

# womens **VOICE**

Feb '81 Issue 49 Price 25p



**ST. VALENTINE'S  
DAY MASSACRE—**

**2½ MILLION UNEMPLOYED**



Womens Voice Conference  
February 7th and 8th in London  
Discussion on:  
Cruise missiles  
Why women need the right to work  
Pornography  
The public sector fight on the 6%  
Nationalities Bill  
Rosa Luxemburg



# Womens Voice Conference

and much more  
Plus  
how to  
build Womens Voice  
produce a leaflet  
work round strikes  
organise a street meeting  
write for WV

Accommodation Creche Food Social  
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or contact your local WV group.

# OUR POINT OF VIEW

## A woman's place

WORK OUTSIDE the home gives women independence from the family and from men. A woman's right to work is therefore fundamental to women's liberation because it gives women a chance to choose what kind of lives they want to lead.

That becomes clear when you look at what happened to women in Britain over the past twenty years. The million women who joined the labour force in the sixties didn't do so out of any romantic ideas about women's liberation. They went out to work for the money and because employers persuaded them to. But going out to work changed the way that women thought of themselves and the way they behaved. Women workers joined trade unions in their thousands, and they fought hundreds of struggles for trade union rights, for equal pay, and for equal opportunities.

It became clear that a woman's place was not just in the home, but also on the production line and on the picket line. Confident as workers, women fought for other rights too; for abortion and contraception, for mater-

nity leave, for nurseries and for all the things that would make the right to work a reality for all women.

Now all that is under attack. Unemployment is rising. Tory laws take away maternity rights. Cuts close down nurseries. So when employers at BPC publishers in London tried to force through redundancies it is hardly surprising that they suggested pregnant women should go first. With fewer maternity rights, less nurseries and poorer social services, a woman's right to work has already been greatly diminished.

The fightback at BPC is therefore doubly encouraging both because the women decided to fight for their jobs, and because they are united with the male workers in that struggle. The fight at BPC is a fight against unemployment. It is also vital in the fight for a woman's right to work, because all the workers, women and men together have shown that they think ALL the workers, women and men, have an equal right to a job.

womens  
**Voice**

Womens magazine of the  
Socialist Workers Party



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## Thousand picket Tory Council cuts

OVER THE past year the Tory council in Wandsworth, London has:

- \* chopped 1000 jobs
- \* slashed services
- \* raised rents by 143%
- \* scrapped transfers from high rise flats
- \* Sold council houses.

Now the Tory government have stabbed their faithful followers in the back by cutting their rate support grant. So another 700 jobs are to be axed by compulsory redundancy if necessary. Rents are to go up another £6 on average, and that's before any rate increase. The elderly will get clobbered again as luncheon clubs and day centres are closed. Home helps and meals on wheels services are to be greatly reduced.

Childrens homes, day nurseries, adventure playgrounds, swimming pools and libraries are all to be closed. Women who work will find it even more difficult to cope as what little provision there is for child care and childrens recreation goes down the pan.

Librarians, nursery nurses, park keepers, tree loppers, residential social workers have already had redundancy notices through their doors.

As if that wasn't enough,

rates even in this Tory borough will have to go up a further 30 or 40 per cent.

1000 people turned out to picket Wandsworth council in the driving snow last month in a very vocal and angry protest. Abuse was hurled at councillors as they scurried up the steps of the town hall, protected from workers and tenants by a large police presence.

After two years of the Tories in office widespread disgust and anger at their policies is beginning to take an organised form.

On the following day the whole of the council was closed down when almost without exception white collar workers came out on strike. Dustmen, building workers and other manual workers willingly respected picket lines and came out in support.

By contrast, Lambeth Council next door is Labour controlled. So far no jobs or services have been cut. Lambeth has instead gone for the option of

huge rate increases—75% last April and an additional levy of £50 to be paid in the next few weeks. In April they will almost inevitably be raised again.

A week of action has been called for February when council workers will go on strike in protest against Tory vandalism of the welfare state.

Unfortunately the council have never seriously tried to mobilise a mass opposition to the cuts, or the enforced rate rises. They've never gone to tenants association meetings, or other workplaces in the Borough to build support for a stand against the Tories. They believe it's their responsibility, not ours. We just have to suffer the consequences of £11- £14 increases in our rents and rates by April, for the privilege of paying twice for services that should be ours by right.

The only way to defeat the Tories is by building the widest possible opposition.

That can't be done by penalising other workers in the borough. Irrespective of whether it's a Labour Council or Tory we have to build opposition to Tory policies. If that means strike action, or rents and rates strikes then that's what has to be done in the coming months.

Linda Quinn



## BPC: we will not step down



Andrew Ward Report

BPC workers picket over 65 sackings

THE JOURNALISTS of BPC have been in dispute since November 1980. They have been in occupation since December 1980. Womens Voice went along to speak to some of the women in occupation.

**BPC, WHICH** owns three subsidiaries and has printing interests, announced 10 redundancies in October of last year and suggested that pregnant women be the first to go! The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) Chapel,

(union branch) three quarters of whom are women, decided to fight the redundancies. As a result all 65 members of the union were sacked and locked out. They gained re-entry and went into occupation. They are

## Sacked! -and its all in the family

WHEN Joan Monaghan's husband came home from work and told her that he and their two sons had just been sacked, she was stunned. They all worked at Mosedaes Brickworks, in Flixton, near Manchester.

A dispute started when TGWU members found that two non-union members were being paid on a higher bonus. When they asked for parity, management sacked them, along with someone who was on holiday, someone who was off sick, and the Union Branch Secretary—who was taking time off to look after his children while his wife was having a baby!

Joan's husband, Alan, is a shop steward. She said 'I'd murder them if I could get my hands on them. Three, just like that, thrown out of work. Thrown on the scrapheap. We'll all stick together, I won't back down.'

June Hessian has worked at Mosedaes for six years. She is the only woman member of the union. 'When we got organised they didn't like it. I was getting to the end of my tether. They don't like you to stand up for yourselves. When the lads came out on strike I decided to stand by them. The main thing is for everyone to stick together. We'll stick it out as long as we can.'

The strikers are desperately in need of support. Raise the dispute in your union branch—especially if you are in the TGWU. The strikers are holding mass pickets, come down and support them.

**Send donations and messages of support to:**  
J Brown (secretary), Mosedaes Strike Committee, 216 Irlam Road, Flixton on Manchester, M31 3WE. Telephone 061 747 4291.

Cath Potter and Anne Barber

refusing to accept the sackings.

Negotiations are in deadlock, management refuse to compromise. **Annabel McLaren**, Mother of the Chapel (shop steward), says 'we have won a few battles'. Of a settlement 'it's difficult to tell—circumstances change from day to day.'

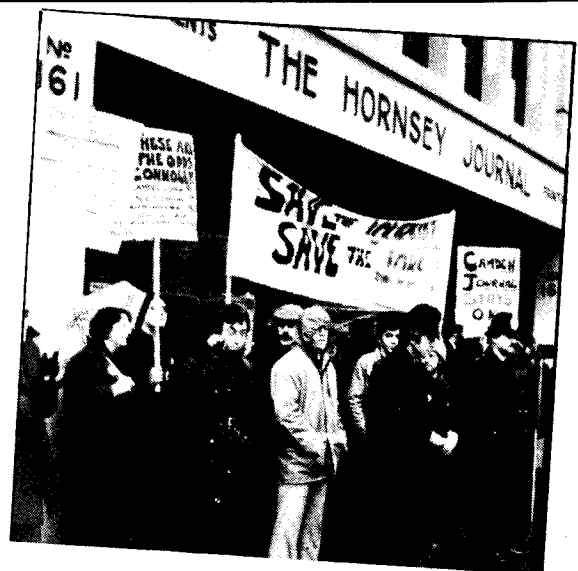
**Lis Edwards** spoke of how they organised themselves during the occupation. She said morale was very high, and put this down to the fact that everyone was involved and always knew what was going on. There are two Chapel meetings a day,

with cheering report backs from picket lines, delegations, the blacking campaign .... As Lis says, 'we are completely clear with management, our position hasn't changed—we will not step down'.

These journalists need, and deserve, your support. They are fighting for the right to work. Support them!

Raise the occupation in your union branch. Organise a collection.

Send donations and messages of support to:  
**BPC, NUJ, Acorn House,**  
314 Grays Inn Road,  
London, WC1X 8DP



THE management of the 'Camden Journal' announced nine redundancies—all of them active trade unionists. On December 24, journalists on the Camden Journal, and its sister papers went on strike.

The strikers have been successfully picketing their print works in Nuneaton. They have received tremendous support from the readership of their papers and Camden Council has given them strike headquarters. Messages of support and donations to: Save the Camden Journal Campaign, 38-40 Camden Road, London, NW1. Telephone: 01-485 8207.

# Answering back

## Their law to keep their order

'HANG the Ripper' screamed the placards and the demonstrators outside the court as the arrested man made his first court appearance. Male, female, the old and the very young—all seemed to be gripped by the same hysteria.

This is the emotional hanging lobby at work; people who believe that revenge is the only justice. They are quite ordinary people who arrive, baying for blood, everytime someone is arrested for a particularly horrible murder, especially when women and children are the victims.

The official hanging lobby, the judges who regret they can only give life sentences, the top policemen who believe that the threat of violence will stop violence, the politicians who believe they are born with the right to give life and to take it away, will bide their time, and when they are assured of the maximum popular support they will introduce a new hanging bill.

They try to pretend that hanging will deter people from murdering, but most murders take place regardless of the penalty. Since hanging was abolished in Britain the proportion of murders has not increased. Hanging is no more than a vicious and barbaric form of retribution. A hundred years ago men and women could be hanged for stealing. It never deterred them. They stole because for most there was little other means of survival.

The law and order lobby is not concerned with that fact. Nor are they concerned with the growing number of thefts, break-ins or rapes. If they were they would look to the causes of crime, to growing unemployment, poverty, frustration with life, particularly family life, and poor education, and they would do something about these things to set people's lives on a better course.

But they're not interested in doing anything about the causes. In fact they are part of the cause of these problems themselves. Law and order is for them a political slogan, by which they mean *their right to use their law to keep us in their order*.

The police and the judges will be pleased that they have caught the alleged Ripper. If he is found guilty he will be locked up for the rest of his life. Even socialists cannot argue that a man who apparently uncontrollably murders women should be allowed to go free. But we should remember, prison doesn't look to the root of the problem of why people murder. It provides a simple solution which gets the problem out of the way. And the fear of violence still exists.

The law and order brigade and the hanging lobby are not in the least interested in the fact that many women are terrified to get out alone at night. They will just use that fear for their own ends.

## AFTER THE RIPPER

ONE OF the sickest things about the Yorkshire Ripper is that since someone was arrested lots of people are heaving sighs of relief, saying that women are safer now—as if one man were responsible for all murders and violence against women.

Living in a red light district is a problem for women, but it has to be put in perspective. Women are under threat in their own homes in residential areas and the middle of town. Certainly in areas like Broom Hall (the red light district in Sheffield) women get harassed by men kerb crawling but it's the prostitutes the police harass, not the men. If you go to the Top Rank you get hassled by men all the time—you just don't always get offered money for it. If you go to the pub with other women you're considered easy meat.

Lots of women go 'on the game' to get money to live. If, for example, you've been busted by the DHSS then you'll find it hard to get Social Security. Also why work 40 hours a week for a £1 an hour when the-

re's an alternative? There used to be a good probation unit in Broom Hall which worked with prostitutes and supported their unionisation. The Social Services closed it.

The arrest of the Ripper brought out a lot of terrible ideas, like hanging and flogging. The scenes outside the courtroom were degrading and ugly.

This case has done a lot of damage. The police got away with the man they arrested not appearing in court because of the prison officer's dispute. Rape and murder have increased enormously in Yorkshire. Also it has been established in people's minds that it's not as bad to kill a prostitute as it is to kill a 'nice girl'. That phrase we're all familiar with, 'she asked for it' takes on a new meaning. The police questioned thousands of women and men and all that information won't be thrown in the bin. The arrest of one man in a society that breeds violence isn't going to change anything.

Ann Doyle

## RECLAIM THE NIGHT

AT THE Christmas NUS conference a motion was passed overwhelmingly, which called on the union to organise a national Reclaim the Night march. To protest at the escalation of sexual attacks on women and the accompanying bombardment of films and advertising which glorify male violence against women.

