

# womens **VOICE**

20p March '80 Issue 39

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this woman  
and her  
children  
be homeless?**

**INSIDE:  
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RISING PROFITS...  
WHY SHOULD  
WE PAY?**

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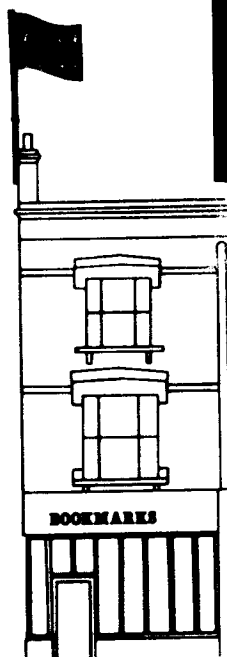
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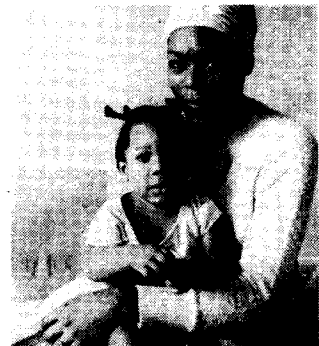
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# OUR POINT OF VIEW

womens  
**Voice**

Womens magazine of the  
Socialist Workers Party



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We do like to hear from you. Deadlines for the next issue: for letters March 12, news and what's on March 14. Ideas welcome anytime. If you want to help on Womens Voice contact us about the next editorial meeting, March 26

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# No to their wars

AS THE cold war between East and West continues America has announced its decision to draw up new lists for the draft. 61,000 women will find themselves conscripted into the army as the call up for active war service is made. Women will find themselves serving in the front line.

That's equality for you. And the young American women interviewed for British television accepted it. Women want to be equal so they must expect to be equal in all things' they said. 'It's only fair'.

Up to a point they are right. We do want to be equal in everything and that might not always be pleasant. Equality will not come easily or without sacrifice. We can't shirk the hard or the dirty tasks.

But what's objectionable about women being drafted in America is the cause for which they will be fighting—American domination. Do we want women fighting in that front line? Would we have accepted women fighting in the Vietnam war, because it made them equal?

Right wing Tories are baying for a conscript army in Britain too. Do we want women soldiers fighting and dying in Northern Ireland, any more than we want men there?

We're not saying women shouldn't be prepared to fight. The women who enlisted

with the Sandanistas in Nicaragua were fighting for their country's national liberation. The women in Mozambique and Angola trained and fought alongside the men to rid themselves of their Portuguese overlords.

In those armies we are proud to see our sisters. In the battles to free ourselves we will be prepared to fight.

# No to their laws

THE Parliamentary charade over the Corrie Bill is working itself to a climax as we go to press. Our fate lies in other, less capable hands than our own.

We know how we want to live our lives and we know that our own freedom should not be taken away or tampered with by people who listen more to their own prejudices than the voice of reason.

Parliamentary democracy should not be the one way process that MPs have made it. We don't vote them in to give them carte blanche for five years to make what laws they please.

If the Corrie Bill becomes law we'll have to defy it and keep up the fight to repeal it.

If it fails, we can cheer that so many people were prepared to stand up and be counted. We can control the law makers. And we shall.

WOMEN'S VOICE · PO BOX 82 LONDON E2 · 01 986 6222

## CORRIE - it will take more than your bill to stop us

SATURDAY 2 FEBRUARY

Thousands of pro-abortionists turned out on demonstrations around the country. 1,500 in Glasgow, 1000 in Newcastle, 300 in Nottingham, 200 in Sheffield, 600 in Birmingham. The spirit and militancy was high. In Glasgow striking steelworkers sent a delegation of twelve. But the success story of the day was Manchester. Maureen Watson explains what it was like.

Three thousand trade unionists and pro-choice groups marched through the centre of Manchester to voice their protest against Corrie's bill. All the way along the route passers by joined the march.

At the rally at the end of the demo all the speakers stressed the need to stop the return of death and disease at the hands of the backstreet abortionists by defeating this bill.

The battle will not end here. In Manchester we have fairly detailed plans to take the campaign further. It will take a lot more than John Corrie, the church and a few rich old men in Westminster to defeat us.

### 5 FEBRUARY

The biggest day of the week. We were hoping for 5000. But it was clear by lunchtime, when students were assembling for a march to Westminster, that thousands more were coming. Technical college students streamed out of packed coaches.

It was the biggest student demo for two years. At Central Hall everything was chaos. Inside the hall—already full—the campaign organisers were told that ten thousand students were marching to join them.

Panic. Where could everyone go. Another hall was opened up. It made little difference. Thousands queued outside—clerical workers, civil servants, some manual workers on delegations. Others queued outside parliament to lobby their MPs. Some were there till 8 or 9 in the evening.

Everyone was taken aback. The police were astonished. We sold out of 500 Womens Voice and all our abortion badges and could still have sold more. The atmosphere was euphoric.

### 7 FEBRUARY

The week didn't end there. Round the country on Thurs-

day night hundreds more women had torchlight processions against Corrie. Penny Packham reports from Edinburgh.

Edinburgh Womens Voice had been busy with preparations for the demonstration against Corrie for weeks—with a fundraising social, flyposting squads, leafletting, a radio interview, making banners and placards.

Over 600 people marched along in the drizzle.

It was really spirited. 'a limited deputation' of several hundred angry women and men went round to Charlotte Square and, despite trouble from the police, presented a wreath of gin, knitting needles and red flowers to the Secretary of State for Scotland. And we sang 'Who's Corrie Now' through the megaphone on the bus back to our local.

Womens Voice members in Leeds NAC were at it too. 'At 11pm about forty women were singing, passing the whisky and chucking paraffin on the brazier of the all night vigil against the Corrie bill. We had set it up next to the Town Hall and in front of the private wing of the General Infirmary. Earlier over 400 women had marched noisily round the town centre in a torchlight demonstration.

A shift system, coffee and coal kept the vigil going all night and at dawn about 20 women were there to leaflet people going to work and to give a live broadcast through the local radio van. We're ready for action if the bill goes through. If we win, after the hell of a big party we're going to have, we're going on fighting for a womans right to choose. Leeds WV group will go on working with NAC for our right to control our fertility. As we shouted on the demo 'Its our bodies, our lives, our right to decide'.

## stop us

### 8 FEBRUARY

The day of the third reading. thousands of women decided to converge on Westminster. The student womens assembly organised by NUS attracted 300. They marched spontaneously down to Central Hall, which was filling up with women from all over the country, for a Womens Assembly.

The mood was very different from Tuesday. It was very angry. The women there were disgusted that over the road MPs were coldly discussing whether or not to restrict a womans right to choose. Speaker after speaker stressed the harm Corrie's bill would do. Peggy Seeger sang. Then Jo Richardson arrived to tell us the debate was going on to next week.

Then we heard that six of our sisters had been detained in the House of Commons for unfurling a banner which said 'Women will not obey your law.'

Hundreds of women left their seats and stormed over to parliament. Some managed to get inside and were thrown downstairs by police. Others couldn't get in so they sat down outside.

A woman holding a tiny baby came back to the assembly to tell how the police had thrown her and her baby across the road.

Then thousands converged at the Temple to march down Fleet Street. All women, the march looked fantastic. Thousands of women carrying torches, singing and chanting had Fleet Street workers out on the pavements waving us on. Everyone felt so high they didn't want to go home.

Several hundred women blocked the road near Blackfriars Bridge. Police horses had to be got out to move them. It summed up the whole day—defiant, angry and determined to stop Corrie. A good end to a good week.

## Time to do something about Life

WHEN THE anti-abortionists claim that they are only against abortion and not against contraception—just don't believe it. Victoria Gillick is the organiser of her local Life group and has been waging a one woman campaign about contraception and the under sixteens.

Mrs Gillick set up the Parents on Suffolk Association which campaigns for parents' rights of responsibility over their daughters who are under sixteen. She believes that parents should have to give their permission before contraception is given.

She has been campaigning against the FPA for some time, writing to them under assumed names in order to get information. She has tried to get the FPA's charity status withdrawn and is putting pressure on her local Area Health Authority and Community Health Council. She also organised a 5,000 name petition which was presented to Thatcher in January. All this is happening at a time when the Department of Health and Social Security is considering the question of under-age contraception and parental consent.

As far as the FPA are concerned everything they do is out in the open. They work within the DHSS recommendations on under-age contraception which states that a doctor would not be outside the law if they were acting in good faith in protecting the girl against the potentially harmful affects of intercourse.

When asked if it was true that she had had nine children in ten years, she said in an interview with her local paper, the Ipswich Evening Star, 'I have had nine children but don't say so. You might as well say that I am a Bangladeshi with 14 children. It will bias people against me. Please don't write anything about it—as a personal favour.' Apparently she did not want to explain why her children were being educated at home.

But all of this is no reason for her to not to be taken seriously. She has managed to get herself and her campaign a lot of publicity in the local and national papers and radio. She is obviously being taken seriously.

Recently, similar campaigns have been run in Dudley, Doncaster and Devon. It is not an isolated incident. It seems that the only action that has been taken was started by Wolverhampton Women's Voice. Isn't it about time we took things like this a bit more seriously and did something about it?



**MARTHA KING, from Brixton Womens Voice was one of the women who nearly came face to face with MP's in the House debating our future. She tells what happened:**

'As we stood at the main entrance reading the closed sign, some women started to force their way in. All of a sudden we were through the first doors, chanting and rushing towards the second set of doors. Four sisters got through

Then a guard or policeman reached from behind the doors and punched one of us in the face twice, as hard as he could.

'When we saw we couldn't get through we sat down still shouting and chanting. We felt safe and strong together like that, but fear returned when the police started ejecting us bodily. Three were excessively violent. One took delight in throwing women down the stairs while two worked as a team yanking women by the arms and legs roughly and jerking them about.'

# Too complex for TV!

YOU MAY have noticed that there was a speedy change of television programmes on Thames Television on 7 February—the day before the third reading of the Corrie Bill. At 6.25pm in peak viewing time there was supposed to be a 'Help' programme which billed Rose Shapiro of the Family Planning Association. The subject was abortion. The programme that actually appeared was altogether different.

The five minute Help slot had been very well planned, too well as it turned out. Joan Shenton, who introduces the programme was going to give a run down on the '67 Act and explain what the Corrie Bill would do. Then she was going to talk about two graphs which the researcher had put together which showed quite conclusively that if the Corrie Bill was passed, only nine per cent of the women who had abortions in '79 could be sure of getting one.

Then Rose Shapiro was to be interviewed to explain that there are many reasons that women will need abortion regardless of the Law. For example no method of contraception is suitable for every woman and 100 per cent effective. The Corrie Bill does nothing about these things, it merely attacks the result without looking at the reason—no woman has an abortion lightheartedly.

The information was obviously too solid for the head of features,

religion and education at Thames—Ian Martin. The programme was cancelled at 10pm the night before it was due to be recorded. Ian Martin seemed to think that the subject had been over-exposed on television and that anyway it was too complex a subject to be dealt with in five minutes.

The programme certainly wasn't

banned because of any error in the factual information—the Independent Broadcasting Authority lawyers had already passed the material. The only possible explanation is that Ian Martin did not like the conclusion that had to be drawn from the material—the Corrie Bill is a disaster.

Anna Bradley

## THE FIGHT GOES ON

**AFTER A fantastic month with more demos, pickets, vigils than ever before, we still haven't kicked the Corrie bill out of parliament. It is coming up next on 29 February and probably on March 7 and 14.**

**NAC has agreed to demonstrations on 29 February and on the other days if the bill is being debated. Local activities are being planned. We have to make sure that every time it's discussed we are there too.**

**The police are trying their hardest to dampen the campaign. They have threatened to arrest members of the NAC steering committee. They have banned torches from demonstrations after our torchlight demo on February 8. They refuse to let us march within a mile of parliament.**

**We have to be prepared to ignore the petty restrictions they impose on us and demand the right to march where we like, carrying torches if we want. We cannot expect to win our rights without fighting for them.**

**Corrie and his friends have to be made to realise that if their bill becomes law we will try to make it inoperable. We will support doctors and clinics which practice abortions even if they are illegal. We will carry on demonstrating, spraying slogans, sitting down as long as this law continues. We will still get widespread support from trade unionists because the vast majority now accept the right of women to choose for themselves.**

Lindsey German

## More news on abortion

'THE DAVID STEEL Act of 1967 was an enlightened and pioneering piece of legislation'.

'The 1967 Act took into account social reasons for abortion and made it possible for women to ask their doctors to help without fear of prosecution.'

These come from the Daily Mail and the Sun. It's very surprising when not so long ago, these papers were screaming about fetuses left to die on draining boards and whole generations being murdered through abortion.

At the beginning of February the press started to change its tune about the Corrie Bill. The Sunday Times published the results of two opinion polls which show that most people are in favour of abortion being freely available for women. Fleet St was taken aback.

After months of demonstrations, leaflets, petitions and meetings against Corrie the media have woken up to the fact that we don't want abortion to be restricted.

But they're still being very cautious. Free abortion on demand means women having the right to control their own bodies—and the press can't agree with that.

For once the press have had to shift—slightly—to our opinions. For once they haven't continued blindly in their usual reactionary way. For once they may have listened.

If the Corrie bill passed we'll give them a lot more to listen to.

AS A protest against the Corrie Bill, a torchlight vigil was held outside Whipps Cross Hospital in Waltham Forest on 6 February.

The combined Womens Voice groups of Walthamstow, Leytonstone, Ilford and Redbridge, together with NAC, turned out in full strength. It was cold and raining quite hard but our torches shone out.

We gave out leaflets to all visitors going in to the hospital.

Some magazines were sold and we made contact with nurses and other women who were there.

There were over 50 people there. Carole Barrett.

ON WEDNESDAY 13 February *Women against Corrie* made a protest to the private clinics in Harley Street. Women with spray cans and red paint pointed out to the private clinics that although they perform abortion, they are only available to women with money. Armed with stencils, spray cans and plastic cups filled with red gloss paint, they sprayed out the stencils to read 'No return to the backstreets' and 'We do abortions for rich women only' on the marble steps and beneath the Harley Street signs.



## Gays come out at work

LOUISE BOYCHUCK was sacked for wearing a badge declaring she is lesbian. An industrial tribunal ruled that she should be sacked because she interfered with her employers' business. In Scotland John Saunders has been sacked from working in a youth camp because he might interfere with the children.

