

**IF YOU
DON'T
HIT IT..
..IT WON'T
FALL**

ALCOHOL

THE 1971

**SQUAT NOW
WHILE
STOCKS LAST**

**N° 18
FREE**

DIARY

JUNE

DIARY

JUNE

DIARY

- 2 June Thur THE BRITISH ROAD TO SOCIALISM Communist Party Public discussion with main speaker Dave Cook (National organiser CPGB) at the ICC* 61 b Mansfield Rd 7.30
THE FIGHT TO SAVE A HOSPITAL Film, speakers and discussion about the EGA Women's Hospital, London. Large Hall, Sherwood Hospital, Hucknall Road, Nottingham 7.30
- 4 June Sat PERSONAL AND POLITICAL meeting, 23 Mansfield Grove 3.30
- 8 June Wed POSTERS AND THINGS meeting, Top flat 58 Burford Rd 7.30
- 10 June Fri IMG DISCO Carlton Hotel, Noel Street, Late Bar 8.00
MEN'S MEETING Top flat, 58 Burford Road 7.30
- 11 June Sat WORKING WOMENS FESTIVAL 7 June 12. Details next page
- 13 June Mon POLITICAL ECONOMY OF NOTTINGHAM 3 Dunlop Avenue 7.30
- 14 June Tue THE SALTLEY GATE SHOW Banner Theatre of Actuality about 1972 Birmingham Workers mass support of miners pickets of gas works. 80p Clarendon College Drama Workshop 8.00 (also being performed in Southwell at 7.30 Mon June 6)
- 15 June Wed IF YOU DON'T MEETING all welcome 10 Milner Road 8.00
- 16 June Thur UNITY OF THE LEFT?/SOCIALIST CHALLENGE New IMG 'open' newspaper. Public meeting with Tariq Ali. ICC* 7.30 (This meeting is still provisional - check tel 47304)
- 18 June Sat MEADOWS FESTIVAL thru to June 25. Details next page
- 19 June Sun ANTI APARTHEID DEMO Coach to London contact Malcom 601037
- 21 June Tue NATIONAL ABORTION CAMPAIGN 'A woman's right to choose' DISCO at the Poly, Byron Common Room, Byron Building, Shakespear Street. Disco and entertainment about 20p. Non students must get tickets in advance from Judith Executive Office, Byron Building lunch times or Maggie 18 Premier Road, Forest Fields, tel 601593. Mixed
- 23 June Thur WILLIAM TYNDALE: What happened at William Tyndale? Socialist Teacher Group public meeting with speaker ex head Terry Ellis and video film of teaching in the school in 1975. Teachers Centre, Cranmer Street 7.30

WOMEN'S MEETINGS

WOMEN'S AID Mon June 6 & 20 at the Refuge tel 624547
LESBIAN SOCIAL GROUP Every tuesday contact Char 76410
WOMEN'S GROUP Thursdays 8.00 at Women's Centre. June: 2nd:Words. 9th:Erotica. 16th:Media. 23rd:Classism.
NAC(Mixed) Every wednesday at the Women's Centre 8.00
NEW WOMEN'S CENTRE meeting tues June 14 at the 8.00 Women's Centre, 26 Newcastle Chambers, Angel Row.

6th DEMAND 'An end to discrimination against lesbians and the right of all women to a self defined sexuality' Regional Conference in Nottingham Fri/Sat June 24/25 details, contact Char tel 76410.

BIG FLAME

Saturday 4 June 11.30 in Liverpool. Big Flame Community Commission meeting on Direct Works and the Housing Struggle. If interested contact Kieth Nottingham 789826 for details.

WORKING WOMENS FESTIVAL

THE WORKING WOMEN'S FESTIVAL IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN, THEIR FRIENDS AND FAMILIES TO COME AND DISCOVER THE CONTRIBUTION TO ALL ASPECTS OF WORK - AT HOME, IN TEXTILE MILLS, IN TOURISM AND OTHER INDUSTRIES - MADE BY WOMEN, SPECIALLY IN THE BAKEWELL, MATLOCK AND BELPER AREA, PAST AND PRESENT. ENTERTAINMENT IS THE PROMISE: EXHIBITIONS AND INFORMATION ARE THE INTEREST.

Saturday/Sunday 11/12 June
Matlock Bath Pavillion

Tickets Pavillion Box Office
Matlock 3848 50p per session

MAIN EVENTS

Saturday afternoon:

- 2.00 Songs Franky Armstrong and Kathy Henderson
- 4.00 Women's Theatre Group Music from their shows.

Saturday Evening:

- 9.00 Gaslight Gaieties
- 10.30-12.00 Disco

Sunday Afternoon:

- 2.00 Women's Theatre Group 'Out on the Costa del Trico'
- 4.30 Three films on the Fakenham women workers factory occupation

FREE EVENTS

Films on Saturday

- 11.30 The Sheffield Film Co-op

Films on Sunday

- 11.30 The Women's Film Group

Through Saturday and Sunday Women Here: Historical exhibition of women workers in the area.

