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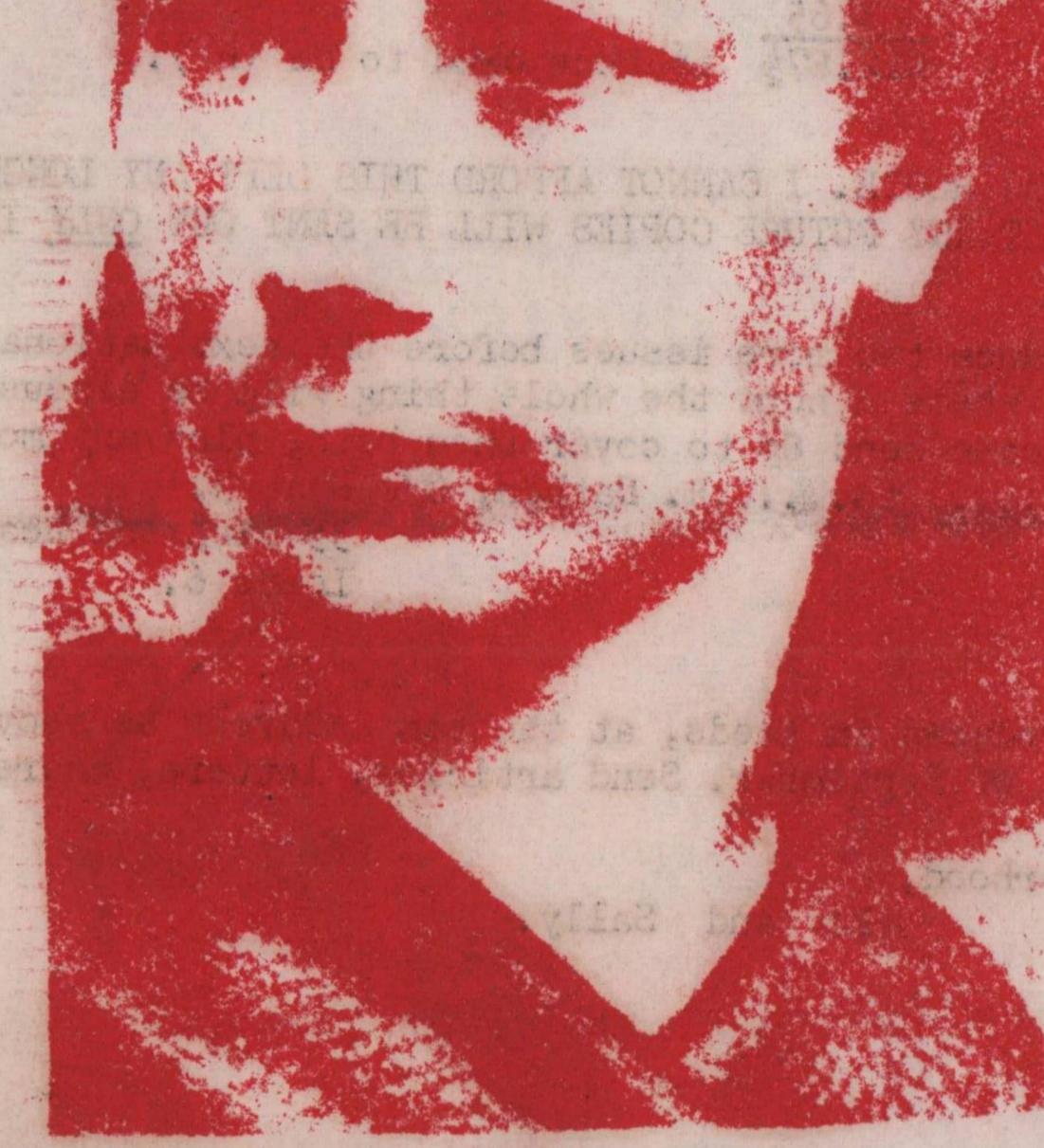
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LOUISE MICHEL was a french anarchist. She took an active part in the Paris Commune of 1871, and at its downfall was transported to-the penal settlements.