The rights won by lesbians and gay men in the last ten years all depend on keeping silent. And with the Tories on the rampage even these rights are at risk.

Most cases where gay oppression has actually been fought have revolved around the workplace and the trade unions. Many gay people do not realise the importance of the workplace for defending their rights and for developing the solidarity to come out. Many trade unionists, otherwise good rank and file fighters, do not know how to take up the struggles of gay people.

The Gay Rights at Work Conference at the City of London Poly on 29 March is to bring together people active in the gay movement and the unions, to share experiences and discuss how to build rank and file groups which will be able to do the things we now need to do: pass motions through branches, get clauses written into contracts of employment, fight individual cases of discrimination, get publicity for the existence of gay groups to encourage people to feel positively about coming out at work, and work among gay people to involve them in the fight against cuts and the Tories' attempts to shackle the unions.

Gay Rights can be won only with a strong and confident labour movement. Without that we can lose what little we have.

**DID YOU KNOW that over two thirds of all divorce petitions are filed by women?**

## ITALIAN TEACHERS OCCUPY CONSUL

EVERY YEAR the Italian government sends 200 qualified teachers to Britain, where they teach primary and secondary immigrant children their mother language. Many of us have a lifetime of service behind us, but have little chance of a pension because regularly paid contributions are not passed on. We have no job security and we are forced to reapply for our own job every summer. Travel expenses have been cut from 100 per cent to nothing. The authorities in Rome and London will not discuss security of tenure, wage increases or terms equal to state employed teachers in Italy.

The schools here are administered by the Italian consulate general, vice consulates and the Education Department. They ignore our plight and will not give us a fair hearing. Therefore we decided to occupy the consulate building.

We are a small group, very little interest has been shown by our administration, we are demonstrating peacefully, so far. We are not deterred by uninformed parents who have bought in unqualified and unofficial teachers.

We ask you to bring us to the attention of women in Britain. D. Zanini, E. Savaglia, E. Samperi

## NAG proudly presents...

THIS MONTH Nalgo proudly presents the breaking of three-quarters of a million membership barrier. Women now account for more than half that figure. But surprise surprise, 80 per cent of our women members are in the low paid, low status, jobs such as typists, telephonists and clerks, servicing the male-dominated professional and management grades. Sounds familiar doesn't it! Prices and rents are going up

faster than our wages, in local government we got a lousy 9.6 per cent increase last year. Part of this deal was to put in for a comparability study. Comparable with whom you might ask. To date, 14 February, the comparability talks have broken down, Nalgo negotiators rejected the employers offer, but whatever the outcome the low paid will get less as they will get a lower wage and differentials will widen even further.

The Nalgo Action Group, Nalgo's rank and file group has always pushed for a flat rate pay claim and the scrapping of the lowest clerical grades. We have campaigned for the Typists Charter, abortion rights, maternity leave and nurseries, because in Nalgo the Rank and File are women.

Ruth Clapham,  
Hackney Nalgo

## Chix needs mass action

THE LATEST mass picket at the Chix sweet factory in Slough demonstrated the strengths and the weakness of the five-month-old-strike. Only about 150 pickets turned up, and the promised delegation of MP's was not amongst them. The routine atmosphere of the picket led to complaints from the Asian women strikers that the pickets lacked discipline and were not taking the action seriously.

In spite of such problems, the strikers' cheerfulness and determination continues. The women are smiling and chanting 'We want the union!' even as they explain that they expect the struggle to drag on for as long as another year. This view is encouraged by the GMWU officials, who say they expect the action to build up slowly through blacking and picketing of scab firms used by Chix management.

The blacking has been successful—production is down to 25 per cent inside the factory—but it is inconceivable that a strike for union recognition can be won without mass action on the picket line. But Jeremy McMullen, GMWU regional officer, is not interested in physically stopping the vans which carry scabs and supplies into the factory. He told Womens Voice, 'We'd rather have a large demonstration in front of the building than be round the back trying to stop the vans. We haven't got the numbers to do it.'

His defeatism is not echoed by the women on strike. They say that if only their English was better and their confidence greater, they would be running things differently. As it is, every day they have to face drivers who ignore them because they are Asian and female, but who will turn away from the gates immediately an English-speaking man asks them to.

The women realise they are in danger of the strike being taken out of their hands, away from the picket line, and of morale being weakened by lack of action. They agree that blacking has to be continued, but argue that it is consistent mass picketing that will stop incoming vans, close the factory, and win them the strike.

• When are you bringing a



Andrew Ward (Report)

delegation to the picket line? Send details to: J. McMullen, 154 Brent St., Hendon, NW4.

• Even if you can't attend, send a donation to: M. Anwar, 271 Goodman Park, Slough.

• The following firms have been crossing Chix picket lines and must be blacked:

MILLER, MORRIS & CROCKER, 462 Bath Road Slough, Berks.

GLOY STEARN TRANSPORT, Chapplefield, Sheffield

BAKER, BRITT & CO., LTD., East India Dock Rd. E14

S. GRUNTON (WASTE) LTD., 589 Uxbridge Rd., Hayes, Middx.

E & H TRANSPORT LTD., Woburn Green, Bucks.

Susan Pearce

## Vicars—where men fear to strike

TWENTY THREE women clerical workers are on strike at Simon Vicars in Newton-le-Willows, Lancashire. The strike at the biscuit machinery factory is over wages.

The women are offered a 9 per cent increase, on wages of around £39 a week gross. They are holding out for 15 per cent. Unfortunately the rest of the workforce have settled for nine per cent. They are engineers and they have made it clear that if the women do win their increase

## Steel: getting wives involved

ANNE KILLEAVEY lives in Ilkeston, in Derbyshire. Her husband is a blastfurnaceman, and one of the strike leaders at the steel plant of Stanton and Staveley. She spoke to *Jeanie Shaw* about her support for the strike.

I support the strike for three reasons. First, my husband is one of the leaders of the strike. Second, for the money—we need it the way prices and rents are going up, we can't manage now. Third, it's the only means we have got to get anything out

of the government.

I think wives could do more in this strike. They are inclined to sit back and let their husbands take it on their own back. They should be encouraging their men to go on the picket. They should come themselves. Just show their face for half an hour, they could come with the kids even. I do.

Men often don't want their wives on the picket line. They feel embarrassed and nervous. My husband said he wanted to get rid of me at first. Then I took up some coffee. The pickets got used to it. The first day was terrific. They joked "You can't cross the picket line with the pram".

We would like to get more women involved, we could have a kids party. We can get the money for it by having a jumble sale. Now the strike is biting financially we need to get women especially involved. We can have a coffee evening to make the arrangements for the party.

I think the government and it's laws are rubbish. I would have been classed as a secondary under the new union laws!

**DID YOU KNOW** that the top one fifth of people owns four fifths of the nation's wealth? The bottom four fifths only owns one fifth.

Sadie Blood

# Answering back

## Biology - our destiny

THE TORIES are backing up their attacks on women's rights by dragging age-old theories about equality out of the musty recesses where they belong.

Patrick Jenkin, Minister for Health and Social Security, said on television that if God meant men and women to be equal, he wouldn't have created them differently. According to Ivor Stanbrook MP, the very notion of sex equality is 'foolish and irrelevant'.

Their argument really boils down to this: women and men can't and shouldn't be treated equally because they have different 'natural' roles, and women's role is to breed and care for children.

Throughout history, people in power have tried to justify inequality and oppression by saying it's 'natural'. There's no such thing as a natural way to bring up children, and certainly having them cared for by their biological mother alone in the home is a relatively new and uncommon phenomenon. If you look at other societies, or at our world not so long ago, it is soon clear that it's more 'normal' for grandparents, older children or other members of the community to care for young children.

Anyway, what's so wonderful about nature? Floods, famines and disease are natural—shouldn't we try and eradicate them? We're not saying that women shouldn't have children if they want to: the test-tube baby may be a future option that women will choose, but that's not here and now. We believe that women must be free to have children if they want to: but this mustn't be used to limit us in all the other things we want to do.

Our biology is not our destiny. We don't deny our biology; we do deny that this means we should accept being treated as second class citizens, passive, undemanding, and satisfied with low pay and a double ration of work.

We want to be able to choose to have children and live fully active lives. This means we want the care of our children to be shared by the community as a whole—and if this means breaking down the possessive links between parent and child, then so much the better for everyone. We don't want to cut out close emotional links, but to extend them to a wider circle.

There's another argument used against us; we're supposed to be unreliable or inconsistent. This is just a euphemism for saying we get pre-menstrual tension and period pains.

Once again the solution lies in changing society to suit us, instead of accepting that half the population is incapable of being full members of society. If we weren't under so much unnecessary stress and strain, worrying about money, work and everything else, we'd suffer a lot less from periods. Have you noticed how, when you're on holiday and much more relaxed, you're hardly aware of the onset of a period? And if we had a say in medical priorities, then research into this area would be near the top of the list.

What is clear is that there is no hope of being treated equally without an enormous change in society as a whole. That's why we're not only feminists, we're socialists too.

As for Jenkin, Stanbrook and the likes of them, there's really only one argument they'll listen to. We began it outside Parliament over the Corrie Bill; it's the sound of women shouting 'We will have our way'.



School dinner ladies against the cuts: a petition in protest about increases in school meals and transport prices is presented to the Tories.

Andrea Ward (Report)

## Teachers strike against the cuts

AVON teachers are leading the fight against the cuts in education. In October the Tory-controlled Avon Education Authority announced that 406 teachers had to be cut—and since then they have got rid of over 400 jobs, and forced all the schools in the area to alter their timetables halfway through the year. Members of Avon National Union of Teachers are refusing to teach the new timetables or accept extra pupils.

The cuts were implemented without redundancies amongst permanent teaching staff, but supply teachers (on temporary contracts) were made redundant. 'Natural wastage' accounted for most of the jobs, through frozen vacancies, early retirements, even maternity leave.

The majority of supply teachers are women. They are employed on short term contracts, many can be sacked at only a day's notice. The general attack on education includes a particular attack on women.

Bernice Astling, a teacher at Hartcliffe Comprehensive in Bristol, one of the largest schools in Britain, told *Womens Voice* that their whole school had to be completely retimetabled after losing four teaching posts. This took place in a matter of weeks instead of the six months it usually

takes to plan their timetables, and was introduced in the middle of the school year.

The new timetable means larger classes, for example, a class of 26 becomes 31. In addition to this teachers are changed which leads to problems of discontinuity. One social studies group, studying at CSE level, face their sixth different teacher in four terms.

The teaching rotas have been completely thrown by the retimetabling, with some pupil groups repeating work already done, whilst others are missing whole courses. Many classes have different teachers for a single subject, for instance three English lessons each week, each with a different teacher. Non-specialist teaching is a major problem. Teachers are taken from French, Art and Music to teach English—it has become accepted by the LEA that anyone can teach English!

Hartcliffe School has special literacy classes to give slow readers the chance to catch up which have proved particularly successful. These classes have now doubled in size, and thereby rendered ineffectual, in a school where 25% of the pupils have a reading age below the average. Numeracy provision classes have been scrapped. Upper and lower sixth forms have been



merged, putting 'O' and 'A' level pupils together for classes.

The remainder of the £4 million cuts so readily implemented by Avon include ...

\* 10% cut in the capitation allowance, with no allowance for inflation. This is in mid-year, the money was actually given to the schools and then taken away again.

\* At Hartcliffe school a library of 10,000 books lies unused because Avon will not fill the vacant post for a librarian.

\* The school swimming pool, the only one in South Bristol, is closed. The LEA will not pay to heat the pool, or pay the caretaker overtime to clean it.

\* The school's sports courts are unusable. Avon will not make repairs to the surfaces and they are too dangerous to use in their present state.

\* There are five boarded up windows in one classroom alone, as the LEA will not pay for the glass.

The Avon NUT response to the attacks on education began last autumn. They held mass meetings with parents to discuss the effects of the cuts, and leafleted neighbourhoods explaining and publicising the effects. Finally the union decided to ballot for strike action.

In January they refused to teach the new timetables, sticking rigidly to the old ones, 'refusing any retired classes or extra pupils.

Avon say they will not budge and insist that the new timetables must be implemented. Avon teachers will maintain their action until the LEA are forced to back down.

Katrina

## No free travel

There has been free travel for children attending school over three miles away ever since 1944. But free education in Kent is to become a thing of the past. Now Kent County Council has proposed a charge of £3.50 per week for each child over 11, and £2.50 for primary school children, travelling to school by public transport.

Following a tidal wave of public protest KCC has been forced to climb down slightly and has lowered the charges to £2.50 and £1.50 per week. This revised charge is likely to be only for an initial period, perhaps a few months, and then the original charges will be reintroduced. The decrease was immediately offset by an additional rise in the cost of school dinners.

At present children over 5 travelling on East Kent buses pay full fare if they travel before 9.00am and between 3.45am and 5.30pm. Obviously it is difficult to travel to school outside these hours. Most children travelling by bus therefore will be forced to pay the proposed charges.

The consequences of these cuts are enormous for families in Kent. Because Kent is largely a rural area large numbers of children travel quite a considerable distance to school. A family with three children over 11 may be landed with a bill £7.50 bus fares a week.

The consequences are obvious. Many children will just not be able to attend school. Others will be forced to walk along dangerous unlit roads.

The leader of Kent County Council recently stated that 'for the cuts to be effective they have got to hurt'. Unless we fight these cuts quickly they are going to hurt, and they are going to hurt our children and their education.

Barbara Robathan

## What a ball!

A ball and buffet given by Wandsworth Tory council was invaded by women on St Valentines Day.

It was a charity ball to raise money for the NSPCC. For months the Tories in Wandsworth have been cutting our local services.

We were incensed at the hypocrisy of people who support systematic cuts in services for children and families, and yet can make a public display of giving to a national children's charity.

Our group combined with others in protesting outside the ball. There was also vocal presence inside the hall which took over the platform. We gave a few of the local Tories both food for thought and indigestion.



Nurses on the demonstration to save the Royal Northern Hospital from the Tory axe.

## People first, Horses second

I WAS on my way to the picket line at St. Georges Hospital, in the heart of London, where the staff are in occupation fighting to save the NHS and to defend their jobs.

In the road running along the side of the hospital, I came across three red coaches—each sporting two coachmen, done up to the nines in ridiculous bright red uniforms, and two horses. As I went past this sight I suddenly saw black suited butlers. All were carrying silver platters, on top of which were huge piles of grated carrots, beautifully garnished with radishes.