Women at Work: Contemporary exhibition of local women workers

Women's Work in Hackney.

What Shall I do when I grow up: Infant school children picture their future.

INFORMATION PLATFORMS

Women and Employment

The Law

Health

Child Care

Womens Books Gingerbread

CHILDREN'S PLAY ACTIVITIES

For 3-5 year olds and for 5-12 year olds events each day 11.00 to 6.00. Sunday: Derby Theatre Workshop 11.00 for 5-12 year olds Children's Book display.

MEADOWS FESTIVAL

Grand Opening Saturday 18 June

Community Carnival Day

- 12.30 Fancy Dress Parade
- 1.15 Carnival Procession around Meadows led by Silver Star Steel Band
- 2.30 Grand Opening at the Queens Drive Recreation Ground with Cannon Fire by Colonel Rossiter & his Roundheads
- 4.00 Clifton Morris Dancers
- 4.30 Prize Draw
Lots of sideshows and stalls including hopefully: Womens Group, Women's Aid, National Abortion Campaign, Anti-Fascist Display.
- 7.30 Dance at the Queens Walk Community to Centre, Queens Drive. Bar. Silver
- 12.00 Star Steel Band.

Sunday 19 June 3.00 at Queens Walk CC East Meets West. Pakistani evening with eastern delicacies, palmistry handicrafts, films etc.

Tuesday 21 June. The Sociable Theatre: 'Sally Allelullia Band' 8.00

Wednesday 22 June. Coffee Morning QWCC

Thursday 23 June. Folk night

Friday 24 June. Music, Poetry and Dance Night 'Rainbow' Queens Walk CC

Saturday 25 June Adventure Play Day Queens Drive Recreation Ground. Inflatable, Sociable Theatre in 'Mexican Bandits' etc.

8.00 Disco at Queens Walk Community C

Booking Office and further details from Queens Walk Community Centre, Queens Drive, The Meadows. 4.00 - 6.00 in the week before the festival. Tel 864183

NOTTINGHAM The full programme for the
FESTIVAL fringe festival, June 13 -
FRINGE 25, is now in the public
libraries etc. Or phone
Chris Ryan or Isobel D'Arcy 607201

JOURNALISTS AND OFFICIAL SECRETS

The latest moves by the state against left wing investigative journalism seem to have hit a new peak. Philip Agee and Mark Hosenball, the two American journalists who were accused of being 'security risks' because of their exposes of the CIA, seem likely to be deported within a month or so. Meanwhile the case of Aubrey, Berry and Campbell the two journalists and ex-soldier accused of handling 'official secrets' has taken a serious turn.

Instead of being charged under section two of The Official Secrets act (maximum penalty two years) Campbell and Berry have now been accused of handling information 'prejudicial to the safety or interests of the state' and charged under section one (maximum penalty fourteen years). Aubrey has been charged with aiding and abetting and also faces a maximum penalty of fourteen years.

This move has a twofold purpose; firstly to wield an even bigger stick against those who attempt to look into things the state doesn't want looked into and secondly to use a law which has not yet been grossly discredited as section two has.

It seems important that we should attempt to do something to show our solidarity with the accused and to force the government to drop the charges. So far the support for the ABC defence campaign has been pretty minimal. If you are interested in talking about and doing something about this case please write or visit 49 Constance Street, New Basford, Nottingham and look in the next issue of IF YOU DON'T for details of the next meeting.

FIGHTING FASCISM

IF YOU DON'T
PAMPHLET
NUMBER ONE
12 PENCE

The If You Don't pamphlet 'Fighting Fascism' is a collection of articles written by people and groups connected with the Nottingham Anti Fascist Committee. Obviously there a wide range of differing views as well as hard facts in the seventeen articles although the common purpose is very clear.

Contents include: The Threat of Fascism. The Collapse of Bourgeois Democracy. Fascism what is it? Some thoughts on Fighting Fascism. Immigration and immigration Controls. Immigration Legislation. On Enoch Powell. Racialism and the working Class. The need for a revolutionary strategy. Sexism. Racism and fascism. Maoism and Fascism.

We hope that you will read and buy a copy - forty pages, only 12p! Its in Mushroom or contact 15 Scotholme Avenue, Hyson Green, Nottingham. Several people have commented that they have found it suprisingly readable. Please let us have your views on it. Nottingham Voice suggest rolling it up and hitting people with it - we expect that the Evening Post may well feel the same way about it!

