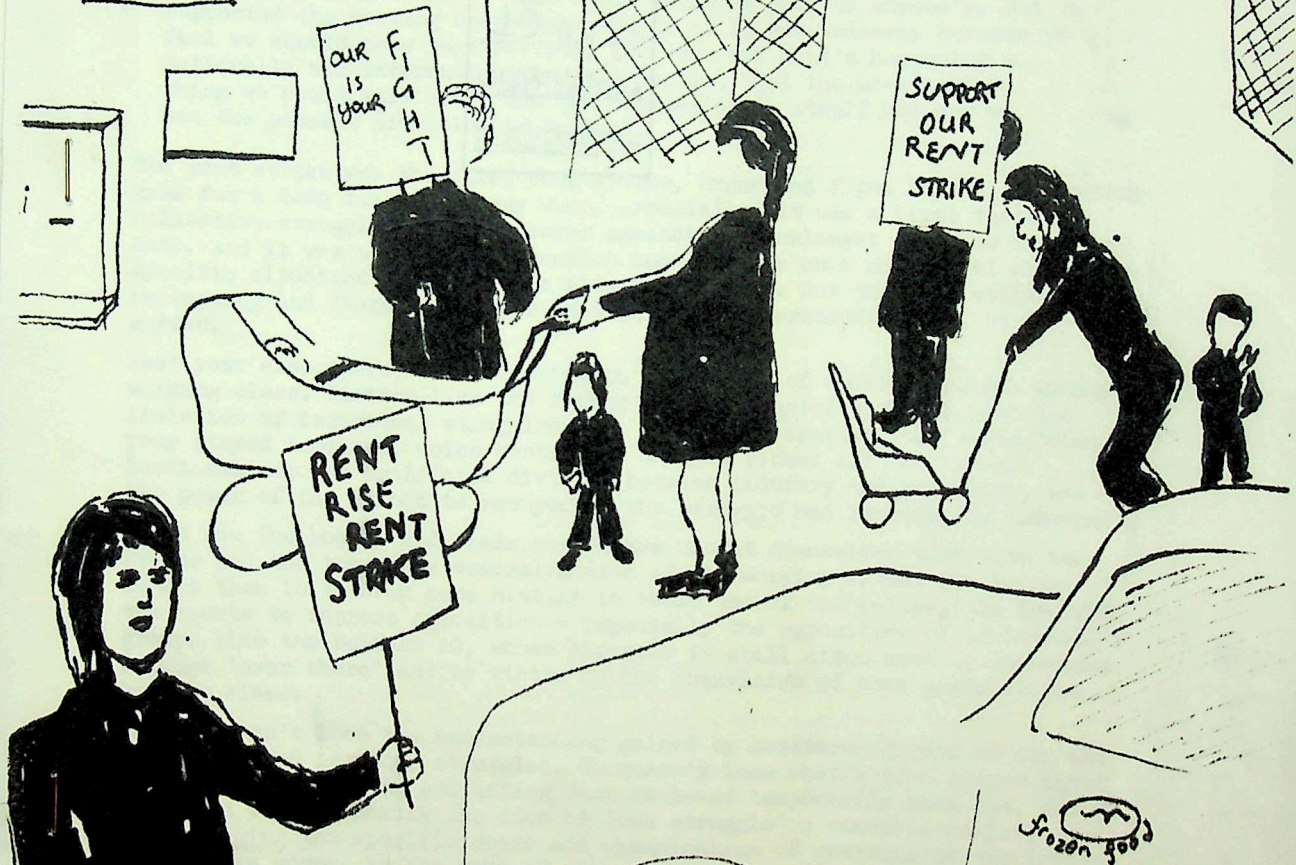


# MERSEYSIDE ISSUE

LIBERTARIAN

# WOMEN'S



Network  
Newsheet 16 JULY '73

4P



# WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

\* This is taken from a 'speech' given by women from Big Flame at a meeting on "Repression" in London on 5th July 1973. The meeting was called jointly by Big Flame (Liverpool), People's Democracy, Lotta Continua, Revolutionaerer Kampf and the Belfast 10 Defense Committee. We're not sure how useful this meeting was to the people there - a few speakers trying to establish a sense of unity, and a minimum of discussion isn't enough. Because no groups are yet very good at co-ordinating and communicating it wasn't set up in a way we would necessarily have chosen - that's our fault as much as anyone's. But we supported the meeting once organisation of it was underway because we feel we should come together more and work out what's happening - nationally and internationally. We decided that the most useful thing we could talk about was not repression in itself but how we see the present situation in England. \*

The rent strike was the first countrywide, organised fight beyond the factory gate for a long time. For many women especially, it was a first taste of collective struggle and of strength against the onslaught of price rise/wage cuts. And it was a chance to question and organise on a mass level around the specific situation of women with kids in struggle. But the rent strike is collapsing and there's a danger that gains in understanding will be forgotten.

Last year also there were victories in the fights of sections of the employed working class. Tactics like the flying pickets started to break down the isolation of individual struggles. But the fights against the Freeze this year stayed isolated, union controlled and got picked off one by one. Sectionalism, the artificial division between industry and community, and the power of the unions to recuperate the struggle has temporarily triumphed.

Right now the bosses and their state have bought themselves time with the Freeze and the temporary demoralisation of the working class. Now we can expect them to be even more blatant in their use of the police, the law and the courts to repress opposition - especially the opposition of isolatable groups like the Belfast 10, whose struggle is still often seen as something strange 'over there' and is victim to the chauvinism of some parts of the working class.

But we mustn't lose the understanding gained by scattered groups of men and women involved in those struggles. We mustn't lose what's been learnt about new ways of organising and acting that at least temporarily came out. And we must find ways of making the idea of 'one struggle' a concrete reality - not by submerging the specific needs and organisation of sections of the working class, like women, in the name of class unity - but by raising the totality of our struggle in every single struggle that takes place.

To illustrate what we mean we'll talk about the things we've learned in our practice in L'pool.

Why, after last year, was it so easy to pick off those groups of workers who took on the Freeze? Last year, when it was easier to see it as a question of fighting the individual boss, the tactics and organisation of the miners showed the way. They refused to accept the boundaries laid down by the bosses of a run-down industry. They argued for money on the basis of their need and discounted the relevance of the bosses profits. This year the Freeze meant no one group of workers could win in isolation - and the fight would mean taking on the State.



The unions as usual were prepared to 'bargain' - for the hospital workers on the basis of their low pay: for the Ford workers on the basis of their productivity and the bosses profits - that is through the argument for the 'special case'.

And the unions were incapable of taking on the state. When the bosses are in the shit the unions will accept that the so-called 'national interest' dictates the limits within which they argue. Union leaders 'negotiate' - their starting point is acceptance of the need for compromise between the buyers and sellers of labour. If we refuse to sell our labour: if we refuse to negotiate the terms of our exploitation: if we fight for what we need as a whole class (within and beyond the factory gate) the union is redundant.

Day-to-day the shop steward, although closer to the rank and file and easier to get a grip of, is still often out of touch with what's going on, still unwilling or more often unable to go beyond the role laid down by his/her part in the structure and political role of the union. Ford Halewood workers fight against the Freeze never got off the ground, at least partly because for the last 2 years the stewards have systematically kept the struggle cool (or tried to) - collaborating over the sacking of militants, 'negotiating' the heat out of fights against speed-ups, victimisations, safety hazards ; stifling communication between sections and plants. One of them said to us - keep control of the men or they'll turn into a pack of wild dogs.

Recent defeats have left many people demoralised and bitter. But those struggles have meant for some a new concrete understanding of the role of the unions, of what we must do to win rather than what we're used to doing, and an experience of collective organising. Ford and gas workers stewards both met in a Liverpool hotel during their fight against the Freeze. Accidentally they both met in the same room - so without more ado the gas stewards politely left! It might not have occurred to them to talk about their common struggle but the gas workers themselves were learning a bit. They organised their own flying pickets to other depots and to their union HQ. And again, Ford workers let themselves fade out in the unions' tedious delaying tactics. But they've not allowed management to move in on them after that defeat. Twice in the last few weeks they've won the reinstatement of sacked men whose cases were already 'in procedure'. In other words they knew that union/management negotiations would mean defeat and took action for themselves. They won.

Traditional union ideas, which have a hold on all sections of the class, not just the employed, have also proved useless in the face of indirect wage cuts outside the recognised workplace. The situation of people on a rental rent strike in Tower Hill (an estate in Kirkby on the edge of L'pool) has shown concretely the necessity and possibility of raising in every struggle the total conditions on which that struggle's based. And it's shown that we cannot win if we carry on thinking in terms of a separation between industry and community, or of merely formal links between the two. Factory and school, house and shop, hospital and college - all have to be challenged as the ways in which capitalism organises our time, our energy and our lives.

Some people in that rent strike the issue very soon went beyond defeat of the Unfair Rent Act. Some people raised the issue of struggling for a right, and wanted to extend the rent struggle to take in all the conditions on the estate. So the need was seen by some to contact 2 families living in a nearby estate and to help them leafletting and organising a demo. At the same time, energy was put into involving everyone on the estate through area meetings.



Some people now, mainly the women's group, are constantly trying to keep the Rent Action Group meetings alive by questioning how to sustain the organisation of the rent strike. They see the need to raise all these issues with the rank and file in the local factories - not just to make token links (and refusing to accept the Trades Council's 'pledges' of 'support') but to make the rent strike something that's constantly raised in and related to the factory. At the start of the rent strike women picketed the local Birds Eye factory to get reinstatement of people sacked for joining a rents demo.

But some of these things have been raised a little too late, and some have been squashed, particularly by those members of the action group who are tied to the idea of union activity inside the factory and want to confine the Rent Action Group to fighting the Rent Act.

This means the action group hasn't been growing as a focal point for expressing and generalising total conditions of the estate. Instead, the women's group has tried to start this process. And now, with the threat of attachment of earnings orders - getting arrears straight from wages - the women's group again has raised the need to link actively with the local industrial estate. They're trying to stop the action group getting complacent because of past victories. And they're pushing for continual extension of not only the rent strike but of its relationship to other struggles.