Did they take them to the pickets, not a stone's throw away? Or did they perhaps give them to the coachmen to tuck into? No, they did neither. They fed the bloody horses.

Insane waste you'll be saying, and I agree. But the Tory government doesn't. People, it keeps on telling us, need incentive to work hard, and how they spend their dough is entirely their own affair.

No, for the Tories waste is to be found elsewhere in, for example, the National Health Service. That's why the government has cut the budget of the area health authority. And that is why St Georges Hospital is threatened with closure in June.

But the workers in the NHS are beginning to fight back. Not only is St. Georges occupied against the closures, but so is St. Benedicts, in Tooting, a few miles away. Both hospitals are in the Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth AHA, which is cutting a massive £6 million off

its budget. These government imposed cuts of 10% will mean a loss of some 300 beds, and over 400 jobs. The proposals to close St. Georges are made for no other reason than to save money. People will die as a result.

The hospital is famous for heart surgery and is one of the leading hospitals in the world for heart pacemaker operations, after-care and open heart surgery. But with the threatened closure, the cardiac unit will be wiped out. Only a quarter of present operations can take place in the alternative facilities in St. Georges, Tooting and the Brompton Hospital. The team of specialists who carry out this work will be scattered. Jobs are certain to go. There are 2000 people on the waiting list at Hyde Park corner, and this is growing by about 100 per month—we simply can't afford to lose any more services.

In London alone, some 3000 beds have been lost in the last two years. The fight being led by the staff at St. Georges is a fight to defend the NHS. Unless the cuts are resisted, thousands will lose their jobs. But St. Georges cannot win alone. The fight against the cuts is everybody's fight.

If you can, join the picket line, or send donations (money, not carrots) and messages of support to; Alan Ellis, NUPE Branch Chairperson, St Georges Hospital, Hyde Park Corner, London SW1.  
Helen Rose.  
Pimlico WV.

lan McLintosh (11-4)



'Funny how there always seems to be enough money for those who are rich already. There's enough for wage rises for MPs. There's enough for Maggie to have two new cars and a dress designer. There's enough for rises of £5000 a year in perks alone for top civil servants.

There's NOT enough for teachers, hospitals, firemen, for the working class. *All these are being cut in Ilkeston.* There's £1m a day profit for the Post Office and Gas Corporation, but there's not enough money for free prescriptions. There's enough money for fat salaries for British Steel managers, but not enough for cheap school meals and milk. Yet we already pay for all these services with our tax. The steelworkers' fight is our fight.' Part of the argument on a bulletin put out by Ilkeston Womens Voice aimed at striking steelworkers wives. It didn't just put the socialist argument for supporting the strikers, but also publicised a free children's party for 'any worker at Stanton or supporter of the strike (whether on strike or laid off or not) welcome.'

They held a jumble sale to raise money for the party and advertised both on the leaflet, with a slip at the bottom for details of names and ages.

Keith Joseph got a stormy reception from Steelworkers in Wales recently. Leeds Womens Voice is hoping he'll get a similar one when he comes to hand out degrees at Leeds University. A picket is being organised to protest at Tory

government policies. The Womens Voice group will be protesting in particular at the cuts, the Corrie Bill and the attacks on maternity leave in the Employment Bill.

A new Womens Voice group has been formed in the St Helens/Warrington area. Sadie Blood explained what they have been doing:

'We decided to do something in St Helens because its a very strong Catholic town. We made torches and a wreath with knitting needles and gin bottles, and laid it on the Cenotaph. Our photo was in three local papers. Afterwards four men—including a miner—wanted to join Womens Voice.

Then we decided to occupy the Tory club in Newton. Four of us did it and we needed a few drinks to work up courage. We went in and unfurled two banners—one said cut defence costs not public spending, the other support the steelworkers. The steward sent for his wife and when she found we weren't members she sent for the police.

They didn't really know what to do. We had a photographer outside and we made the front page of the local paper again.

## Self defence no defence

SARAH DIXON, arrested on anti-NF demonstration, was found to be carrying a knife in her pocket. He was then charged with carrying an offensive weapon.

A big campaign was launched in Bradford to defend Sarah, but when she went to court she was found guilty and given a three month suspended sentence. The jury had eight women on it!

How are those jury besmembers going to feel when the Yorkshire Ripper strikes again? If Barbara Leach, one of the Ripper's victims, had been found carrying a weapon the day before she was murdered and had been stopped from carrying it, how would they have felt the next day. They day she was murdered. Trish Calvert.

SCHOOL DINNER lady Kathleen Fellows has been sacked from her job in Staffordshire - for wearing rubber gloves. The authorities point out that they harbour bacteria and can cause food poisoning. What they don't say, is that working in washing up liquid without the gloves often causes severe dermatitis and other skin diseases. A simply solution would be to provide disposable gloves for dinner ladies - but when school dinners themselves are being cut Staffordshire County Council would rather sack staff.



## The prisoner of Castlebar

PATRICIA JACK has been imprisoned in Castlebar Court Homeless Families Hostel in Ealing for a year and a half now. When she first went there, she was horrified by the conditions. It was so delapidated, overcrowded, unhealthy and depressing, that she organised the other homeless families into a campaign to demand that it be closed down and replaced.

With the help of Acton and Ealing Womens Voice Groups, there was a demonstration to the local Housing Department. During the election campaign, the Council did take some notice. But now its over the place is still there and so is she, all promises forgotten.

Why is she still there? She had been tricked by Slough Council into transferring to Ealing Borough, but an official arbitrator has now said that she is the responsibility of Slouth. This Borough has a reputation for being racist and having a vicious Tory attitude to housing. As expected, they say they will contest the decision, and the case will drag through the courts for months, or even years, to come.

She is desperate now. She is isolated. Her health was deteriorated. Her son, Joanthan, was six weeks old when they were evicted by Slough Council and now he is nearly two. His mental and physical condition is also getting worse. Her other children are in care, with less and less hope of them ever coming back to her.

She is still fighting, Womens Voice is helping to arrange a campaign to pressurise the council into giving her a home. Picket Ealing Housing Committee, 7pm, 24 March. Ealing Town Hall, Ealing Broadway, (nearest tube, Ealing Broadway)



Women occupied a cafe in Brixton when a woman was assaulted by the manager. They think he got the message!

IAN MCKINOSH (U.S.)

## EQUAL PAY HEARING

TWO EQUAL PAY cases are being heard at the European Court of Justice this month. If the decision is in favour of the women pursuing these cases loopholes in the Equal Pay Act will be closed, and, hopefully, the Government and the bosses will have to take notice.

Wendy Smith is employed by a pharmaceutical firm, Macarthy's Ltd, as a stockroom manageress. A man was doing her job before, at £10 a week more than her present wage.

Mrs Jenkins is a part-time worker at Kingsgate (Clothing Produc-

tions) Ltd. She receives a lower hourly rate than a man who does the same job but works full-time.

The Treaty of Rome lays down that 'men and women should receive equal pay for equal work'. The government says that this does not include comparison with the pay of previous workers, even though the same job is being done. If both of these cases are found in favour of the women and the ruling is enforced, then equal pay for equal work might be closer to becoming reality.

Harriet Sherwood

**THERE** are no lights in Westrock, an estate in West Belfast.

The British Army knocked them out ten years ago so that snipers wouldn't be able to see them at night. When you walk through Westrock you don't see snipers, although there are lots of kids and teenagers running sitting, kissing in the dark.

There are derelict cars, old prams, an ice cream van with no wheels. The prefab houses were built 31 years ago as a 'temporary' measure.

In one of these lives an old lady, Mrs Bridget Maguire. Her story, tragic though it is, is not uncommon in the catholic area of West Belfast.

She had seven children. One died at six weeks old, two died of bone cancer in their youth, one is on the run, one is serving life for a crime he did not commit, and two daughters were shot dead by soldiers as they sat in a car. The army's excuse is that they were mistaken for men. They were unarmed, their crime was to be catholics living in a catholic area.

In February, Mrs Maguire went to Long Kesh to visit her son. The security searchers found a letter in her purse, which they accused her of attempting to smuggle into the jail. She was taken to Castlereagh Interrogation centre, held for two days and constantly interrogated. They even, as she says, 'threw my dead daughters in my face'.

Perhaps they let her go because they were frightened of repeating the mistake they made with Guiseppe Conlan.

Guiseppe Conlan went to England in 1974 on the advice of his solicitor, as his son Gerrard had just been arrested. His father firmly believed him to be innocent. Shortly after arriving in London, Giuseppe was arrested and charged with conspiracy to cause explosions, and sent to jail. He hadn't worked for 16 years because he had tuberculosis. His doctor swears he was too ill to be anything but innocent.

Five years later, in January this year, he died in Charing Cross Hospital. William Whitelaw now says he was just about to be released, as he was not guilty of anything.

But for his family it is too late. On the night when his body was lying in the family house in Belfast, a soldier yelled at his daughter, as she walked along.

# The Long Sorrow

## Women in Northern Ireland fight on for their beliefs

'Do you remember Wednesday night at 8pm?' Guiseppe had died on the previous Wednesday night at 8pm.

As if this wasn't enough, the Conlan family have just suffered another tragedy. On 10 February Guiseppe's nephew, little Hugh Maguire, was out on the road near the new fort in Turf Lodge.

There is nothing for children to do on the estates. There are no playgrounds or trees or fields. The children have grown up with the troubles. They are used to Saracen armoured cars intruding on them as they play. They turn and fling stones, lumps of mud and bottles at the Saracens. Sometimes the Saracens turn on the children.

Hugh Maguire's head was smashed and the flesh on his hands scraped off. The army say he was hit by a metal bar ricocheting off a Saracen. No one except the army believes this story. According to numerous eye witnesses, he was killed by a Saracen which was chasing the children. He was nine years old. He died within hours.

Since the troops came in ten years ago, 30,000 people have been arrested, interrogated, humiliated. Of the population of 1½ million, 12,000 have been convicted. Nearly all of this harassment is directed at the catholics, who form 33% of the population.

Why did these things happen? Are there thirty thousand criminals in the catholic population of Northern Ireland?

Of the prisoners, there are 37 women on political protest in Armagh Jail locked up for 23 hours a day.

In the first week of February the women in Armagh were in the dining hall when 50 male screws backed up by 50 female screws rushed in. The women were badly beaten. The authorities put out a story that IRA uniforms had been found in the cells.

Whether they were or not is irrelevant. What is relevant is that these women are denied political status although they



are political prisoners.

The British media chooses to ignore the protesters in Armagh and the blanket men entering their fourth year in Long Kesh. Headlines scream when an old dignitary is blown up by the IRA. What about the thousands of grieving people in Northern Ireland? What about the families of victims of state repression and sectarian assassination? What about the savagery of the security forces patrolling the lives of the catholic minority?

In old Mrs Maguire's house there is a poem written on a handkerchief by someone in jail.

**'I do not grudge thee Lord, I do not grudge my two brave daughters,  
That I have seen to go out and break their strength and die.  
They and a few in bloody protest, they shall be spoken of among  
Their people and generations shall remember them and call**

**them blessed.**

**But I will speak their names to my own heart in the long nights  
The little names that were familiar once on my dead herth.  
Lord thou art hard on mothers.  
We suffer in their coming and Their going and though I grudge them not, I weary, weary of  
The long sorrow and yet have my joy, my daughters were faithful and they fought.'**

Perhaps the most moving and striking thing about the republican women of Northern Ireland is their compassion, their defiant spirit, their determination in spite of the sorrow they experience throughout their lives, to fight on for what they believe in.

Their people do remember them, and this year on March 8th, International Womens Day, Women Against Imperialism have called for a picket on Armagh jail.

**Melanie Macfadyean**



## EVERY SECOND COUNTS



Flexitime is being introduced in many offices. Lyn Turner, a member of NALGO in Edinburgh writes:

There is a new system of working finding its way into offices all over the country. Some workers have been operating it for years. It's called flexitime, and it is usually popular with women workers.

But is it all that it's cracked up to be? How does it work? 'Flexitime' means that for a certain period of the working day, say 4 hours you're expected to be at your desk and working. This is called core time. Outside of core time there is a longer period. (Usually 8am until 7pm) where you can choose to be clocked in or out.

The total number of hours you work is added up at the end of the month. It sounds great. Just think, time to take the kids to school in the morning, do the shopping at lunchtime or go home early. Or you can work from 8am until 7pm every day until you have enough credits for a day off next month.

But there are snags. Basically you still have to work the same total number of hours. And even though you may think you have more control over when you choose to work, it doesn't always

happen like that. Managers actually have more control over *you* when you've clocked in. The division between 'their' time and 'your' time become a lot clearer.

For example, if a friend stops to say hello in the corridor or if he asks your shop steward about the state of the pay claim - anything that isn't strictly work - you're likely to have a boss breathing down the back of your neck. You're working when you feel like working instead of when you've got to work, so you are donating your peak hours to the bosses and you'll have less energy left for what you want to do at the end of the day. Every minute is accounted for and that's often a source of resentment.

Flexitime can mean different things to men and women workers. Many women still see their main job as being in the home and tend to gear their working lives around their home life. These are the women who think flexitime is great until they start using it to go shopping or pick up the kids and find themselves in debit at the end of the month. And while women's lives still revolve around the home, our power as workers is less likely to show itself.

There are other snags too. Medical appointments may have to be taken in your own time. Hazards such as snow last winter, or a bus strike might not be taken into account. If you're late, it's tough. If you wake up feeling ill, don't take the day off - go in late and make up the time next week.

So who really benefits? Workers are still doing the same number of hours, but the bosses get more out of labour with flexitime than without it. Make sure you don't fall into the same trap as other office workers. Think twice.

# MOTHERS MONEY

The Employment Protection Act gave women at work the right to maternity pay and the right to return to work after taking maternity leave. *Irene Bruegel and Von McClary* have done research to find out just how many working class women have been able to take advantage of these changes in the law.

IF YOU HAD a baby in 1911, the chances are that you would have got more money from the government than you do today. If you live anywhere else in Europe—East or West—you get more than you do in Britain. For all the talk about the importance of the family, having children means poverty for most people, just as it did in the 'bad old days'.