She was a delegate at the Saint-Imier International of 1881 (the 'Black International'), which had been created after the Bakuninists had ousted the Marxists from the First International in 1872.

During the 1880's she helped organise the unemployed. An open air meeting of the unemployed in 1883 was broken up by the police. Louise Michel and Émile Pouget, carrying a black flag, led about five hundred demonstrators towards the Boulevard Saint-Germain. In the rue des Canettes the demonstrators pillaged three bakers shops, with the cry, "Bread, work, or lead!". The bread they contained was shared out among them.

Louise and Emile were both arrested. Louise was sentenced to six year's solitary confinement, and Emile to eight years. Public opinion eventually forced the granting of an amnesty to free her and Pouget.

Production costs

This issue produced by Sally & Ro, at Flat 3,35 Richmond Rd, Leeds 6. The cost of producing this issue was : £6.73½
125 copies were produced, which works out at approx 5p per copy, ...

including postage.

Since the last issue, we have £3.65 in from anon, Helen, Lee, Jill,

Cathy, Liz and Peggy.

The debit to date stands at : £9.79.

plus cost this one $£6.73\frac{1}{5}$

minus credit

3.65

 $\frac{3.65}{£12.87\frac{1}{2}}$ is thus owed to me (Ro).

I AM OUT OF WORK AND MOVING HOUSE. I CANNOT AFFORD THIS DEPT ANY LONGER. I MUST THEREFORE STATE THAT ANY FUTURE COPIES WILL BE SENT OUT ONLY IF PAID FOR.

NO. 8 will be produced in Leeds, at the same address as above, on the weekend of the 9th of September. Send articles, letters, addresses and money, here,

in sisterhood,

No and Sally.



180 Melbourne Road, Leicester.

of bentant as death and bett and will be to to be the bent of the Dear Friends,

We are trying to start a free school in the Highfield area of the town for our own and other small children (Lib Ed meetings to be held regularly next. term to this end - first one at 180 Melbourne Road on 23rd August at 8.00 p.m.).

I have recently (and thankfully) stopped teaching to have a baby and am, as yet, underemployed. I should be glad of money-making suggestions as well as the opportunity to talk to people who have

a) brought up self-regulated children (in practice, not theory):

b) got good ideas about organising help and organisation for unsupported mothers (nobody here has any capital and property is scarce).

Please also list our place as a temporary crash pad (only thing about Ieicester is that it's on the way to everywhere else!)

Best wishes and sorelial greetings,

Diana Humphrey

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18 Willow Road, London N.W.3.

Dear Sisters,

We owe thanks to Rosalind Brunt for attacking the view that the Pill's side effects are 'all psychological.' It is dreadful how doctors make us all out to be dotty. Menstrual cramps, premenstrual syndrome, nausea of pregnancy, any disorders connected with our sexual functions - all are attributed to some 'nervous over-reaction,' 'feeling of guilt,' or, God help us, 'rejection of our femininity!' How's this: R. W. Kistner, in The Pill (Hutchinson, 1970), a book whose 'purpose is to enable you to make up your own mind' (p. xiv), says the following about nausea (p. 59):

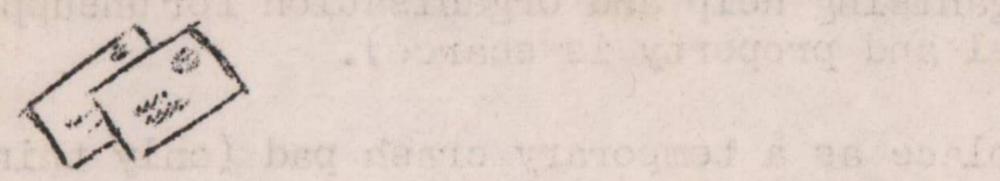
'Psychiatrists have suggested that (nausea of pregnancy) represents an unconscious repressed rejection of the pregnancy, with the ejection of the stomach's contents signifying the body's attempt to empty the uterus. Transferring this reasoning to Pill users, one might speculate that persistent nausea or vomiting represents an underlying guilt feeling and that these symptoms afford the patient a valid reason for stopping the Pill.'