They do this because of their specific situation on the estate. In the shops they meet the people who can't or don't go to the action group meetings - so they know when people are too scared to question what's happening but are terrified by the whole thing. They know all the other aspects of life on the estate - the mice, the lack of playspace and playgroups, the lack of schools and the inadequate school bus service that ferries kids to other parts of Kirkby, the house repairs needed, the rising prices, the lack of health facilities, the need for safety barriers on the roads etc etc etc. And they know that what happens to their own or their husbands pay packet affects their lives, and how that's related to all the other shitty conditions they live with. And all these things have to be raised within every struggle that takes place. So far this has only been expressed organisationally within the women's group, but the group is trying to relate to more women on the estate.

One question only tentatively raised and never dealt with is the specific situation of women with kids in the organisation of the rent struggle. One reason why women have dropped out of the action group and then the rent strike itself must be because women can't sustain any activity outside the home while they remain totally responsible, individually, for the care of the home, the husband, and especially, the kids. Women in Wower Hill came out of their homes, and for some it was their first experience of struggle. But the tension between the needs of the family and the needs of the struggle was never resolved. How can you get to action group meetings if you've young kids, if your husband works shifts, if he's unsympathetic - and why bother if you've never been to a meeting before, you're used to being alone with the kids, you feel you haven't much to say?

The division of labour within the home has been shaken up a bit, and it will be challenged more and more as more women see the need to become active. But that activity can't be sustained unless the organisation of the struggle deals with their specific needs. Development of the collective care of kids must therefore be an integral part of our organisation as a revolutionary movement. To challenge that division of labour, and to make of a so-called private service a community activity, we have to challenge everything in the end. Because we'll have to challenge the way our time and activity is organised by capitalism - and that means breaking what ties the houseworker to the home and what ties the factory worker to the production line.



ough consciousness of this problem hasn't led to much discussion  
nd the women's group, the beginnings are there and this is just one  
he things that must be consolidated.

aven't come here with any blueprints for organisation in the present  
ation. But it's clear that ways must be found of consolidating and  
nding the gains that have been made. Given the way things are we don't  
k there's any basis for 'calling' for mass rank and file organisation  
there's no mass level of struggle that means people see the need for  
But neither do we think that isolated groups who've been pushing the  
uggle further can sustain that activity if they remain in isolation.  
Big Flame we are now in the process of discussing what this means in  
situation in Liverpool,



WE DIDN'T MEAN THIS NEWSHEET  
TO BE SO HEAVY SO WE LEFT A LITTLE  
SPACE...



# WE WON'T PAY RENT STRIKE MERSEYSIDE

This is just an attempt to say what's been happening in Liverpool both in Tower Hill and other estates since the Housing Finance Act was implemented here last October. The rents went up by £1 in most places and were expected to increase steadily at that rate in following years.

The Tower Hill estate in Kirkby had started to organise for this in May 1972 so for 6 months there had been a lot of campaigning on the estate about the Housing Finance Act. Some of the women who are now in the women's group were very involved in this initial campaigning. (quotes in this article are taken from a recorded chat we had about the rent strike with women in Tower Hill)

"Leafletting, going on demos, helping to do posters, making a banner. And anything that needed to be done. Going from door to door, speaking to people. And then we formed our area committees. We had an area committee member, and we held meetings in the home. We went from door to door, in each area and asked people to attend these meetings, which went well because we were able to talk informally rather than people who were a bit dubious about going to big meetings having to have a chairman and everything else. Everybody was able to ask questions and give their opinion."

When the October rises came in Tower Hill tenants were in the position to call a total rent and rates strike because of all the preparation they had done....

"Partial rent strike would never have got us anywhere at all. There's a big difference between withholding £1 and withholding well nigh £6.53. If you withhold a pound they'll not take any notice of it. If you withhold £6 they get worried especially if there's a lot of people doing it."

The only other estate in Liverpool that called a total rent strike was 'Over the Bridge', Scotland Road. Some tenants there had been organising around other things before October so they felt together enough to call for a total rent strike - and as some of them said: the conditions of the houses round here are so bad they should be putting the rents down not up...

Other estates in Liverpool called partial rent strikes - "withholding the increase". Some of us from 'Big Flame' tried to get a rent strike going in the Halewood estate because that seemed to be one of the few places where nobody was trying anything. The initial response there was very good - 300 people turned up to the first meeting - but everyone decided on partial rent strike because we weren't well organised enough to go for anything else.

After a few months it seemed obvious that total rent strike had been the best tactic because it forced confrontation much sooner. The arrears reached high levels very quickly so the council acted sooner. (At the moment Kirkby Council is owed £200,000 arrears and may have to declare itself bankrupt very soon)

In estates like Halewood, on partial, there was no confrontation and although we tried to keep things going - pickets outside the rent office and a kids party at Christmas - the numbers of those involved fizzled out. A lot of women were forced out of the rent strike by pressure from their husbands - (Big Flame put a leaflet into Fords later complaining about the men who scabbed on the rent strike.)

I can't go into any more detail about what went wrong in Halewood because of lack of space...



# Tower Hill Rent Strike

In October there was a demonstration in Liverpool against the Housing Finance Act. 22 men from the Birds Eye factory in Kirkby who were on this demo were suspended by the Birds Eye management for taking part in the march, and two men were sacked for the same. At the weekly Tower Hill rents action group meeting the women agreed to organise pickets to go to Birds Eye in the morning and support the 24 men who were picketing the factory in protest. The next morning the women went round the estate with megaphones and knocking on the doors getting other women to go with them. At 10.30am an army of women with children and babies in prams joined the 24 men who had been laid off. Birds Eye came to a standstill because the pickets had completely blocked off the main gate and turned back all wagons and lorries, explaining to the drivers why they were picketing the factory. The shop-stewards inside the factory were telling the rest of the workers that no-one had been laid off and not to listen to the rabble outside as they were only trouble makers.

As a result of all this the 24 men were re-instated and the chairman of the Birds Eye group flew up from London and told the workers that he didn't want politics brought into the factory and threatened to close the factory down.

On Saturday Nov 11th eight tenants on the estate received eviction notices. 7 of these were told they had up to the 20th Nov to pay up their arrears or get thrown out, but the other one was only given till 13th to pay up. At 4.30 on the 13th hundreds of people sealed off all roads leading to Tower Hill, causing traffic jams for a radius of 7 miles. During the road block and for some weeks after there were also people in the threatened tenants house in case the bailiffs tried to get in. On the next day the Action Group received pledges of industrial support in the event of eviction from various industries on Merseyside. Probably as a result of this show of force Kirkby Council decided not to evict any tenant for non-payment of arrears incurred by rent strike.

On Mon. March 12th Kirkby Councils Health and Housing Committee held a meeting in the Council buildings - the public were not allowed in. The Tower Hill rent strike was on the agenda for discussion and hundreds of tenants were outside the building to protest against any action that might be decided upon at that meeting. Police were on duty outside the building to prevent any of the tenants getting in. When one of the councillors turned up late everyone took the opportunity of pushing their way in with him. About a dozen people got in but were brutally thrown out by the police.

After the decision by the council not to evict they sent out court orders which are the first part of an attempt to recoup the arrears by attachment of earnings. The first of these which were received on March 26 were sent back to court with ON RENT STRIKE written across them - this decision was taken after a long discussion at an action group meeting. In May 70 tenants received letters asking them to attend court on the 24th May and have a meeting with the registrar, probably to discuss the court orders that had been returned. The tenants decided to ignore the letters.

On 25th May some tenants received letters from the court informing them that starting from 22nd June and on the 22nd of every month they have to pay the court £27, which the court will then pay to the council. All these letters were gathered in and sent back with WE WON'T PAY written across them.

On 22nd June nobody paid the money and since then nothing has happened. The women in the womens group have been talking about writing and distributing a leaflet about 'attachment of earnings' to give out at factories



and also about revitalising area committees so that everyone doesn't get scared and demoralised as they wait to see what the council will do next. (See article on Tower Hill Women's Group)

## Women and the Rent Strike

The fight against the Housing Finance Act has involved a lot of women in struggle who have never before been involved. The main evidence of the effect the rent strike has had on women's attitudes to themselves and to a lot of other things has come for us from the women we know in Tower Hill, but it must have happened to some extent in most places. We had a chat in the womens gp in Tower Hill about this sort of thing and here is some of what came out of it:

MS When the Industrial Relations Act came out I don't think there was as many women interested in it but it was just as bad as the Housing Finance Act. Why didn't the majority of women identify themselves with that but did with the Housing Finance Act.?

RM I think the main thing is that the majority of women have been brought up with a fear of strikes and things like that. But the HFA hit them at home. Its like the decimalisation that cut our money by a few bob and then we went in the Common Market and its just impossible for women to manage, to buy food and things that are necessary, especially when they've got kids.

MS Do you think that housewives with not working in industry didn't identify with the IRA but with the HFA that was knocking on the door and smacking them right in the face.

RM I don't think its so much that but the IRA when it was done people said it involved men more than women and women were just never told about it and men never bothered to explain about it so they never felt it was knocking at their door. Whereas when it came to it the women pay the rent. The women get a certain amount of money and they've got to pay that rent no matter what it may be and they decided that it was impossible. When I went on rent strike basically it was principle's sake but within two weeks owing to the cost of living that money just went on my housekeeping money. Its just gone. People say you must have something to show for it but I've not seen anyone who's got something to show for it. It just goes to show how high the cost of living is going up if people that managed to pay a rent of £5 last year find it impossible this year to do anything with that £5 but buy food and things they need for the kids and the home. Its not just one thing its everything. Its impossible to say that your standard of living can increase. Every so-called amenity that people use has gone up - buses everything, gas electric. I'd say that a lot of people even though they've not paid rent, are even worse off than before they stopped paying rent. OK so people were brought up with this thing that you keep a roof over your head - starve but get this roof and people complied with that because they were frightened, they were one on their own so they subjected themselves to doing without some things so they could pay the fucking rent money on a Friday when he came. But once they discovered there were a hell of a lot of people felt exactly the same and were willing to go ahead and refuse to pay that rent they soon discovered the things they been missing out on - it wasn't luxuries it was ordinary everyday things - that rent money could go towards them.



ve been living rent free for 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  months P. Can you remember what it  
like when you paid rent?

