansfield Road. For further information or babysitters

ring Jane 866522 ext 219 or Gill, Nottingham 625499

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

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

● **READING** Womens Voice meets regularly. For information phone Kathy on 660 800.

● **STOKE ON TRENT** Womens Voice meets at Knotty Action, Mollart Street, Hanley. Fortnightly. Ring Sandra 814094

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

● **SOUTHWARK** Womens Voice meets every other Tuesday evening. Contact Jenny 697 7996 for more information.

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

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

● **SOUTH LONDON** Womens Voice meets fortnightly on Tuesdays. Tate Library, Brixton. Oval. All welcome.

● **SOUTH WIRRAL**- Would anyone interested in forming a Womens Voice group please contact Janet, 051 339 6070.

● **SOUTH WEST LONDON** Womens Voice meets alternate Tuesdays. 91 Bedford Hill, Balham. All welcome. More information and babysitters contact Marion 947 0560

● **SHEFFIELD** Womens Voice meets fortnightly at the Prince of

Wales pub, Division Street at 7.30pm.

● **STOCKPORT** Womens Voice. For details phone 061 431 7564.

● **STOKE ON TRENT** Womens Voice would anyone interested in organising with us in the Stoke on Trent area contact Sandra 814094.

● **TOWER HAMLETS** Womens Voice meets on alternate Mondays. Babysitters available phone Heather 739 6668

● **WALTHAM FOREST** Womens Voice meets fortnightly on Tuesdays or Thursdays at 8pm. For details ring Jeannie 531 8340 or Pauline 521 4768.

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

● **WATFORD** Womens Voice is being formed. Anyone interested in coming to meetings please contact Davina or Ros. Watford 28500 ext 659

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

WOMENS VOICE SWEATSHIRTS AND T-SHIRTS

Womens Voice fights for womens rights' Sweatshirts in dark blue or red. £2.50 (reduced from £3.50) plus 25p post. T-shirts in red, pale blue, black or white. £1.50 plus 15p post. Small or medium sizes. Cheques to Kentish Town Womens Voice group, c/o 175a Kentish Town Road, London, NW1.

FLEET STREET WOMENS VOICE

are calling a mass petitioning for Monday 3 September. Meet 5.30pm, Ludgate Circus, (Blackfriars tube station).

WV events

SCOTTISH WOMENS VOICE WEEKEND SCHOOL, GLASGOW

Saturday and Sunday 1/2 September

Speakers include: Joan Smith, Sheila McGregor, Linda Quinn. Plus sessions on abortion, housing, women in trade unions, sexism in school books, new technology, and practical sessions on how to print teeshirts and posters.

SOCIAL Saturday evening.

Registration £2. Accommodation available. Pooled fare. All women welcome. Phone Penny 031 557 0731 for further details.

Small ads

Leamington Womens Group would like to contact other womens groups/Womens Voice groups/ NAC Groups etc in the midlands for exchange of information, joint campaigns and a possible regional meeting. Contact: Jane Woronwski, 13 Church Street, Leamington Spa.

Socialist seeking alternative life-style to nuclear family in SE London. Persons with existing mortgage or cash (£5000 each) needed as mortgage for suitable large property. Kids desirable but not essential. Phone 061 660 0989 for details.

Where to buy books

Open Gaze Bookshop

60 Broughton Street, Edinburgh.
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Open: 7.30am to 10pm Monday to
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Non profitmaking bookshop runs
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Feminist/lesbian/socialist
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1985 Bookshop

Longacre Community Centre,
London Road, Walcot, Bath. 0225
20263. Tuesday to Saturday, 12
noon to 6pm. Range of feminist
and socialist literature; also black
and third world struggles,
children's books, fiction.

Full Marks Bookshop

110 Cheltenham Road, Bristol 6,
40491. Monday to Saturday 10
am to 6pm. Socialist and feminist
books, magazines and local
contacts.

Bookmarx chain

Birmingham. Socialist and TU
Books 224 Deritend High Street,
Birmingham 12. 10am to 6pm

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Hull: Socialist Books 238

Springbank 10am to 5.30pm,
Monday to Saturday

Southampton: October Books, 4

Onslow Road

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6145. 10am to 6pm. Monday to
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**Advertise your bookshop 50p an
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card for display ads available on
request to: Womens Voice, Box
82, London, E2.**

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21a Silver Street, Cambridge.
0223 55589. 9.30am to 5pm,
Monday to Friday only. Left wing
pamphlets, books, magazines.