If it's all in the mind, of course the responsibility for both cause and cure lies with the patient. She must either sort herself out or shut up. Meanwhile the medical profession is relieved of the need to look for organic causes. Our only defence against such dangerous rubbish is to know our own bodies and refuse to be fobbed off with non-explanations. A woman suffering from menstrual difficulties can go armed with this: 'Dysmenorrhoea (menstrual cramps, premenstrual bloating and headache, etc.) can be induced in any woman by the administration of the wrong hormone. This invalidates any theory that dysmenorrhoea is purely psychological.' (Katharina Dalton, The Menstrual Cycle, Penguin Books, 1969).

Even libido, almost universally explained in psychological terms alone, is affected by hormones. Most women - and even some medical researchers are aware that sex drive fluctuates over the menstrual cycle and may be affected by pregnancy and the Pill. Men don't think hormone balance is important because their own hormonal fluctuations are trivial or not easily recognised. (That early morning erection is caused by an increase in circulating testosterone. How many men know that?).

Don't even trust a woman doctor. Not only has she been trained to think in the same way as men doctors and taught the same 'facts' but she will bring in the evidence of her own body's reactions, and her reactions may be very different from yours. If there is any conflict between what you feel and what someone tells you that you ought to feel, believe yourself, After all, whose body is it?

Vicky Chick



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St. Dunstan's Nursery, Friars Place Lane, London W.3.

Pelicata Books, 1969).

Dear Comrades,

Some comments on the 'Radical Feminism' item in News Sheet No. 6:

Best wishes and sorelist

Evidently Tessa doesn't go along with some of the more reactionary aspects of radical feminism, but she seems to give tentative support to certain dubious and potentially harmful ideas of the separatist variety. We don't have to be lukewarm in criticism of our sisters, and I feel that, as libertarians, we should be clear on this.

Radical feminism is not hard to understand, given centuries of male domination and the bitter experience of countless women, but it is a reaction, not a solution to that situation. In fact, it bases itself on the very assumption we should be most concerned to challenge, namely that the sex difference is vital, fundamental, insuperable, and that we must limit ourselves to functioning as women, not on equal terms as people. This seems to me a crippling denial of self, even if we claim to be superior in our separateness. The movement could easily tend towards inverted elitism (female chauvinism) - and here the analogy between 'Woman Power' and Black Power is significant - and to mirror the worst facets of the society it sought to oppose. Can a libertarian mentally liquidate a whole vast category of people on grounds of race, age - or sex? If we believe that our practice now ought to pre-figure wherever possible the sort of society we want to see, there can be no question of committing ourselves exclusively to an exclusively feminist movement.

The commonplace assertion that women's liberation means human liberation of course has a lot of truth in it. But the point is that this one cause cannot be completely won, or struggled for, in isolation. If we ignore social and economic inequality, political coercion, division of people into ordergivers and order-takers in every sector of society, we will remain obstinately blinkered to vast areas of reality. The struggle is multi-faceted. To consider that men require liberation only in respect of their 'destructive role as oppressor' is monstrously inadequate. It's not a question of identifying with a wider, vaguer 'movement'. On the contrary, our political ideas should be fairly definite, whereas the women's movement is really wide and vague, having as its prerequisites only the biological circumstance of being female and an undetermined degree of consciouness about some of its effects. I think I have more in common with men who share the same sort of political consciousness, including ideas of women's liberation as an integral part of their own struggle, than I have, even potentially, with many women. I prefer the conscious, political affinity of comradeship to the random, biological affinity of sister-hood.

I don't deny there is a case for excluding men from the small groups where women are learning to relate to each other and communicate meaningfully for the first time. And, of course, there are women's struggles, where women must organise autonomously. At times, these will be foremost in our thoughts and actions. But the prime identification must surely be with the totality of our own ideas, which we haven't received at second-hand from male theoreticians but have developed, integrally with our women's liberation consciousness, over years' observation and experience as people in society.