. As R. says it was just you must pay your rent and do without-  
er what you needed like kids shoes, you couldn't get them because  
got to pay your rent come what may. I've never missed my rent  
- only on exceptional circumstances but never to this extent.  
e HFA came in I knew and the majority of people knew you had to  
stand oh this. It's not going to stop at this £1 its going to go  
on. Our rents gone up £2 in the last 2 years.

do you think your going to manage when you start paying rent again?

I have to start paying this rent I just won't be able to do it.  
ve to do without and the kids will have to do without, and the  
all the rest. Now I can pay the bills but if I have to go back to  
the rent I know I won't. Something will have to go. I'm not prep-  
do that. When I look back I realise I've done it long enough.  
re are a lot of people doing it and are too scared to do anything  
t.

\* \* \* \* \*  
were always looked on as 'just' housewives but once we got inv-  
something don't you think it's helped you to communicate a  
e outside your home - especially with men do you find you can  
hold your own in an argument?

y're fascinated that women can hold their own even on their ground,  
ings that happen at work. We say look you get a rise in your  
's a cut in your wages and they want to know what you mean or  
't know what your talking about. But we do know what we're talk-  
ut.

think men are a lot more ignorant than women in every degree -  
it be in industry or in work. They don't have a clue - I'm  
at the men up here who don't know their arse from their elbow  
r place of work or what's happening in the home or anywhere.  
to find it quite hard to talk to women, especially in this estate  
thought it was a lot easier to talk to men but now I think men are  
gest bluffers on two feet, Just because their women had been  
complete ignorance and told 'its all right love you don't  
'll tell you what it is, but mind you its not women's work  
s so just keep out of it'. Now I can communicate much better  
men, especially since we started organising for this rent strike  
r't before because the fucking men wouldn't let me an inch near

\* \* \* \* \*  
you take more interest in occupations and strikes and what the  
ents doing?

, I say good luck to them, anyone whose doing anything like that.  
to say oh there they go again, especially the dockers, because  
a docker and now I realise they're doing it for a reason and  
not a gang of rabble like we get called. They're fighting like  
for their future and their livelihoods.



# JUST HOUSES and HOUSES

These articles were written by two women who have lived both in Scottie Road and Kirkby (council estates.)

CHRIS... I suppose many of us know of a place like Kirkby a small town built on the out skirts of a large city. Most of the people that were originally moved to Lirby in the early fifties lived in the Scotland Road district of Liverpool. This was probably one of the roughest parts of Liverpool in which working class descendents of Irish immigrants worked and drank their lives away in badly designed post-war houses shared with rats mice and numerous fleas.

Kirkby was originally thought of as being the "Ponderosa", in a part of the wild west. A few houses were built which seemed luxurious compared with previous conditions but people were reluctant to move there because most of them had to travel to Liverpool to work mainly on the docks, and the bus service was not very good anyway and it was a common thing for the one bus to break down leaving people stranded in the middle of nowhere. Quite a few people reverted to buying push bikes and cycling the ten miles to Liverpool every day.

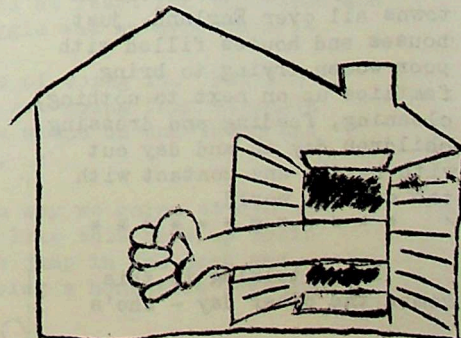
People complained about being moved from an area in which they knew every one, from the local storekeeper onwards to the isolated boxes in Kirkby and it was considered, analogous to being moved into solitary confinement.

I disagree with this romantic picture of the great community spirit that existed in the Scotland Road area. To understand it one must first live in this type of area. People lived out of one another's pockets, but this was not out of love but necessity. Although a cup of sugar would be lent now and a few bob till pay day, the main thing that was noticeable

was the battle for survival. Every family would kill the other to survive, and the main topics of conversation was criticising other families for what they did, their fights, their drunkenness etc. Okay so there were some good parties every night, good sing songs, as we called them 'do's' but this was a very inward looking community who could only survive by forgetting their troubles and getting drunk as often as possible. These do's generally ended up in fights in which all the dirty linen was brought out in public and at wedding receptions, more often than not ended up in arguments, after the bride and groom had left for their honeymoon, between the two families involved over who had paid for the drink and who was drinking it the quickest.

The hill-billie type of feud between families was also a common occurrence and wife beating was considered to be normal. Nobody thought of questioning this state of affairs i.e. why they had to survive in this way, why the money did not last till the next pay day, and so people depended on each other and fought with each other rather than seeing their real causes of oppression and fighting against the system.

As time went on more houses were built and the industrial





te began to be developed  
terrific rate. So new  
by was composed of houses,  
, but as yet no amenities.  
ally hasn't developed from  
e today except maybe for the  
l increase in public houses;  
same old philosophy... Keep  
workers drunk and they will  
appy. This type of community  
s vandalism as there is  
ng for the children or youths  
and an example of Kirkby  
town roaming with thieves  
randals was quoted several  
s in the national papers as  
as in every week in the  
papers.

As the children of this  
generation of people living  
Kirkby grew up and got married  
Council then decided to build  
sively again and a new part  
Kirkby isolated the other  
areas, Northwood, Southdene  
estvale was built called  
hill. The young couples  
ot houses here then faced  
he same problems as the  
e who first moved to Kirkby.  
were shut up in what seemed  
a concentration camp with  
shops charging what they  
for food and that was all.  
children had to travel  
other parts of Kirkby to go  
hool and again there was  
ng for them to do. The  
were built alright, but  
use were they to the poor  
women stuck at home day  
ight with children, it only  
ased their problems because  
en would go out alright  
hat about them.

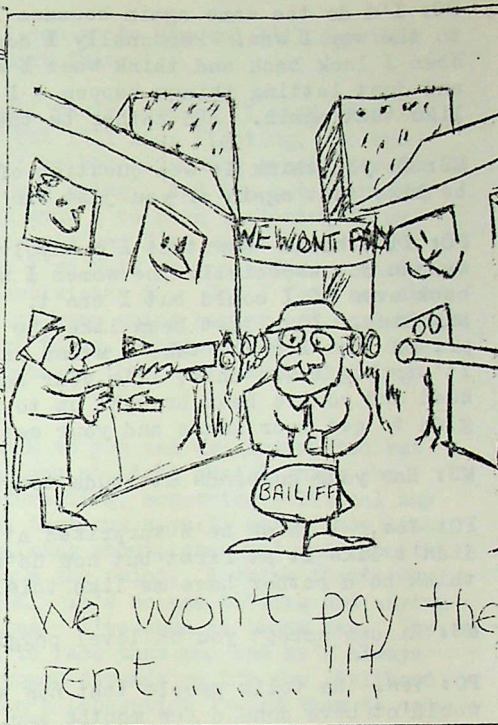
So we see Towerhill being  
many other districts in  
all over England, just  
s and houses filled with  
women trying to bring  
ies up on next to nothing,  
ing, feeding and dressing  
ren day in and day out  
hardly any contact with  
outside world.

\* \* \* \* \*  
I was talking to this  
the other day - she's

about 50 - about the rates. And  
she said we've got these amenities,  
we're getting something back for  
our rates! And I said we've not  
got a mobile accident unit up here  
the nearest hospital is Walton  
and that's a good quarter of an  
hour in an ambulance there and  
back, on the bus it's over an  
hour. If you have an accident  
up here you could be lying in  
the street dying waiting for an  
ambulance to get to you. For  
an area this size we need an  
accident mobile unit, we need a  
proper clinic. We've got two  
doctors here taking up council  
houses that people could be  
living in - they should have  
built a clinic. If you're paying  
your rates, you want something in  
return. We've only just, a  
couple of months ago, got a sub-  
post office - it's not a proper  
one. We've got a scabby chemist  
we could do with a 24 hour  
service in the chemist - it's  
a young estate, we've all got  
babies up here. Even the play  
group you have got to pay, we  
haven't got a nursery. And  
this woman, she turned round  
and said nut you get your bins  
emptied every week and you get  
your grass cut once a month, and  
I said I'm paying my £1 a week  
and I get my grass cut and my  
bins emptied. And we could do  
with decent lighting like Black-  
pool illuminations - you no  
half the lights are not working  
and you can walk along the street  
and fall down a grid because there's  
no cover on it, which a little one  
did a few weeks ago. You can  
break your bloody neck on the  
flags outside because they are  
all uneven. This is where your  
rates should be going. And  
then she said well I have waited  
16 years for my house and I'm  
not about to jeopardise that  
because I've got kids to think  
of, she thinks I don't know  
what it's like to live in a  
one bedroom flat or have a  
toilet down the garden, because  
I'm young. But I know what it's  
like from my mother and father -  
I know what hard times are like.  
I say you have got to live through



your experience and remember it - I hope these kids remember whats going on now. I remember when I was living down St Gerards parish - (Scotland Road) pushing an old pram through six inches of snow filled with bags of cole from the gas works, because there was no coal going. I remember when my old fellow was on strike om the docks week after week, me ma'd be there sitting worried and crying about her rent and having egg and chips for our tea. I remember one night when my da was on strike for 8 weeks and all she had was 1/6 and the priest come round collecting - you know how they do on a Friday - and she gave him the 1/6 cos she was frightened. And the priest looked at it and said 'things must be bad' and me dad said 'they are' and he took the money back off him, and I was terrified that I'd be pointed out in church Sunday morning. And people turn round and say 'well, your young, You don't know what it's like.



## TOWER HILL WOMEN'S GROUP

The Tower Hill women's group started round about December 1972. At the moment it's made up of both women from the estate and women from the B.F. women's group. At that time some of us wanted to become involved as a long-term commitment in political activity with women. We wanted to be part of building a base in a community, to organise with other women on the bases of women's needs within a community struggle. The group's gone through a lot of ups and downs which we'll try to describe here because of the lessons we can all learn from that experience.

The women who initiated the group on the estate, and who first asked B.F. women to come, were among the most active members of the Rents Action Group (the co-ordinating body of the rent strike) and had become friends through that struggle.