The maternity grant is only £25, the same as it was in 1969 when it might at least have bought something worthwhile. The government has refused to raise it. One in ten mothers don't even get this pittance, because they haven't got the right number of stamps. When MPs argued that this grant should be given to *all* mothers, Tory MP and landowner John Farr said 'if we sought to remove this barrier it would probably encourage girls to have children before they married'. How wicked!

To get this miserable £25, you have to produce proof of marriage, or else have your own national insurance stamps. In our study of London mothers, we found married Bengali women who had been refused the grant because the Department of Health and Social Security wouldn't accept their marriage certificates.

Other unmarried women were caught in a double bind. They were refused supplementary benefit because they were living with their partners 'as man and wife', but couldn't get maternity grants because they weren't married!

Women who have been at home, either unemployed or looking after previous children, get only the £25 grant to cover all the costs of the new baby. Only women who have jobs get

a weekly benefit, and in a few cases, maternity pay. The more you earn, the more money you get: or in other words, the poorer you are the less money you get towards the cost of a child. No wonder the babies of working class women are almost twice as likely to die in the first few weeks of life than children of top management and professional people. Far from disappearing, these differences between the classes are growing all the time.

It's not that working women do that well out of maternity rights, but those who haven't got jobs, particularly if they aren't married, are really being hammered. As unemployment goes up, more and more mothers will find that having children means hardship and poverty.

Our research shows conclusively just how few women who *do* have jobs, and ought to benefit from maternity rights under the law, actually got anything.

Under the Employment Protection Act, working women were promised six weeks maternity pay and the right to return to work. The reality is very different. Of the 250 working women we talked to, only 80 were due to get *any* maternity pay from their employers, and only 36 saw any possibility of returning to work once they had had their babies.

To get maternity pay and the right to return to work, the law says you have to have worked full time for two years for the same employer, and you have to work until 11 weeks before your child is born. What we found is that most working class women had not worked two years full time in the same job, and when they had, they were often

bullied out of their jobs while they were pregnant.

It is 'unfair' to dismiss a woman because she is pregnant, but life can be made so difficult for women who are tired and sick in the first months of pregnancy that they leave and lose all their supposed rights.

We found that it was only where women were organised in trade unions, where they had negotiated their own maternity scheme, that they got maternity pay and were in a position to consider going back to work. These were public sector workers, teachers, social workers, nurses and some ancillary workers. Otherwise maternity rights are a non-starter, hardly worth the paper they're written on.

This is what the Department of Employment found too. They asked small firms whether they had had any problems over maternity leave; and none of them did, not a single one. Only four firms in every hundred had ever given a woman maternity leave, and only two had ever paid maternity pay. No wonder it's not a problem!

Now the Tory government is trying to take away the miserable rights the law gives us. It

seems management just cannot cope; the trickle of women who do succeed in taking maternity leave are undermining the profitability of British industry, destroying the quiet easy life of managers. It must be stopped.

When James Prior, Minister of Employment, first published his proposals to cut maternity rights, even Tory women and backbenchers objected. Prior then made it appear that he would drop this set of proposals. But he has done no such thing. Tucked away in the union-bashing Employment Bill are some apparently harmless clauses which make it almost certain that if your boss doesn't want you around after you've had a baby you'll be out of a job, unless you're well organised.

In future, if you want your job back you will have to tell your employer three times in writing. If you slip up in some way, bang go your rights to return to work.

A lot of women don't know and can't know whether and when they will return to work because, whether Mr Prior knows it or not, children tend to be unpredictable and child

care facilities even more so. This change in the law won't reduce uncertainty for employers since it won't stop women from changing their minds. All it will do is trick many a harassed woman out of her rights.

The Bill takes away your right to return to your job. An employer will only have to offer you a 'suitable' alternative, not your old job back, if he doesn't consider it 'reasonably practicable' to keep your job open. If your boss doesn't want you back, then he won't find it 'reasonably practicable' to keep your job open, and the 'suitable alternative' he offers might suit him, but not you.

If you work for a firm with less than six employees, as many women do, then your

boss doesn't have to give you a job back at all—that is of course if he doesn't consider it 'reasonably practicable' to do so. In most small firms there will be no union to challenge his line, and out women will go.

With these proposals, the Tories are challenging the very idea that women have rights as workers. Our rights may not amount to very much at the moment, but they are some protection against employers pushing women around for getting pregnant.

On March 9th, when we march against the Tories' anti-union Bill, our voices will be heard. The Bill must be killed, not least for its attempt to deny women their maternity rights.

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## KILL THE BILL

Support the TUC demonstration against the Tories' anti-union, anti-women Bill. Sunday 9 March. Contact your Womens Voice seller for details of transport to London

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Virginia Torbett

# RISING PROFITS

EIGHTEEN years ago we lived with my father-in-law. He was a railway worker. They were low paid then just as they are now. But he could afford to have two weeks holiday a year and they could buy a good joint at the weekend that would last Saturday and Sunday, feeding five adults.

In those days the basics of life – bread, milk and so on – were cheap and that meant they could afford a few extras.

Recently I was talking to a railway worker and I said to him: 'It must be really good to have all that cheap travel'. He laughed and said 'you must be joking. I can't afford to use the perks on my pay.' 18 years ago we could afford it.

Fifteen years ago my husband started working at Fords. We had four kids but we were quite well off for then. I used to buy steak three times a week, we had lemon sole fish and I could spend £2 on fresh fruit, every week. We never went on holiday because we had a handicapped child, but we used to go away on regular trips and we could afford to spend a lot on them. We certainly didn't have to scrimp – sometimes we used to have a restaurant meal.

Then we never thought of buying a car because transport was plentiful, and cheap with it. Now the train service has been cut and it's more expensive. Then the trains used to run every half hour to Manchester or Liverpool and we could get trains to Wigan, St Helens and Warrington. Now the trains only run every half hour to Manchester and Liverpool. The last train to Warrington leaves at 10 pm.

At Christmas we could afford more or less what the kids wanted, they had plenty of toys. Christmas today is a nightmare. Because food and fuel and things were cheap then we could afford to spend money on other things.

To live up to those kind of standards now both the husband and wife have to work full-time. In those days you only needed one wage. Then Fords was quite highly paid in our area and now they are well down the league, their pay has really fallen behind.

The real erosion began with decimalisation. I noticed that before then things used to go up by ½d or 1d. (Remember 12d old money became just 5p new money). Shortly after decimalisation things went up by a ½p or 1p – that was about three times as much. I remember noticing that the pies at the bakers used to be 8d and then suddenly, just after decimalisation, they went up to 8p – that was a really big increase. But no one noticed, they were all so confused, no one could get used to money. Even now people still don't realise how much things are. I sometimes come back from shopping and think 'that cost me eleven shillings', I can't believe it. We were

really conned.

In the old days I used to give the kids 3d for pocket money. They could buy a bag full of toffees for that. Now if I give them 10p they look at me as if to say 'what's that?' They can't even buy a bar of chocolate for 10p. I have to give them 20p – that's four shillings.

I'm not harking back to the 'good old days', I know wages have gone up but they just haven't gone up in value along with the rise in prices. Prices are a long way ahead.

The price of school dinners was never a worry then, now it costs £1.75p for each kid and I've got three. The school bus fares cost 10p a ride, that's £1 a week – £2.75p just to get a kid to school and home. The result of that is that my kids only get the bus to school, to make sure they get there on time. They have to walk back. And we're not amongst the lowest paid – Len, my husband, works at one of the highest paid factories in Warrington.

When we joined the Common Market the multinationals had it made for them. Profits have soared. About that time Finefare opened in our area and all the little shops had to close, they couldn't compete. Now on half-day closing there's only one grocery shop left. There's no choice and that means that the supermarket can charge what they like. The EEC brought meat mountains, butter hills and all the rest.

I met a woman recently who used to work on school dinners with me a few years ago. She asked me if I'd noticed that the money we earned from part-time jobs had disappeared. Before we used to be able to put it towards a good pair of Clarks shoes for the kids, and maybe even salt a bit away for a holiday. Now our part-time money goes into the house-keeping.

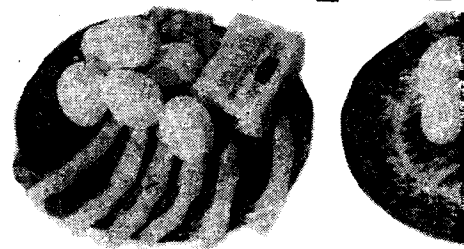
It's all been eroded away. All the basics have gone up, fuel has shot up. I've changed my heating three times now. First of all I had night storage heaters because they were supposed to be cheap, then they shot up in price. So I changed to solid fuel and that went up, four times. So I changed again, this time to gas and that's going up 29 per cent. There's nothing left to change to now.

Our purchasing power is really diminished. As the basics have gone up in price they have become today's luxuries.

The sad thing is that housewives have not realised what power they have in their hands. There haven't been any food boycotts. In Italy the housewives boycotted food that was increasing in price too fast, there were riots in the streets and the end result was that the government changed their policy and kept the food prices down.

Sadie Blood

# WE

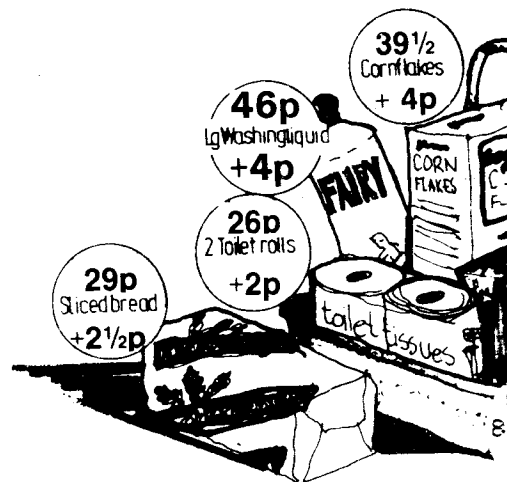


JUST LOOK at the way prices are rising, and you can easily see why the steel workers laughed at their 2 per cent pay offer. You can understand why the water workers have rejected 19.2 per cent. But you may find it difficult to understand calls for increases of 30 per cent and more.

In fact this is the kind of figure we have to talk about. 17 per cent is the rise in the retail price index. 20 per cent would be nearer the truth. Then there's the extra money they take away in tax and insurance when your wages go up – even though those wages don't buy any more in the shops. So you need about 25 per cent, just to keep up with rising prices.

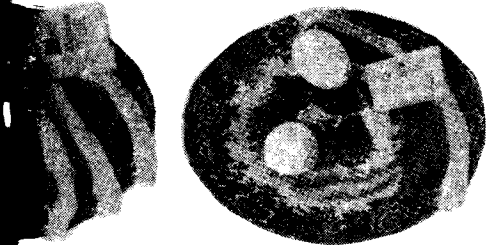
But that doesn't take into account the money we all lost

## Womens Voice



# RISING PRICES

## PAY...

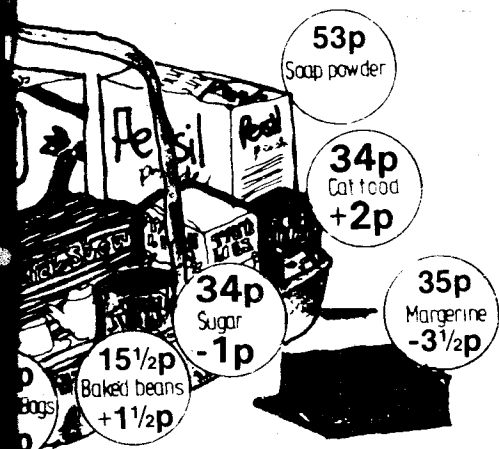


during the years of the social contract. Between 1973 and 1978, real incomes after tax fell by about 7 per cent. That doesn't sound like much — but it means no more evenings out, no more holidays, no more little luxuries that make life worth living. For families with four or more children, the fall in real disposable incomes was a frightening 20 per cent — that's one fifth!

So 30 per cent isn't an excessive demand at all — it's just what you need to maintain the sort of standard of living you had just a few years ago.

It's quite clear now that it's not wages that cause inflation. Workers don't put up interest rates or oil prices, or company profits. Rising prices *aren't* our fault — why should we have to pay?

## Shopping Bag



## The prices lie

THE OFFICIAL figures, produced by the government and spread by the papers and the TV, say that average earnings are keeping pace with average inflation. But when you go round the supermarket, and find that every week you're cutting back a little further, official figures aren't much comfort. What's the truth? Is the government lying?

The statistics certainly are. *Two-thirds of all workers earn less than the average earnings.* How can this happen? The average includes the chairman of ICI, who earns £107,278 a year, but doesn't include all those part-time workers who are so badly paid they don't pay tax. So don't be fooled by 'average' wages.

Then there's the retail price index — the measure of how fast prices are going up. 17 per cent was the latest figure, meaning that prices have gone up by 17p in the £ over the last year. Once again, this is a distortion of the truth. For families on lower incomes, prices are rising faster.

The retail price index works by deciding what an 'average' family spends on a number of different items each week, and then measuring how much the price of those items goes up. But families on lower

incomes spend more of their money on housing and food than the average — and these are just the items that are going up the fastest. So the retail price index underestimates the extent to which these families are hit by inflation.

For example, the retail price index estimates that housing comes to 12 per cent of the family's budget. In 1979, while the retail price index as a whole rose by 17 per cent, housing costs rose 22 per cent. So if you have to spend more than 12 per cent of your income on housing, your costs will have risen more than the retail price index says.

### Highest paid directors in the UK 1978/9

Lord Grade	£195,208	Associated Communications Corp.
R. R. S. Edgar	£132,000	Hill Samuel
A. Stewart Moore	£110,750	Gallaher
C. Pockock	£109,634	Shell
M. Hodgson	£107,278	ICI
Sir David Steel	£105,804	Vauxhall Motors
W. Price	£101,842	Plessey
G. J. Wilkins	£ 89,136	Beechams Group
Peter Macadam	£ 78,843	BAT

Source: 'The Wealthy' by C.I.S.

## Food for thought

FOOD PRICES have gone up by 17 per cent in the last year. The food that cost £1 in February 1979 costs £1.17p today. Meanwhile, the giant food companies have seen their profits grow and grow... Unilever, the food multinational, makes Birds Eye, Walls, Batchelors, Liptons, John West, Mattesons, Blue Band, Stork, Summer County, Echo, Spry and many many other household name foods. Last year their profits were £609 million.

You know how much milk and bread has gone up recently. You won't be surprised to learn that Unigate, the dairy products giant, made profits of £43 million in 1979 — up from £31 million in 1978.