Liz Willis

68 Breedon Street, Nottingham.

Dear Ros,

Sheet - that feminism, along with a non-acquisitive and non-competitive ethic, is the only revolutionary movement in the world, involving totally new, exploratory ways of thinking and living, radically new educational methods, a new approach to old ideas of 'responsibility' and 'self respect' (based on the urge to power in our society; in any new one they will have to be grounded in something much purer). Personally, I think most forms of communism are intensely bourgeois in purpose and effect - power and acquisition....

Helen Scalway

OUT and ABOUT

Leeds Women's Lib group are still organising a Women's Advisory Service, which offers both personal and telephone contact for women who need advice on abortion, contraception, pregnancy, nurseries, childminders, social security, etc., etc. We would welcome any news of other groups' advisory services, such as information about the number of people seeking advice, about what in particular, and ways to improve the correlation of information between nearby towns. Contact tel. 783256 or call in at 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds 2 on Saturdays from 2 to 5 p.m.

Manchester's three Women's Lib groups are co-ordinating to organise a Women's Liberation Information Centre for information on abortion, contraception, VD, sterilization, divorce, unsupported mothers, tenants organizations, etc., etc. The contact given is to tel. 2732287 or call in at 218 Upper Brook Street, Manchester 13 at 7 to 8 p.m. Mondays to Fridays.

Nottingham Women's Rally was held on Sunday, July 23rd, and organised by Nottingham WL group. The rally started at 12 noon with stalls for literature, an FPA stall, a Sexton workers stall, a WACC (Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign) stall, several handicrafts stalls and others. Speakers began at 2.30 p.m. and included May Hobbs (night cleaners campaign), Audrey Wise, Nancy McGrath (from Sexton's of Fakenham), members of WL from Nottingham, Scotland and other areas, and a lady of 77 who was on a march from Jarrow in the 1930's.

There was quite a bit of heckling from male chauvinists, asking such old chestnuts as 'Why don't you work down the mines, then?' and 'Why don't you stay at home and have more children to solve your problems?' However, there was a very good turnout of local people who stayed for over an hour to listen to the speeches and then to questions, which lasted for more than half an hour. The hecklers were dealt with very well by the speakers themselves, which was good to see, and it was generally felt by the majority of the crowd that the meeting had gone very well indeed. Altogether, it was a very pleasant way to spend an afternoon, and Nottingham hope to do even more next year.

In the evening, after a showing of Martin Cole's film 'Growing Up', there was a meeting of the WACC groups present to discuss the next national WACC conference, a national demo in the autumn, local campaigns, and fund-raising. (See next item)

Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign - there will be a national WACC conference, probably in November of this year. A preliminary meeting will be held in Bristol on Saturday, September 9th, to arrange conference details and to exchange ideas about what should be discussed. The meeting will be held in the University Students' Union in Queen's Road, Clifton, and will start at 10 a.m. Beds and floorspace can be provided both Friday and Stturday nights, but contact Sue Beardon, Hall Flat, 18 Beaufort Road, Clifton, Bristol, or tel. 30903 for more details, or if you wish to take children.

NEXT NATIONAL CONFERENCE IS OCTOBER 20/21/22 IN LONDON - more details later

Next North-East Regional Conference is to be held in Leeds on Saturday, September 30th. It will probably be held in the University as before, but details will be given in the next newsletter. This conference will continue the discussion on Selma James' paper 'Women, Trade Unions and Work' which was begun at the previous Leeds conference and the subsequent York conference. As the last meeting seemed so productive, lenclose the minutes of this meeting for general distribution.



'Don't play with your tentacles, it's bad for your sight!'

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Do girls like fucking?