Women at the conference were angry with attitudes that make sexual attacks and harassment all too common an occurrence and angry with the lack of action taken to protect women.

This term we are hoping that every college will take up the question of safety by a militant campaign. Women students are increasingly becoming targets for sexual assaults and attacks.

This march is only part of a campaign which demands safety and welfare of individuals in this society as a priority. A Reclaim the Night march is our assertion of a woman's right to walk alone at night. Women should not have to feel that they must rely upon the protection of men to be able to go out at night. In reality, curfews exist on women—we often have to stay at home because we are afraid of being attacked or molested. This is the reason that 'Reclaim the Night' is for women only, but we feel that men should support the principle of women being able to walk wherever they want and to dress however they want and remain free from harassment.

JAN NIELSEN

## RECLAIM THE NIGHT NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION CALLED BY NUS

Assemble Temple Place near Temple tube, London, WC2.

Saturday 21 February 6.30pm



## "Fanatics" scare off Sainsbury

A LOT of women sighed with relief when they heard that Tim Sainsbury MP had dropped his Abortion Amendment bill. His reason—he was scared of 'fanatics'. In other words he saw how Corrie was defeated, by thousands of women organising together on the streets, and was scared of a repeat show!

Womens Voice spoke to Marge Berer from the National Abortion Campaign (NAC) on the eve of the announcement by Sainsbury.

'People don't really think of us when there isn't a campaign' was how Marge described NAC's problem. NAC has been in existence since the first anti-abortion bill from James White in 1975. Although NAC always comes to the fore when there is such a bill, with demonstrations

of up to 80,000 being the high points, there are many other activities taking place all the time.'

NAC has two major events planned. One is a forum on abortion in London on February 21. As Marge says it is intended to 'raise all the controversies the we don't have time for during the big campaigns'. The second initiative is a trade union conference on positive legislation. It will take place in London on March 14. Many trade union bodies, including several national unions, have already pledged support.

The level of activity is low, as it always is between bills but it is higher than it was after the White and Benyon Bills. The problem that NAC has is a case of 'out of sight, out of mind'—

**Labour Movement Conference**

**ABORTION and POSITIVE LEGISLATION**

**London March 14**

**NAC LARC**

"It is still essential that the Labour and Trade Union Movement maintain a campaign in support of both TUC and Labour Party policy on Abortion"

— Charles D. Greer, General Secretary, The Tobacco Workers Union

**Will you be represented?**

Sponsored by:

- Trade Union
- ACT
- ASTMS
- ATA TASS
- NLI
- NLE
- National Union of Shipyard Workers
- Coopers, etc.
- Heating, Domestic Engineers
- TNL
- East Anglia Regional Council TUC
- South East Regional Council TUC
- ACTSS Central
- London
- APES, Holborn
- APES, Westminster
- TIPS
- ASTMS, Birmingham
- ASTMS, W. London
- Medical
- ASTMS (London)
- Public Health
- ASTMS S. & S.W. End
- CPSA Dept. of Employment
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- NALGO Camden
- NALGO Hackney
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- NLI, Epping
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- NLFE, Aston Social Services
- NLFE, Bristol Community Workers

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- Doris
- Frank Aronovitch
- Frank Adams, MP
- Ronald Boothroyd, MP
- Frank Dobson, MP
- John Grieve, MP
- Maria Hanbury, MP
- John Lister, MP
- L.G. Day
- Beryl Haffield, MP
- Secretary, Women's and Marriage Regional Council TUC
- W. H. Keys
- Stan Jemel, MP
- Maria Farnham
- Reg Race, MP
- John Rickman, MP
- Ernie Roberts, MP
- John Rinker, MP
- Bill Six
- Donald Stanger, MP
- Clive Soper, MP

and also by:

- National Union of Students
- Sheffield Socialist Medical Association

and this means people forget that NAC have to survive financially. They have a huge deficit, the reason they have survived is their non-payment of rent over the last six months!

NAC needs money, and they

need it urgently. Send donations, no matter how small to: NAC, 374 Grays Inn Road, London, WC1. You'll obtain more information about their two major events from the same address.





## BERNADETTE FIGHTS ON

THE BRITISH Army were just around the corner, but not quite quick enough. Three gunmen had time to smash down the front door with an axe, shoot Michael McAliskey several times, and then find Bernadette who was hiding upstairs and also shoot her several times. Both survived the attack, although as we go to press both are still in hospital and Bernadette, particularly, is still very ill.

It seems that the loyalist paramilitary UDA may have given a very public warning of the attack, when Andy Tyrie, the 'Supreme Commander' of the UDA said on ITV's *WORLD IN ACTION*, before Xmas, that they would 'eliminate pro-Republican leaders.' The UDA have admitted that Bernadette Devlin McAliskey was on their hit list.

If it was the UDA who tried to kill her, then their reasons go back more than ten years and are still strong now.

She was a university student from a working-class family, when she first got involved in the civil rights movement. She said recently, "When the civil rights movement began in 1968 I was not really political, or even sure why I got involved in the first march. Through activ-

ity on the streets I began to learn political lessons ... The law, the courts, the newspapers ..... they're not impartial at all, their interests are *against* those of working people."

In April 1969, on the tide of the civil rights movement, she was elected to the Westminster Parliament. The press, who when in a fix seem to fall back on the *Guinness Book of Records*, now glowingly describe her as the youngest ever woman MP.

But she was an unusual MP in other ways. In August 1969, a few months after being elected to Parliament, she was on the streets in Derry, fighting at the barricades set up to defend the Bogside against the August 12 Apprentice Boys march.

In 1970 she was sentenced to six months prison for riotous behaviour in the Battle of the Bogside. But she was out of prison and back in Parliament in good time to punch Home Secretary Reginald Maudling for his remark about Bloody Sunday (January 30 1972)—when the army killed 13 people in Derry.

She lost her Westminster seat in 1974, when the Catholic middle class stood against her, and split the vote: Bernadette stood as a revolutionary socialist.

She did not, as the press hopefully suggested, give up

politics to be a wife and mother. She says 'I never *really* understood women's oppression until I started bringing up kids.'

What she understood was the importance of the Relatives Action Committee: "There's a lot of women activists in Northern Ireland who only started seeing themselves as women, organising themselves as women, when internment started and their men went to prison."

The consequences of taking on the British state—first internment and then, particularly, the Emergency Provisions Act—meant that families in the Catholic community came up against the law in its most brutal and cynical form. Stories of torture and forced confessions went hand in hand with a new set of rules which removed the usual 'safeguards' and rights of arrested people—no jury, and changes in what counts as admissible evidence.

Protest in the prisons—H-Block and Armagh—escalated to the dirty protests and finally, last October, the hunger strike. This was the focus for a new mass movement, though unfortunately it made this movement vulnerable to the outcome of the hunger strike.

Outside the prisons, the united campaign against repression gradually channelled the anger. In the European Elections in 1979, 35,000 voted for Bernadette McAliskey. But the end of 1980, people were marching (in the North and the South) in support of the hunger strikers—in numbers that hadn't been dreamt of since the early 70s.

One of the reasons they were there was—as Eamonn McCann said in *Socialist Worker*—because Bernadette had 'a dogged willingness to keep at it when almost everyone else thought it was futile.'

This was why the UDA wanted to kill her. It *may* be why the men of the Third Paras were on the spot *almost* immediately, with just a little delay.

Janet Vaux

## Equal Pay Victory

An equal pay case in which a woman was seeking parity with her male predecessor has been won in the European Court of Justice.

Wendy Smith claimed that Macarthy's, a wholesale pharmaceutical company, had offered her a job at lower pay than the man who previously held the post. The British courts ruled that the Equal Pay Act only covers men and women working concurrently; that under the Act Wendy Smith could not compare her job or pay with a male predecessor.

The Equal Opportunities Commission took the case to the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg, who ruled that the principle of equal pay for

equal work allows comparison with people no longer employed in that particular job.

Several other equal pay cases are due to be heard by the European court this year. The most important one concerns a part-time woman worker, Mrs Jenkins, claiming parity with a man doing the same job but working full-time. The British courts insist there is a 'fundamental difference' in full-time work and part-time work, but if the European Court rules in Mrs Jenkins' favour a precedent will be set for Britain's four million part-time workers, most of whom are women.

Harriet Sherwood.



## That's the way the cookie crumbles

UNITED Biscuits, one of the country's biggest food conglomerates, have decided to 'rationalise' their plant in Osterley, West London. They are shifting £10 million worth of equipment to other plants and their 1,700 workers the vast majority of whom are women, onto the dole queues.

The factory is to be run down over the next two years and the women despair of ever getting other jobs. A West Indian woman, who has worked on the twilight shift for 10 years, told us 'There is no chance of getting another job with so many factories closing in the area. I've got kids to look after so I can't work during the day. I just don't know what I'm going to do.' Another worker, Mrs Arora from Heston, said 'We are all crying we are so desperate. Every Friday I look in the paper, but there are no jobs.'

There have been thousands of jobs lost in this area in the last two years, which have seen the closure of AEC (a BL factory) and Firestone plants and massive redundancies and short time working at Hoovers, Lyons, Booths Gin and all other major factories. The Youth Employment Register has 32 vacancies this week in a borough of 230,000 people.

At a recent mass meeting, Osterley United Biscuit workers voted to refuse to negotiate redundancy terms and workers in other plants have decided to black work from the plant.

But the company is a



Tessa Howland/IFL

THE South West Africa People's Organisation, (SWAPO) is fighting to free Namibia of the illegal occupation of their country by the apartheid regime of South Africa. Last year Ida Jimmy, seven months

pregnant, was sentenced to 7 years imprisonment for addressing a SWAPO meeting. She joins many other women prisoners who have been held without trial or sentenced by illegal courts.

Send donations and write for further details to: SWAPO Womens Campaign, c/o Namibia Support Committee, 188 North Gower St., London NW1. Tel: 01-388 5539

very powerful one and is far from running at a loss. The chairman, Sir Hector Lang, who is an industrial adviser to Margaret Thatcher, last year announced profits of nearly £44 million, £30,000 of which was generously donated to the Tory Party. It is also remembered as the company which

successfully used a High Court injunction to prevent lorry drivers from placing a secondary picket on its gates during their strike. They are closing the Osterley plant because they say there is a drop in demand for their cakes. Not very surprising—who can afford them?  
*Carolyn O'Reilly*

## HOSPITAL OCCUPIES

LONGWORTH Hospital is in occupation. The Area Health Authority planned to close the top floor of the geriatric hospital near Oxford by the end of January. Their plans were put back a little when, in early December, the staff decided to occupy.

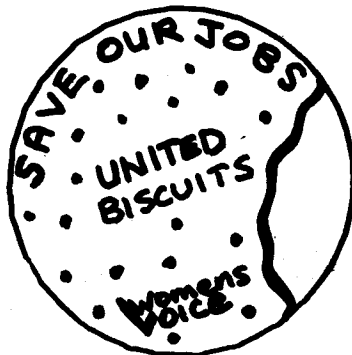
Tina, an auxiliary worker, said: 'There is a family atmosphere at Longworth. Some of the patients have been here 23 years; they know all our names and treat us like friends, not like strangers in a uniform. If they were to be moved it would kill them—they couldn't cope with the change.'

Two months ago in South London St Benedicts geriatric hospital was closed by the Tories. One out of every three of the patients moved has since died.

The occupation at Longworth has received tremendous support, from relatives, local doctors and trade unionists. This is what you can do to help:

- organise a collection in your workplace.
- Support the picket
- Put resolutions of support, and asking for a donation, to your trade union branch.

Send messages of support and donations to: Ms B Russell, Longworth Occupation Committee, Weybread Cottage, Faringdon Road, Longworth, Oxfordshire.



Ealing/Southall WV Group is producing a sticker to sell with Womens Voice outside United Biscuits. Come and sell with us. Ring 01-571 1838 for details.

### GLASGOW DEMONSTRATION AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT

Saturday 21 February

Assemble 11am Blythwood Square  
Called by Labour Party



# TAMPON SHOCK

**TOXIC** Shock Syndrome is so rare that at least four cases have been reported in Cambridge hospitals in the short time since we have been leafletting and campaigning on the issue.