For most women on Tower Hill the rent strike was their first experience of political struggle. And at least for the women who started the women's group, that struggle was an eye-opener:-

PO: I didn't think I was capable of doing it. But I'm not surprised now because women are going from strength to strength now. They've made a stand on one thing and they're going to go on fighting.

MS: When this strikes over - you say we going to win and get what er eant - if something like this come up again over a different issue would you jump in the deep end again or would you go back to being a housewife like you were?



PO: I'd do the same again because I just couldn't go back to the way I was. Personally I don't like the way I was. When I look back and think what I was - stuck in the house and just letting things happen - I wouldn't like to be like that again. I'd rather be the way I am.

MS: Do you think it's a question of you wouldn't like to be like that again or you just can't be?

PO: It's both. Now that I'm involved and I've seen what we can do, especially the women I wouldn't like to go back even if I could but I can't. I don't think I've done anything. I've just been like the others. But I'm surprised that I could take a stand and not be scared, because it's a big issue this, it's your house, the roof over your head and you've been brought up to look after that. You're glad to get your house and your settled with your kids.

MS: Has your husband's attitude towards you changed?

PO: Yes. I think he's surprised at the change in me. He didn't like it at first but now he's used to it and I think he'd rather have me like this.

MS: Hi can accept you on level pegging with himself?

PO: Yes. He tells people that now who ask him. He wouldn't have done a few months ago. He goes to work and when he comes home I know he needs to relax. Well now he knows I do too, that I need things and other interests and to go out for a drink or something just like he does, and have a break from the kids and the house - and he helps me.

Because they knew the difficulties of being a woman with young kids involved in political activity they knew more women could become involved, who were still too frightened, tied down with kids and who still hadn't discovered their potential for being politically active. That was one reason why the women's group was formed - as a way of encouraging more women to come together to organise from their own situation and so participate in the struggle of the whole community.

R: The majority of women here have lived in Kirkby and then they've put their names down and got a house up here, and they go to their mothers or their sisters, and that's the extent of it. I was saying to Kathy, she can't get out the house, but I said "what you did do last Wednesday, at the Birds Eye, shows that you'll never ever be able to open a paper without reading between the lines You'll never be able to watch television and say, 'well everything's fine' and the gardens green' because now you will have got a sense and a taste, and you'll never see the environment or anything in the light that you've seen it before." And I think that's all it takes, even if you're going to get their backs up. I think once you get that through to them, they'll never look back, they'll only look forward then, they'll start seeing things things they've never seen before. That was the first time she'd been ever involved in anything like this. There was a lot of them like that. We had to shame Kathy because her man didn't want her to get involved. And we had to have a go at her, and she's quite militant now. So what



she says is: 'When I listen to you I can go to him and I'll say this and I'll say that and I'll say the next thing.'.....

R: You see Theresa said to me, well you're young. I said when I'm 40 I might be dead with the fight but I'll keep fighting. So she said 'everyones not like you! But I've been fighting myself for ten years, trying to find out where I was going. And its not been easy because I've been frightened. You know I've been listening to my parents, different people, older people and I've great respect for people, old young or what. And as I've said to you before - violence I've never been able to take or participate in. But I feel now that I know where I'm going and I'll just keep going harder and harder but its not an easy thing. It's a hard thing. Whereas people who are unaware sometimes are very lucky because they don't look at things and go sick at everything.

R: And you'll get women who'll talk to you and are interested but as soon as their men come in from work at night she'll think she might be able to say something interesting, something political say and as soon as she opens her mouth that guy says to her: 'now look here you don't know what you're talking about, shut up' and then the woman gets deflated and thinks whats the point. I think that's why a lot of women don't get interested. It's no use kidding and saying its easy for a woman to tell her man. I've seen it every day. Its not fucking easy. When she's got to face that man and he's always been the so-called boss and that woman depends on him for livelihood And when I hear women talk in Women's Liberation I want them to come right out into a typical family home and listen to a woman trying to do it. Some would say well I'd just get out. But its not easy when you've got to live there day in and day out and you've got to bring up kids.....

Women get frustrated but they've been told since they were little that their frustration is only a natural thing, its typical of women and it'll pass. And maybe her man comes in and he's nice to her that night and her frustration passes. And women have been told that getting involved is boring and they go through thinking that. Women are told they're only fit for talking about each other She's been told all she's to do is sit there, be a great mother and listen to her kids screaming all day - thats an outlet and thats not boring and women have got to accept that. She's lived all her life thinking that her ultimate is a few kids and a home. Anything else frightens her. As soon as she tries talking to her man or her sister or her mother when anything goes on they laugh at her - 'thats not your worry'.....

To understand the development of the group the whole context of struggle on Tower Hill has to be understood. In the womens movement there's a lot of discussion about the relation of class struggle to sexual struggle. It can become sterile if we argue abstractly about marxism versus feminism or if we get bogged down in whether or not we recognise class differences among women. The question is what to do, how to change things and how to develop as women, a revolutionary perspective that extends the whole class struggle. And its in concrete situations with day to day hassles, that we can begin to understand these things and act on our understanding.

For women in Tower Hill, and every working class community in struggle the question is how to organise as working class women involved in an ongoing community struggle. The fact that some feel the need for a



oup but are critical of middle-class 'women's liberationists' session of that situation and a reaction against talking shops. These analyses that they can't relate to their immediate situation. The women's group started because women wanted to fight as women and to start organising around their oppression as they see it - and that is always in the context of everything about Tower Hill, a working class community come together from all over the pool and Kirkby to a badly designed estate with no amenities, a struggle, kids, husbands, rising cost of living and fixed costs etc.

## it started

A few of us from Big Flame and about 5 women in Tower Hill had informal meetings to talk about a women's group. We talked about the basic problems of women being lonely and isolated, stuck at home with the kids, not knowing anybody. This is particularly true of an estate like Tower Hill.

At an informal meeting we all met with some women from Internationalists who were interested in a women's group (IS had been involved in the rent strike since it began). One thing we discussed was a playgroup and we found we had some differences with the IS women about what forming a playgroup meant. Some of us tried to pressurise the council into providing free nurseries with a staff, where women could take their kids so they had spare time for 'political' activity - presumably organising in the factory. We discussed this because 1) we criticised the way state nurseries run and the things kids are taught, like sex roles and 2) we see a playgroup as part of the women's groups political activity. At the meeting we talked about at the meeting included road safety on the estate, mobile accident unit, contraception and abortion clinic, better health service etc. From that meeting it was clear that we (the Tower Hill women and the Tower Hill women) would not be doing things with the women's group.

We had our first 'open' meeting in the community centre on a Saturday afternoon in early January. We wrote a leaflet and distributed it to every house on the estate (2,500) because we wanted to make the group as broadly based as possible i.e. we didn't want to make concrete plans as a small elite, but wanted to discover from as many people as possible what was wanted and needed.

Many women came to the first meeting and after that the meetings were on the 20 and 30 (about a third of the women came consistently). For all kinds of reasons - boredom, loneliness, need for a social life etc. We talked about setting up a playgroup, the possibility of a women's centre by applying for or occupying a house, and the lack of amenities on the estate.

We saw the playgroup as an obvious necessity. All the families on the estate are young and there are a lot of kids under five. The existing playgroups have 3 year waiting lists and on some parts of the estate it's dangerous for the kids to play out because there are no barriers on the main roads. And it's impossible to talk about organising together unless part of that organising involves looking at the kids collectively.

In the community centre we met in one room while the kids played next door. The first meetings were chaotic because the kids weren't used to being away from their mothers. This made talking difficult (which was put off some of the women who never came back) and was one of the reasons we never thoroughly discussed exactly what kind of playgroup, how to organise it, whether to involve unemployed men on the estate etc.



# Mill Farm

In March we were offered a room in a council-sponsored adventure playground Mill Farm for the playgroup and the women's meetings. We made it clear to the youth leader that we wouldn't let the council dictate what we did in it.

Now we feel that Mill Farm is the wrong place to be. Fewer women were coming anyway, and fewer still come to Mill Farm, which is on the opposite side of the estate from where most of the women coming live. In some ways it's a good place, but as we haven't yet started a playgroup (except at times of meetings) it's used and messed up in between times by the kids who use the farm. It's not a place we can call our own, and there's a need for a place where women can drop in anytime and use as a base for women's group activity.

The group has now settled back into the original few - those of us from Big Flame and six or seven women on Tower Hill, including those we first met. A few other women come less frequently. So we've decided to go ahead with plans to get a house (or two) on the estate itself and hope that more women will come.

We've realised that sticking leaflets through doors advertising meetings once a week isn't enough if we want to get more women involved. We're questioning the use of once a week (or more) 'meetings' on their own - especially when most women there are unused to this as a way of getting together. We want to explore less formal ways of meeting other women. Every week since we've started we've all tried to get round and see each other and other women who've been to meetings, to try to maintain contact.

Then some women had a small meeting in a house in Moorfields, an area of Tower Hill, a couple of times recently. Three of them had never been to a Thursday meeting though they'd heard about it. We had a long talk about the group, women's liberation, our attitudes to men etc. If we could have more meetings like this then we could break down the idea that the Thursday meetings are the only place where women can get together, talk and organise.

In the meetings themselves there are still a lot of things to work out. When we first started, the size of the meetings, the general chaos and the newness of the group made it difficult for some women to join in the discussion. We never really found out what a lot of the women thought about e.g. a collectively run playgroup. One or two women tended to dominate the discussions - because they'd initiated the group and felt nervous about it, because they were more used to talking in meetings, and because they had more definite ideas about what they'd like to happen.

As the group got smaller and the women there knew each other better the discussions got more wide ranging, with more people participating. Initially there was almost no discussion about the rent strike for example, but now that most of the women there know each other as active rent strikers they want to talk about it more. Before, there was a slight fear among those active in the rents group of alienating women who might not be on the rent strike, and might see the women's group as just a rents action group offshoot. But we all now think it was a mistake to avoid the subject, and put the women's group in danger of being 'outside' an important political struggle on Tower Hill.