POSTERS AND THINGS

In the last issue of 'IF YOU DON'T...' some ideas were put forward about the sharing of skills, making of posters by people in Nottingham. Quite a bit of discussion has taken place since then, so a meeting is being called in order that we can:

1. Consider putting together a directory of resources in Nottingham. This would give information about where equipment is & how to use it. The equipment that is available isn't being fully used, or is only being used by those 'in the know'. If we want to change this, we have to do something about it.
2. Talk about why posters aren't being put up. Posters that do go out from 'the left' are usually tied to a particular meeting or, at best, a specific campaign. Posters that aren't limited in this way can be part of seeing struggle in a broader, more everyday, way. For example, a poster saying 'WOMEN WORK A SEVEN DAY WEEK' (showing womens work in the factory and in the community) brought up questions about womens' oppression without talking as if 'revolutionaries' are the only people who know what's going on. The poster worked because it took what people say anyway and put it in a different context - one that was very public, one that suggests that things can be different but which doesn't lay down any uniform solution. The poster also doesn't put forward any cut-and-dried position, except making it clear that only womens self-activity can be the basis for their liberation.
3. Posters are a big undertaking, and stickers are easier to carry around & put up. They do need to be more catchy, though, and often rely on words more.
4. We hope that people go to the meeting on 'political film'. If we can make some arrangements to show films at 'the building' and maybe to have them more as meetings rather than 'showings', we may well be on our way to providing a real alternative in Nottingham to the 'Everything you always wanted to know about Jaws' syndrome.

We're not expecting people to come to the meeting with big ideas about posters etc. all worked out. Everyone's had different experience with all these things which effect the kind of confidence and energy we feel. We've got to find a way of developing ideas and working together.

The meeting (which will be mixed) will start at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 8th June at top flat, 58 Burford Road, Forest Fields. Tel. Ron (76410) or Maggie (601593).

WOMENS MEDIA GROUP - there hasn't been much response so far to the suggestion for a 'womens' media group'. If anyone interested in all this perhaps could come to this meeting and work things out from there - Maggie.

Some men in Nottingham have been talking about the possibility of getting together to talk about our lives, relationships, feelings and our politics. As men. As men talking about.... There was a mens group some time ago, I hear it was a walking disaster. Men in other parts of the country are doing things, making lots of mistakes, becoming unisolated, unbecoming men....

A group in London share a gay centre and do massage, writing, talking, therapy etc. Other groups (I was involved in M.n against Sexism in Leeds) concentrated more in childcare, action around paternity allowance, equal pay etc.

Theres always been a lot of tension between womens liberation and gay liberation and 'mens groups'. Some gay men thought that the only way for men to give up their power was to stop using gay men as sexual guinea pigs and try relating with each other. Many feminists see it as a male plot.... Seems theres lots of distrust and suspicion around. Bring it to a meeting on Friday June 10th at 58 Burford Road where theres plenty of room to ignore each other. Tel Ron 76410



HOME BIRTHS OK!

We are a group of women who have had babies recently, many of them at home. We were able to choose where we had our babies - home or hospital. We had the education, knowledge and contacts to get a home birth. But many women don't even realise you can have your baby at home, let alone know where to start if - or perhaps I should say when - they meet opposition from GPs and others. (Very few doctors will book women for home delivery now even if the pregnancy is straightforward.) So we have decided to produce a pamphlet which we hope will provide information, encouragement and ammunition for women in this situation.

Perhaps I should try to explain why we attach so much importance to this question. We favour home births for many reasons, mostly based on a desire to avoid modern hospital conditions. We wanted to be with people we knew (that includes the midwives), not white coated strangers. We found the domiciliary midwifery service a more flexible, congenial and respectful institution than the hospital. We wanted to be in soft familiar surroundings not harsh bright ones, we wanted to establish breastfeeding comfortably, build links with the new baby, etc. The list is endless. But basically we wanted a safe happy birth, (yes, home is as safe as hospital), and we wanted to exercise our own judgement as to where we could best achieve this. We don't think that all women should have their babies at home - some feel happier in hospital or have to go there for good medical reasons. We just want women to be able to make a fully informed choice and at the moment, due to the greed and power-seeking of the medical profession, the (increasing) inability of state institutions to accommodate diversity and the lure of technology, they can't.

Two things need to be done about this: first home confinements must be more readily available and services improved; second hospital practice must be changed - for there is much evidence to show that some hospital procedures e.g. induction, separation of mother and baby after birth, routine use of epidurals, are positively harmful. Producing a pamphlet is a first shot aimed at the former objective - to encourage women to put pressure on the NHS for domiciliary facilities - but it should also have some effect on the second. It will only really sink in to the hospital medics that women don't like their set-up when they are faced with a diminishing "clientele". It may also help to de-mystify the birth experience, remove it from the province of the professionals, make terms like 'epidural' and 'induction' comprehensible and the processes they shield open to change.