We leafletted the university and town centre; sent letters and articles to shops stocking Playtex and the local paper.

Eventually an article was published, and the following day the same paper reported that two identified cases of TSS were recently treated in Addenbrooks Hospital, and another two were treated which, retrospectively the doctor says were probably TSS.

Evidence of the correlation between Playtex deodorant tampons and TSS is increasing. This is what you can do to stop its sales:

- Contact your local Community

Health Council, midwives, health visitors and nurses, and impress on them the seriousness of Toxic Shock Syndrome.

- Ask your Area Health Authority to conduct an inquiry into TSS and other tampons (the danger might lie in the synthetic fibres rather than any deodorant—one Cambridge case was associated with Tampax Slimline.)

- USDAW, the shop workers' union, will probably represent workers in large chemist or general store chains which sell tampons. Approach your local branch—they may be prepared to not handle them, or ask awkward questions. Cambridge Womens Voice

## Kingston contacts

WE HAVE recently formed a Womens Voice group in Kingston. The first meeting we held, on Women and Socialism was very well attended. More recently we had a meeting on Women and Unemployment which went very well. We have made a lot of contacts, and have general meetings every two weeks.

Although unemployment is increasing in this area, it hasn't yet reached the high proportions of other areas. Most of our activities have centred around

**WARNING ALL WOMEN**  
**THIS TAMPON CAN DAMAGE YOUR HEALTH!**

PLAYTEX deodorised tampon increases the risk of Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS). This is a bacterial infection of the vagina and can be lethal. The symptoms of TSS include vomiting, fever, diarrhoea and body rash. Seventeen women in the USA have died from it, all while menstruating and using Playtex or similar tampons. Fifteen-year old Diane Silva of California and the family are suing Playtex. She died and became ill.

**These tampons are not covered in Britain.**

- Playtex's tampons have six rough blood stream.
- The tampons are made of synthetic fibres.

**Get the facts! WV leaflet £1 for 100 orders to PO Box 82 London E2 9DS**

street sales and pickets of Woolworth and Boots, about Playtex tampons. We have also written to shops in the area stocking Playtex. One has written back saying that they are aware of the *scaremongering* surrounding these tampons but they will continue to stock them, whilst keeping a watch for 'developing evidence'.

Keymarkets Supermarket passed our letter onto Playtex, who they felt were better qualified to answer our complaint.

Next we plan to leaflet schools. Our next meeting is on 11 February, on 'Violence and Sexism'. 8pm Liverpool Arms, 140 London Road, Kingston, Back room.

Emma Newton

## LINK THE ISSUES

OVER 30 women and men responded at 24 hours notice to our call for a picket outside the Odeon Cinema, which was screening 'Dressed to Kill'. The response was so good that pickets

were immediately organised onto a rota for all evening performances. One of our members contacted Mercia Radio and was given a telephone taped interview which was broadcast twice. News of the picket was also broadcast on each news bulletin throughout the day.

One of our pickets was a Camden Journal journalist who persuaded more Womens Voice members to go to Nuneaton to join trades unionists in picketing the 'Journal's' printers. About 50 pickets braved the weather, and Jean, one of the journalists, told WV: 'We left London at 4.00am to be here and we have to go back to London to do another picket this evening.'

Our complaints about our 6.30am start were put to shame!

Coventry Womens Voice

**SINGLE** mothers, aged 16 or 17 and still at school or college are now entitled to claim £26.50 per week **Supplementary Benefit**, even if they live at home. A guide to benefits for one parent families (price 40p including p&p) by the National Council for One Parent Families 255, Kentish Town Road, London NW5 2CX. Tel: 01-267 1361.

DEADLINES.....

SIGH... TIPPEX

WOMEN'S VOICE NEEDS YOU!  
 HELP WRITE + PRODUCE YOUR MAGAZINE.



THIS SESSION of the Tory parliament will see yet another piece of repressive racist legislation added to the government's arsenal, unless we do something to stop it. They are proposing a new bill on Nationality which will completely change the basis of acquiring citizenship in this country.

The old category established under the 1948 Commonwealth Act of 'Citizens of UK and Colonies' is going to be abolished and replaced with three different categories.

1. *British citizen.* To become one of these, you have to be a 'patrial' which means you have to have a British parent by descent, registration, naturalisation or adoption. At present any baby born here is automatically British on production of a birth certificate. Black parents in future will have to produce evidence of being British before their children can be registered as British. This implies that there will have to be two different kinds of birth certificates, one for children born of British parents and one for those whose parents are not British.

2. *British Overseas Citizen*  
3. *British Dependent Citizen.* Neither of these two categories will have any rights as British citizens either to enter the country, settle or anything else.

Rights for naturalised and registered British citizens will be less than for those who are British by descent. If an Indian couple register as British and then have a baby abroad, say in Germany, where children are only German by descent, the baby will neither be British because it was born abroad of registered parents, nor German, nor Indian because India does not allow dual nationality. So the baby will be stateless.

At present Commonwealth citizens living in this country can simply register as British after five years. This provision is to go. After the Bill becomes law, Commonwealth citizens will have two years to register. After that, they will have to apply for naturalisation which is much more expensive and totally dependent on the whim of the Home secretary. There are all sorts of qualifications required, such as language, loyalty to the

# Fighting to stay



Andrew Ward (Report)

country, and intention to stay.

In fact, if you leave the country looking for a job you can lose your nationality again. The main point about naturalisation is that there is no right of appeal, because, according to the White Paper, there is no way of objectively judging 'good' character. It has to be left to the only man who can know — the Home secretary!

The proposals in the White Paper are highly varied, complex and vague, and allow the government great room for manoeuvre. The most likely effect will be to make many black residents stateless and therefore their children will also automatically become stateless. It will make it virtually impossible in the future for black Commonwealth citizens to become British citizens even if they do get into Britain.

Many people possibly wonder why the government is changing the law on Nationality at the moment. The last law was passed in 1948 which conferred one citizenship on the United Kingdom and Colonies. That was in the years of economic expansion when the foundries, railways and buses were hungry for cheap, black Commonwealth labour.

Then workers were encouraged in their thousands to come to this rainy island on the promise of equal rights in citizenship and that they would be welcome here. It was all a hangover from the empire. Instead of going abroad and taking wealth, black workers could come to Britain and make our rulers' wealth here for them. Much easier.

But as the boom dwindled and the thirst for labour was slacked, so the 1948 Act was amended through a series of Immigration laws, making entry into Britain an ever more impossible task. Now there is a full blown recession. The government know they cannot even begin to provide jobs, let alone houses, education and the necessities of life. So instead they try to find a way of getting rid of some workers — black workers by making them illegal and deporting them.

The other thing they have to do is to find adequate means of repression to prevent the mass of workers rising up against them and their system. What better idea than to attack black workers, weaken the link in the workers' chain and turn white workers in racist reaction against their own black brothers and sisters.

Thatcher must be gazing enviously at the situation in the rest of Europe where 'Gastarbeiter' only have right of residence as long as they have jobs. Once the jobs go, the workers go. What more simple solution? How envious she must be too of the situation in Vitry around Christmas, when native French workers bulldozed an immigrant hostel to the ground. What more satisfying sight than to see worker fighting worker, wasting badly needed energy in tearing the workers' movement apart.

That is what the Tories want and what the Labour government before them wanted. That is what we have to prevent.

Readers of *Womens Voice* will already be familiar with the case of Anwar Ditta fighting to get her children into this country. Now we have to take up the Campaign Against Racist Laws, which is organising a national demonstration on March 29 in London. For further information write to CARL c/o Lansbury House, 41 Camberwell Road, London SE5.

Sheila McGregor

# 'And I'll blow your house down'



ANGELA PHILIPS

WHEN THIS Government singled out housing to take the brunt of public spending cuts, the justification was that housing conditions have considerably improved in the last 30 years. More people are housed now than in 1950, but then half of Britain's housing stock has been built since the last war.

But housing is by no means adequate. A report from Shelter, called *AND I'LL BLOW YOUR HOUSE DOWN - Housing need in Britain: present and future*, shows that Britain's housing supply does not nearly meet people's needs and that the country is on the brink of a severe housing crisis.

In the financial year 1979/80 Britain's housing budget was £5,372 million. In February last year Michael Heseltine, the Environment Minister, announced a cut of £1,000 million, or about a third, in the capital budgets of local authority housing departments and housing associations. The capital budget is spent on building new homes and

renovating existing property; the rest of the overall housing budget goes on rent subsidies and tax relief on mortgages. This cut was announced as part of a four year plan of public spending cuts in which housing will bear 75 per cent of all cuts. By 1983/84 the budget will have been reduced to £2,790 million—a cut of 48 per cent in four years. By that year the Government plans to spend 33p on housing for every £1 spent on defence.

Shelter conducted a survey of local authorities to discover how Government cuts were affecting housing programmes. It was carried out before the Government's freeze on all new building in October, so it does not reflect the extent of cutbacks. The overall reduction in housing investment in England between 1979/80 and 1980/81 is 33 per cent; house building has been cut by 44 per cent in London; and improvements have been cut by 40 per cent in the South West. Responses to the survey included:

'The whole of the 1980/81

building programme has been cancelled. The majority of the units were to be for OAPs.' *Camarthen, Dyfed*.  
'...three year council house modernisation plan cut completely.' *Congleton, Cheshire*.  
'All major schemes except one new building project have been stopped.' *Hartlepool, Cleveland*.

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'COUPLES WHO earn more than £7,000 a year between them are being told they are too rich to live in a council house. The ban has been slapped on by Elmbridge Council in Surrey. Already it has meant that some couples are being taken off the housing list.'

*Quote from the Daily Mirror 23 January 1981.*

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'...no new houses, no further improvement schemes for council dwellings, no new general improvement area schemes, no further adaptations for the disabled...'

*West Derbyshire.*

1.4 million households are

without basic amenities; one million council homes have major damp; an unspecified number of people are living in unsuitable homes—children in high rise flats, disabled people in homes with staircases. Today at least one million households are acutely short of space. Twenty per cent of Glasgow households are overcrowded.

Shelter deals with thousands of cases of homelessness and unsatisfactory housing—cases like this:

'Mrs M, her husband and her two sons occupied one room in the basement of a multi-occupied house. Mrs P, her husband and her son occupied the adjacent room. They shared the use of a cooker under the stairs, as well as sharing bath and WC with several other tenants. They reported severe damp and were also paying high rents. A home visit confirmed the damp and disrepair, and Environmental Health Inspectors were brought in. On contacting the Housing Department, Shelter



was told that both families were high up on the waiting list, but that there was no prospect of re-housing because of the shortage of two-bedroom units in the borough.'

At least four million households are living in substandard accommodation. In inner London one home in every seven is classed as unfit for human habitation, although most of England's unfit homes are in the north. One council estate in Hackney, London, was condemned as unfit on completion and will have to be rebuilt.

'Could you please advise me. The wet is coming in all over my house, down my bedroom wall, through the carpet and ceiling. I have had three different builders but they never came back. One wanted over £900, I have not got that kind of money. It is making me ill with worry. I cannot sleep at night. Over a long period I have been paying out money for repairs from my pension... The dampness is doing my health no good... Please help me. I am using oil, also many candles to try to warm the place. I don't know what to do really. I only know I cannot put up with another winter like last.' (Letter to Shelter)

One in 15 households in England are on council or housing association waiting lists. The numbers waiting for accommodation on these lists increased by 12 per cent last year to a total of 1.2 million. Many councils will not allow people to even put their name down unless they fulfil certain criteria: residence in the area for one to five years (each council varies); no single people; sometimes waiting lists are restricted to people with a housing crisis.

The number of homeless households accepted by councils is at a record high, but twice this number apply for help and are turned down.

'I am a young married lady living with my husband and little boy and expecting a baby soon. We shall become homeless at the end of October as we are living at a holiday caravan which closes through the winter. We cannot stay on at the site as there would be no water, sewage disposal or electricity, and caravans are very difficult to keep warm in wintery conditions which would be a terrible risk to a newborn baby. It is impossible to find

rented accommodation which will accept children. The price of property in this area is so high that a mortgage would be impossible for us. The local council refuse to help us, but say all they can do is put us on the housing list in a year's time and meanwhile place our children in a home. The thought of being separated from my children is unbearable and is driving me to despair...' (Letter to Shelter)

This was the situation in 1980. The Shelter report does not stop there; it tells us how it is going to get worse.