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This question is prempted by the literature which comos from Women's Lib. I shall not insult women by presuming to have sympathy for them, although I do admit the biological peculiarities of women place them at a disadvantage in capitalist society. These peculiarities can be seen as disabilities from which men are excused. Menstruation is always inconvenient, and can be a misery spaced out with three weeks phobic apprehension - yet the fact of not menstruating can be even more shattering; pregnancy is supposed to be a time of joyful expectancy, but I have never heard a good reason for this; the obstetric couch is a fearsome apparatus reminiscent of a medieval torture chamber; grasping the sticky neophyte and nestling it in the bosom may make poetry, but is it life? Shitty napkins and sore nipples can only bring ecstacy to the supreme masochist. If God is responsible for this shocking state of affairs, then he must be the Arch Male Chauvinist Pig; which is one of the reasons that made me reject God after a childhood of papist conditioning. But if this anthropomorphic misogynist did saddle Eve's female progeny with their woes, you can't blame a poor cunt-struck loon for the crimes committed by the great MCP himself. The atheist and even the agnostic alternative still does not shift the blame to Saying that it must be Nature does not answer the question of responsibility. for what is Nature? An even less accessible MCP. I can only suggest that both men and women must make the best of the biological facts of life. One important fact is that the natural consequence of fucking is pregnancy.

Let me declare my interest. I have always enjoyed a fuck. My natural instincts have led me to regard fucking as only desirable when my bed-mate is equally determined to join in the fun. I doubt whether this is bourgeois conditioning, for I was brought up on the bourgeois doctrine that women were self-immolating passivists; sex was crystallized in the immortal obscenity of the late Lord Curzon: "Ladies don't move". (Ill bred servant girls offered a welcome change from the monotony of patrician female cadavers). Rather than condone this inhumanity, I would retire alone and enjoy the lesser pleasures of a wank. Reaction to Victorian prurience led to the cult of the Great Big Prick, enshrined in that great classic "The Ballad of Eskimo Nell". Although at first the ballad glorifies the GBP, the last laugh is with Nell, when she demonstrates that the Greatest Prick of All is a puny catspaw alongside the Vaginal Orgasm - nothing less than a Vesuvius in major eruption. Sc much for female passivity.

Women's Lib stirs our emotions with the horrors of marital rape. Whatever may have been the norm in Victorian times, it seems hardly likely that
today any girl can marry without being fully aware that fucking will be a major
function in the association. Bernard Shaw put it in more delicate language,
but marriage is a licence to fuck, providing the maximum opportunity. The
girl who marries with intent to sabotage this understanding carries little
conviction when she pleads that she has been raped. It seems, though, that
even in Victorian days, girls were never so ingenuous as tradition imagines,
and a study of the Victorian female novelists casts doubt on the illusion of
sweet womanly innocence.

A regular feature of the problem page in women's magazines is the wife who finds fucking repulsive. Perhaps she ought never to have married in the first place, for it may be that some of these women are confidence tricksters who thought marriage offered an easy life in which they could opt out of the inseparable fucking; at the same time, there is no doubt that they married extraordinarily insensitive men. There is good reason to suppose that the so-called frigid woman, after emulating in snobbery Lord Curzon's vulgarity, tries to rationalise her gaucherie while casting jealous glances at her more expert competitors. Occasionally, a problem appears of the wife who cannot

rouse the natural lusts of her partner; with the traditional availability of milkmen and window cleaners, this woman seems lacking in initiative. The basic trouble in all these problems is most likely to be a realisation by at least one of the parties that a mistake has been made. Most of us delude ourselves that marital mistakes are uncommon; when we do face up to the fact that they occur frequently, we must also allow that the misery will be removed by social revolution and not by prosecutions for rape.

Women's Lib are entirely correct to emphasise the depravity of men who degrade women into sex objects, but if we are to rectify this and reach a mutually good understanding, we must start from the cold biological facts. Righteous indignation has now become a speciality of Women's Lib, but it only obscures the issue - as it always does. Women's Lib have exorcised the vaginal orgasm, and now want to exorcise pregnancy too. From this premise, they deduce that the prick has become redundant. They tell us that for women, all the thrill and rapture of sex resides in clitoral stimulation; and for this, only two women in bed together are required. By extension, all the fucking which goes on must be rape.