There's lots more to say, but that will come in the pamphlet. We're all busy with small children and make no rash promises about when it will be produced, but when it is we aim to make it really informative and well presented, and to give it a wide and free distribution. We would welcome the involvement of other people (men and women) with relevant experience or thoughts. Contact us via "If you don't" - 708302

Julie

-oOo- -oOo- -oOo-

LETTERS

Dear If you don't,

Thank you for the publicity given to Rip Off in issue No. 17. Who was it who said "the only bad publicity is no publicity"? We only hope that some of your readers will get Rip Off despite the panning it received in your anonymous . . . er . . . review. As often happens when I read things in 'If you don't' I got lost among the jumble of words half way through but it would seem that Margaret's article on abortion offended your reviewer the most and was described by him/her as "moralistic guilt-ridden middle-class shit". Moralistic? Is it moralistic to air one's personal feelings about a given subject? If so we are all guilty of being moralistic. "Guilt-ridden"? Nowhere was it suggested that a woman should feel guilty if she has an abor-

tion. Such a lot of space has been given to the arguments of the NAC in various papers that Margaret felt she wanted to put forward an argument against the practice of abortion. We could, of course, have refused to print it, but that would have been authoritarian on our part, in fact it would have amounted to nothing less than censorship. Middle-class, Margaret works at a supermarket and earns more than she would get on the S. S. if that makes her middle-class, Shit? Well, shit is very useful stuff - ask any gardener.

Just in case this letter gets published in "If" I would like to invite all their hundreds of readers to write for RIP OFF on any subject, serious, funny, poetic. It is the aim of RIP OFF to be non-sexist, non-racist, non-ageist, and NON-AUTHORITARIAN, with of course a sprinkling of humour.

Love from Paul,
in defence of RIP OFF - the voice of ALL the people.
X X X

Dear IF you don't,

I'd just like to say that I found the review of Rip Off in the last issue objectionable, especially the bit about "guilt-ridden middle-class shit". There are lots of intellectual reasons why I didn't like the review; e.g. it seems to me that when you resort to abuse to criticise something you can't have many substantial arguments against it. Also "middle-class" seems to be used as a short-hand for certain traits or attitudes which are not peculiar to the middle classes and do not represent that class's total contribution (or lack of it) to society.

But more than this I'm concerned at the bitterness and aggression in the review. It's difficult enough simply to write things for publication, without having people jumping down your throat the minute you're "in print". I'm not saying we shouldn't criticise, only that we should try and help each other by our criticisms instead of destroying them. It's odd that only since I've been involved in "left" (and student) politics have I found it hard to say what I think, for fear of peoplesneering, laughing, or pitying me because I haven't got the correct revolutionary "line" or "analysis" or "perspective". I think this "revolutionary correctism" is just as much a feature of the libertarian left as of any other branches and it's very alienating. Any movement should be a synthesis of ideas, and if people are put off putting their views then there will never be a true synthesis. I think "if you don't" should be less of a know-all.

Julie Woodin

(Continuation of article below!:

It will have to do away with the absurd notion of the dualism of the sexes, or that man and woman represent two antagonistic worlds.)

"If I can't dance I don't want to be part of your revolution" - some quotes from
Emma Goldman

"The narrowness of the existing conception of woman's independence and emancipation; the dread of love for a man who is not her social equal; the fear that love will rob her of her freedom and independence; the horror that love or the joy of motherhood will only hinder her in the full exercise of her profession - all these together make of the emancipated modern woman a compulsory vestal, before whom life, with its great clarifying sorrows and its deep entrancing joys, rolls on without touching or gripping her soul.

Emancipation, as understood by the majority of its adherents and exponents, is of too narrow a scope to permit the boundless love and ecstasy contained in the deep emotion of the true woman, sweetheart, mother, in freedom. . .

. . . The demand for equal rights in every vocation of life is just and fair; but, after all, the most vital right is the right to love and be loved. Indeed, if partial emancipation is to become a complete and true emancipation of woman, it will have to do away with the ridiculous notion that to be loved, to be sweetheart and mother, is synonymous with being slave or subordinate.

ON THE STREET

"MORALISTIC GUILT-RIDDEN MIDDLE-CLASS SHIT"

IT seems that some people were upset, confused, disagreed, angered, etc. with this phrase, when I used it in the last issue with reference to an article on abortion in RIP OFF written by Margaret. She was arguing that abortions are the taking of the right of life of the foetus; that its alright for women to choose what to do with thier own body, but not to impose their choice on the body within their body.

We could quite easily carry this argument through to the right of any child to impose their right to be looked after for 16 years more or less by the body that bore it, the body which may not have wanted to. anyway, and so on, but I'm not really inclined to see it that way; too wordy and intellectual and tit-for tat. To me it's quite simple.

If a woman wants to have a/the child, then I hope she does; if she does not want the child, then I hope she doesn't, pregnant or not pregnant.