Birmingham has 107,000 older (pre-1919) dwellings, of which 7,000 are so run down they will be demolished. Of the remaining 100,000 homes 39,000 are substandard and in need of improvement. Over the next five years another 20,000 are expected to deteriorate, and 32,000 more will be substandard by 1990. In nine years time, if the Government continues on its path of cuts, Birmingham will have 9,000 suitable homes out of the original number. The City of Birmingham's Housing Strategy and Investment Programme 1980/84 says: 'If positive action is not taken immediately there will be a substantial fall in the overall standard of housing in the city over the next five to ten years.'

## 'And I'll blow your house down'



The level of arrears of repairs and installation of basic amenities for England's housing stock has reached £14.2 billion, according to the Association of Metropolitan Authorities.

Shelter predict that by 1984 there will be as many as two million households registered on waiting lists. Today the average waiting period for a council home is six years; by 1984 it could be 20 years. In many areas only 'emergency' cases will ever stand a chance of being housed; short-term accommodation (bed and breakfast) for the homeless will become critically over-populated in cities; and 'any ordinary family in need of a rented home will be

forced through the trauma and indignity of homelessness or dreadful housing conditions before they will get somewhere to live.'

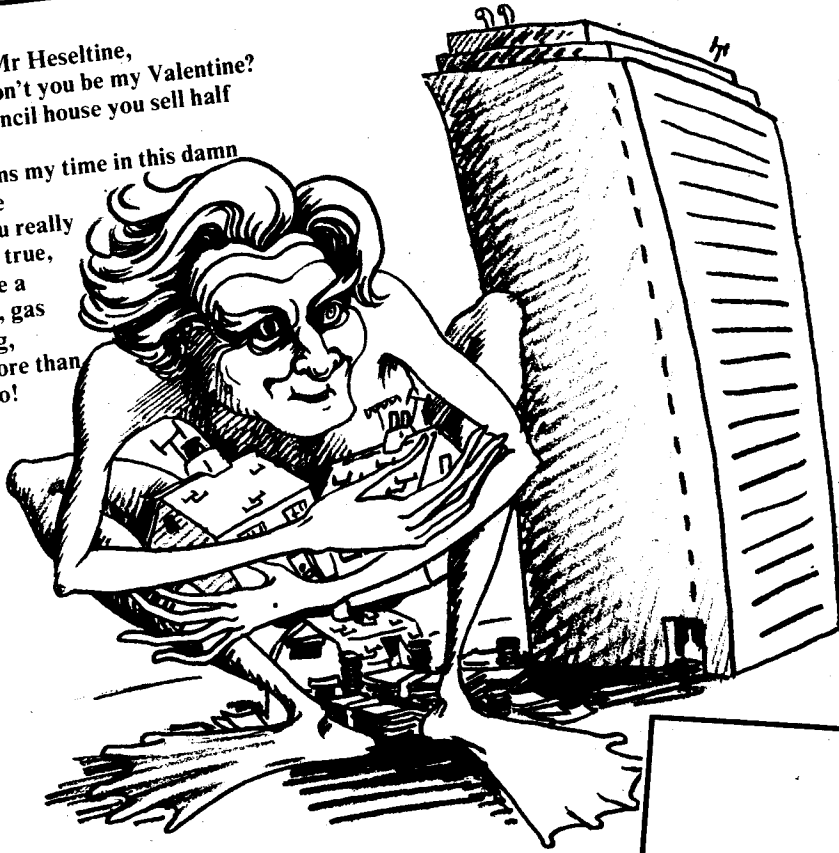
At the present rate of demolition and building it would take 500 years to replace England's existing housing stock. The Shelter report concludes by saying: 'It is neither alarmist nor partisan to predict a disaster in housing. The train has already entered the tunnel and the tunnel is blocked.'

*And I'll Blow Your House Down* - £1.50 plus 15p postage from Shelter Publications, 157 Waterloo Road, London SE1.

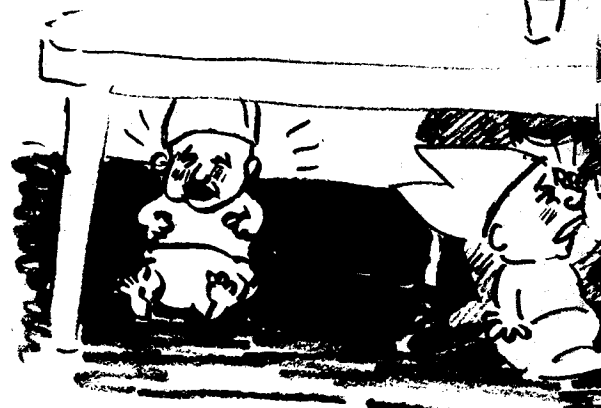
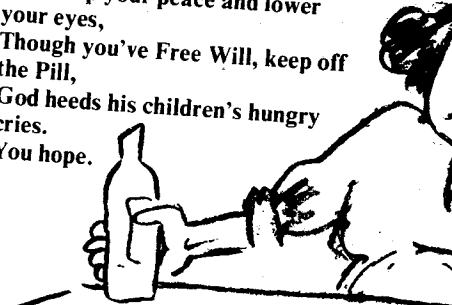
Harriet Sherwood



Dearest Mr Heseltine,  
Please won't you be my Valentine?  
Each council house you sell half  
price  
Lengthens my time in this damn  
high-rise  
So if you really  
love me true,  
Give me a  
garden, gas  
heating,  
and more than  
one loo!

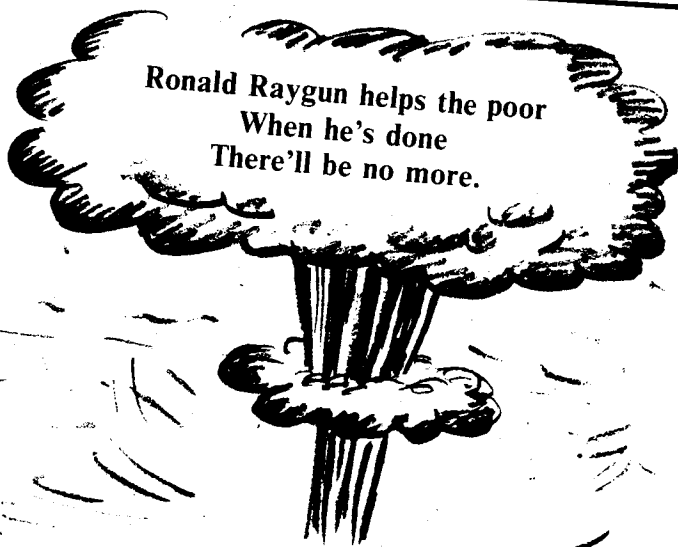


Here's Pope John Paul, don't  
criticise,  
Just keep your peace and lower  
your eyes,  
Though you've Free Will, keep off  
the Pill,  
God heeds his children's hungry  
cries.  
You hope.



# Happy Valentines Day

*Cartoons by Sophie Grillet poems by L*



Ronald Raygun helps the poor  
When he's done  
There'll be no more.



U.S.A



Little Miss Moffat  
Sat on a tuffet  
Was happy and wanted to stay.  
Down came Willie White Law  
And issued an Order  
Deporting Miss Moffat away.

Dee Davies



A WARDER brought Sarah to the Governor's office, a large well-furnished room with paintings of high-ranking police and prison officers lining the walls. The Governor sat at a large table. Behind her on the floor lay a big honey-coloured dog.

'Sit down,' said the Governor, and Sarah sat, head bowed, quite still. She did not look at the Governor, or respond to anything she said.

She had been given a six months' sentence, and her children had been taken into care. It was the thought of the children that broke her spirit. In six months, even four with remission for good behaviour, they could get into all sorts of trouble, and she would not be able to help and comfort them. She could not bear the thought and became so depressed that she wanted to end it all. This desire took hold of her completely and consumed all her waking hours.

She looked long and hard for the right implement, and eventually found, and hid, a piece of broken glass. After the lights went out one night she slashed both wrists and lay down on her bunk to wait for the end.

It was an unusually restless night. Someone screamed. Someone else screamed back. Then shrill voices and screams reverberated throughout the cell area. The lights suddenly went on, and Sarah's two cell mates got out of bed to try and make out what was happening. They saw Sarah's bed covered in blood, and themselves started screaming. They went on until a warder came.

Sarah was alive, just. She was whisked off to the prison hospital. She was given blood transfusions, and after some days was pronounced out of danger.

### Summoned

When she was better she was summoned before the prison governor. And here she was, across the table from her, a lost soul not caring about anything.

The governor went on talking. 'You did give the other women a terrible fright,' she said. 'Such things give the place a bad name, as though you were being mistreated. That isn't so, is it?'

No answer, 'Have you any particular complaint against any warder? Have they broken any rules?'

She droned on, As she did so something stirred inside Sarah. There was something about her voice that seemed vaguely familiar. It must be the faint trace of a Yorkshire accent, Sarah also came from Yorkshire.

But no, there was more than that. There was something about the intonation of the voice that stirred deep memories.

Out of the corner of her eye she glanced up at the Governor as she went prattling on. A woman in her forties, probably the same age as Sarah, upright, confident, self-assured, a woman who had risen to the top, no doubt by her own efforts. There was something vaguely familiar about that face too.

Sarah did not hear anything the Governor was saying. She was consumed by the nagging pull of memories evoked by the familiar ring of the voice and look of the face.

The Governor's name was Mrs. Hall. As Sarah sat at the other side of the table, lost in her thoughts, her eyes wandered about her. Papers and forms were lying about on the table, The Governor's signature was on many of them! B. Hall. Suddenly her eye caught hold of one, signed more fully—Bronwen Hall.

Welsh Bronwen, with a Yorkshire accent.

husband left, without warning.

She had had to bring up the three children all on her own, with no income except what she got from social security. Many a time she had been in utmost despair, and it was only care for the children that kept her going. For them she had fought the difficulties that dogged her footsteps constantly. Poverty was not the worst. By careful managing she had kept up a respectable appearance, and the children had not wanted for basic essentials, especially food. It was the constant manoeuvring and haggling with the social security, the housing office, and

# Two Worlds

## Short story by Chanie Rosenberg

Sarah jumped, as the vague memories suddenly crystallized. Bronwen Jones and Sarah Thompson came from the same village in Yorkshire. Bronwen's father was a village teacher, Sarah's a farmer. They went to the same primary school, were in the same class, They went to the same secondary school at the same time, and left in the same year, twenty-seven years ago. They had always been good friends, had been very fond of each other, and in and out of each other's houses. Their families had been on good terms.

Then Sarah had come to London, after leaving school. Both her parents died soon after, and she never went back to the village.

Life in London had been exciting to begin with. She was popular with the friends she made and led a busy social life. After some years she fell in love and married. Difficulties started creeping in. Housing became a big problem, especially after the first child was born and they had to leave the rooms they had found. They started squabbling over little things, then over work, money, and the rotten accommodation they could not seem to improve on. After the third child, her

every other bureaucracy she was forced to deal with, the daily humiliations handed out to her as a husbandless mother dependent on their goodwill, that pulled her down. She had stood up to it all and come out on top.

That was until, for a single instant, temptation got the better of her, and she picked up a doll from Woolworth's for her baby's seventh birthday, popped it into her shopping bag and walked out without paying for it. She was stopped, arrested and taken to court.

### Humiliation

The £20 fine was the beginning of the end for her. This final humiliation, after years of struggling, was more than she could bear. She got into a panic about food for the children, and after being without meat for a month, she stole three pounds of it, and was again unlucky. Worse, when the store detective approached her she panicked and lashed out at him, cutting him so badly with the buckle of her handbag that he had needed stitches on his face.

She sat huddled across the table from



the prison governor—two opposing worlds, whose origins had been the same small Yorkshire village.

A spark of life entered Sarah's soul. What an extraordinary turn of fate that their lives should converge once again like this. Here was Bronwen, the supreme success, in her early forties governor of a large women's prison, arbiter of the lives of hundreds of inmates. And here was Sarah, total failure, beaten into the ground.