There's still a problem of domination and some women tend to be seen as 'leaders' of the group by other people on Tower Hill. This is being talked about by everyone and we hope it will be worked out as more of us develop the confidence to talk, write leaflets, initiate activity.



still a problem of balancing the needs of different women  
to the group. While some want to develop its political potes-  
look to it more as a social focus etc. This creates  
a discussion and when activity is initiated. At the moment  
has been solved because the groups got smaller and more homogeneous  
women's centre would probably help if it meant that the group  
could develop activity and yet be open to more women  
use the centre for a variety of reasons. We need to think  
about how the womens group relates to the situation of  
on Tower Hill. Given its settled into a small fairly  
group, we have to consider in what ways (without wanting to)  
up a selection process. How much have we alienated other  
easy has it been for women to become involved, how repres-  
s the existing group, what do we feel about the group being  
en with a similar political orientation, should the present  
consolidated or made more open, and in what way????? Phew..

## Women's Group Activities

done as a womens group in relation to the rent strike  
to explain what we mean when we talk about women organising  
ly but in relation to the whole class struggle....

s ago, at the time of the local council elections, the womens  
ributed a leaflet (Money, going going gone) on Tower Hill.  
a rumpus on the council and every comment we heard from the  
Tower Hill was good.

me we'd started talking more about the relation of our group  
ts Action Group. Some of us feel we should now organise  
group within RAG, to give a more total perspective to  
and the womens group.

letting the estate we organised a small demo outside the cou-  
bration dinner in a local school, to protest against all the  
g wasted stuffing their bellies. The Kirkby Repreter waxed  
out how we'd insulted the local dignitaries. The RAG, which  
usly voted not to support the demo dissociated itself from  
. According to them everyone went as individuals or from the  
oup - although everyone there from Tower Hill was on rent  
most are active in RAG. RAG'S reason for not going was that  
thing to do with it's function i.e organising the rent strike,  
cretary (IS whizz-kid Tony Boyle) was even quoted as saying  
no point to the demo because nobody's paying rates anyway!  
wing RAG meeting he was kind enough to say that those involved  
be reprimanded or expelled from RAG. (Nowadays RAG is hardly  
al point for the rent strike, and is in real danger of  
ng itself - in the form of increasingly formalised meetings -  
nt struggle of the whole of Tower Hill).

ided at this time that with the threat of 'attachment of  
on rent strikers and only vague 'promises' of support (now  
to fade as crunch-time nears) from the Trades Council, the  
should together approach rank and file workers direct about  
or industrial support. The fairly large Kirkby industrial  
ides an ideal situation for at least keeping news going  
g industrial workers, and hopefully for getting concrete  
t's doubtful whether everyone on Tower Hill still knows  
at's going on because the weekly RAG Bulletin, all written  
etary, can be long-winded and it's known that not everyone  
And Tower Hill has always been isolated from other parts  
because of its insistence on TOTAL rent strike - the other  
d areas have collapsed)



We had various ideas for leafletting the estate, and other factories and sites, trying to hold factory gate meetings, going to picket lines to talk about the rent strike. This had been done on a small scale early on in the strike, but the nearest people got was to the convenors and stewards, even though some of the women tried to talk to the 'rank and file'. Then the idea got shelved. We decided to propose to the RAG that we all try again - we were prepared to do it ourselves but felt that everyone on rent strike should be discussing it and organising for it.

When we first raised it at the RAG meeting the response was to leave it to us. We think this meant 1) in a meeting of 19 men and 6 women (4 from the Womens Group, including 2 of us from Liverpool), the fact that a woman spoke meant the issue was more likely to be ignored (RAG meetings haven't always been this small or male-dominated but its been dwindling) 2) some of the men there (several from IS) either disagreed or didn't understand the need to approach rank and file workers and aren't at the moment discussing very thoroughly how Tower Hill is going to face the threat of attachment of earnings except via union branch resolutions etc. 3) The men who spoke were pessimistic about workers doing anything to organise in support of the rent strike "when they weren't even out on May Day". There was very little discussion of our suggestion, partly because of the increasingly formal nature of the meetings and partly because only a couple of people came out and said they thought it was a wor thwhile idea. So "letting the women do it" simply meant giving us all the dirty work to do. (We might be wrong but it seems that most people are now so reliant on the secretary doing things that it didn't occur to them to do it or to question his reply to our suggestion - "sorry, I've got too much on my plate" i.e to ask the support of the action group meant to ask him.)

At the next meeting we tried again and this time a few men said they'd help leaflet. So now we're going to do it, We'll also now be contributing to the weekly RAG bulletin, to raise issues that haven't been talked about for a long time to do with the rent strike, to include other things to do with life on the estate and so help make it something more people will read.

There's been a lot of discussion about what this means for our involvement in RAG. Some women have felt that while remaining on rent strike they sometimes feel like giving up on the Action Group. Other women feel we s hould try harder to organise within it, to redirect discussion, to raise issues as women which mean our needs are recognised in the way it works. It'll be hard, especially when IS men in RAG label us as anarchist, apolitical or irrelevant, depending who they're talking to. But the rent strike is at stake, as well as the struggle of women to be able to organise themselves and participate in what goes on in Tower Hill.

\*\*\*\*\*

Women's summer camp in the Welsh mountains, 21 July - 31 August. Cost is £3 per week per person for food, £2 for claimants. Marquee provided in you havn't got a tent

Contact: Women's Summer Camp,  
89 Northdown St. London, N.1.

And if you've managed to wade through all this, you might like the Big Flame monthly newspaper. Subs. are 50p for 10 issues, £1 for 20 from Big Flame, 22 Woburn Hill, Liverpool 13. Tel 051.220. 5223.



# UGHTS = BIG FLAME AND TOWER HILL

Some of the problems we've been trying to work out as the Big Flame who go to Tower Hill.

At first meetings of the Tower Hill Women's Group we were scared to open our mouths in case we were seen as intruders/outsideers: or in case of us being big gobs, directing the discussion. Because we were not invited by the large meetings: and because we weren't sure what we were doing there anyway. So the women who didn't know us saw us as 'volunteers' or social workers who looked after the kids and did the odd jobs. In a way we accepted that role by thinking that one good thing about our being there was to 'help' the development of the group by doing the odd jobs. One indirect result was that we ended up producing the leaflets and producing them 'out of the blue' for the group. This kind of 'help' (an offshoot of self-consciously trying to avoid an interventionist role) meant we reserved for ourselves an activity other women could have been learning about.

All of us from BF now live in Liverpool, are ex-students, have different backgrounds, live differently etc. there are obvious barriers to our being an integrated part of the group. We've talked to most of the women in the group about this, and at least we're good enough for them to have been honest about their suspicions and openly express them when they've thought we put over a shitty attitude - and we've been the same.

Anyway, we were accepted by these women as being 'nicer' and being genuine in our relationship to the women's group (not manipulative, non-recruiting) in a situation where IS was actively recruiting, mainly among men, and completely disregarding the needs of women with kids in the struggle. The women's political views are totally opposed to those of IS and though they wouldn't call us Big Flame we share many basic assumptions.

One reason we were accepted was because in practice we are seen to be a serious group in BF and are seen to act independently with the group as our primary concern. But as usual we've seen this as so obvious that we've said too little about BF and why we think it's important in the development of struggles. We hoped our ideas about BF would be evident in our practice so we misunderstood the ways it can't be more important, haven't tried to make the rest of BF clear to the women we know as a way of meeting others in struggle. The main problem is a problem for the whole of BF. The general meetings, when the base groups meet, don't offer this opportunity, so we should be thinking a lot harder about how BF must change to provide what is needed e.g. smaller inter base group meetings dealing with the things raised in the struggles people are experiencing. But we've been our reticence and confusion that's silenced us. To some extent we've been so busy thinking about our relation to BF that we've forgotten the main thing - how can it assist in struggles, how must it change to do so, how can we make it more accessible and useful to others.

At least one woman has not considered BF useful whereas she's formed an anarchist group with people, not necessarily involved in the struggle, in other parts of L'pool. We're not complaining about that - but we have to think about the needs of everyone for wider support with people in struggle elsewhere, the need a lot of people now have for becoming part of a wide movement. We also tended to assume



that the women in Tower Hill had the same conception of a women's group as we did - without realising how much we get and take for granted from contact with the rest of BF. So we expected them to be interested in the women's group and the Rents Action Group and ignored their need to relate organisationally to people outside Tower Hill (except through rents meetings that we and they criticise).

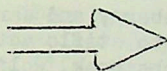
An offshoot of this is that in the process we've met men who've become isolated by the onward march of IS and their own refusal to join. Because our priority has been with the women there we've been unable to provide any focus for them either - although the development of the women's group as a general reference point on Tower Hill could eventually provide that focus...

A few of us have been talking about moving to Tower Hill. It seems the obvious thing to do to involve ourselves in the everyday activity of the women there. And as long as we're a part of BF the best way to reorientate it so it becomes much more a 'coming together' of groups of people in struggle rather than a central collection of individuals who move outwards into activity.

If we decide not to move there we feel more and more that going to Tower Hill must be something we do on the basis of struggles we are directly involved in here in L'pool. At the moment we still sometimes feel slightly parasitical and we can't really get totally involved in the everyday hassles of looking after their kids etc. If we did things nearer home we could then have a more equal relationship when we go to Tower Hill, and the possibilities of BF linking struggles would be clearer.

\*\*\*\*\*

LETTER



In the last issue of the Newsletter, there was a short article about Pauline Conroy who has been forced into political exile in Algeria with Mike Sirros and their kid Cormac

When she left she and Andy Ellesmore were on bail on a trumped up charge of "conspiracy to acquire firearms". In this letter she explains why she didn't come back for the trial - ironically, Andy was finally acquitted in July.

The questions she raises about our preparedness for going underground or even for going into exile become more relevant every day.



Relizane. Algeria.

April 9th Monday

and Sisters,

To clear up some confusion and speculation as to why I decided to stay in Algeria instead of returning to stand trial at the Old Bailey on March 26, I will write a few notes below.

In the last two years, those forces which could have led a revolutionary movement in England have been severely attacked. In Ireland has escalated the extent and means of repression against the ruling class. The Libertarian groups and groupings have taken more than their share of repression, being at the same time well organised, very subversive from the point of view of the ruling class, in their support of rank and file base groups and armed struggle and finally being ill-prepared for the wave of repression which has fast enveloped it.