SOCIALISM AND EDUCATION

(Journal of the Socialist Education Association)

Winter 1979 Issue on:
Women, Educational and Labour

Available from 129 Ripon Road, Stevenage, Herts. Price
30p (+10p p&p)

RUSKIN HISTORY WORKSHOP 13

People's History and Socialist Theory

Ruskin College, Oxford. Fri-Sun. 30th November - 2
December.

Papers from Britain and Europe on the History of
Socialist History. Sessions include: Roydon
Harrison—**Webbs History of Trade Unionism.** Ian
Carter/Carter/Hans Medick—**Peasant Studies.** Ian
John Walsh/Carlo Ginzberg/Christopher Hill—
Religion; Capitalism; Popular Movements. Anne
Marie Troger/Paula Di Cori/Selma
Leysersdorff/Sheila Rowbotham—**Feminist History
in Germany; Italy; Holland; Britain.** Sally
Alexander—**The Standard of Living Debate.** Paul
Thompson/Luisa Paserini—**Oral History.** Gwyn
Williams—**Communist Party History.** Thomas
Hodgkin—**African History.** Peter Burke—**Popular
Culture in Early Modern Europe.** Tim Mason/Lutz
Niethammer—**Fascism and Anti-Fascism in
Germany.** Richard Johnson/E P Thompson—**History
and Theory.**

Tickets (Limited to 400) £3 or £4 with papers, from
History Workshop Collective, Ruskin College, Oxford.

bookmarx

THIRD
QUARTER
1979

The Bookmarx Club is now an established method for socialists to get the best of new socialist books at a big discount—and delivered to your door.
HOW IT WORKS. You send us £4.50 for which you will receive the books on List A below plus those on one other list of your choice. Extra lists can be obtained for £2.50 each. Don't delay, send in the form now with your subscription, you will save pounds on the retail value of the books (shown in brackets on the list).

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ASBESTOS, KILLER DUST by Alan Dalton (£2.25)

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ANGER ON THE ROAD by Jimmy Reilly (85p)

Jimmy took part in the 1978 London-Brighton Right to Work march, this is his hilarious account of the trip illustrated by Evans

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Special issue of a magazine which has set new standards of photojournalism

LIST B—
HEALTH IN DANGER by David Widgery (£2.95)

Brilliant new book by Widgery lays bare the danger in which our health services lie

LIST C—
THE WORKERS' REPORT ON VICKERS by Huw Beynon & Hilary Wainwright (£2.40)

Report by the Shop Stewards Committee on what the massive reorganisation and rationalisation means for the workers

BUT THE WORLD GOES ON THE SAME, Durham StrongWords Collective (90p)

Powerful collection of reminiscences and writings from Co Durham pit villages

LIST F—
TRAPPED WITHIN WELFARE by Mike Simpkin (£2.95)

A socialist social worker questions the nature of his job, and whose interests it really serves

LIST D is split into two sets of well-known books which deserve a place on the shelves of any socialist. Each set counts as one list

LIST D1—

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GERMINAL by Emile Zola (£1.25)

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LIST D2—

SOLEDAD BROTHER by George Jackson (£1.00)

PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND by A. L. Morton (£1.50)

SPARTACUS by Howard Fast (50p)

LIST E—
DUTIFUL DAUGHTERS, edited by Sheila Rowbotham & Jean McCrindle (£1.50)

Newly paperbacked collection in which women talk of their lives

SLAVE GIRL by Buchi Emecheta (85p)

Story of a Nigerian girl sold into slavery by her brother

BLACK NATIONALISM AND SOCIALISM by Tony Bogue (50p)

Essays in the struggle of black nationalism

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Join Womens Voice...

WOMENS VOICE fights for womens rights. We want equal pay with the highest paid; maternity leave without restriction; the right to a job; nursery places for all children so that mothers can chose to work; and an end to discrimination in education, training, jobs and benefits; the right to abortion on demand. To fight for these changes is only a beginning. Womens Liberation means we have to free ourselves from the grip of the rich and powerful whose oppressive rules and ideas are fostered on us from our earliest years. This means we have to fight for socialism too, to free us from a society divided between those who have and those who have not.

To fight we have to be organised:
Womens Voice

is a sister organisation of the Socialist Workers Party.

**Fight with Womens Voice
for Womens Liberation
and Socialism.**

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