It did not seem as if the Governor recognized Sarah. It was certainly much harder than for her to recognize Bronwen. She went on talking about all sorts of matters that did not touch Sarah at all—the efficiency of the prison, the pride it took in its care for the inmates, the commitment and hard work of the warders, the good name of the prison, public opinion, the press, the diligence and courage of the police among whom she had many friends.

### Lethargy

Sarah pulled herself out of her lethargy, as she had done so many times before, and considered the situation. To reveal their connection would be extremely painful for both of them—Bronwen perhaps even more than Sarah. Sarah was used to humiliations, she had stood up to them throughout her married life. But how would Bronwen, the law in this institution,

## *"The choice was between pride and salvation"*

react to an affinity with a wretch fallen foul of it?

At the same time the thought of possible rehabilitation gave Sarah the strength to try and leave her feelings out of the depths to which they had sunk. She was used to finding the emotional means of surviving when there was something to survive for, and this situation presented the possibility of a radical change. Sarah's life had been too hard for any of her old friendships to be preserved, and she was completely alone in the world. Here was a lifeline, the oldest and warmest friendship of her life. 'Sweet Bronwen,' she used to be called, and that was no misnomer. She was always kind to all the animals, and would weep over any maltreatment of them. Judging by the obvious affection between her and the dog, called Honey, she must have preserved these feelings.

Sarah tussled with the dilemma. The choice was between pride and salvation. The former she had swallowed time out of number. The latter had never been possible.

As the Governor went on talking Sarah started fidgeting. Some colour came into her pale cheeks, and she lifted up her head. She had decided what she was going to do.

She didn't take in any of the wise words

the Governor was saying, but waited for a pause in her speech to come in. It took some time, as the Governor seemed to be carried away on the wings of a great moral mission.

Eventually she noticed Sarah, who till now had sat still with bowed head, staring at her.

'Well, Sarah, what have you to say?'

'Do you know...' began Sarah, but could not carry on. She stopped, and hung her head again.

## *"Where would we be without law and order?"*

'What?' A pause. 'Do I know what? Come on, Sarah.'

It was too hard for Sarah to carry on, and she remained silent.

'Do I know why you did it?' the Governor went on. 'Whatever the reason, you must not let yourself go. You must get the better of your temptations. Just imagine what would happen if everyone went about breaking the law just as they pleased? But your attempt to take your own life is perhaps the most serious thing. Look at the harm it could do if the papers wanted to blow it up.'

She paused again. Again Sarah took the opportunity. She looked up.

'Do you know....who I am.'

'Certainly. Sarah Cullen.'

'I used to be Sarah Thompson.'

'Yes?'

'Do you remember?'

'Remember what?'

'Me.'

'No. Should I?'

'Do you remember Middleton? The Thompson family, my family. The school—Miss Woods. Mr Graham, the vicar. The big house where Dr Whitby lived. The little foal in the field, the one we called Sheba. Brutus, the big Alsatian.' She stopped, sitting bolt upright.

Recognition dawned slowly in the Governor's eyes. Her face went pink. She shifted about in her seat and swallowed hard. After a long silence, she said in a strained voice, 'Sarah Thompson. Why, yes. Good heavens, who would have thought we'd ever meet again. Twenty-five years, no, it must be twenty-seven at least.'

Sarah waited, her nerves taut.

'What happened?' asked the Governor.

Sarah related simply and honestly the main events of her life in London and the incidents that had brought her to her present state.

'Dear me, dear me,' said the Governor, after a pause. 'It has been hard. But you

couldn't stop yourself giving in to temptation. What a pity.'

Sarah went on talking, her face flushed, her voice rising with excitement.

'Do you remember how we used to try and ride Sheba bare-backed. And how we used to fall off every time. And once you broke your leg and I had to almost carry you home.'

'Astonishing.' A pause. 'The way that poor store detective was so badly scratched.'

Now Sarah had found her voice the memories flooded out.

'And we were always stopping Brutus chasing the cats. You used to cry when the cats darted up the trees and got stuck there and couldn't come down. You always climbed up to rescue them. You always loved animals.'

A faint smile moved the Governor's lips for a brief moment. She stroked the dog. 'However hard things are, we just can't go around stealing other people's property. Where would we be without law and order?'

Sarah rattled on excitedly. 'And do you remember the day your father took us to the circus in town and the lion went berserk and your dad....'

Her voice trailed off. It began to dawn on her that the Governor's world and hers were now travelling in different orbits, and that she could by no means at her disposal bring them together. The Governor did not once reminisce about their past life together, but kept tut-tutting about recent misdemeanours. Sarah relived it vividly, casting her present predicament aside momentarily.

### Trouble

The Governor looked at her watch.

'I'm afraid,' she said, 'you caused us a lot of unnecessary trouble. I am bound by the rules in such cases. Prime consideration must be the good of this place and your own safety. This gives me little latitude. I fear you might be foolish again if we don't give you enough time to recover fully. So, although with remission you might have left after four months, I am afraid I have no option but to disallow the remission. You will find this in your best interests.'

Sarah gasped. She half rose out of the chair and lifted her arm—to speak or to lunge out, she did not know which.

The Governor quickly rang a bell on her desk for the warder, and got up, circumventing any action on Sarah's part.

'I must leave now to go to a meeting. Warder, please take Mrs Cullen back. Come, Honey,' she called to the dog, stroking him as he wagged his tail and jumped on her. 'Good-day, Mrs Cullen.'



# Paedophilia

CONSPIRING to corrupt morals is an old charge being brought against four members of the Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE). The Department of Public Prosecutions pressed these charges in August 1979 as a result of an 'expose' of PIE in the News of the World.

PIE was set up simply to put paedophiles—people who are sexually attracted to children—in touch with one another. This has

caused some controversy as the charges are mainly concerned with the contacts' lists in the newsletter sent by PIE to members. There is some feeling that our children are at risk of being raped, perverted and corrupted by dirty old men in macs.

Children and young people are often not able to make any kind of choice about their lives and the people they relate to is because society certainly

does its best to ensure that children learn as little about life as late as possible. They are in a situation where they can never have any kind of equal relationship with anyone older than them.

Children often initiate relationships, both sexual and other kinds, with adults themselves. For example, many teachers and youth leaders have close emotional ties with the children in their charge and often contribute considerably to the children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

Lewis Carroll, the author of Alice in Wonderland liked fondling and cuddling young girls. He wrote his stories for them and seemed to have an understanding of the dream world many girls inhabit when life becomes tedious and they want to shut out the nagging of the adult world.

There are risks to every relationship, but paedophiles are often more concerned with the welfare of children than for example teachers who run cadet corps and want absolute power over the pupils.

Adults are in power and

they control children's lives already. But that doesn't mean that we should persecute people for finding children sexually attractive. A lot of children definitely like being fondled, petted and carried by adults. As long as the adults are parents, or in the same position as parents, we do not mind. This is true even when the child, often a growing girl, hates being fondled by her father or uncle, but sees no way out of the situation other than leaving home. Society turns a blind eye.

When others raise the question of sexuality it is seen as a threat to both our children and society as a whole. It is important to see that our children are looked after and taught in ways which help them to learn how to get the most out of all their work, play and relationships now and as adults.

While we may not agree with PIE, we should not allow them to be victimised for raising questions that society should be dealing with in more constructive ways.

Gays who work with children will be seriously threatened by this trial—parents, teachers, community workers etc. Industrial tribunals who have already upheld sackings of gay people who worked with children. Clwyd council have adopted a policy of not employing homosexuals!

*Mary Phillips  
South London  
Womens Voice*

(Mother of four).

• We know that this is a controversial issue. This is only one woman's views. We would like to know what our other readers think about paedophilia. Write in to: Womens Voice, PO Box 82, London, E2 9DS.

**Adults are in power and they control children's lives already**



Will Mary Whitehouse use this trial to clamp down on sex for young people?



The campaign Against Public Morals (CAPM) have published a pamphlet called 'Paedophilia and Public Morals'. CAPM have five basic demands:

- 1 Stop the trial of the PIE four.
- 2 Drop the charges against the PIE four.
- 3 For the right of paedophiles to organise.
- 4 No state harassment of young people.
- 5 For the abolition of conspiracy laws.



# WOMENS HEALTH

## A million housewives...

VALIUM is the most commonly prescribed drug. One in five women and one in ten men take it. It is very often prescribed to patients who have got cancer to help them 'cope' with the idea of having a possibly fatal disease. Yet recently there has been evidence published that valium itself is linked with cancer.

The work done so far is not conclusive but the results are very disturbing. In 1979 a London doctor, Dr Basil Stoll, reported that women who were taking tranquillizers before breast cancer was diagnosed were more likely to have rapidly spreading tumours. Breast cancers are usually very slow growing and by the time that a woman goes to her doctor the lump on her breast may have been growing there for anything between three and thirty years! She may well die of old age before she dies of cancer.

### Research

However four out of ten women seem to have very rapidly growing cancers that kill within six years. Some researchers believe that the common use of valium by women before and after diagnosis of cancer may have something to do with this. The most rational course of action would seemingly to suspend the use of valium and plough in money for further research.

Some researchers in Canada have been working on their link for three years but the authorities and the medical bodies that give out funds have refused to consider their latest application for more money. Horrobin, one of the researchers pointed out, "only an 'expert' could suggest that a possible connection between one of society's commonest drugs and one of the commonest forms of death was not worth investigating".

Horrobin has published work which showed that rats which had been given valium had tumours that had grown three times bigger than tumours in rats which had not been given the drug. Horrobin argues that one of the reasons that the link has not been discovered before is that the cancer disappears if the dose is raised.

Cancer starts when the chemical balance that controls the rate at which a cell in your body grows is upset. It starts growing into a lump containing millions of cancerous cells. Horrobin believes that it may be possible for

a small dose of a drug to upset the balance whilst a large dose simply kills it off. Researchers will quite often dismiss results as mistakes if a larger dose of the drug doesn't produce bigger cancers.

The most recent study suggests that valium may promote cancer. It is believed that healthy cells are able to some extent to control the growth of a cancerous cell, but some substances may interfere with this mechanism.

Valium is marketed by Hoffman La Roche. The company has hired experts to counter the claims by Horrobin and his colleagues and have published denials. 'There is no evidence at all to doubt the safety of the drug in humans'.

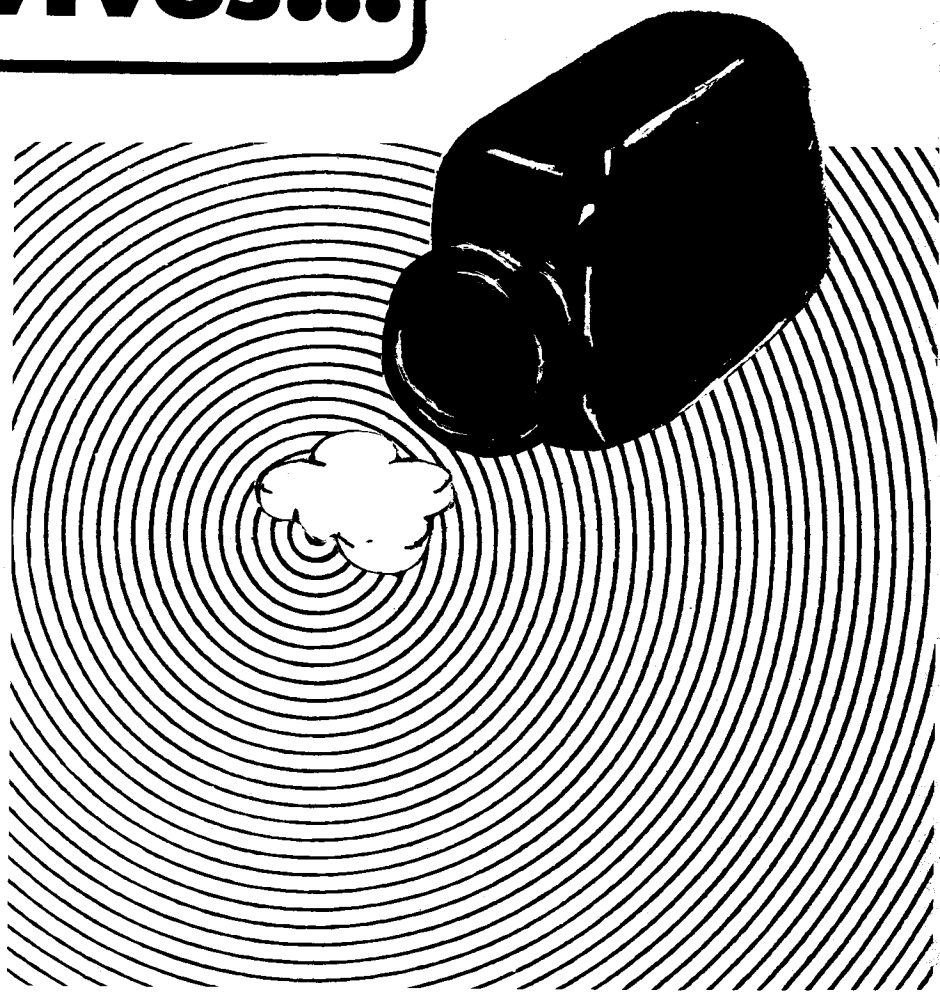
Just as presumably there was no need to doubt the safety of Thalidomide. That experience demonstrated that when the chemical

companies are faced with the loss of substantial profits, safety comes low on the list of priorities. These companies are immensely powerful.