In this context we can see the long straggle of the trials, the Mangrove Nine, the Stoke Newington 8, The Saor Eire individuals Jake Prescott, Tony Soares and others, as an attempt by the ruling class on the one hand, to attack those whom they regard as 'leadership elements' in the movement, and on the other hand to prevent sentencing, to frighten off those who support direct action and armed struggle, regardless of whether the individuals arrested were actually engaged in revolutionary violence or can be proved to have done so.

In that context, can be seen my own arrest as well as that of several others, the arrests of people like Chris Bott and John Weir and their later acquittal; the deportation of Mike Wolf Seeberg, and earlier still Paul Hoch, Rude Dutschke, were attempts to stifle activists who were capable of mobilising people. Paul Hoch's book, Wolf's film on N. Ireland) and were able to bring us to THINK. During my interrogation, Commander Bond told me that you are capable of writing communiques". Even two years ago the ruling class were watching out for people who could write, read and speak within the movement. In my case as in many others, being able to do so much the better for ruling class publicity, in demonstrating that ideas like armed struggle were not indigenous to Britain but imported from abroad. To that end, thousands of pig hours were spent in the Stoke Newington 8 trial trying to prove that my character was FOREIGN..

What can an arrested militant do? In my first case I had a radical lawyer from the Neighbourhood Law Centre, then a radical solicitor and relied on my friends and brothers and sisters to sort it out. It consumed not hours but weeks to obtain my release and preparation for sentence. The charges were dropped!

Shortly after Mike was imprisoned for the third time in Pentonville awaiting deportation, for having an expired visa, I was arrested again. This time not by the Special Branch but by the Flying Squad from Scotland Yard. This is in line with the repression faced by militants in Germany. There following several trials of alleged members of the Red Army Faction (see Armed Struggle in West Germany) the ruling class tried to discredit the movement by calling criminal charges and to break the trend towards political action by laying heavy criminal charges on active militants. If the facts were otherwise, was clear from the moment that Andy was arrested (member of the Agitprop collective haunted by the Special Branch since their support of the Jake and Ian defense group.)



During my committal last September, Andy and I were accused of conspiring to buy and conspiring to sell firearms. An Irish ex-con was brought in to give pig evidence. In this evidence he blurted out that he had been told that I was a member of the Angry Brigade, and that my intentions were to kidnap important people or perhaps high jackings! He added that he was worried when he got a look at me, as he saw that I was 'only a young girl'.

After my committal I returned to Algeria, which has given Mike political asylum. It was the only one of 17 countries approached, which would accept him after 4 months of hustling during his imprisonment. During that time, I realised how ill-prepared was the movement for the problems of deportation, and for pig harassment that was not based on any evidence that could be twisted around by a radical defence or radical lawyer. No-one knew anything about asylum. No-one knew anything about the politics of other countries. No lawyer knew anything about international law or even less cared to inform himself of Home Office procedure. The Neighbourhood Law Centre and a small number of individuals spent days and hours writing to governments, Embassies, preparing dossiers, pouring over maps and nagging Embassy officials. The parochialism of the movement became apparent. Where were all the overseas contacts of the Libertarian movement. Where were the escape routes for exiles. Where was the last resort when the court scene had been played out. It didn't exist!

The most helpful and useful people were personal friends of lawyers, journalists and foreign correspondents, other exiles who were tracked down. The one group, who had done some research on international questions was Agitprop, who provided in 24 hours a list of contacts for seeking political asylum in Socialist countries, but as very few people had ever used it, it had to be oiled a little to make it work!

Radical lawyers and Defense groups have a role to play when you still want to fight within the courts. But for the increasing number of militants like Mike and I, who wanted to make a retreat out of the scene when all our legal cards had been played... there was nothing except good will and personal friends. We need an organised underground network to handle every situation in a militants life, when those militants can no longer operate without repression.

In staying in Algeria, I broke bail. This will not prevent others from getting bail. They have already been prevented. Look at Stewart Christie, Ian Purdie and others denied bail. Look at the sardine packed wings of Brixton and Pentonville, full of bail-less men and women. What is needed is a fund of money to reimburse those who actually do stand bail. Such a fund was raised in South Africa among conscious white people and enabled countless revolutionaries to flee the country.

In staying in Algeria I have abandoned all hope of getting out of the Old Bailey free. I do not consider it worth the risk, even a good risk, to spend my youthful years inside. Nothing is to be gained from imprisonment except a lot of excess weight.

In our case Algeria accepted three of us as one family. When you seek political asylum you cannot choose the terms on which you enter the country. We now have 2 jobs and a flat. These are huge privileges here and put us in a social position far superior to the mass of the people. To prevent Europeans taking advantage of these privileges i.e. grabbing some advance pay-checks and splitting, we may not enter or leave the country as we wish. Permission has to be obtained from the local education authority. It is a complex procedure. If for any reason the trial had then been delayed, I would jeopardise my job by not returning to it. If I had been convicted and had not returned at all, I would have jeopardised Mike and Cormac by breaking one of the conditions of our entry and stay in Algeria, and thus fucked up the one country which agreed to accept Mike.



turned from here for committal, it involved a huge amount of  
ion to arrange transport, instant defence. I do not think it  
other people doing all this again. Regrettably a lot of time  
to be spent sorting out the problems of the woman who stood  
me. She stood bail out of her goodwill and generosity. She  
t be expected to bear the burden all on her own.

Waste the time spent around trials is lost time. Lost in the  
t this work should not be carried out by the best and most  
militants. Left wing defense should be as common knowledge  
to avoid paying on the tube. This work should be supported by  
like Release, the Release McKenzie evenings, NCCL who will keep  
nd be able to draw on a pool of experience and knowledge. For  
active and experienced militants to be drawn into defense work  
into the spiders web, woven by the ruling class: to entice  
into DEFENSE on their terms, in their courts, instead of  
in our time, in our areas of choosing.

in Algeria is not necessarily to be cut off. The movement is  
ned to England alone. A militant has work to do everywhere. A  
nary has a revolution to make everywhere. It must also be  
d that I was an immigrant to Britain in the first place, and  
e immigrants again. A revolutionary who sees his own struggle  
from the struggle in Europe and the Third World is not a  
nary but a Nationalist. Unless he sees it through the eyes of  
World he is unconsciously going to see it through the eyes of  
sm.

re the movement in England and Ireland looks very different.  
isolation reflects the isolationism of those movements. Being  
n a country like Algeria can be invaluable for those individ-  
for those movements to which they are attached, but only if  
a relation between them. The movement in England needs milit-  
ad, to expand the struggle at other levels, and to assist in  
ments integration into the international struggle against  
m and Imperialism.

have come here, we have received many letters telling us of  
of individual struggles, the progress of individual campaigns  
s. These no longer make much sense to us. They are divorced  
general struggle, and we cannot make sense of these accounts  
months abroad, cut off from the general atmosphere of social/  
affairs. We need to know the THEORETICAL CONCLUSIONS drawn from  
uggles. Such theoretical conclusions, small scale of large scale  
guide us in our search for similar struggles or related  
in the international scale. Here we have available to us a  
unt of international magazines, journals, newspapers: articles  
d and struggles analysed could be drawn from this material if  
me indicators on which to do this.

iduals are compelled to jump bail it's neither a sign of their  
their guilt or their disregard for their brothers and sisters,  
ire for a holiday in the sun. Life in Algeria, in a small  
own without gas, often water or electricity is no holiday in  
Rather it is a sign of the scale of repression and the new  
being investigated by militants who want to stay active and  
all costs.

be the last to say jumping bail is the solution for everyone.  
e considered on its merits as one of many stratagies, to be used  
nd desperate occasions. Andy Ellesmore has taken the correct  
I believe to remain in England. That we were arrested together  
bind our interests together. It would be a mistake for us to find



a false unity in a making class definition of our guilt, He is my brother and a comrade: there is no desertion or abandonment between us: we are going different ways.

Jumping bail is a step into clandestinity. In my case it has been unfortunately an UNORGANISED CLANDESTINITY. I wish it had not been my choice. I wish I had not received letters saying: "X says stay but Y says come back." I wish it could have been a decision made more collectively, on criterion of organisational needs, and an analysis of the state of the movement.

No revolution was ever made OVERGROUND. They all began clandestinely or from exile: Algeria, Cuba, Yemen, Dhofar, China... can we learn that lesson and start now?

revolutionary solidarity, pauline.

# Family Allowances

The campaign  
on  
Merseyside

Merseyside Womens Liberation first started talking about the threats to the Family Allowance in December. Most of us were in our early twenties, unmarried and without kids; some students, some teachers, most on the dole. Several of us new to Womens Liberation. We got a copy of the Green Paper and the Child Poverty Action Group analysis of why Tax Credits should go to women. A few people agreed to read the green Paper while a few others agreed to write a leaflet to explain the proposals to women in the street. Almost immediately there was confusion and disagreement over whether we should oppose the entire Tax Credit proposal or support the Child Poverty Action Group line of Tax Credits paid to women. This was never talked through but those of us who became the core of the Family Allowance group sort of tacitly agreed that the whole thing was rotten.

We did our first petitioning outside the Post Office in Kirkby town centre on a Tuesday (which is also market day). Five of us collected about 600 signatures in two hours. The response was fantastic with only a handful of women refusing to sign.

"Bloody Hell! If they put it in his wages, it'll go straight to the ale house."

"I'd get it off my fella but I know plenty who wouldn't."

"I save it up. That's the only way to pay the gas and the leccy."

"I can't manage from Friday to Friday without family allowance on Tuesday."

We'd all felt hesitant about petitioning before this because we weren't confident about how people would react. After the great day in Kirkby we tried over the next few months to systematically go around the various parts of Liverpool on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Out of the dozen or so places we went to, women overwhelmingly supported what we were doing. After a five minute broadcast on Radio Merseyside we even got a few written requests for petitions to pass around.