The question forming the title of this article should be phrased "Do girls like being fucked?", and from the logic of Women's Lib, the answer must be a resounding "No!". Empirical observation does not support this view. There is a credibility gap in their logic which Women's Lib have failed to bridge.

Plug Plug Plug Plug

WOMEN'S LIBERATION LITERATURE COLLECTIVE: CHILDREN'S BOOKS A copy of No 1 is enclosed, current copies from :- Lee Sanders, 71 St. Ann's
Lane, Leeds 4, Yorkshire. Please send stamped addressed foolscap envelopes,
or enough to cover 4p each (including postage) for each month's newsletter.

ELECTRO-STENCILING - the cover of this Newsheet, and the insert ad. for the St. Imier Meeting, were done by electro-stenciling - if you want one done... send copy plus 75p for the electro-stenciling, to O.R.A.,68 Chingford Rd, Walthamstow, London E.17.

(N.B./ the two-colour production requires two seperate stencils, and two seperate sheets of copyeg. photo of Louise Michel, her name & the number 7, on one sheet of paper, and the black letteringon a different sheet Geddit ?)

ADDRESSES

As you may have noticed, once again, we have left out the full list - saves money, time, etc. If there is anyone who wants to go on it next time, write to let us know under what interest-topic you want to be put under. (And while you're at it, let's have some money!)

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Abortion & Contraception: Jill Walker, 14 Clare Rd, Levenshulme, Manchester 19.
NOT Industrial Unions: Diana Humphrey, 180 Melbourne Rd, Leicester.

BOOKS

It occurred to me that all the heavier publications (!) have a 'book review' section, so here we go.



The Strike of a Sex, by George Noyes Miller, was written in 1891 in America and is a short story concerning a visit by the hero of the piece to a particular town which appears run-down and dismal, as do the inhabitants. He then realises that he has seen no women or children at all and discovers that the Great Women's Strike has been in progress for three months, the women having withdrawn completely to a building at the far end of the town, along with all female or dependent male children. He is told that the women have struck for their rights and originally issued a statement demanding the ability to own property, the right to vote, to be eligible for all civil offices, to be placed on an equal footing with man regarding wages and other material advantages. Unfortunately for the men, with the granting of these demands within three days of the start of the Strike, the women enlarged their demands and issued a Magna Charta, and it is this that has taken three months to resovve. It is not until near the end of the book that we find out what the Magna Charta is. The book paints a sorry picture of a community without women - men eating out of tins, having no buttons on shirts and jackets, all forms of entertainment closed ('No courtesans!' I exclaimed. I abruptly rose from my chair and walked aimlessly into the centre of the room. Then, partly recovering myself, I walked back and sat down again.) Just before the day of the Ballot (when the men have to decide whether or not to grant the women the demand put forward in the Magna Charta), our hero is told that the women are demanding 'the right to the perfect ownership of their own persons'. 'In what respect?' queries our hero, and in reply is told 'In respect to maternity', which he cannot understand and exclaims 'What a preposterous idea!'

The women have produced a new spaper throughout their Strike called 'Bitter Cry' explaining their reasons for demanding self ownership and several passages deal with pitiful tales, taken from the newspaper, of distraught mothers or neglected children. The women, who include all women - wives and mothers, sisters and daughters, spinsters and 'fallen' women. - joined in one united sisterhood, parade through the town the day before the Ballot is to be held to show the men what they will miss if they do not give them their demands. The women threaten to refuse indiscriminate motherhood and to withdraw completely from the society of men, thus allowing the human race to die out, unless they are allowed to implement Zugassent's discovery (we are never told precisely what this discovery is but assume that it is some form of birth control).

Needless to say, the men vote for the women to have their demands met and for them to return to their society. Just after the result of the Ballot is declared, our hero rises to his feet to exclaim at the wonderful news - and wakes up to reality!