There seems to be no support either from the established 'watchdogs'. The Committee on Safety of Medicines have decided to do nothing on the basis of Horrobin's work, and another committee has stated 'no evidence to link it with cancer'.

Nevertheless how can the research done by respected scientists in well known centres be so easily dismissed. We should ask ourselves who appoints the people on the committees? What are their priorities? Possibly if the panels were made up of ordinary people then the decision would be made to put more money into research and monitor drugs much more carefully.

**Ewa Barker**



# REVIEWS

## Romance

### THE BLEEDING HEART MARILYN FRENCH

MAYBE it's wrong to want to compare a writer's second book with their first but as a follow-up to *The Womens Room* I thought that Marilyn French's new novel would have a lot to beat. The book is already in heavy demand and has all the marks of becoming another best-seller.

When you read the book it is easy to understand why: Marilyn French's style makes for compelling reading and she is both sensitive and powerful. However there is something missing. Or perhaps to be more accurate, she expands on a theme which was implicit in *The Women's Room* and leads the reader to a conclusion which is both disappointing and unsatisfactory.

The book can be summed up as a love story with a difference. The two main characters, Victor and Dolores, are plucked out of their everyday lives and dropped together in England. This is no ordinary couple. Both have lived through horrific experiences. Through this somewhat contrived set-up Marilyn French begins to put across forceful arguments about the position of women in society in general, and their position in a relationship with a man in particular.

What she is saying is that women are oppressed because men are conditioned into their role as oppressors, and women are conditioned into the role of being oppressed. The way out of it is through the politics of the individual.

Through rigorous self-analysis and self-criticism we can break out of these roles which society has prepared for us. And yes, Victor and Dolores try it, and it appears to strengthen their relationship and make them more understanding of each other even if it doesn't completely work.



But then Victor and Dolores are in a position to indulge in this sort of activity. If you have to get the kids ready for school, go out to work, do the shopping and cook tea then this kind of 'solution' is completely out of the question. It is, in fact, a luxury that very few of us could afford, which leads me to the main criticism of the book. And that is that by dividing society into two classes of men and women who are engaged in a power struggle Marilyn French neglects the differences between women of different classes. She assumes that all women are in the same boat and that if we all work as individuals to liberate ourselves, then everything will be all right.

But, these criticisms apart, the *Bleeding Heart* is a very good read and there is a lot that rings true in the description of Victor and Dolores' relationship even if you can't agree with the conclusion. Wait though, to get it out of your local library, because it's very expensive to buy!

Claire Harris

### FACES IN THE WATER JANET FRAME THE WOMEN'S PRESS £2.75

A STORY about women and 'madness'. A picture of eight years of existence in mental hospitals showing the patients' feelings of desperation, hopelessness, further isolation, and deep fear. We see institutionalised women, dependent and helpless. Any confidence they had in themselves has been shattered.

Istinia's survival is remarkable. She suffers the 'treatments' of pills, insulin and electric shocks, narrowly escaping a lobotomy (or 'personality change'). Perhaps she survived because she saw that the aim of these practices was to re-train and rehabilitate her, leaving her 'fitted, my mind cut and tailored to the ways of the world'.

If you were unco-operative you were moved to a more 'insane' ward. If you were

submissive and obeyed orders quickly you were improving.

The system tries to make you 'normal'; it also decides what that means. It has decided that women are prone to mental illness: we're neurotic, depressed, obsessed, manic. And sometimes we are. But this book underlines that the causes are rarely treated: society, our families and relationships can go unexamined—the point is to make us fit in.

Fay Weldon's TV play *Life for Christine*, showed how Christine's rebellion against restrictions was treated as mental illness. Her future got bleaker as she moved down the spiral of more reaction, harder institution, and she too is remarkable for not believing she is crazy.

Another good account of the short shocks the 'sane' give the 'insane' is in Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*. Why not get these two novels from your library?

Celia Shalom  
Tottenham Women's Voice

...and reality





Coastguard

## Some breakthrough

'In my five years as chairman of the EOC I have seen many changes for the better in the status of women in this country' writes Baroness Lockwood in a new pamphlet, *Breakthrough*, from the Equal Opportunities Commission.

Which presumably is why the EOC has chosen to ignore the statistics and instead produced a glossy booklet which contains 40 enthusiastic examples of women and men who have broken traditional job barriers and are anxious to encourage others to do the same.

'I hope those who are gloomy about the rate of progress toward equality between men and women will be encouraged,' concludes the Baroness in the introduction. Unfortunately there is very little encouragement to be had. The collection of women and men interviewed is interesting, off-beat and definitely non-traditional. A silversmith (self-employed), a Moss Bros. saddler, a station master (with a degree in industrial relations), an airline pilot, and a Football Club Secretary are all among the people who give advice about how women can get into new kinds of jobs.

They are successful. Yet they don't reflect reality for most working women, and for working class women in particular. Recent surveys show that rather than pro-

gress towards desegregation in jobs, there is actually a tendency toward greater segregation than ever in the jobs that men and women do.

Although over a million women entered the workforce in the sixties, most of these went into jobs that were traditionally women's work. Few went into male dominated jobs. As a result nearly half of women workers (45%) work in totally segregated jobs where there are no men at all.

Employers explain the segregation by saying that women don't apply for traditionally male jobs. But there are other reasons too.

Less than 2% of apprenticeships in skilled manual labour go to women—a figure which has changed very little in the past few years. Unions and careers advisors as well as women are responsible for that.

Where have all the women gone then? Presumably into the increasing number of part-time jobs. For as social services and nurseries are cut, women will continue to go into part-time rather than full time work in order to leave time to cope with the increased workload at home.

Small wonder therefore that a recent article in the *Employment Gazette* ended with this observation:

'The statistical picture is one of profound differences between the way men and



Chief superintendent of police. Is this what we're fighting for?

women are employed; differences in the way women are recruited, in their entry qualifications and in-service training, in the jobs they do; in their hours of work, basic and overtime; in pension, sick pay and other benefit rights. These facts describe a pattern of segregation and

differentiation which is patently beyond the reach of existing legislation against sexual discrimination.'

It's a picture which is clearly beyond the understanding of the EOC as well. If one swallow doesn't make a summer, equally a few female plumbers and pilots don't make for equality.

**Anna Paczuska**



Plumber—but daddy owns the firm



# LETTERS



## No sign of a creche

*Dear Womens Voice,*  
I've recently started a new job. After several weeks and the loss of the use of the canteen during breaks, I attended the first union meeting held since I started. It was the NALGO Annual General Meeting—held in the evening, with the bonus of a buffet tea.

I was certain that a large proportion of the members were women, but I could only spot one. However, more women wandered in later—I suppose they had to dash home to feed the kids before the meeting started, missing the benefit of a ready-made tea for themselves. I didn't see any sign of a creche which meant a lot of women had to miss the meeting altogether. Why don't they hold meetings in work time so that all members can take part?

The meeting started at last. I looked at the platform—

seven men and one woman—and guess who was writing the minutes!

We were in luck! Our General Secretary had found his way to the provinces to address us. He said how deplorable the 6% limit on the public sector was and how our union would support a TUC stand against it. Great? Then he said how, of course, we had to have pay restraints—it was just that the 6% was rather on the low side! I thought it was the bosses, not the unions that talked about pay restraint.

We eventually got to debate a motion. The speaker was very eloquent—but he had the cheek to explain that the reason more people hadn't come along to support him was because of the Ripper! He said that this was the obvious reason for fewer women than

men attending. Predictably, he didn't advocate doing anything about the timing of meetings to solve this problem.

Now we could moan until the cows come home about the lack of representation for women, times of meetings, lack of creche facilities etc. Let's not fool ourselves—the men who dominate our unions.

will not do a damned thing unless we force them to. So it's up to us to get along to meetings—if you've got kids, get your Womens Voice or SWP group to help with the babysitting. It's only us that can change things for the better—no one will do it for us.

**Pat Jones**  
Huddersfield

## Keeping in touch

*Dear Womens Voice*  
I enjoy reading WV and find it informative on the various struggles and action of politically aware women in Britain. Of course the only way women can win *ANY* struggle is to be organised through political commitment.

WV, also keeps certain non-British women and feminists in touch with the British women's working class struggle. We feel that there is no significant difference between the struggle of working class women who are oppressed in any part of the world. WV also seems to feature on the oppression of women not only in Britain but in other parts of the world as well. This is very enjoyable and morally supportive to know, and shatters the myth of womens liberation which the capitalist international press seem to continually indulge in.

Enclosed is a cheque for £2.00 for copies of WV for 6 months.

I hope that the New Year 1981, will bring more success

into the Women's Liberation Movement in Britain and for the left too.

**C. Gomes**  
East London.

## Have you tried this one

*Dear Womens Voice,*  
I was very interested to read your article on cystitis, having suffered from it for many years. I would like to suggest another alternative to the use of antibiotics, and that is a strong wine antiseptic which can be prescribed by a doctor. As far as I know there are no bad side effects from the usage of a wine antiseptic.

I consider this important although the alternative that Angela Kilmartin suggests, drinking copiously has been successful for me, if I'm very careful to catch the cystitis in time.

This also leads me to the importance of treating the cystitis as early as possible. I have found that if I do need



**ANNA PACZUSKA**

**SISTERS AND WORKERS**

**SISTERS AND WORKERS; ten years of the struggle for womens liberation and socialism. A new Womens Voice/SWP pamphlet out now.**

60p plus 15p postage, from Socialists Unlimited, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London, N4 2DE.



## Ripper: are we safer?

*Dear Womens Voice,*  
The media coverage of the arrest of Peter Sutcliffe, accused of murdering Leeds student, Jacqueline Hill, is dangerously sensational. It has made it impossible for this man to have an unbiased trial, and it has the danger of making the women in Yorkshire feel safer.

However the press emphasis that Jacqueline Hill was on her way home at a respectable time is important, because it shows that even getting a bus home along a main road early in the evening is no guarantee of safety. The fact that there is wasteland nearby is irrelevant as practically anywhere there is a nearby moor, park or unlit backstreet. No-one can realistically avoid going out in darkness when it starts at 4pm, but shift workers are particularly vulnerable.

I work on the buses in Leeds and recently early and late staff buses have had to go right to a woman's door if requested. Trade unions should take up the issue of transport for all women on late or early shifts. In and around Chapeltown, Leeds scene of the Ripper murders, there is the most noticeable police presence even although other areas of Leeds have worse reputations for other crimes.

How can the police protect prostitutes while trying to track them down? Legalizing it might reduce the violence and would make kerb crawling unnecessary. Besides, as an activity which doesn't interfere with any unwilling person, it should be legal. Men in Leeds have realised that women might suspect them of being the 'Ripper'. However as women, we never know whether or not any man, who is a stranger, is dangerous, especially when it is dark and quiet. Men should have more tact than the man in your article, who offered to walk a woman he didn't know to her door.  
Chris Slater  
Leeds

to see a doctor then I quite often have to wait a few days. It is possible to buy a reasonable urinary antiseptic over a pharmacy counter. I would be grateful if you print this, as I am very concerned with the over use of antibiotics where less harmful alternatives are available.  
G S Haden  
Aude, France

## XMAS?

*Dear Jane*  
I am always slightly amused (and dismayed) by the condescending attitude of most left-wing trendies towards Christmas and the celebration thereof. It would seem perfectly possible to celebrate Christmas (as we do) simply as a pagan/religious mid-winter festival without feeling so guilt-ridden and miserable. The nuclear family, after all, is a 20th century invention and hopefully will even die out. But it seems to have left its mark on many people who every year dutifully return to their original nuclear family to repeat the agony of early years.