When May Day was getting near, we wanted to do something to point out that while however many industrial workers are on strike, the domestic workers continued to slave away. We talked of leaving kids and toys in the Tax Office or the Treasury building, having a Family Allowance contingent on the May Day march and a speaker at the Pier Head rally. But plans involving kids or occupying a building quickly came to a halt because, no matter how many signatures we had, the involvement of the



stopped after their names were on paper. We leafleted women at  
y about demonstrating for the Family Allowance on May Day and  
with the Womens Committee of the Liverpool Trades Council but  
g more came of it. When we asked to speak at the rally, the Trades  
l Secretary said no, because it was important that the speakers be  
e and interesting i.e. men wouldn't be interested in the Family  
nce. In the end Womens Liberation marched with other left of lefties,  
ng Family Allowance banners.

g back:  
oning gave us an excuse and an opening to talk to women who we would  
likely to meet in any other setting. Women who might disagree with  
ur Womens Liberation basic demands, who very likely disagreed with  
f our reasons and rationale for keeping Family Allowance, nevertheless  
mily Allowance as important to them. Some women didn't seem to feel  
ed to money of their own. Some didn't seem to think that further  
s were in order. Many denied th. at money to their husbands was any  
ent from money to them. But they would still sign the petition.

oes signing a petition do? By itself it is an isolated point of  
t leading nowhere. For most women in Liverpool, the State as an  
ary is vague, remote, omnipotent. Petitioning does not alter these  
gs, it reinforces them. And at the same time, all other women signing  
so vague and remote, so there is little sense of strength by working  
er. My feeling is that our group was unable to carry on to any further  
because we saw our involvement in F.A. as important in itself,  
t simply as a possible means of opening up and drawing new  
into any ongoing work or growing relationships.

t the position of women could and would be clear to women  
ly because of the Green Paper and Family Allowance issues i.e.  
ndent income, being considered as individual people rather than  
ages of blokes etc., and that women would then band together  
se up against the government. Well, reality is a bit clearer now.  
ents can pervert any issue, particularly when the fight is so  
n THEIR terms i.e. through Parliament. Revolutionary potential  
ot in issues per se but in how we use issues to establish  
g, sisterly relationships among all sorts of women; networks of  
ho come to experience us on an equal level with them, working out  
nces and problems of working together in "revolutionary" ways.

## SUPPORT THE : FAMILY ALLOWANCE DEFENCE FUND

help pay the fines of women arrested during  
fight to keep family allowances.

Contributions to: Family Allowance Defence Fund,  
1/0 S. London Women's Centre,  
14, Radnor Terrace,  
LONDON S.W.8



# ANTWERP DOCK STRIKE > WOMEN EXTEND THE STRUGGLE

(Translated from German Newspaper Wir Wollen Alles, June 1973.)

"We women know best when the money doesn't stretch. We have the housekeeping and see quickest when we can't manage because of rising prices. We know it couldn't go on, we know best of all that there had to be a strike."

So one of the most militant dockers wives explains the active interest and participation in the 8 week wildcat strike of Antwerp dockers. The autonomous strike committee of women was set up the moment all dockers' demos were banned. The women had got to know each other on the demos where they marched in the front row, and a number of them were together when the ban was announced. They decided, "If our husbands can't demonstrate, then we will". It snowballed: 5 women each chat to someone they know and there's already 10 agitating for a women's demo; 50 women marched through the city centre of Antwerp to the union building. Quite a few had taken the day off work to join in. The demo was smashed by brutal police attacks - 4,000 police with water cannons against 50 women. The terror of the attacks only strengthened the anger and militancy of the women. "I'm not afraid of the police. I hit back with my umbrella". A woman whose ankle was smashed insisted on coming on the next demo - in a wheelchair.

After this the women started getting x into it properly. They met regularly as the women's strike committee and began having "Go-ins" into nearby factories informing workers about the strike and calling for support. They gave out leaflets in the schools and collected money all over, though it was banned. They wrote their own newsheet and organised more demos e.g to Ghent, to keep the unity of the struggle going. One of their demands was against the stopping of the family allowance, which is higher in Belgium than here and is normally paid direct to the woman. They wrote an open letter to the Minister for the family - who said he couldn't be responsible - and had a demo at the town hall to call the mayor to account. They wanted to have a go at him about the way 14 year old boys were being used as strike breakers in the docks. There'd been a lot of accidents, and one boy lost three fingers. The mayor wanted to talk with a delegation of 3 women. They replied, "Sauf Louis, come out. You've got to talk with us all. We all have to feed our kids."

There were only about 150 women active in the strike - the first dock strike for years. When we asked if they'd tried to get the other dockers' wives involved in the struggle a lot of the militant women said, "Everyone knows what's going on. If they don't join in it's their fault." They only really started talking about getting the rest involved towards the end of the strike. The conflict between the militant wives and the others shows in the following scene: the wife of a scab locks spitefully into the shopping basket of a dockers wife and says, "Ha, you can't afford what we buy can you?"

The women who'd decided to fight developed a ruthless militancy which must be explained by their lack of connections with the unions, revisionist organisations and their structures of organisation, and thought. They didn't have their heads full of formal-democratic rules but acted from the basis of their direct interest, knowing they were in the right, and didn't let themselves be put down. So often tensions developed in the men's strike committee (CP dominated) because the women accused them of timidity and compromise. By the end the women weren't even having their meetings in the CP office. Or another example - "A lot of people came and asked us who our chairwoman was.



ly say we haven't got one. We all know what it's about and  
e to do."

er of ll children got a bit of extra money, she turned it  
t it in the general strike fund. "Why should it be only  
re all fighting." The strike-breakers, the scabs, were  
d sworn at by the women. One woman used to play the record  
ll my friends" every day by the flat of a scab in her street.

egan the process of becoming autonomous through their act-  
e strike, which they're no longer prepared to go back on.  
anded to be present at all future docks meetings and to  
. "Whether they're striking or not, it's our affair as well.  
ght as women to make the decisions too, because we have  
e house and bring up the kids. We have to take care that  
ands are made in strikes. The capitalists are trying to  
strike by starving the families. How many men have come to  
d they had to fight on two fronts. Against the capitalists  
as and against their wives at home, who're putting  
n because they can't feed the kids. We're going to have to  
his sum the capitalists are doing. We must get active as  
fight for our rights. Sitting home and waiting, watching  
here. It doesn't bring in money. We women have to get out  
ets". The policy of the state and capital in starving the  
at was giving them a specially bad time because of the family  
being stopped. It meant the families had no income at all.  
their heads above water by by having their holiday money  
y the women and older children getting jobs, by using up  
d from donations.

are going to keep meeting even after the strike ends. They're  
alk to the other women, give out leaflets on the buses and  
n on the docks leaflets for their wives. They're going to  
y what kind of programme of social demands they'll put

nk about the participation of the dockers wives in the strike:

emand to take part in and vote in the dockers meetings is  
ssault on the politics of capital and the unions, which  
ected at the wage-worker, doesn't recognise the social  
housework, and calls the reproduction of the working class  
atter. This conflict was played out for us: In one family  
there was the husband's cousin who's been in the CP since  
There was a violent discussion between him and the docker's  
the demand for participation. He kept saying it shouldn't  
women were 'nt working and weren't paying union dues. The  
ying that the women have a right to decide because they keep  
The demand attacks the politics of capital which makes  
d reproduction-workers.

of financial independence was reflected in the demand for  
the family allowance. The bitter protest against its with-  
ased on the women's understanding of the function of social  
have as mothers when they are thrown back on the men's  
women could have made it a good strike but they haven't  
es active enough yet," said the dockers wife. She recog-  
the women often cry off because the passivity of waiting  
es them more likely to be anxious and timid. If one is active  
knows why, then one knows why one takes risks and is more  
take them, "Women must get out of their houses."



3. The militancy and resolution of the strike was basically due to sheer material necessity, sharpened by increasing insecurity about work because of constant rationalisation and the introduction of containers. According to our experiences, material necessity in Germany is expressed not just in having enough to live, but in standards of life defined by the "economic miracle", which are only realised through credit and MP, where inflation makes repayment even more difficult. We know women who have to skimp on the food they eat in order to pay their debts.

4. The starting point for the development of a women's movement among the dockers wives in Antwerp was the men's strike. From their supportive function they developed their own demands. From this situation it is clear that women have always emphasised how we must break the divisions between men and women, fight in unity. All the same contradictions arose naturally when for instance the husbands were against their wives demonstrating because they were afraid something might happen to them and then who'd look after the kids? The Antwerp dockers wives have broken down a lot of roles through their activities, and gained self-consciousness. So for instance it often happened that the husband had to look after the kids while his wife went to a meeting of the strike committee.

For us its important to realise in any case that a women's movement can develop from a man's strike, a women's movement which brings its own perspectives. Instead of just watching "Salt of the Earth" perhaps we should have a look at what's happening here in the family when there are strikes.

\*\*\*\*\*

# WHY WE BOTHER !

WOMEN  
IN  
BIG  
FLAME

It may seem strange to have an article in a women's newsletter about working politically with men and it seems to us that the discussions and experience of those of us who work in a mixed revolutionary group must be circulated and commented on, especially when the "alternatives" are usually posed as working either with a women's group or with one of the "traditional" left groups. We all came into Big Flame in different ways and at different times: some of us when BF was only just beginning to be active, mostly in industrial struggles 4 years ago; others came later from a variety of situations including the university, claimants unions and women's groups in other parts of the country, when BF was developing involvement in other areas of struggle. Since last summer all the women in BF have met together weekly, and women we know in Women's liberation also come. We discuss our activities (Some of us are involved in Tower Hill, others in the community group - now dying - and we all have more sporadic contact with women in different areas and struggles), and we discuss issues raised in BF, the women's movement and elsewhere.