Problems only then arise due to the pressures on women to be certain things, which often does not tally with her own feelings, experience, etc. The socialization of the woman via family, school. children, games, tele, reading, ^aimges, etc. puts/ imposes a discipline to conform to weakness, care, marriage, breeding, suffering for others, washing, cleaning, depending, etc, all in a subordinate way to men's socialization and repression. If a view is forced upon you over the years, to go against any is a struggle, a struggle to define one's own way, or with others, a particular groups way (as large as over 50% of the world's population). It is a struggle for ones own identity. In this case for a woman to choose to give birth or not, but more than that, for with the birth goes what comes after- bringing up a human being. As so many things, it's wonderful sometimes and at other times it's stiffling and ^dmadening. It's virtually a life-times commitment. Some women may not want that, because they are into something else. Tomorrow maybe, but not now. I've adjusted to having them, and am pleased, but to place any sort of pressure on women to give birth is horrendous, and to do so when in doubt or confusion or insecurity is worse. And when people argue for the rights of the foetus inside your body, when you don't want it (or only when you've got it through no choice), it IMPOSES an attitude on the woman. That imposition produces, in this type of society as all others which oppress women, confusion and guilt, simply because it goes against what a woman 'should' do. The struggle continues.

^mSympathy, understanding, empathy, care, respect help and love somehow are now lost with each gasp of disagreement and difference, and the woman curls up inloneliness. I am talking about the women who either have decided they don't want to carry on with the pregnancy or who are not sure. There are thousands around us.

For the woman who wants to, I hope it's enjoyable, during and after.

But immediatelyone imposes a doubt upon the doubtful, a whole wave of morality and a movement is built up around it, making it more difficult for the woman

to choose her own path. We can see these movements today, mixed up with religion, the established church, the preservers of "morals" (that is sexual repression), the preservers of the nuclear family, a beautiful tool for capitalism to thrive on. But inside the woman's head the struggle goes on. Who is to hear her voice, her pain, her anguish and her love?

It is the righteousness about this life-argument which makes it smell of religious pomposity, of moralising, of being moralistic. Don't misunderstand me here.

Everyone, I suppose, has different attitudes and some people go to town on it, even make a career of it, by building it up and calling it morals or morality. But it's a different thing to use it such that it is part of a movement which represses or which certain people feel it as a repressive obstacle to their own path. That is moralistic, heavy, insensitive, arrogant. It is this attitude that I attacked which is guilt-ridden, because it produces guilt, and I feel this to be emotionally repressive.

So to me it's moralistic and guilt-ridden. It's also shit, or rubbish. You know... I mean that its ^{an} expression of anger and emphasis.

But the "middle class" is an interesting one. Some people thought/think that I meant that middle-class people have a particular sort of job or that the working class may also be against abortions. I know this ^{is possible but} I wasn't referring to that. It comes down to looking at what is meant by class of whatever type.

For a concept like class to be meaningful, that is for it to be useful in trying to explain something and analyse it, it has got to be one related not to static positions, like job, income, house, neighbourhood, etc. That might have been more meaningful 100 years ago, but not now. That is, it does not help us explain anything. To say all miners are working class and all nurses are middle class means very little. These occupations or other factors alone do not explain their activities. They are not ^a useful basis on which to base class differences, or class. That a lot of these factors together may define the activities of certain groups is very possible. You can see this difficulty in Marx, who due to the particular conditions of his time, saw things more structurally or action by what position one held within the society. Once he started on doctors he stalled. In his time the capitalist class or bourgeoisie and the working class were quite distinct developing groups, more so than now. Some people have seemed, however to have fallen for the pluralistic argument that now classes are very mixed and not important; you can travel into one and out of another. Most people seem to believe this, as well as libertarians, while the left still hang on to more traditional structural concepts of class. Fortunately, increasing numbers of libertarians are now analysing class.

Firstly, class is a general amalgam of groups and not simply based on the job of one person, such that you can say she/he is such-and-such a class.

Secondly, it is made up of many features- together - job, thoughts, income, background, but most important ACTION.

Thirdly, it is fundamentally based on the economic working of the society and a groups relationship to it. There are still the two major groups, the capitalists who exploit and oppress and the working class, the exploited and oppressed. But a middle class has emerged very strongly which acts as a front, a pacifier, a manipulator, preventing working class growth. Anti-abortionists and those who meddle with a woman's right to choose are such a pacifier, that is the attitude, but it is quite possible to still have other working class attitudes and activities.