Two companies, Associated British Foods and Rank Hovis McDougall manufacture 60 per cent of all the bread we eat. In May 1979, the Price Commission said that they could only have an increase of one penny on the price of a loaf. Then the Tories won the election, abolished the Price Commission, and the companies promptly put two pence on the cost of a loaf of bread. No wonder Associated British Food's profits were up to £78 million last year and Rank Hovis McDougall's reached £31 million.

## Cold comfort

GAS PRICES are going up by 29 per cent this year, next year and the year after. Last year the gas corporation made £360 million profit; that's a million pounds a day. They made double the profits they'd made the year before.

Electricity prices are to rise by 27 per cent. In 1979, the Central Electricity Generating Board has a profit of over £65 million, which was over *three* times higher than the previous year.

Central heating oil is also due to rise in cost. In the first nine months of 1979, British Petroleum made profits of £1,184 million. That's over £20 profit for every man, woman and child in the country. This was three times as high as for the same period the year before. All the oil companies have boosted their profits to record levels.

Written and researched by  
**Anna Bradley**  
and **Elana Dallas**

# 'You must not even speak, friend, it's dangerous'

Sheila Cassidy worked as a doctor at the Posta 3, an emergency hospital in Chacabuco, Santiago's red light area.

The Posta 3 stands in the midst of a poverty ridden shanty town. Qualified doctors prepared to work in this ill-equipped hospital for the poor were scarce. Over a thousand doctors had to leave Chile after the coup. Fifty were murdered by the Junta and three hundred were imprisoned. Very few doctors who were sympathetic to Allende were allowed to work at all. Those still able to work were demoted and replaced by less skilled doctors loyal to the Junta.

Sheila Cassidy describes\* the atmosphere of the military coup:

'The coup took place on the morning of 11 September. By six o'clock that night all Chileans were confined to their houses by the curfew. This was not a civil war with prolonged fighting in the streets and the lobbing of hand grenades, but the overthrow of a president and his bodyguards with jet bombers and then the cold-blooded killing night after night, under the cover of curfew and darkness, of thousands of unarmed citizens. The military coup was not a war but a massacre.'

Within a few days of the coup bodies were found in Mapocho river. Many were mutilated and bore marks of torture.

John Barnes, correspondent of *Newsweek* magazine, estimated after much painstaking research that during the first two weeks of the coup 2,796 corpses passed through Santiago's morgue.

Every person has the right of life, liberty and security of person.

Everyone has the right of recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

(Articles 3 and 6 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights)

1970

Salvador Allende was elected President of Chile. His Popular Unity (PU) Government began a programme of social reform.

1973, March

Allende was re-elected holding a larger majority.

1973, September

The Military Junta, led by General Pinochet, backed by millions of US dollars and strategic advice, bombed the Presidential buildings. Allende was killed. Thousands of Chilean socialists, trade unionists and their families were to be tortured or just to 'disappear'.

1975

The Labour government withdrew its Ambassador to Chile following the imprisonment and barbaric torture of the British doctor, Sheila Cassidy.

1979, December

The United Nations General Assembly condemned the continuing violation of human rights in Chile. Their report stated that human rights in Chile had *deteriorated* over the past year.

1980, January

Thatcher's government re-establish full diplomatic relations with the Chilean Junta, the torture and brutality to be forgotten.

The Directorate of National Intelligence (DINA) are the most feared power within the Chilean Junta. They have total authority over their captives and are on a par with Hitler's Gestapo. Many of their victims never come to trial. All prisoners subjected to torture are compelled, on threat of death, to sign a declaration stating that they have not been maltreated. It was necessary for the DINA to set up a special 'hospital' for the treatment of the tortured needing life-saving attention. Those that bravely resisted the DINA's method of interrogation were tortured to death.

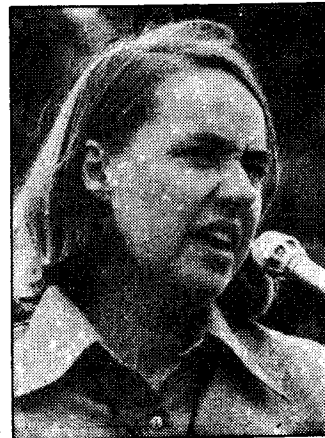
The United Nations Commission on Human Rights reported that torture in Chilean prisons was;

to be characterised by extreme ruthlessness... extending from cold, methodical application of torture as a means of extracting information or of punishing and destroying political opponents to frequent manifestations of barbaric sadism by individual operators.'

Pregnant women are not spared this horror which

includes the use of dogs to bite, scratch and rape women. The DINA's sadism sinks to unimagined depths; live mice have been inserted in women's vaginas.

Undeterred by the power of the DINA and the consequence of her defiance, Sheila Cassidy was prepared to do whatever was expected



Sheila Cassidy

of her as a doctor. She was asked to secretly treat a man with a bullet wound. The patient turned out to be Nelson Guitierrez, a member of the revolutionary socialist group, MIR. At the time he was the most wanted fugitive

in Chile.

But unflinching Sheila Cassidy treated him. Sadly, because of the seriousness of the wound, she was unable to treat him successfully. (Guitierrez was later to seek asylum.)

Sheila Cassidy's 'crime' at first went undetected. She continued her work at Posta 3 but a week later she was trapped by the DINA whilst visiting a friend.

The DINA blindfolded her and sped off to the Casa Grimaldi detention centre.

They knew for certain that she had treated Nelson Guitierrez but they were desperate for details that might lead to his capture.

This is Sheila Cassidy's account of the events that were to follow.

'Again came the order to undress. Slowly I removed my sweater and then I could not bring myself to go any further. Then I felt a rough hand grab my shirt and one of the buttons came off. Realizing that they meant what they said and wanting to avoid further manhandling I removed the remainder of my clothes. The handkerchief around my eyes was by this time a little loose and I saw that I was in a small room which contained a double metal bunk and a table and chair. On the wall hung a street plan of Santiago and crowded into the room, for it was quite small, were about five men in plain clothes and a woman. They told me then to lie on the bed and quickly they secured me to the bottom half of the bunk, tying my wrists and ankles and upper arms and placing a wide band around my chest and abdomen. Then it began. I felt an electric shock pass through me and then another and another. I made to scream, but found that there was a gag in my mouth.'

The appliance they use is a parrilla, meaning a barbecue. The parrilla leaves no lasting mark.

At first Sheila Cassidy lied to the DINA to protect her friends. In time the lies were



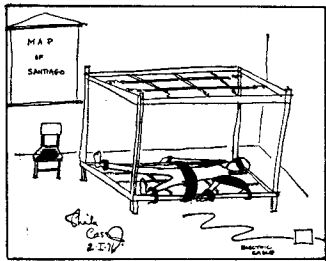
detected.

The interrogation was resumed, this time using more 'sophisticated' electrodes.

'One electrode was placed inside my vagina and the other, a wandering pincer, was used . . .'

Eventually Sheila Cassidy broke. The information she gave led to the arrest of an American priest and a member of the MIR, whom he was sheltering.

'I felt sick with humiliation at my betrayal. I said to the man who sat beside me, "Does everyone talk, or am I weak?" and he replied, "Everyone has their breaking point".'



The parrilla

When it was discovered that her information was correct they pushed her form more, convinced that she knew the whereabouts of other Mir leaders. Again she was put on the parrilla.

Twice more she was stripped and tied to the bed. Eventually, during the early hours of the morning she was pushed into a cell.

Her imprisonment was to last three months.

Life in Chile has become intolerable. There are no wholly effective trade unions let alone the right to strike. Seven women were arrested and held without trial for protesting to their employers. The multinational company they worked for decided to withdraw the supply of hot water, with which the women made their tea, on grounds of economy.

The PU government had provided free milk for the children of the unemployed. The Junta put an end to that.

Before the coup the right wing opposition made enormous political gains among women by conducting a highly organised propaganda camp-

aign. The three most popular women's magazines were owned by the right wing. EVA, aimed at the 'lower classes', was especially articulate in its campaign. EVA's editor admitted:

'I have declared war on popular Unity. Women must fight, and we must help them, stimulate them and educate them.'

The most successful initiative by the right wing was to organise the 'march of the pots and pans'. Beating empty pots, they marched through the streets protesting at high prices and the lack of food. These demonstrations took place all over Chile. The peasant and working class women on these demonstrations were not aware that it was their rich leaders who were stock-piling food and running the black market.

EVA veiled its real opinion of poor women but this extract is a clear testament of their beliefs:

'Politics encourages frustration, discontent, boredom and exhaustion, especially in the workplaces . . . it produces disenchantment in the worker and threatens the system of production at all stages.'

After Sheila Cassidy returned to Britain the British ambassador to Chile was recalled. It was probably the most significant, if not altogether effective, diplomatic protest that could be made. A total economic boycott would have had far more devastating results, but



Chilean women embroider political patchwork.



The men of the prairie wished to protest and they killed them like dogs because they had to be killed

You must not be poor, my friend, it's dangerous, you must not even speak, friend, it's dangerous.

The women of the prairie began to weep and they were killed because they had to be killed

Who knows, tomorrow or the next day or perhaps in a little while, the history which you have heard may be repeated.

Santa Maria de Iquique 1970  
Written in memory of the 2000 salt-petre miners killed over a hundred years ago for protesting against appalling working conditions. Written three years before the military coup in Chile, the last verse is a bitter irony. History did indeed repeat itself in Chile.

that was not to be. Now the Tories have decided to return the Ambassador. In a stupid justification of this decision Nicholas Ridley, Foreign Office minister for Latin America, tried to cover up his actions by suggesting that perhaps 'Sheila Cassidy was wrong'.

Undisputed evidence from numerous sources, including the United Nations, points to the brutality, and the continuing brutality, of the Chilean Junta.

Sheila Cassidy, now a novice nun, stands by her evidence. The Chile Solidarity Campaign report that the following trade unions reaffirm their solidarity with the Chilean people in the fight against the regime of

Pinochet:

T&GWU, NUM, NGA, NATFHE, NALGO, NUS, NUSEAMEN, CPSA, ASTMS, NUR, COHSE, NUDBTW, NUTGW, SLADE, Tobacco workers and NATSOPA.

The Chilean peoples bitter battle for survival and victory over the Junta, shall not be forgotten. International support is vital to this cause. We can all help. Those sisters and brothers bravely fighting are alive because of international pressure.

'A great international movement forced the Military Junta to free me less than one month after my arrest . . . in a very concrete and personal way the importance of the international solidarity movement which denounces the crimes of the Military Junta'.

*Carmen Castello.*  
Carmen is a member of MIR now living in exile.

Sisters we salute you!  
by Gail Cartmail

\* The sections of this article that quote Sheila Cassidy are extracts from her autobiography 'Audacity to believe'. Price 95p (Fount paperbacks).

Bookmarks special offer: 'The Gorillas are Amongst Us' by Helios Prieto is available for 25p + 15p postage from Bookmarks, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4. Latin American Women's Group: c/o Carila, 29 Islington Park Street, London N1.

Chile Solidarity Campaign: 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7.

Is the coil safe? Serious doubts are emerging about the safety of IUDs, but once again, only after hundreds of thousands of women have suffered needlessly. Womens Voice talks to Judith and Mandy about their experiences.

#### Judith:

'I became pregnant in 1976. It was unplanned. Even though I had always wanted children I didn't feel secure about bringing them up at the time, and I didn't have a settled enough life.

'It was incredibly difficult getting an abortion. My doctor said NHS abortions were only for people who couldn't afford to pay for them.

'I got an abortion through the Pregnancy Advisory service and it was one of the first day care abortions in the private sector. There was a lot of psychological pressure put on me, and I agreed to try the coil despite my doubts about it.

'I knew the pill was no good for me. I had tried it occasionally and it made me put on weight and feel depressed. The Family Planning clinic warned me of two possible difficulties with the coil - the danger of an ectopic pregnancy, and the possibility of very heavy and painful periods.

'I was only on the coil three months because it gave me such painful periods. Shortly afterwards I decided that I felt ready to have a child so I didn't use any other form of contraception. Over two years later, when nothing had happened, I was referred to a fertility clinic.

'In one of the tests they try to put dyed water through the fallopian tubes to see if they are open. When I came round from the anaesthetic one of the doctors told me they had tried to put the dye through five times and failed. There was scar tissue on the fallopian tubes which must be the result of an infection. I have only once had a vaginal infection - trichomonas - and that was when I was on the coil.

'They could find no other reason for me having become sterile than infection from when I was on the coil.

'It is believed that the coil works through a low level infection. That leads to some sort of inflammation which isn't always detectable or noticed - and that inflammation can block the tubes because of scar tissue and so cause sterility.

'I feel very depressed and angry. I always wanted children and I've thought about it a lot - it isn't just an impulse. I know I won't be allowed to foster or adopt because of my politics and life-style.

'If people were warned of the danger in advance they wouldn't use the coil. I was prepared to take the risk of painful periods, or even an ectopic pregnancy but not of complete sterility. My right to choose has been taken away.'

# WOMENS HEALTH

## WHAT IS THE COIL?

#### Mandy:

'I went on the coil four years ago. I had just had a baby and was already looking after two children. I went to my local Family Planning Association clinic and they fitted me with a copper seven.

'I wasn't happy with it from the beginning. At the clinic they tell you about it and how to feel for the string to check it is there. When I got home I tried and I couldn't find the string at all. I kept on trying and eventually I decided to go back to the clinic. They referred me to the hospital who did a "sounding" to trace the coil.

'When I went back to the FPA they assured me there was no problem - it was in the right place.

'Two months later I was confirmed pregnant. With three children already I definitely didn't want another one. The youngest was just a baby. My doctor was very sympathetic and she referred me to the London Homeopathic Hospital where I had an abortion.

'The abortion was fine. I felt no regrets about it, I knew it was the right thing. The staff were very nice. But after the abortion they told me they hadn't been able to find the coil to remove it. They asked me to come back after a week and they would do an internal x-ray to trace it.

'A week later they tried to do the x-ray. I had an injection which was supposed to make me feel relaxed but it didn't seem to work and the doctor was new and very nervous. As a result the x-ray didn't come out very well and they still couldn't find the coil.

'I was very worried by now, angry and upset. They told me they would have to give me an x-ray under a general anaesthetic and if they still couldn't find it they would have to operate. I felt so furious that what should have been just a simple form of birth control was causing me so much trouble.