Personally I feel quite optimistic about our ability to create our own festivities without always making Christmas a family affair (it certainly never started off that way!) And I can even go as far as to say ... that I enjoy Christmas.  
Mary  
South East London

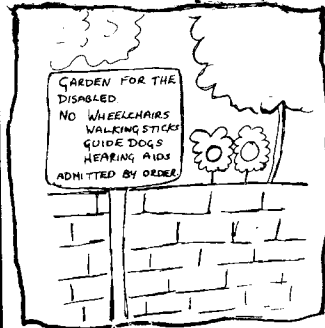
## DIRTY LINEN

This is International Year of Disabled People. Just in case you had already forgotten. So far we have two reports of great achievements for the year.

One. London Airport has imposed an extra surcharge of £15 on disabled people who need help to board or disembark their airplanes.

Two. The Sunday Times is running a special competition to select the best design for a garden for the disabled. The winning garden will be specially built and on display at the Chelsea Flower Show, in May.

Details of the competition, sent out to entrants, carry a disclaimer from the organisers of the Show. Special facilities for the disabled are not available, and as it always gets very crowded they ... well, they don't actually tell the disabled to stay away, but the meaning is clear!



A judge in Bonn, West Germany, has revived an 100-year-old law which compels children to do housework. Children under six are excused this onerous sentence. But by the time they

get to 14 teenagers are expected to do a whole range of tasks—shopping, cleaning, washing up.

It sounds just the sort of law that would appeal to our PM.

The first 40 'gun girls' have been receiving their training in the British Army, much to the delight of press and television.

Browning pistols and Sterling sub-machine guns will be normal issue for the women, to 'defend themselves while the men are needed elsewhere', apparently.

There hasn't been the hue and cry that met the issuing of guns to women soldiers in America because 'our' girls will only be using them in self-defence, not combat.

But that is bound to follow, and this is one piece of equality we are very definitely against.

Just in case you've been saving your Heinz can labels in the hope of helping your local school get some new sports equipment—you're too late.

This disgusting promotion, which cost Heinz £1 million and earned them a fortune, was exposed by the Daily Mirror who interviewed one headmistress of a junior school. She had collected in 15,000 labels. And received from Heinz—six tennis balls.

Just in case you thought there had been a radical change in the nature of women's work over the last few years the following tables will put your mind at rest:

- 99 per cent of bank managers are men.
- 96 per cent of chartered accountants are men.
- Over 99 per cent of civil engineers are men.
- Over 99 per cent of surgeons are men
- 90 per cent of barristers are men.
- 92 per cent of solicitors are men.
- Over 99 per cent of chartered surveyors are men.
- 98 per cent of university professors are men.
- 83 per cent of telephone operators are women.
- 99 per cent of typists and secretaries are women.
- 82 per cent of shop assistants are women.
- 91 per cent of office cleaners are women
- 92 per cent of nurses are women.

# Dear Jane

OVER the last three months this column has raised some of the problems that women face if they try to break away from conventional roles and lifestyles. Looking at how difficult it can be being a single woman in a couple based society, the ties that draw us back into the family at Christmas and how hard it is to find personal time and space.

The conflicts and dilemmas that women experience in these and many other situations frequently produce an emotion that many of us are more than familiar with ... GUILT.

The dictionary defines guilt as a sense of 'wrong-doing, arising out of real or imagined contravention of moral, religious or social standards'. Everyone is surrounded by these standards or codes of acceptable behaviour and roles. Women are

more intensely affected by these codes. We are defined, and often define ourselves by the reactions of other people to how we are, what we do etc. This creates a feeling that there are things we 'ought' to do, ranging from the trivial, 'I ought to wash my hair 'cos it's not nice to have greasy hair' to very personal areas of life, 'I ought to love my family, but I don't'.

Guilt is often a before or after emotion. Before guilt may be about deciding priorities, should you go to the important meeting/demonstration or should you go to your child's school play/mother's birthday dinner etc. There's guilt at putting political commitment before your family, and guilt that friends or comrades might think you are 'copping out'. After guilt is usually the 'Oh my God, what have I done variety!'

Desperately wanting to turn back the clock, and feeling filled with remorse. This might happen if you have sex with someone new and you are involved in a monogamous relationship. This is a double edged guilt, firstly at what has happened, but also what to do now, keep a guilty secret or risk hurting your partner's feelings if the truth is told.

Sexual guilt, and the dishonesty which can happen within a relationship, can distort and destroy. If guilt means half-truths about what we feel or want to do the relationship is false and distorted.

Guilt can also have a 'paralysing effect'. The conflicts can seem so intense and painful that doing or saying nothing is easier. Ending a relationship that has gone wrong may be dragged out

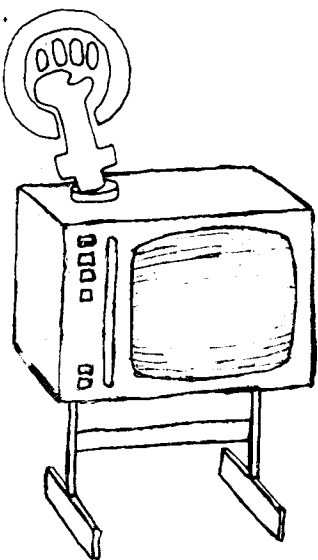
for a long time. Perhaps from fear of how the other person will feel, or that people will not understand, or be critical.

Guilt is a difficult emotion to deal with. It can range from vague worries and anxieties, what if this? what if that? To keen and painful feelings of remorse. What each of us should do when trying to deal with guilty feelings is to look at whose standards we are judging ourselves by? There are so many conflicting values around us, from parents, friends, conventions set by society. But, you can not please all the people all the time. If we set our own standards, and judge our actions, thoughts and desires by those, it is better than submitting to values that we don't accept or believe are right.

Jane Foster.

## Yours Worried

# Playing for time



played Fania Fenelon, in the true story of a Jewish musician who was in the French Resistance and the Communist Party. She escaped the gas chambers of Auschwitz in the last war by playing in a women's orchestra to entertain her Nazi captors.

Vanessa is a revolutionary socialist. She is totally opposed to fascism, to racism, to anti-semitism. Why did casting Vanessa as Fania spark off a campaign that brought threats against her life, the Jewish playwright's and producers' lives, the TV company and their children's lives? This was led by the Zionists, Jews themselves. Why? We must go back a little to understand.

After the terrible persecution of Jews in the last war, the state of Israel was set up so they would have a country of their own. But the land that became Israel had Palestinians living there. Israel was not just a new state, it was a Jewish state. So if you weren't a Jew you couldn't live there. The Palestinians were driven out into refugee camps. Some formed groups like the Palestinian Liberation Front to fight back. So a war developed between them and the hard-liners in Israel called Zionists.

That was what the campaign against Vanessa was about. As a socialist she is against all kinds of racism that sees Jews and blacks as inferior. But she is also against the religious racism of the Zionists who drove the Palestinians out of their land. So she openly supports the PLF. That's why the Zionists were against her.

sages of the film—racism of any kind is wrong. Divisions of any kind between the oppressed only weaken them. It's not just a simple horror story, but a message of humanity in the face of inhumanity. Fania never rejects anyone. The women look to her and through her draw slowly closer. They heal their divisions instead of saying, 'I am a Pole, I'm only a half-Jew, I am better'. Fania refuses to wear half the Jewish star to say she is half Jewish. The Nazis are shown as human too. The governess of the camp is beautiful and longs for a child. Yet she is cruel. To say Nazis are monsters dodges the issue that *could* happen again to anyone. Given the right conditions for fascism with mass unemployment, economic crisis and the workers movement smashed and the ruling class will turn to a fascist solution and draw ordinary people in.

And that's one of the mes-

Jeannie Shaw

I HOPE you didn't miss Vanessa Redgrave in 'Playing for Time' last month. Such a faultless, sensitive and moving film. Vanessa

# why I became a socialist



Jennifer Young

Becoming a socialist is not like being converted to a religion, a blinding flash of light followed by instant understanding. For many

women it's a long-drawn out process of experience and knowledge. *Womens Voice* spoke to Jennifer Young.

**W**HEN I was 15, and still at school, the *Polaris* submarine came to the Holy Loch, and that's when my political life began.

I lived in Greenock on the West of Scotland and to get to the Holy Loch in Dunoon you had to take the steamer from our town. And Greenock was always full of the American navy so there was no escaping that we had this nuclear weapon so close to our home.

I don't know what made us go on the demonstration, perhaps there was some kind of awareness there already, but that was the beginning. I joined CND and went along on the Aldermaston marches. I realised there was more to the argument than just banning the bomb, so in 1962 I joined the Young Socialists of the Labour Party.

Being in the YS was the only period of being in the Labour Party that I really enjoyed. There was so much political discussion. We had speakers along to all our meetings, and very little time was spent on business. We did things too—South Africa was a big issue then, with the boycott of food being organised, and I can remember going through the streets here with a coffin protesting at the political murders taking place there.

But we were also used as work horses for the Labour Party. We travelled round Scotland, canvassing in elections, by-elections, local elections. We felt it was important because the Tories were still in power.

The debates inside the LPYS were then much as they are now. We argued about structure and democracy, with the main opposition being organised around the Trotskyist papers *Young Guard* and *Keep Left*, just as much of it is now around the *Militant*.

I supported *Young Guard* but when they eventually left the Party in 1966/67 I decided to stay on and join the Labour Party proper. I was married then and my husband was in the Party. I suppose it was the easy option to stay.

It's always difficult to know how much is hindsight and what you really thought at the time but I think even then I was struck by the lack of political debate. I once tried to introduce political discussion into our monthly Greenock constituency meetings, and I was told there wasn't time for it! Our local execu-

tive committee had a cabinet vote system and once the line was decided they all voted the same way at our management meetings, so that stifled debate too. We were told that that was how trade unions operated and if it was good enough for them it was good enough for us.

The attitude to new and young people was always wrong. The answer to any new idea was 'we tried that in 1936' and that was the end of the matter.

**m**ost of our activity was around the elections and that was how my main disillusionment set in. The Greenock MP was a man called Dick Mabon, who treated the constituency with total contempt. But his was a safe seat with a 10,000 majority. Norman Buchan was the MP for the neighbouring, marginal seat. He was, and still is, a socialist whom I respect. In the 1970 election my husband became his election agent and I and others from Greenock worked in his constituency during the election. We were determined to ensure his return.

What we did do was cause one hell of a row. There was no such thing as comradeship here. Mabon could spare the support but wasn't prepared to. As it happened they both got into Parliament, but the Labour Government didn't!

My disillusionment had set in but it wasn't complete. You get tied up in the bureaucracy of it all and lulled into thinking you are there to run this election machine. You discussed the problems of local councillors or some Parliamentary report or other. But it isn't enough.

Soon after that I moved to Glasgow, on my own. I was still in the Labour Party and joined my local branch in Hillhead. I also got a job and joined the CPSA, the civil service union.

When my department was transferred to the Scottish office I went with it and found myself in a union branch with two members of the SWP (then the International Socialists) as chairman and secretary. That's when I began to see how things could get done.

In the branch and nationally the IS members, and a few others, were people who seemed to want to achieve something, change things, not just reforms, little bits here and there. I went with

them to the first Rank and File conference and I suppose that was like a blinding flash. I realised that here was something new, a new way to work.

I was delegated to Glasgow Trades Council and there as well met SWP people I agreed with. They put forward strong political arguments, always analysing what was happening. When Allende was shot in Chile we learnt the lessons of what happened. That never had happened in the Labour Party.

I became involved in the women's movement and the abortion campaign and the disillusionment went even deeper. The Labour Party wouldn't take the issue seriously. It was too much of a taboo subject and this was particularly true in Glasgow because of the Catholic influence and the dependence of some MPs and councillors on the Catholic vote.