As you probably saw in the last 'If you don't....', a meeting was called on May 8th by people who have been working in the 'personal/political group'. This meeting was to "discuss Gyroscope and related issues", and to see who was interested and how we could all work together. The meeting did not really focus on Gyroscope or past 'personal/political' discussions at all and revolved around a range of topics, discussions about what we wanted to do etc.. Without coming up with any hard and fast decisions the meeting seemed positive. (There's some reactions and thoughts about the meeting and suggestions about what to do now outlined by Ron overleaf). This not-centring on Gyroscope and past 'personal/political' discussions was a particularly encouraging aspect of the meeting as they are only parts of a whole range of interests and work. Everyone seemed just to want to find out who was interested in discussing/working around/thinking about/living any aspect of the whole area going under the name 'personal politics'. By this name we mean: sexuality, relationships, consciousness, ways of organising, ideology, implications to existing conceptions of politics, class struggle and revolution....etc etc.. In short, the real need appears to be to explore the possibilities of working together, in general or in smaller groups; to see if we can establish some umbrella context where those working in various aspects can exchange information and relate their work/lives/ideas - and to discuss proposals for the future. (Some possibilities are again outlined overleaf).

THEREFORE THERE WILL BE ANOTHER MEETING ON SATURDAY 4TH JUNE AT 3.30 P.M., AT 23, MANSFIELD GROVE. EVERYONE WELCOME.

In what we've said above there's a very rough and ready attempt to characterise what the area of interest is, and what the approach is. It seems clear that a clearer formulation would be helpful in posing any meeting such as this. Also the discussion of such a formulation would clarify the relationships between all those interested, (this process is hopefully already happening to some extent in response to Gyroscope). Already some people are trying to examine these issues in a discussion about 'perspectives' or 'terms of reference' - June 4th might be a good opportunity to start a general discussion on those lines.

As an example the authors of this page are trying to produce a draft perspectives statement for discussion (hopefully available from the above address by June 1st). We'll give a rough summary of our line of thought here - to help discussion. The emphasis of the draft is to reject the idea that we can just widen orthodox political ideas to new areas and thereby reform what politics is, but that the need is to work out a unified revolutionary project - grounded in our own lives and expressing that dynamic directly in changing ourselves and the world. Our inclination is to develop an environment where the struggle to change our own lives and society are not two projects but ONE. We would seek to establish that environment by uniting with others who seek it, in attempting to relate our experiences and struggles on an equal and open basis. We see that the use of this method as defining unity rather than shared positions - we feel we can explore and grow through divergent attitudes rather than crystallising them as opposed positions if we struggle to use this method..... Well there it is, we'd welcome comment or participation in developing or clarifying that train of thought.

For those interested there will be a NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SATURDAY JUNE 18TH, STARTING 12.00 AT 23, MANSFIELD GROVE, NOTTINGHAM. The motivation and content of that conference will be rather similar to that for the meeting discussed above. It will tend to focus rather more on the perspectives discussion, and the idea of trying to start a magazine. Also there will be material (draft statement, ideas for discussions etc) mailed in advance to make discussion easier. Anyone who wishes to contribute or participate in working for the conference, or to include material in the mailing is very welcome to do so. You can find out more by coming on June 4th or phoning 43081 or 785985.

Many people have read and generally agreed with this, but feel that signing collective statements might identify a 'group' which doesn't exist.

What I felt about the last 'Gyroscope' meeting and should we carry on?

My involvement with 'Gyroscope' was uneven and partial from the word go. I viewed it as a vague, patronising performance by a small group of people (mainly men?) making high-handed statements about the theoretical and practical development of 'the left' generally, and the 'womens' movement' in particular. My view was backed up by a judgemental attitude on my part about the day to day practice of some of the people I knew to be involved. I put myself in a wholly negative position, taking from the discussion what complied with my view of my own life (namely the things written by Rachel, Helen and Char) and probably avoiding facing uncomfortable questions. I took bits and pieces from, say, Mediation Meanders and other things produced, which fitted with my needs, particularly in relation to filmmaking and theoretical practices. In short, I turned dynamic debate into a range of commodities and the issues collapsed into a question of what I could 'use' now, or what my ~~I~~ thought struggle was (was?). In trying to decide which components were 'right' or 'wrong' the question of how to take things forward somehow got lost:- precisely the thing I'd criticised 'the left' for in relation to feminism and questions of sexism.

I'm not saying that therefore my criticisms were completely unfounded. I think there are important questions to be discussed about the objective and subjective basis for the domination of men in the 'personal and political' debate, and also how the way it has been put across would alienate people without the necessary intellectual confidence. Isolated as a gay person in Nottingham and also as a 'filmmaker' within socialist circles, I felt two major antagonisms. On the one hand, against men who didn't seem to be struggling against sexism and their own heterosexism in an open, public, perceivable way; on the other, against socialists who saw 'culture' as being an object which would become revolutionary overnight once 'the masses' had seized power. Though these two questions might seem quite separate, they were united in my life and forced me to question exactly what people mean by 'revolutionary practice'.