'Two days later I had the general anaesthetic and they couldn't find the coil so they cut me open. Apparently they had to search for ages and finally they found it hidden behind my intestine! I don't know how it got there, but it certainly isn't at all safe if it can wander around the abdominal cavity.

'After the operation I wasn't allowed to lift my baby and had to rest for four weeks. I would never try a coil again, not in a million years.'

#### What is a coil?

THE COIL, or intra-uterine device (IUD) is a small white plastic, or plastic and copper device. It is fitted into the uterus (womb), and remains there until removed. A thread hangs down from the uterus into the vagina so that you can check that it's still in place, and also so that it can be removed.

Nobody really knows how it works to prevent pregnancy, but the most widely held theory is that it sets up a low level infection in the womb, creating a hostile environment in which a foetus will not survive.

The major dangers of the IUD are perforation of the uterus, and infection. Perforation of the uterus is where the coil rips its way through the wall of the womb: the Dalkon Shield was particularly dangerous in this respect. This is why you should check weekly to make sure the strings are still in place.

Because of the string hanging down into the vagina, bacteria can 'climb up' into the uterus. The uterus is not at all well protected against infection, unlike the vagina, as in the normal run of things it is unlikely to be exposed to external sources of infection. This, combined with the low level infection set up by the coil itself, means that if an infection starts, the risk of serious inflammation is great. If this reaches the fallopian tubes, sterility may well follow.

There are other dangers associated with the coil: ectopic pregnancy, where the foetus grows in the fallopian tube instead of the womb; infected miscarriage; and embedding in the uterine wall, requiring surgical removal.

The failure rate of the coil is about 3 per cent, roughly the same as the low dose Pill.

Because the coil is not a drug (it is a medical appliance) it is not subjected to the same, fairly strict, tests that drugs undergo before they can be marketed. And the profits to be made are enormous...



Lippes Loop Saf-T-Coil, Dalkon Shield,

## The Age Advantage

INCREDIBLY little research has been done on the effects of the IUD. Now the Margaret Pyke family planning centre has done a survey of over 800 women, over a period of two years. The results are chilling: they show that for young women under 20, the risk of serious pelvic inflammatory disease, which often results in sterility, is as high as one in seven. The risks decrease dramatically with age, and whether you have had children already.

Age	Rate of pelvic inflammation
16 - 19	14 per cent
20 - 24	9 per cent
25 - 30	6 per cent
31 - 49	1 per cent

Only for those women over 30 are the rates of infection anywhere near normal.

## Profits before People: the case of the Dalkon Shield

THE DALKON SHIELD went on the market in the United States in 1971. Within months, complaints were pouring in to the headquarters of the manufacturers, AH Robins. The Dalkon Shield was far more dangerous than any other IUD on the market, causing pelvic inflammation, perforations of the uterus, blood poisoning and ectopic pregnancies.

A recent conservative medical estimate stated that the Dalkon Shield caused over 200,000 cases of serious uterine infections in the US alone. By 1974, when the shield was finally banned in the United States, at least 17 deaths were directly attributed to the Dalkon Shield.

By 1972, it was already clear to the manufacturer that sales prospects in the United States were bleak; it was at this point that the company did a deal with the US Agency for International Development and sold thousands of shields, unsterilised and with only one applicator per ten shields, for use in the Third World. One set of instructions on how to sterilise the shields went out with every thousand shields.

So while the Dalkon Shield was banned in the US, it was still being inserted, unsterilised, into hundreds of thousands of women.

In Britain, sales of the Dalkon Shield were suspended in 1975, after more than 100,000 women had had them. But the shield has never been recalled, so thousands of women still have them in their wombs.

An association has been formed by women who have suffered from the Dalkon Shield: The British Dalkon Shield Association, 16B Elvaston Place, London SW7.

# When is sport political?

IT'S CURIOUS how sometimes sport is political and sometimes it isn't. Remember when Maggie Jones was banned from the disabled games last year for distributing leaflets about South Africa? She was banned for making sport political.

But when the Olympic Games are due to be held in Moscow, sport is suddenly very political indeed.

The Soviets invaded Afghanistan, and Thatcher and Carter, with even more than their usual display of hypocrisy cry 'foul play'. Ban the Olympics.

But are they right? Should we not be glad that at last the powers that be have recognised what we have so long fought for, that sport and politics cannot be separated. Or should we instead step back a little and ask why the boycott cry has been raised and whether or not it is the same issue as that of a sporting boycott of South Africa.

I am convinced that the Olympics should go ahead but not, as most pro-Olympian argue, because we should keep sport out of politics.

Womens Voice quite categorically condemns the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (see WV editorial, February issue) but there is an important distinction between the Soviet Union, and their activities, and those of South Africa.

There is a difference between troops entering another country and the wholesale repression of the majority of a country's inhabitants.

The apartheid system that operates in South Africa means the total disenfranchisement of the majority of its people. It is a country where the black people whose land it is are not allowed to participate in sport on the same field as their white rulers. Where blacks are forbidden to live in certain areas, to work in certain jobs, are not recognised as citizens, are denied the vote, freedom of movement and speech even in its most elementary forms. Certainly there are political prisoners

in Russia, but there are political prisoners in Britain, in America, in Europe, in Argentina where the World Cup took place two years ago. There is harassment of opponents of the state in Russia, but so too is there in Britain where Thatcher is attempting to bring in a series of vicious anti-union laws. There is a difference between the harassment of militants in Britain or in the Soviet Union and the wholesale murder of opponents such as Steve Biko in South Africa.

There is racialism too in Russia, against the Jews and against various national minorities, but there is a world of difference between the kind of racialism that operates in America, in Britain and in the Soviet Union where it is often difficult for racial minorities to get jobs, to get decent housing or to move freely in or out of their country and the kind of racialism in South Africa where all of these things are prohibited by law.

Finally, the issue that has caused the Olympic charade, Afghanistan.

Invasions, occupations of foreign soil are nothing new and are certainly not to be condoned. But where was the outcry against the occupation by British troops of Northern Ireland when Thatcher made her ludicrous offer to stage some of the Games in Britain? Where was the severance of all sporting links with America when they waged war on Vietnam?

The hypocrisy of politicians knows no bounds. To destroy the Olympic Games now would be to destroy them forever. If they are to be banned in Moscow, why then are the Winter Olympics going ahead without protest in the United States now?

We should not fall in with the vicious war mongering of Thatcher and Carter. We should know why sport is political, why we boycott sport in South Africa and why we should not boycott the Games in Moscow this summer.

Mary Ann Stuart

# SPORT

# REVIEWS

## FILMS FOR ALL TO SEE

### *Apocalypse Now*

An amphitheatre, crazily alive with light and noise, thousands and thousands of US servicemen, on the darkened waterside.

At the bottom a landing-pad cum stage, brilliantly lit. A helicopter hovers and lands, and out spring three girls in sexy gun-toting outfits, bumping and grinding their way to the edge of the stage. The throb of the music is barely audible over the shrieking frustrated mob.

Shouts from the front rows. The girls call back, provoking. With a roar like caged animals the men invade the stage and the military police can't hold them. The girls retreat to the helicopter and it whisks them into the dark sky, a Playboy Bunny just visible on its tail.

Vietnam ten years ago. Crazy images of a crazy war. 'Apocalypse Now' (X) is full of them.

Especially the helicopters. If you see this film in a cinema with eight-track stereo, you'll remember the helicopters — they come right over your head.

There's a boat of quiet Vietnamese peasants, loaded with crops for the market. They're challenged by a US patrol boat. A young woman makes a nervous move to hide something. The young black servicemen panic and strafe the boat with machine-gun fire. The thing she was hiding was a puppy.

There's a quiet village school, set around a courtyard, in a coastal village. A maniac colonel has heard the breakers are good here, and he wants his men to go surfing. So the village is napalmed...the planes play out Wagner from loudspeakers on their wings as they dive, because he likes to scare the hell out of

the Vietnamese before bombing them.

There's a useless bridge that gets built and rebuilt and is under constant attack, month in, month out, just so the generals can say they hold it.

The war is crazy alright. Crazy and brutal and hell. One general has taken it to the logical conclusion. He's crossed over into Cambodia and is waging his own war, out of limits, killing and destroying any and everything. The plot tells of a mission undertaken by a special service captain on behalf of the US army to wipe the mad-man out. Up river he goes, like the hero of Conrad's novel 'Heart of Darkness'

It's a descent into hell. The mad-man, Kurtz, played by Marlon Brando, lives in an infernal temple, surrounded by the heads of his victims, and a people made slaves by an orgy of drugs and terror. The whole film takes on the colour, almost the smell of another world...goes right through realism and on the other side into surrealism, long disgusting sequences like nothing you ever saw before.

Realism isn't enough to tell the story of Vietnam. And all the words and pictures in the world could never explain what happened in Cambodia. First of all I wasn't sure if the end of the film was necessary, I wasn't sure what it was about. The napalming of the village makes you sob out loud. But the ending chills you, leaves you numb, strafes your mind. Finally, I decided, it wasn't over the top. How else to tell the obscenity, the brutality, the depravity of that war?

It's possible to add all kinds of foot-notes. It was Richard Nixon who coined 'the mad-man theory of war'. He and Kissinger brought into effect the greatest saturation bombing in the history of the world. By 1973 the equal-



Top left: on stage in *Apocalypse Now* and, right, on stage in *The Rose*. Below: games children play in Northern Ireland.

ent, in tons of bombs, of five Hiroshimas were dropped on Cambodia, a neutral country, in defiance of American constitutional law, and in defiance of Congress. The pilots were sworn to secrecy. Their log-books were falsified. Nixon believed if he could show the Vietnamese that he was totally ruthless, totally irrational, they would be scared of provoking him and submit. Cambodia was a test-case for the mad-man theory of war. Only now are we beginning to see what resulted...the rise of the fanatical Khmer Rouge, led by the psychopath Pol Pot.

Even Hitler's terror did not involve the enslavement of a whole population and the slaughter of all those 'touched and corrupted by the twentieth century'. Neither did Stalin's terror include the banning of all learning, all books, all music, all machines, all family and friendship ties between people. Yet all these were done in Cambodia in 1975, the 'Year Zero', while you and I were alive upon this earth.

No, *Apocalypse Now* doesn't really go over the top.  
*Judith Condon*

## THE ROSE

The Rose is the story of the life and death of Janis Joplin.

By the end of the film Bette Midler is Janis Joplin. Frantic, desperate for approval and love, very open and constantly being hurt by her ambitious, insensitive manager (Alan Bates). Why was she so dependent and anxious to please men who weren't fit to sit in the same room?

You just have to like her — she's got guts, she admits her enjoyment of sex and singing, she takes everything past the limit. When she gets going on stage, she has everyone in the palm of her hand — there's power exploding.

So — the basics of the film are great. And at the end of the film the audience was stunned.

But the film suffers from the same thing which Janis suffered — it is glossy, superficial, more concerned with her glittery clothes and the romantic image of a 'star' swigging scotch than with her.

I found the scenes at the concerts particularly disappointing. The audience looked more like a herd of contented cows than people enjoying themselves, and in all the concerts it was the same audience in the same places wearing the same clothes. It's a film that was made on the cheap and it is ripping off Janis, just like they did when she was alive.

Jenny Jackson

## THE OUTSIDER

'The Outsider' gives a glimpse of what the war in the north of Ireland is really like.

It shows the British army as violent and brutal — ready to torture a helpless blind-man, to shoot down children and manipulate the press to achieve its ends.

It gives a real idea of what it is like to live in Belfast, a city under occupation — where everyday activities, such as getting on a train, going shopping, walking down the street — can be a source of harassment and threat. It shows the effects of the violence on ordinary people.

The central character, a Vietnam war veteran, inspired by his grandfather's tales of 'The Troubles' is the least convincing. But his role and the politicking that goes on

around him are less important than the overall feel of the film which is striving for some kind of authenticity.

The IRA are not made out to be saints. One hot-headed, trigger-happy member is contrasted with the serious old-timer, 'the farmer', who approaches the task of military resistance with a sceptical air of detachment. He is equally impatient with the young hot-heads as he is with the men of the Army Council in the south. There is even an attempt to portray the current tension inside the Provisional leadership and the conservatism of the southern leaders as against the radicalism of those representing the north on the Army Council.

All in all a film to recommend. Your only problem will be finding a cinema that will show it. It has been taken off general release!

Jeannie Robinson



Coming out of seeing 'Monty Python's Life of Brian', we were handed leaflets by a group of earnest young Christians telling us not to blaspheme any more and to come closer to god.

What is this film that has aroused the fury of the Festival of Light and the senile old men of the local boards of censors?

Life of Brian is one of the funniest films I've seen in a long time. It is an hilarious send-up of Jesus and the Christian ethic of the saviour.

It holds nothing sacred. When, at the beginning, the three wise men enter Brian's humble birthplace, explaining that they've followed a star, Brian's mother sends them packing: 'Followed a star? Followed a bottle more like!'

And it creates no sacred cows — of religion — or of politics. And therein lies an ingenious extra dimension that must be particularly appreciated by anyone with

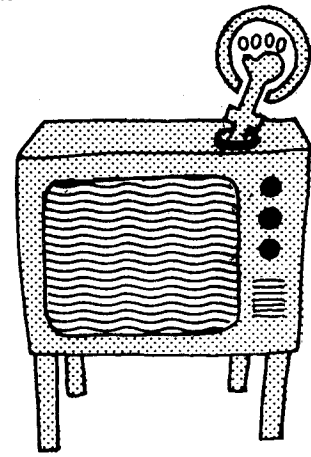
any knowledge of left-wing politics.

Parallel to Brian, mystical saviour, is Brian, of the People's Front of Judea — not the Judean People's Front mind — they're almost as bad as the bloody Romans!

And so Brian becomes martyr of the soul and martyr of the revolution.

The thing is clever and ludicrous, subtle and raucus, complicated, utterly simple and quite ridiculously funny.

Mary Ann Stuart



## THE FAIRY QUEEN

JOHN CRAVEN'S Newsround is a short programme aimed at children. Usually screened between cartoon time and Blue Peter it sometimes shows things that are important; the plight of the Vietnamese boat people; the threat of pollution; the campaign against whale hunting. But these items are always followed by those that are condescending to kids. How Sally from Ealing makes dolls clothes from old copies of the Beano; how worried the keepers are at Luton Zoo because Flossie the elephant has recurring dandruff.