The Labour Government which we had fought for wasn't changing anything. The idea was that it would just fall flat. In 1979 I had my last, half-hearted canvass for the local Labour candidate and in Hillhead, the only Tory seat in Glasgow, the Tory won as usual.

That was really the end of my life in the Labour Party. But old loyalties mean something, and they die hard. There were lots of people in the Party whom I respected. It becomes a part of your life and it's not something you give up easily.

I didn't leave or join anything else. I was caught up in the Corrie campaign against the anti-abortion bill and that took up my time. When that came to an end my time was free, and there was a terrible void. I realised then that you couldn't do anything on your own, you had to be in an organisation. It didn't suddenly hit me, but the end of that campaign was a turning point and I joined the Socialist Workers Party.

It is so totally different. I enjoy my politics again. I find it easier to argue on a tremendous number of subjects. I get a lot of support because we're small and we help each other. I feel as though my political education has just started despite being involved all these years.

Activity is now meeting, working with people, not just sitting there passing motions for a conference. Selling *Socialist Worker* alone is more than we ever did—you really can't go into a pub and sell *Labour Weekly*!



# WHAT IS GOING ON?

## WV groups

- **ABERDEEN** Womens Voice Liz 51059
- **ABERYSTWYTH** Womens Voice c/o Students Union, UCW, Aberystwyth.
- **ACTON WV** Ruth or Jude 740 6660
- **NORTH BIRMINGHAM** Women's Voice Maggie 021 449 4793
- **SOUTH BIRMINGHAM** Women's Voice Jill 021 459 1718
- **BLACK COUNTRY WV** 27 Glen Court, Compton Road.
- **BRADFORD** Womens Voice Janet c/o Textile Hall, Westgate Bradford or Trish 306447.
- **BRIGHTON WV** phone 696897.
- **BRISTOL WV** Katrina 46875.
- **BURTON ON TRENT WV** Kim 33929.
- **CANTERBURY Womens Voice** Barbara (Lyninge 862742).
- **CHORLTON WV** Claire 226 1048
- **COVENTRY WV** 361585
- COLCHESTER** Women's Voice, 22-5650 for details.
- **DUDLEY WV** Brigitte Brierley Hill 78308.
- **EALING/SOUTHALL WV** Christine or Jane 571 1838.
- **ECCLES AND SALFORD WV** Jennie 707 2557 or Ann 737 3800
- **EDINBURGH WV** Penny 5 0731
- EDGE HILL COLLEGE** Womens Voice Bev Southport 212140
- **ENFIELD WV** Nora 807 1741
- FINSBURY PARK** Womens Voice Wendy 01 254 9632 (days)
- **GLASGOW WV** Clare 357 1157
- **GLOSSOP**, Derbyshire Women's Voice Glossop 64287 Carol.
- GLOUCESTER** Womens Voice: Maggie Gloucester 413910.
- **HALIFAX WV** every Saturday 11am-12 30pm. Co-op arcade on the Precinct

- **HAMMERSMITH**—Jinny 749 7292
- **HATFIELD AND WELWYN** WV phone Cathy Hatfield 65238.
- **HEMEL HEMPSTEAD** Womens Voice Val Berkhamstead 74468
- **HIGHBURY WV** Clara 226 7066
- **HORNSEY WV** Maggie 341 1182
- **KENTISH TOWN WV** Pauline 586 5693
- **LAMPETER WV** c/o SDUC Lampeter. Dyfed, Wales.
- **LANCASTER WV** ring 36196
- **LEEDS WV** Gilda 622 800 or Bev 457 098.
- **LEICESTER WV** Fiona 0533 62855.
- **LEYTONSTONE WV** Annie (556 5595) or Pam (558 1509)
- **LIVERPOOL WV** Jane 727 1182
- **LOWESTOFT** Womens Voice—c/o 107, Montgomery Avenue, Lowestoft.
- **LUTON WV** Denise 35, Chatsworth Road, Luton.
- **MEDWAY WV** Lici, Medway 571628.
- **NEWCASTLE** Womens Voice Liz 854 782
- **NEWHAM** Womens Voice Pam 534 1417
- **NORWICH** Womens Voice c/o 56 St Benedicts St. Norwich.
- **NOTTINGHAM WV** Chrissie Langley Mill. 62356.
- **OXFORD** WV phone 723 395 or write to PO Box 20.
- **PIMLICO** Womens Voice Helen 730 7983 or Leslie 834 0760
- **READING** Womens Voice Shirley 585554
- **ST HELENS** WV Carol, St Helens 28178
- **SHEFFIELD** Womens Voice Sue 613 739
- **SOUTH LONDON WV** Sally 720 5768
- SOUTHWARK** Womens Voice: PO Box 82, London E2 9DS.
- **SOUTH WEST LONDON** Womens Voice. Marion 947 0560.
- **STOCKPORT** Womens Voice. 061 431 7564
- **STOKE ON TRENT** Womens Voice Sandra 814094
- **TOTTENHAM** Womens Voice Mary 802 9563
- **TOWER HAMLETS WV** Helen 980 6036

- **WALTHAMSTOW** WV phone Sue 521 5712
- **WREXHAM** Womens Voice Heather 87293

## Small ads

### N&E LONDON WOMENS VOICE SOCIAL

28 February — 8-11.00pm  
Chats Palace,  
Brooksbys Walk, E9.

Jam Today plus Disco  
REAL ALE  
£1.50 — 75p unwaged  
tickets from Barbara  
Tel: 986 5640

*Thatcher degrades Women badges. 20p. Available now from the Womens Voice office*

- **LESBIANS** supporting Womens Voice/Socialist Worker contact the Womens Voice Lesbian Group. Jane Scragg c/o PO Box 82, London, E2 9DS.

FEBRUARY 14 UNIVERSITY OF LONDON UNION, Malet St., London WC1 8pm Benefit to raise funds for the Festival for Women's Rights—against Tory attacks.  
'Just End the Romance' with bands and disco (Jam Today & Tour de Force provisionally booked)  
Next Planning meeting Feb 2 Help needed to organise events on the day eg bands, films, plays, displays, stalls, exhibitions. All ideas about the event warmly welcomed. 7pm 374, Gray's Inn Rd. WC1.

**SOUTHERN** and South West Womens Conference, 7 and 8 February at Students Union Building, Southampton University. For details and registration contact: Southampton Womens Centre, 145 Empress Road, Southampton.

**New Womens Group. Walsall**  
Phone Maria Walsall 648558

Women in Eastern Europe public meeting. Russian feminist dissident Tatyana

**WRRC: a feminist library,**  
190 Upper Street, London N1

Tel: 01-359 5773

Collection of feminist publications including novels and poetry; details of who's researching what and where the Women's studies Courses are.

Free library use to all; membership fee to borrowers

We also run meetings and workshops. Suggestions and offers welcome.

Mamonova on 'Women in USSR', Digbeth Civil Hall, Birmingham. Thursday 26 February 7.30.

One day Conference Saturday 7 February 1981. 'Women in Libraries', Organised by Feminist Librarians Group, Information: Sherry Jespeuser, 115 New Cavendish Street, London, W1. Tel: 01-486 5811 Ext 3639

Womens Festival Newcastle-upon-Tyne Poly & University 11-15 March. Details and Accommodation: Philippa Matthews, 37 Heaton Grove, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Tel: (0632) 659 086

**STROPPI** Cow Records is a feminist record label. Their first release is a 4-track EP. 'Stereotyping' by Jam Today. Available by mail order from:  
Stroppy Cow Records  
40 Croftdown Road  
London NW5  
Price £1.20 (inc p&p)

## WV public meetings

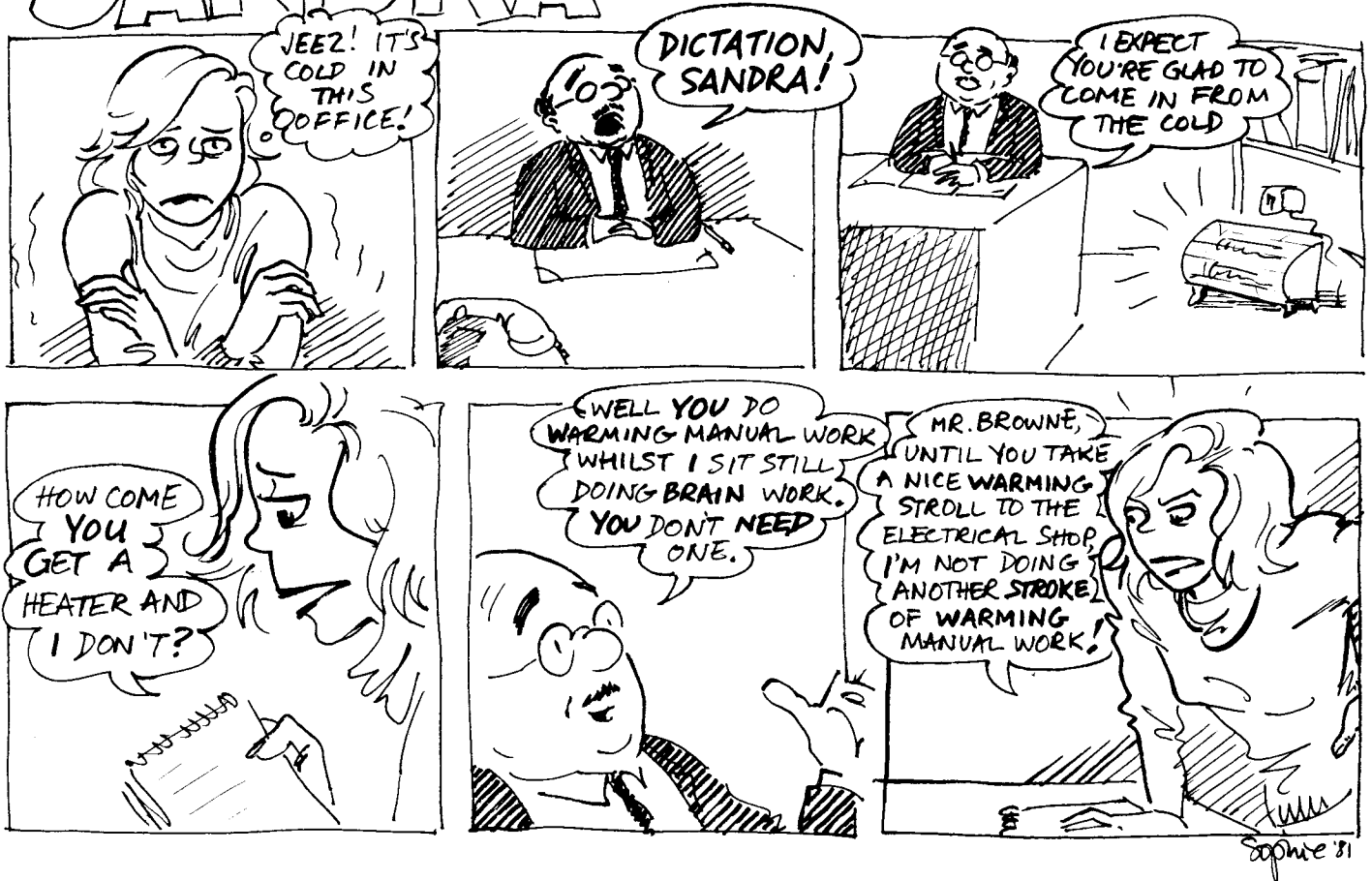
**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**  
Hammersmith joint WV/SWP public meeting  
Speaker: Harriet Sherwood  
19th Feb 8pm  
Workers Music Assoc., All Saints Road.

**Kingston WV 'Violence & Sexism',** Liverpool Arms, 140 London Road, Kingston, 11 February (Wed) at 8.00pm. Women only.

**Tottenham & Hornsey WV** open meeting 8pm Feb 2, Women's Centre, 40 Turnpike Lane, N8—Can we make the streets in Haringey safer for women?

**SEXUALITY AND MONETARISM**  
Tues 3rd March 8.15pm  
St Albans WV/Gay Voice joint meeting  
Speaker: Anne Neagle  
Details: Jane (St Albans 68678) or Richard (St Albans 69041)

# 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



# St. Valentine's Day Massacre



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