Contrary to my initial desperation (and particularly through a series of very painful experiences as 'gay' as 'filmmaker' committed to revolutionary change) I began to feel more positively about the need for a supportive environment to challenge and change all aspects of dominant practice (bourgeois or revolutionary). The question is how? How can we turn away from painful antagonism which involves confrontation, competition and oppressive ritual towards a more supportive, open and organic understanding of our lives?

Despite my class fear of reading and 'theory', and my 'gay' fear of speaking out, of being seen, I have generally gotten more confident and less distrustful of other people (men particularly) and also more able to speak my mind. Reading what 'Big Flame' and 'Zerowork' say about autonomy in the class struggle had been often the only source of identification and support that I've felt in my anger with mainstream left groups taking up vital struggles and sloganising them out of existence. I feel the lack of theoretical debate, of being honest about how little we feel we know and can learn, of being alone with our ideas. And I want to change this. If the whizz-kids of the revolutionary groups are content to stay that way, above class, above struggle, that could be seen as their decision. Except I have the feeling that many other people feel the way I do: going to meetings because it's the right thing to do, because you hope you'll sort things out. It happens sometimes doesn't it? As socialists I think it's about time we began to build on the good experiences we have rather than being totally pessimistic and negative about our 'world-view'. I'm not surprised that people don't come to all the empty, uptight meetings.

At the meeting on 'Gyroscope' I found myself putting out a great amount of energy, which was split in two ways. When people asked how they could 'use' Gyroscope, said it should be more specific, or implied that they hadn't read it for all sorts of reasons, I identified with their situation. At the same time I recognised the tendency to take what someone had said as a 'position' which had to be attacked or defended, said yes or no to, or simply ignored. I don't think that the strength that's needed to develop our lives as revolutionaries will come from that sort of practice. I do it myself all the time and want to find a way of not doing it. I think what we need is to admit the need for a more open debate and make attempts to relate that activity to others. I don't like the idea of groups forming whose central interest is their own intactness. I want to know more about psychoanalysis, for example, and what Marx and others have said about 'personal life under capitalism'. These sort of questions relate to how we understand consciousness and self-change, how we can make sense of ideology and how we can develop non-alienated alternatives. (For example, about psychoanalysis) the mainstream relation of the gay movement to it has been confined to its ' nastiness ' (expressed through psychiatry) with 'zap' tactics etc. I don't want to think that 'ideas' should be thought of as the property of 'the middle-class shits who run the movement', I don't want to say much more, I'd rather talk to people about it. Ron.

BOOKS

IF YOU DON'T READ IT.....

Books at MUSHROOM, 10 Heathcote St, Hockley tel 582506
Open daily 10.30 - 6.00 except thursday and sunday.

LOOK HERE AND THAT'S NOT THE WAY ITS GOT TO BE £1.50 and £1.00 Two books of radical songs including children's songs by Leon Rosselson who is best known for Jumbo the Elephant, Palaces of Gold, Why does it have to be me, Tim McGuire.

NATIONAL FRONT £1.00 Written by Martin Walker of the Guardian: 'The NF can no longer be dismissed as a party of the lunatic fringe; it must be understood if it is to be opposed. Martin Walkers book is the first to make such an understanding possible.'

LIMITS TO MEDICINE 90p new book by Ivan (de-schooling society) Illich.

MY HAMSTERS £2.50 If you are into hamsters this is the real thing - a black and white childrens photo story book...but £2.50!

RAPE CRISIS CENTRE REPORT 40p This is the first year's report from the first rape crisis centre in the country. The centre was started in London in March 1976 and the report covers: Aims, How it began, How it operates, Counselling methods, Research, Law, Police, Statistics, Conclusions, Reading list etc etc.

NUCLEAR POWER - THE UNVIABLE OPTION £2.25 USA

NUCLEAR CRISIS - A QUESTION OF BREEDING £2.50 UK

CARDS AND PRINTS FOR CLAP Community Levy for Alternative Projects 5p/35p

GAY LEFT No4 SUMMER 1977 40p Love, Sex, Maleness. Communists Comment etc.

ANARCHY No 22 20p Just published.

ANARCHIST REVIEW 1977 £1.00 (free to all prisoners) Cienfuegos Press.

THE DISPOSSESSED 75p Ursula Le Guin. (Not new but new to me) This is an amazing story of science fiction about an anarchist (and non sexist) civilisation convincing^{ly} contrasted with a neighbouring 'propertarian' planet. There is no finite utopianism about the new civilisation much of which is presented in terms of believably developed personal and group relationships. At the same time the all pervasive influence of property relationships and their economic basis is given meaning like no sociological text book or political tract ever can.

CO-OP ACTIVISTS GROUP

The group meets next at
118 Mansfield Road on
Sunday 10 July 2.30-5.00

There was a typing error
in IF YOU DON'T No 17
since 'the structure of
the Co-op societies DOES
allow for the involve-
ment of members'...