The development of the women's group in BF has been long, slow and uneven and it's been interconnected with the development of BF as a whole. Right at the beginning some of the women were involved in Women's liberation as well as meeting together irregularly - mainly for "defensive" reasons against existence in a male dominated group. We initiated the Women's Industrial Group with some women from Women's liberation. This group never really became active and soon faded out because of our confusion - it was mainly a response to the current



against the Industrial Relations Bill and our own vague ideas of a women's action group against the Bill. This bias to was pretty unthought-out and reflected our acceptance of the . This in itself was partly a reflection of the situation on at that time - when the only mass organised activity was ly based against the IRB. At that time BF was still very y just working itself out and involved mainly in the industrial t Ford Halewood. This involvement was embryonic and we played g role, e.g. producing leaflets for the shop stewards committee l Ford strike

had learned some lessons about its servicing role - an expression dicalist and anti-organisational ideas at the time. We learned s no use to anyone for us to stand on the sidelines and propa- We needed to be a part of the struggles we were commenting on lising from - we needed to affect and be affected by people on ay basis, to develop a common sharing of experience and politi- pment with other militants. And as we talked about this, we lot from the development of the Italian struggle and especially contact with Lotta Continua in relation to that struggle.

ted "base Groups" - BF broke down into small groups intervening ly in specific situations in order to share experience, put ss on a "mass" level, and link militants within the situation. me the only 2 base groups were at Fords and Standards, and involved in both. Some of us then produced the document "Big Flame" which described the specific problems of women in volutionary group. The problem was still seen very much in articular symptoms - the men speaking more, the women having dence etc. Having a women's group in BF was seen largely in ve" way. Although there was some rather vague understanding d of women to organise as women around their particular oppres- e was a lot of confusion about how that related to the rest of volutionary struggle and for us in BF, on what basis, if any, en's group relate to the rest of BF. So there was little we hile we still clear about the need to develop a revolu- rspective as women

ment of the "community" group in 1972 in Halewood was partly the growing need to relate to women. As BF grew and developed ientiation, and as more women came from other parts of the th different political experiences (in claimants unions and oups) we became clearer about the need for a women's group - ay of getting together defensively and finding the confidence e" better on the "men's ground" - but so we could begin to at we, as revolutionary women should be talking about and hose of us who were still involved in the Ford group (the Standard collapsed) then left to become involved in the women's group.

difficult to summarise the activity and perspective of the oup because there's not an overall "women's group" standpoint. e women continue to go to BF general meetings, where people from ent base groups meet to collectively discuss and analyse those and to co-ordinate activity and discussion which isn't directly re, e.g. Fascism, the struggle in Ireland. Those who go think at least a useful focus for us to meet others involved in ary struggle and its usefulness can be redefined in the context elopment of the situation generally. Others have stopped e are never been even though they might still see themselves as because either they don't feel that the general meetings are hem or they feel the meetings don't allow them to participate



fully. All of us have criticisms of these meetings and therefore of the way BF is organised at the moment and at the moment everyone is involved in the process of discussing the question of organisation so to some extent our difficulties and confusions are a reflection of the whole situation. Because of the diversity of interests in the women's group it's been difficult to work out a basis for meeting together. We haven't yet worked out how to balance the needs of the women who come so we have no discussions thoroughly. Those women who link ourselves with the rest of BF most haven't really found the basis in the women's group to be able to intervene in the generalising processes of BF, e.g. redirecting the "general" newspaper articles.

In the women's group there's little discussion beyond the day to day issues raised in Tower Hill. And when the women's group started we temporarily withdrew from discussion of Tower Hill in the general meetings to give ourselves time and space to move (all the base groups are autonomous and have final say over their activity so we were able to do this). This meant we withdrew from concrete discussions of our own political orientation as women and so limited the extent to which men could learn from our experience, and affected the relations between men and women. At the same time pressure on all of us from the need to discuss certain things at certain times e.g. if all base groups are preparing for a BF general meeting on a specific subject, has restricted those women who feel less involved in those discussions. There's also difficulties when some of us are doing things, say in Tower Hill and so need to discuss it, and others aren't because they're working and have less time for that kind of activity. So in a way the once weekly meetings often goes off at half-cock !! We haven't managed to find how we can all be involved in a discussion. All of this means also that it's rarely we can all see a basis for discussing things like our relationships to each other, to men, to our work and our homes.

Some of the things we've discussed about how BF general meetings operate are old, old stories. There are people who speak more than others, in a certain language that's been allowed to define the way that discussions go on - these people aren't always the most active militants. There's a strong tendency amongst women in BF to reject an "intellectual" way of speaking as a feature of the student movement and male dominated traditional left groups. This has often meant that we have confused "intellectual" and "theoretical", and misunderstood our own need and ability for "theoretical" development in reaction to this. So we've often left the "general" development of BF in the hands of certain individuals who have defined the way such discussions go on and in the hands of a male-dominated perspective. But some of us feel strongly that BF can and must be redirected towards a more genuinely "general" revolutionary perspective through our activity in the women's group.

We don't feel this is a definitive statement, but we've been trying to write it for a month, and finally had to put something down ,.....



years ago I had a child, which I then  
not want. I kept my pregnancy a  
secret from everybody - feeling that I  
could not confide in anyone.

My son was born I thought it better for  
he were adopted. A Social Worker came  
to the hospital, and told me that adoption would  
be difficult as my child was half-caste, but  
she was willing to admit the both of us to a  
Baby Home until a decision was taken. I  
was in this - feeling I had no alternative, and after  
being there for 4½ months I knew I had made the wrong  
decision. Naturally I had grown very fond of my child, and  
I was reluctant to part with him. At the end of this period I was  
told he could be placed in a residential nursery, where I  
would have to pay for his keep.

Under this stress, I considered contraception seriously but did  
not know of its availability. I could not ask my own Doctor, as when I  
went for my Post Natal he told me what a 'silly girl' I had been  
and would not offer any advice.

After I became pregnant again, and when I was 4 mths had  
a back street abortion, which was very painful and frightening.  
I was not very sure about contraception, so  
I became pregnant 12 months later. I  
had another back street abortion, which was really  
horrible. I actually saw the baby when it came away.

I was very depressed after this and felt that for my  
own good I should go to a family planning clinic, but  
as I wasn't sure about going about it. I had heard  
that there was one locally but had never seen it  
advertised.

Twelve months later I again became pregnant and felt that I  
could not face the thought of another back street abortion,  
so I was going to be placed with another child and the whole  
idea was very depressing.

When I was nearly 6 months pregnant I discussed my unwanted  
pregnancy with a newly acquainted friend. She explained to me  
that there was a place in Liverpool who would give me an  
abortion and we agreed to go and see if they would help me at  
such a late stage.

The British Pregnancy Advisory Service were very kind and under-  
standing, but were not very hopeful about an abortion. After  
seeing numerous Doctors it was agreed that I should be sent to  
Brighton to a nursing home, and if the surgeon agreed the abortion  
would cost £100. The price made me feel very despondent as I knew  
I did not have this money. When I explained this I was told the  
organisation would lend me half but I would have to find the rest  
myself. Thanks to another friend I was able to go to Brighton and  
have the abortion, which was another frightening experience, as I had  
been told that because I was so advanced I was going to have the  
abortion induced and would have to deliver the baby the same way in which  
a normal child birth would take place.

This was over B.P.A.S. gave me a 6 months prescription for the  
abortion and gave me leaflets with addresses on where I could obtain future

conferences are typical of what many women in Liverpool suffer.  
Contraception advice is not widespread - abortions are so costly that  
many could never afford them, Roman Catholic Doctors are  
reluctant to consent to contraception and termination - so women  
end up suffering back street abortions and a high  
percentage dying through this.

Many may think that I've been stupid and thoughtless,  
but I do not realise the way I have suffered through  
lack of knowledge and sympathy.



THIS ISSUE WAS PUT TOGETHER BY WOMEN IN BIG FLAME, LIVERPOOL. YOU CAN GET  
HOLD OF US AT 22 WOBURN HILL, LIVERPOOL L3. TEL: 220 5223.

WILL ANY GROUP WHO'S PREPARED TO DO THE NEXT ISSUE GET IN TOUCH WITH US  
AND WE'LL SEND ON MONEY ARTICLES ETC. We don't want to set any pattern  
with this issue - it's not necessarily a good idea for one group to do so  
many articles. So if anyone wants to send in an article we'll pass it on  
to whoever says they'll produce next one.

We were sent 2 articles we didn't put in - "Women and the Revolution in the  
Gulf" and a translation, "Chile: To integrate women into the Socialist  
System". Because there was no material sent in from other groups about  
things in this country we decided to get down to describe what's happening  
in L'pool. We didn't like the 2 articles but even if we had done time  
and space were running out so we decided to pass them on to the next issue.

This issue worked out quite expensive. 18 reams of A4..... £18  
about 5 tubes ink.... £7.50  
electric stencil(cover) 35p  
30 stencils (free)

Notting Hill sent on £9. We decided that as a large group with probably  
more access to equipment, money etc we'd try and support this issue our-  
selves. We're doing 650 and we'll be selling at 4p at the conference.  
We'll send on the £9 to the next group.

## CONTENTS

- page 1.....Where do we go from here?  
5.....Rent Strike on Merseyside - WE WON'T PAY.  
6..... Tower Hill Rent Strike.  
7.....Women and the Rent Strike.  
9.....Just Houses and Houses (life in Kirkby).  
11.....Tower Hill Women's Group.  
18.....Thoughts -- Big Flame and Tower Hill.  
19.....Letter from Pauline in Algeria.  
23.....Family Allowance- the campaign on Merseyside.  
(Women's Liberation).  
25.....Antwerp Dock Strike-Women Extend Struggle.  
27.....Why we bother- women in Big Flame.  
30.....Pregnancy and abortion in L'pool - personal  
experiences.



PKR

Merseyside Women's Liberation,  
2, Rutland Avenue,  
Liverpool L7.

21/2/73.

We would like to inform you that on Friday, March 2nd at 8.p.m. in the Gilmour Hall, in the Old Students Union, University of London, Brownlow Hill Selma James, the International Women's Liberationist and Marxist, author of 'Women, Work and the Unions' and 'A Woman's Place' etc, will be speaking. The subject will broadly be 'A woman's place'. Everyone will be very welcome at the meeting.

On the Saturday afternoon of March 3rd there will be an informal discussion between Women's Lib and Selma James. All interested women would be very welcome. The time and venue will be announced at the Friday meeting or women can write to the above address, as all the details have not been arranged yet.

Yours in Sisterhood.



Here's the latest issue of the Libertarian Women's Network Newsheet.  
If you would like to receive it regularly can you fill in below. The  
cost is 40p for 10 issues. . . . It's free to claimants.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

NO OF ISSUES.....

MONEY ENCLOSED.....

Send to us (hopefully we'll arrange a central address for subs soon)  
Big Flame Women, 22 Woburn Hill, Liverpool 13. Tel: 220 5223.