Last week there was an

item on the government cuts in education. A film was shown of kids in class, with a commentary explaining how the expenses for each child had been cut from eight pounds to seven pounds. This would mean that their were many things that the children would have to go without. There would be no more new books to work with or read, and there would be no new equipment. The cuts were hitting hard. It was going to be difficult in schools from now on.

Great stuff I thought, tell the kids what's really happening. Allow them to think about this and question it.

But hopes of a new attitude towards kids was short lived. The next news item was that Mr Willy Whitelaw (accompanied by a photo of the smiling Willy) felt that as this was the queen mother's eightieth year we should all be treated to a special day's holiday. Hooray.

This wonderful lady, who is loved and respected throughout the land, should be honoured, thanked for all she has done for us. It would be like the jubilee celebrations, with street parties, flags, commemorative mugs, dancing in the street. What joy.

How wonderful. A film of this ageing wonder, smiling, chiffon clad, decked out and looking like a mobile Kew Garden was shown. Waving her gloved hand or accepting even more flowers.

But let's face it, for most kids a day off school is great. A street party as well is irresistible.

If it does happen how many of them will see that this is just another way of covering the bitter truth. How many will see that the magic of this fairy queen is paid for by them; that wand like waving hand will not produce any books for them.

On the contrary that hand takes money away from the. and does nothing for it. Now that's real magic. See if your mum and dad can do it. Yes, you will have a great day, but after midnight you will all be turned back into victims of the cuts in your schools.

The fairy queen will be gratified, respected, and live happily in comfort.

Carole Barrett

# Setting up a Rape Crisis Centre

In May last year a group of women in Manchester decided to set up a Rape Crisis Centre. This month all the energy they have devoted to the project will begin to pay off – the centre is opening. *Anna Bradley* talked to one of the women in the group to find out how they set it up.

'Our group started when a nurse came to one of the Manchester area women's co-ordinating meetings. She had been upset when two women who had been raped and sexually assaulted came into her casualty department. She felt it was important for us to think about setting up a rape crisis centre, in order to offer help to other women who had been raped.

'None of us knew much about setting up a centre, but we went ahead and called a meeting. With the help of publicity in the local women's press 30 women came along.

'The first thing we had to decide was whether to set up a rape crisis centre or a women against rape group. This decision partly rested on whether we wanted to concentrate on providing a service for women or on campaigning on sexual violence. We decided that setting up a rape counselling service was a political campaign in itself and would raise the issue in the community. Primarily we wanted to provide a service for women run by women.

'The first couple of months seemed to go very slowly. To be quite honest, we were thrashing around a bit, not really knowing what we were doing. We were meeting fortnightly and talking a lot, but a real centre seemed light years away. We now realise that all the discussion was very important – by talking things through at the very beginning we have avoided divisions among ourselves that might have arisen.

'We learnt very quickly that it was really important to be properly organised. I think women are generally reluctant to work in a formal structure because it seems to be constraining. But we realised that we had to keep proper records of all our correspondence, minutes of all our meetings and that we needed to file all our information very clearly. So we invested in a portable filing cabinet. We also formed three sub-committees to take responsibility for publicity, medical matters and information. This saved us a lot of precious time.

'Early on we also had to apply for grants from various charitable agencies. To do this properly you need to know exactly what it is you want to do – they ask so many questions. If we didn't know when we started applying, we certainly knew exactly where we were going when we'd finished.

'Applying for funds presented another problem. Very often organisations will only offer money if you

accept a management committee who have some control over how the money is spent. Although we would probably have representatives on this it is likely to include some people who are not counsellors, perhaps someone from the social services or something similar. We still haven't decided about this one.

'We began with telephone counselling. Obviously if a woman rang who was really distressed or in danger we went out to her. But on the whole a shortage of volunteers determined the limited service we began with.

'It was at least a month before we started to train ourselves for the counselling itself. We needed to practise listening and so sort out our own feelings about rape. We were naturally apprehensive about discussing our feelings in depth, so at this stage we closed the group to new members. At the same time we emphasised reliability and expected every woman to attend meetings as regularly as possible. All this helped us to feel more secure within the group.

'As well as weekly meetings we have training days at the weekends which concentrate on "role-play". The group splits into pairs, one person acting out a woman caller, the other playing the counsellor. This has often been very harrowing but it has brought us all closer together. Sometimes women from other crisis centres have come to these sessions and this has really helped.

'If you want to set up a rape crisis centre it is imperative that you have all the information you need at your fingertips. You need to know exactly what happens at police stations and in the

courts, where to get pregnancy tests and VD check-ups. We were quite lucky to have a doctor, nurses and solicitors in the group, but we still needed information from people with more specific knowledge.

'As we had our discussions it became clear that we needed them for a second reason – we had to work out a code of practice to which we would all adhere. For example, the doctor in the group told us about the morning-after-pill. We had quite a long discussion about whether or not to recommend it to a woman, given the side effects. Things like this may sound unimportant, but if you don't sort them out to start with you make life very difficult.

'Fortunately for us, finding premises was one problem we didn't have to face. We had been loaned a room in the centre of Manchester for our meetings and when the time came to have the phone installed we were told we could continue to use it as a temporary base.

'As we are only going to be in the office two days a week we also need an answer-phone and a lock so no one can answer it when we are not there.

'Now we are almost ready, even if it does seem to have been a long hard haul.

'The last thing to tackle is the press and publicity for the opening in a few weeks.' If anyone wants more information the postal address is: PO Box 336, Manchester M60 2BS. The telephone number and opening times will be advertised locally.

● Notes giving further information about setting up a Rape Crisis Centre are available. They list all the points you need to go into before you start. They are available from:



## RAPE CRISIS CENTRES

**BIRMINGHAM:** Office – (021) 233 2655, 24 hours (021) 233 2122  
**DUBLIN:** Monday to Friday 8 pm – 8 am; Saturday & Sunday 8 am – 8 pm – Dublin 601 470  
**EDINBURGH:** Wednesday, Thursday & Friday evenings only 6pm – 10 pm (031) 556 9437  
**GLASGOW:** Monday, Wednesday & Friday evenings only 7 pm – 10 pm (041) 331 2811  
**LEEDS:** Wednesday evening 7 pm – 9 pm; Sunday 2 pm – 8 pm (0532) 40058  
**LIVERPOOL:** Friday evenings only 6 pm – 8 pm (051) 709 1938  
Urgent messages any other time (051) 427 2338  
**LONDON:** Office hours 01-340 6913; 24 hours 01-340 6145  
**NEWCASTLE:** Every weekday 10 am – 10 pm (0632) 29858; weekends 6.30 pm – 10 pm  
**NOTTINGHAM:** Monday to Friday 10 am – 7 pm; Saturday 10 am – 4 pm (0602) 410440  
**SOUTH WALES:** Wednesday evening 8 pm – 10 pm; Sunday 4 pm – 7 pm Cardiff (0222) 374 051



# Love ~ all you need is...more argument!

*Dear Womens Voice,*

Your article about love was really good. It says a lot about this society that whenever I've suffered from a relationship-gone-wrong there are two different kinds of pain that I've felt.

There's one that comes from within, knowing that I've lost the all-important contact with someone I've felt deeply for. The other kind of suffering is false and comes from the outside. It's the feeling we're conditioned with that says 'Ha ha - you're on your own - you're a failure - you don't count any more - you haven't got all the things a successful woman should have, ie you're short of a lover'.

That hurts, sure, but amazingly it seems to overshadow the real pain and therefore it must make it harder to work through the pain and get over it.

I've heard it said before that pain becomes a lot easier when it's recognised for what it is and the blame's put on the right doorstep.

We're each important in our own rights irrespective of whether or not we have a lover. Jackie Manton  
South Woodford

## Support our sisters on International Womens Day

*Dear Womens Voice,*

On International Womens Day we are having a demonstration in support of women political prisoners of Imperialism—from women held in detention centres in England as 'illegal' immigrants to Irish women in Armagh jail; from women imprisoned for resistance in Chile and Southern Africa to Dessi Woods in the US.

The march is being organised by various black and third world women's groups and women in solidarity with national liberation struggles.

The march will be in South London on 8 March. Details will be in Time Out and the Womens Newsletter.

Mariam Lanagy  
A Woman's Place

*Dear Womens Voice,*

Love is an animal characteristic, not confined to the human species. It is stronger in the canine species. None of us, humans, can love as a dog can love, with unswerving and undying loyalty. The much-maligned wolves are, I believe, equally faithful to their mates. The same applies to swans, yet another species. Human love is less dependable. We are swayed by other considerations.

No-one in the February Womens Voice attempted to define love except Liz Balfour. So no-one else knew what they were writing about - a distinct drawback in an article. I congratulate Liz on forcefully attacking anthropomorphic religion, which gives humans (as capable of 'lust' as any other animal) a godlike character, superior in all respects to other species. But I cannot agree that love is only a zero score. It is very potent.

Kathleen Jones  
Shrewsbury

## NO PROGRESS

*Dear Womens Voice,*

I thought you might be interested in the following extract taken from 'Lark Rise to Candleford' an autobiography by Flora Thompson. The incident occurred in an Oxfordshire village about 90 years ago.

'They were a young married couple with three small children and had, as far as was known, always live peaceably together until one evening a dispute arose between them, in the course of which Sammy, who was a great strapping fellow fell upon his frail looking wife and gave her a bad beating.

Several days had passed before it became known that, with her black eye and bruises still fresh, she (Susan) had gone to the police station at Candleford town and taken out a summons for Sammy.

In due course, Sam came up before the court and was sentenced to one month's imprisonment for wife-beating.'

It appears that the police knew their job better than they do today.  
Lorna Read  
Farnborough.

# LETTERS



## Better to fly the flag of freedom

*Dear Womens Voice,*

On a bus journey to Glasgow for a Corrie Bill demonstration I was horrified to see a woman, who obviously agrees with the emancipation of women and all oppressed minorities, wearing a Union Jack hat. Surely this is a sign of oppression itself.

Either she was so thick, or had a cold skull, that she cannot begin to understand that the roots of all oppression lie firmly in the symbol of this corrupted country. You only have to look at the chaos this flag has carried to South Africa, Zimbabwe, Aden and today Ireland.

Women who are fighting for their lives as well as their basic human rights in Armagh jail, see this flag as the ultimate lie in the British name and anyone wearing this symbol is guilty of oppressing their own sisterhood.

Hang your head in shame. People are murdered in the name of this disgusting rag. A Taylor  
Dundee

## All change in Nottingham

*Dear Womens Voice*

I would like to draw your attention to the editorial policy of the supposedly left-wing paper, the Nottingham News, which was set up in December 1978 by the sacked journalists of the Nottingham Evening Post.

I have pointed out that a 'socialist' paper can't rightfully

trivialise the women's movement anymore than it could poke fun at trade unions. I have threatened the editor with adverse publicity if he does not stop this practice of treating women as being sub-human, and I would greatly appreciate it if you could persuade WV and SWP groups in this area to launch an all-out protest against this newspapers' trivial treatment of serious issues.

I suspect Mr Ludden would be quite shocked to find that many of his so-called 'Women's Libbers' (he hasn't heard of feminists) are men. Zoe Pitt  
Nottingham

## Watch Out!

*Dear Womens Voice,*

I must comment on the tactlessness of the cover of the December 1979 issue. I sell Socialist Worker and Womens Voice in an area with a high Asian population. Some Asian women were offended by the headline 'The Baby Killers'—apparently being a caption for the photograph above.

I was unable to explain the misunderstanding. Not only did I lose a potential sale but I am convinced that a certain amount of damage may have been done regarding the close relationship that has been built up in the Gravesend area with the local Asian community. Zoe Keeble

Dear Reader

We would like to hear from you Why not write to us

PO Box 82  
London E2

# Deatt Jane

# Why am I jealous?

"I CAN'T help feeling jealous" or "I wish I could understand why I get jealous". Do any of these quotes sound familiar? Dealing with our feelings about this is difficult and personal. I can't offer much advice, or any solutions, and hope that readers will write and comment, giving their own views for discussion.

Jealous is a word we often use very casually and frequently without it with envy, which is quite different. Envy is hostility or resentment towards the personal qualities, success or possessions of others. Jealousy is a deeper more complex emotion. The dictionary defines jealousy as "hatred or suspicion, fear towards a rival". Envy looks outward; jealousy causes people to look inwards, creating or awakening tensions and insecurities inside.

We talk about jealousy between people, perhaps as

a first child feeling jealous of a new arrival (or rival), workmates vying with each other for success. Most frequently we refer to jealousy in emotional and sexual relationships, particularly between men and women.

The term "jealous woman" has very negative connotations. There is an assumption that women experience an inferior kind of jealousy to men. Female jealousy is often seen as petty grasping, malicious. The jealous man is indignant and self righteous, defending his interests, his possessions, his woman his rights and privileges.

Jealousy has several important features. Firstly it can be very inward and destructive for the individual who experiences it. Jealousy can make us afraid, afraid that a relationship may fail, that we are not being loved or

cared for, suspicious that our partner or friends may be deceiving us. Feeling like this can eat away at our self confidence and draw us into a vicious circle of constantly trying to check out suspicions and fears which may do nothing to reassure at all. Feelings like this can intrude on day to day living filling up our minds with doubts and fears.

Another side of jealousy is the outward one. Once jealous feelings take root we fear that we may lose control of ourselves. As fear and suspicion distort the way we interpret events and conversations we may suddenly let feelings loose. This may also be the reason that jealousy is seen as irrational. At first jealousy may be inward. By the

time someone else is confided in jealousy may have distorted the significance of events out of all proportion. It may then be hard for someone else to understand the feelings as being 'rational'.

The confidence between what we think should happen in our personal lives and what does, is a very important one. Jealousy is just one of many areas where theory doesn't easily match up with practice. Because of the importance that women invest in their relationships, we draw confidence and identify from them. Jealousy can destroy that, it can damage us, that's why we must try and deal with it.

JANE FOSTER

## Yours Worried



## To the patients at Rampton

dent inquiry into the running of Rampton.

At the moment complaints are channelled to the staff at Rampton, who consequently represent a law unto themselves. All inquiries and information is covered by the Official Secrets Act. Allegations are serious enough to warrant a full public inquiry.

- To help patients and their relatives make complaints to the proper authorities, and to help ensure that patients are not victimised.

Rampton is isolated and remote. Patients are subjected to degrading treatment and punishment, such as being made to scrub floors, and not being allowed to talk at mealtimes. They are also subjected to physical cruelty. All of which make individual complaints a hazardous business.