The story is charming to read, with lots of nice quotes in it ('poetically speaking, children are the rosebuds of life; practically, they are the torments of existence', "They have struck for their rights as a sex". My surprise at this statement was so overwhelming, the idea of women ever combining and striking as a sex had been so utterly undreamed of in my philosophy that I could not speak for several moments.', 'Strange as it may appear, the women suddenly took up the notion that if all men were brothers, all women were none the less sisters',

'I can easily understand how the dockmen of Iondon could stand the hunger of protracted idleness with their muscular frames and rude tastes, but how can refined and delicate women undergo the hardships of such a siege', 'I had observed before during my life that where men under the stress of circumstances had assumed the function of dish-washing, their dishcloths speedily took on a grotesque blackness that made them a positively fascinating study'), but it is naive. It presents the idea of a totally separate women's commune and 'woman power', which the radical feminists seem to advocate today, but it does not suggest that men's roles would be changed and, more important still, it does not touch upon the reasons why the women were subjugated in the first place, and does not imply a change in social and economic relations throughout society (socialism).

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Radical Feminism or Libertarian Socialism

The two of us collaborating on this came from different experiences to the Women's Lib Movement. Sally describes herself as 'yer actual soggy', and I (Ro) was an 'unworked-out muddled anarchist'. Both of us have found involvement in the Movement has given us more self confidence, in ourselves as well as with other people, especially blokes. It has opened up our own sexuality to us. It has also made us more political because we have found a much greater personal involvement with wider socialist politics, now that it means our own liberation to us.

Having stressed this, we want to try to explain our antagonism to radical feminism, and also to get in a critique of Selma James' paper 'Women, the Trade Unions and Work', as we feel the two are linked (quotes here come from her paper).

Selma James' criticism of trade unions is that because they limit themselves to the confines of their work situation, as defined by Capitalism, they prevent class consciousness by creating trade union consciousness in its place ... 'it is that the union prevents such organisation, by fragmenting the class into those who have wages and those who don't ... they structurally make a generalised struggle impossible! (page 6, paragraph 3). To the extent that trade unions do this - struggle only in terms of rates of pay, differentials, speeds of belts, etc., while not making any links, or bringing up wider issues - then I would agree with her analysis. However, I believe that this criticism of separateness of organisation is valid for any and all separate organisations.

Several times, Selma criticises left-wing organisations for dismissing women as 'periphal to the revolution' (page 2, paragraph 2), and for seeing their struggle as the only 'real' one, but later she pleads for 'our own analysis of women, and therefore our own analysis of the whole working class struggle! (page 7, paragraph 1). Again, it seems to me that this reinforcement of separateness, into a separatist theory, is a danger that results from any separate organisation. Is this not what radical feminism is doing?

I have come to believe that the structure of an organisation affects the development of its theory, although of course the general structure of the organisation will be laid down by the theory. While its theory obviously lays

down the guidelines for its activities, I find that experience in activity helps to clarify and re-assess the theory. In other words, there is a dialectical relationship between structure, theory and practice.

When I first began to see things in this way, I was brought up against the question 'Should there, or should there not, be a separate women's organisation?' At first, it seemed that the answer was to decry any separate organisation (even though emotional 'gut feelings' made one feel that a separate movement was necessary for personal development) and call for everyone to join only allembracing organisations. On considering reality, however, I realised this: separate organisations - unions, and even different unions for different trades; the women's movement; claimants' unions, etc. - are not separate because someone set up a theory that they should be. The reason for their separateness is that the people within these groups are, physically and in time, separated from people outside the groups (e.g. claimants organise with other claimants to argue against the SS, in the SS office, when people who are not on SS are usually just not there; workers inside a factory talk to other workers inside the same factory about a problem - they don't involve wives, kids, claimants, etc. directly, because they are not there). The structure of the situation is not the only one which leads to different groups organising separately - because people internalise the divisions created by Capitalist society, they tend to feel solidarity (sisterhood, etc.) only with people clearly within their group.