- To support the relatives of patients.

It is difficult to cope with having a loved-one in such a place as Rampton. Often relatives have to travel long

distances, but they get no financial help. They find patients behind bars, they are only able to speak in the presence of a nurse. All of which causes distress and hardship for the families involved.

- To put pressure on local hospitals and authorities to take care of patients released from Rampton.

Often patients are kept in Rampton long after they are declared able to be released, simply because there is nowhere else for them to go. Similarly many people find themselves in Rampton in the first place after being pushed from pillar to post - many are not dangerous criminals, just unfortunate individuals with no one to stick up for them.

- To call for changes in the running of Rampton.

Not only that it should not be shrouded in secrecy, but that the staff should be qualified psychiatric nurses, not prison officers as now.

We do not want to dramatise the situation, but things at Rampton are no better than they were twenty years ago, and many people have been roused to indignation by the television documentary. We are receiving help from people at Nottingham University, but would welcome support from anyone concerned about conditions at Rampton.

A public conference is to be held in Nottingham on March 1st beginning at 10 am at the International Community Centre, 61b Mansfield Road. Speakers include Robert Kilroy-Silk MP, and Paul Bacon, on the workings of mental health tribunals.

The national Secretary of PROPAP is Jacky Boucherat, Resource Centre, Portland Building, University Park, Nottingham.

Interested readers in the West Midlands can contact me, Noele Arden, at 6 Albert Road, Harlescott, Shrewsbury, Salop.

Noele Arden's book about her own experiences of Rampton title *Child of a System* is published by Quartet and costs £1.50.

PROTECTION of Rights of Patients at Rampton (PROPAP) was set up after the showing of the television documentary 'The Secret Hospital' about Rampton top security hospital.

We have several general aims:

- To press for an indepen-



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# TALES WE TELL OUR SISTERS

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**'I used to  
get  
headaches  
trying to  
be what  
my mother  
wanted me  
to be...  
I wanted  
to be  
myself'**

**by  
Sheila  
Mitchell**

My mother was an amazing woman. She was brought up on a council estate in Ilford. In 1944 she started teaching and in 1950 she went to Singapore where she met my father, a sergeant in the British Army. They married in 1951 and I was born in 1952. We came to England when I was eight.

My relationship with my mother was very intense. She was highly strung and easily angered, she used to fly at me and hit me. She obviously loved me and was very proud of me. She wanted me to be aware of other people's needs, to be self-sacrificing but she got angry when I lent things to people and didn't get them back. I used to imitate her, we'd have screaming matches. I would run to my room to escape from her slaps. I would say things to her that I would never say to anyone else -- hateful insults not to be repeated.

She wanted me to achieve educationally but she wanted me to be happy. She wanted me to have a career but to get married as well, preferably to a doctor or an architect. She wanted me to be attractive and gracious -- to ask for things nicely but I cannot ask for things nicely to this day.

I used to get headaches trying to be what she wanted me to be. I wanted to be myself. I wanted to rebel against all authority. I wanted the complete transformation of society. She was a socialist and a feminist in her own way but not a revolutionary. She did not have my burning discontent and dissatisfaction.

When I heard she had terminal cancer it seemed unreal. It seemed so unlikely

that someone who had lived such a healthy life could be dying of cancer.

My mother did not know she was dying. Although she was cheerful, she was fading away.

I went home every weekend when I knew she was dying. It was heart breaking to hear her talk about a future which did not exist for her.

When the heroin and cocaine that she was taking to relieve her pain began to affect her mind, it was horrible to see people unable to cope with her random meanderings.

I had been staying with her a few days the day she died. My eyes were continually wet, my voice choked in anticipation of her leaving. It was strange that incontinence and disease were not revolting when it was your mother experiencing them.

When she died, despite being stunned and shocked, I was taken up with the practicalities of death. Being a christian she believed in life after death. I believe that people just live in the memory of others. Life after death is a con to try and stop us changing life on earth.

It's nearly a year since it happened and I'm weeping as I write this. I feel a sense of loss and waste. Over the last few years we were just beginning to become good friends.

For much of the time since her death, I have wanted to be physically alone to cope with the torrent of emotions, to think things through. Of course, the best way to remember someone is to fight to make it a better world for the living.

# WHAT IS GOING ON?

## WV groups

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

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

● **Acton** Womens Voice. Ring Ruth 992 9814 or Jude 740 6660

● **NORTH BIRMINGHAM** Women's Voice meets fortnightly. Phone Maggie 021 449 4793

● **SOUTH BIRMINGHAM** Women's Voice meets fortnightly. Phone Jill 021 459 1718

● **BLACKBURN** Womens Voice meets every Tuesday 8pm-10pm Jubilee Hotel (opposite King George's Hall) 673894 for details.

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

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

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

● **BURY** Womens Voice. Ring Lynn 061 764 6659 for details.

● **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.

**DUNDEE.** For information on local meetings, contact Audrey, 0382 452687.

● **EALING** Womens Voice meets regularly. Phone Jenny 991 0443.

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

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

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

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

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

● **HACKNEY** Womens Voice phone Pauline 985 3086 or Chris 806 8535 for information and babysitters.

● **HALIFAX** Womens Voice details from WV and SW sellers every Saturday 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 359 0842 (days).

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

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

● **KENTISH TOWN** Womens Voice meets fortnightly. Phone Gail 485 0954 or Pauline 586 5693 for information and details.

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

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

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

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

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

● **LUTON** Women's Voice meets alternative Wednesdays. Details and babysitters. Ring Jane 421266

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

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

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

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

● **NOTTINGHAM** Womens Voice group meets 2nd and 4th wednesdays every month at 8pm, 118 Mansfield Road. For further information or babysitters, ring Jane 49502

● **PIMLICO** area Womens

Voice—phone Helen 730 7983 or Leslie 834 0760 for further details.

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

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

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

● **South London** Womens Voice meets fortnightly, Tate Library Brixton 8pm on Tuesdays.

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

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

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

## Small ads

**CABARET:** Rights of Women presents an evening of Cabaret and Disco, (8.00-11.15pm) on International Women's Day, 8th March, for women only, at Action Space, The Drill Hall, 16 Chenies Street, W.C.1., (Goode St. Tube). Tickets £1.50 (75p. unwaged), food and drink available, creche facilities provided. For further information, contact ROW 01-278-6349.

### International Womens Day March

Women Political Prisoners in Great Britain and Abroad. Assemble Clapham Common, 1pm, marching to Brixton Oval, 8 March. Women Only.

**MANCHESTER** Law Centre have a vacancy for a WOMANS RIGHTS WORKER to work in the area of women and financial dependence. Individual advice work and campaigning work will be involved. Legal qualifications are not necessary but experience of individual rights work will be an advantage. For application forms and/or more info. contact Sue Marrs, 595, Stockport Road, Longsight, Manchester. Closing date for applications 1st April 1980

**Gay Rights at Work Conference** City of London Polytechnic, Students Union, Fairholt House, 102 Whitechapel High Street, London, E1, 29 March, for more information contact Gay Rights at Work, 7 Pickwick Court, London, SE9 4SA.

**CONFERENCE ON CLITERODECTOMY**, 16 March, Kent University. Organised by Campaign against Cliterodectomy. The conference will be mixed, with speakers and workshops. For more information, contact North London Women's Group (CAC), 88 Clarence Gardens, Regents Park Estate, London NW1 (SAE) or phone 01-388 5313.

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

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

● **TOWER HAMLETS** Womens Voice meets on alternate Mondays. Babysitters available. Phone Jane 515 7403.

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

● **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

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

**WOMEN IN EASTERN EUROPE** Study Group—meeting Saturday 15 March, Ashley Building, University of Birmingham. Programme: 11am - 1pm Women and the dissident movement 2pm - 4pm Femininity and Sexuality (women only) Phone (Birmingham) 021 472 4028 for further details and creche.

**FEMINIST 'KNIT IN'** at Mother Red Cap Pub, Camden Town, (Camden Tube) from 9pm, Monday 3 March.

On 18 February, three women drinking together in the pub were told by the Landlord to put away their knitting, threatening to chuck them out if they didn't. Join the knitty gritters in demanding a woman's right to knit AND sit in a pub. Men Welcome.

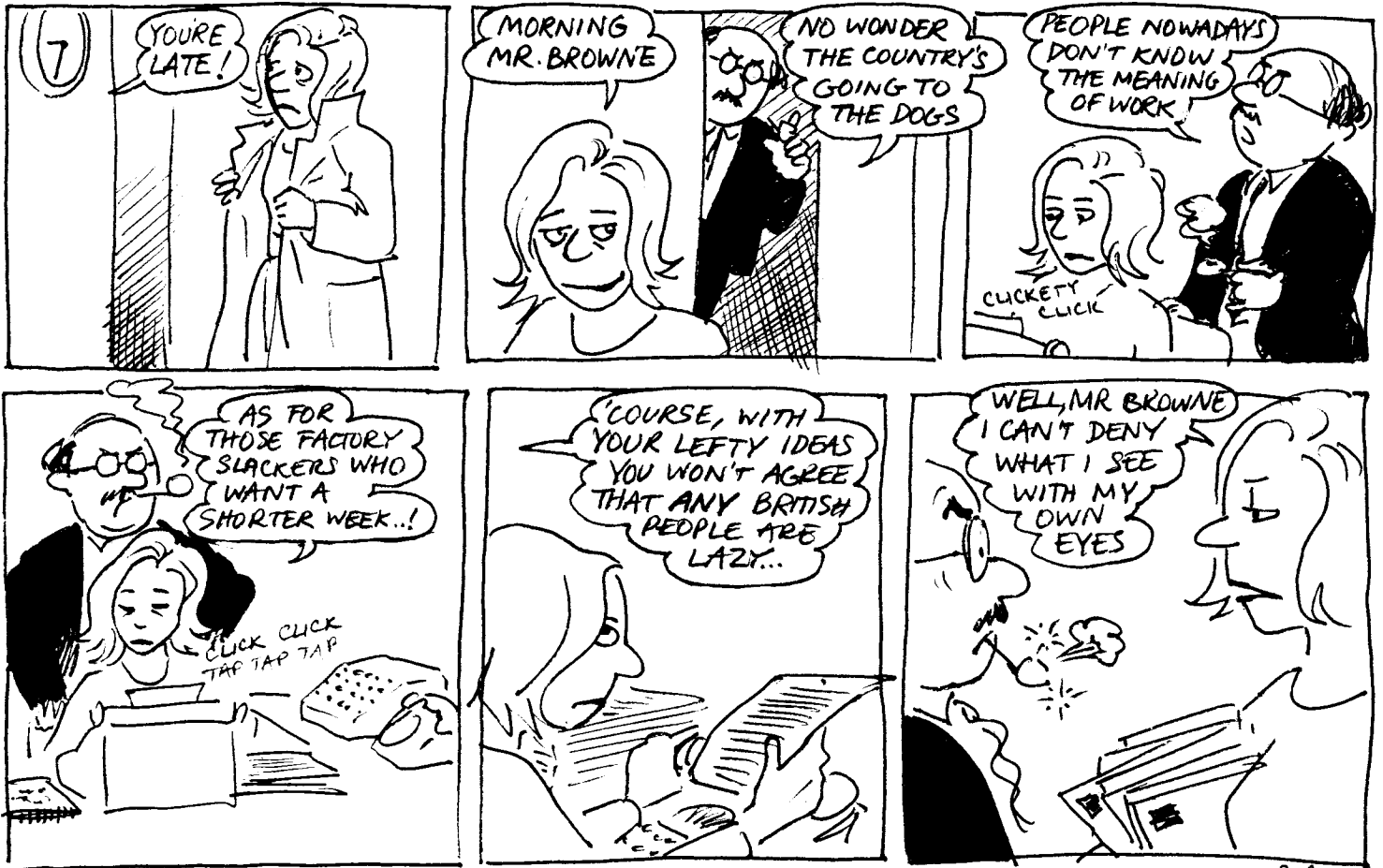
**SW London Womens Voice** International Womens Day Anniversary Debate. Womens Liberation - the way forward for socialist women. Women speakers from Womens Voice, Communist Party Labour Party and Womens Aid. All welcome to contribute to discussion. Women only, Tuesday, 4 March, 8pm, Battersea Library, Lavender Hill, London, SW11.

**Cambridge Womens Voice** Keep Women in the Family or How women are being made to pay for the economic crisis. Speaker Peggy Eagle, Thursday 20 March, 8pm, Mawson Hall, off Mill Road. Contact Patricia 68226 for more details.

**Bristol Womens Voice Spring Fair** 2pm, Saturday 1 March, The Inkworks, Hepburn Road, St Pauls, Jumble - Refreshments - Crafts - Games.

**MERSEYSIDE Womens Voice Public Meeting on De-provera.** 5 March 8pm, Triton Hotel, Liverpool.

# SANDRA



## Your nearest Womens Voice Group meets

Join Womens Voice...

join  
the  
fight

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

We fight for:

- Equal pay
- Free abortion and contraception
- Maternity leave and child care provision
- The right to work

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

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

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

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

I want to join the fight...

Name

Address

Send to Womens Voice  
PO Box 82,  
London, E2

# SPECIAL OFFER



'Let Me Speak' is the story of a woman of the Bolivian Andes, wife of a tin miner, mother of seven children, militant women's leader from Catavi. Domitila de Chungara was the daughter of an activist in the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario who lost his job because of his political activities. Her mother died when she was nine, and she became responsible for raising her four sisters in extreme

poverty; when she married, she went to live with her husband, also a miner. She gradually became involved in the struggles of the Bolivian tin miners and organized the women into an active force in this struggle. This book is the record of her development into a popular leader, and a first-hand account of the continuing confrontations between the miners and the government over the last fifteen years. There are few such testimonies of the lives of women or men in the mines, factories, shantytowns, and countryside, and few narrators who understand so well the causes of their poverty or who are so deeply committed to the struggle for change.

Domitila's voice is that of a woman of the people, with colloquialisms and grammatical structures strongly marked by the Quechua language she learned as a child. Writing from deep personal experience, she expresses the vision and analysis of one who has been a participant in the struggle she describes.

Moema Viezzer is a Brazilian journalist and social anthropologist

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This book and a **FREE** six month subscription to *Womens Voice*. Yours for just £3!

Please send me a copy of 'Let Me Speak'.

Name .....  
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