Looked at in this way, it seems that separate groups will organise around their specific problens, because of the practical reality of their situations, but this doesn't preclude fighting collectively. So the only thing that appears to me to answer this dilemma is to consciously make links, both in theory and in practice, with other people not in the group (just as workers are not just workers, but also tenants, fathers, men, football-match goers, etc., so women are just not women, but also mothers, housewives, factory or shop workers, claimants, tenants, etc., etc.).

So, instead of 'demands', which have been criticised for encouraging reliance on the State, instead of self-reliance, certain forms of action could be agreed on, undertaken after discussion and analysis of their potential in terms of the links it makes with people outside the group, in practice and thus in theory, as well as in terms of the self-confidence and self-reliance and solidarity it builds in the women (and non-women) involved.

At present, one such form of action would be for women to organise within tenants associations, not only to fight the 'Fair Rents Bill', but <u>equally</u> importantly to create real community organisations to solve the problems faced by all tenants: women with children forming self-organised nurseries, where possible, or at least a baby-sitting rota; campaigns for play facilities within the estates; getting men to help build adventure playgrounds, youth clubs, etc.; to help old-age pensioners by shopping, visiting, cleaning, gardening, help in claiming benefits, etc.; to organise campaigns on necessary repairs - possibly to the extent of people with building skills using them. All these should be based on a long-term view of socialist society, and an attempt made to create class consciousness of how Capitalism works, whichever government is in power.

It is obvious (I hope!) that I have written this from the point of view of libertarian socialism, but that many of my statements may be tantalisingly vague or open to misconstruction. I hoped here to deal with only one aspect of my criticisms of radical feminism - its separatism. I have not space here to go further into definitions of class consciousness, 'working class struggle', and libertarian socialism. Both Sally and I feel that this further analysis is vitally necessary at this time - we hope to spark it off - and we hope to take part in formulating a manifesto of libertarian socialism, based on the tenet:

NO REVOLUTION WITHOUT WOMEN'S LIBERATION

NO WOMEN'S LIBERATION WITHOUT (LIBERTARIAN SOCIALIST) REVOLUTION

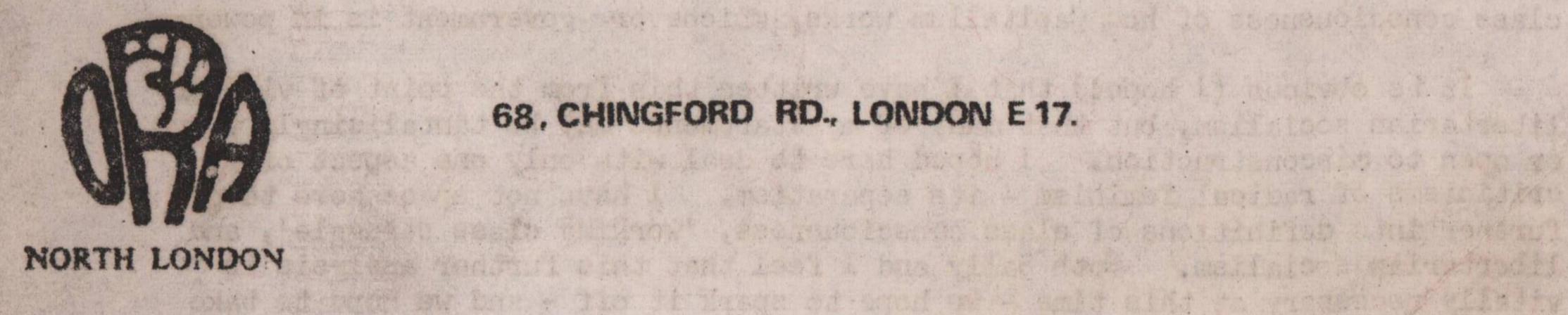
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Libertarian Communist speakers from Britain & Continent.

CENTRO IBERICO (opposite Holborn tube) 7.30 pm Sunday Sept.10th



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