The point being made
was that this invol-
vement is in seperate
sections. General
meetings are only twice
a year. A Co-op
Activists Group provides
for people to come to-
gether on a regular basis

(IYD typist: sorry!)

GLASS JARS

We have a large
quantity of screw
top ex fruit juice
jars suitable for
bottling fruit or
pickling. They
hold one litre. If
anyone can use any
then phone Colin
Julie: 708302

DISCUSSION MEETING AT THE BUILDING

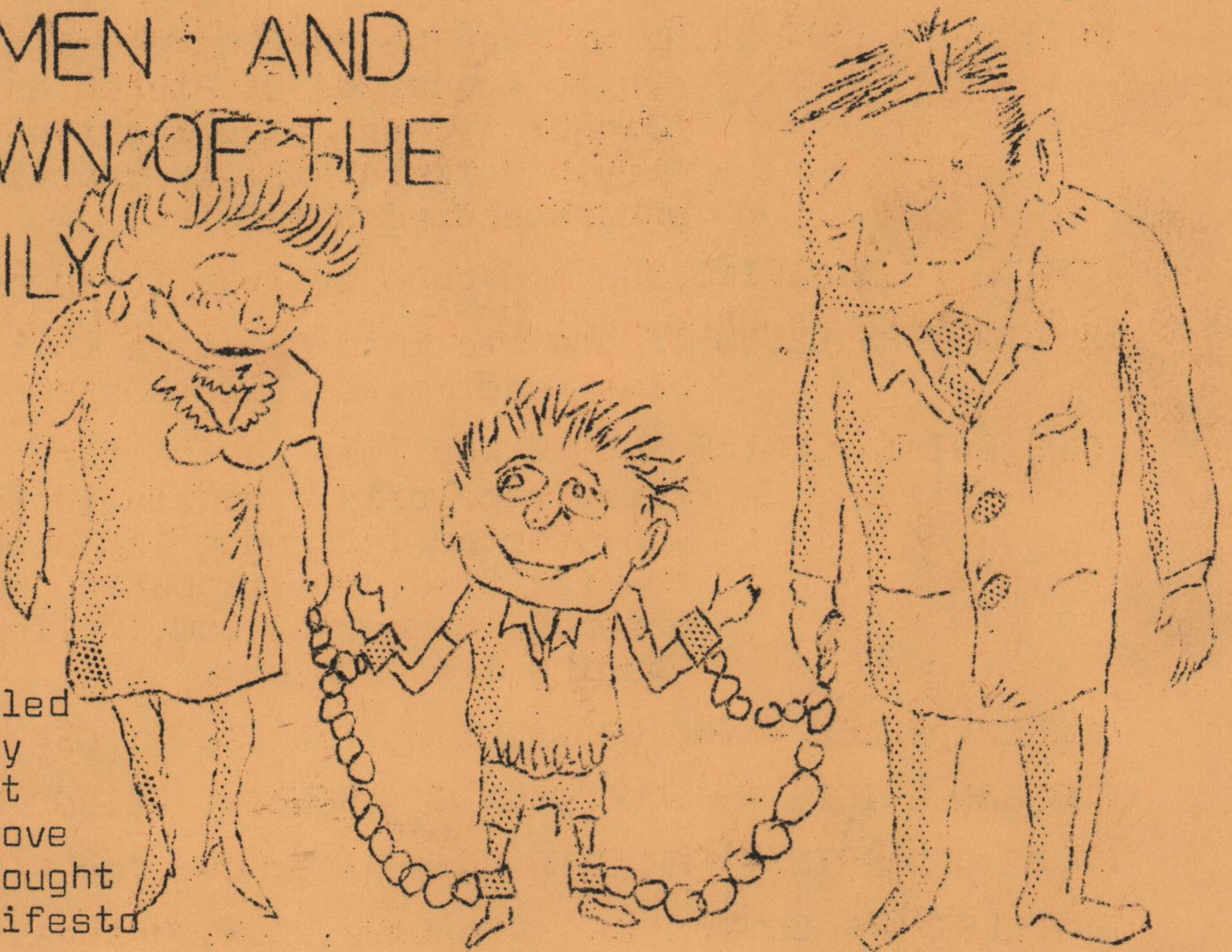
MONDAY 30 MAY 7.30

BATTERED WOMEN AND THE BREAKDOWN OF THE NUCLEAR FAMILY

This meeting follows on from
the Big Flame meeting held at
the beginning of May.

The Building, Forest Green
Community, Gregory Boulevard
Near the Library

' How many working class
families are splitting
up? Countless. Not that
we want to defend the
family as an institution
- on the contrary. But we
want to be able to make
choices, not to be compelled
by the stresses created by
capitalism to destroy that
little bit of security, love
and affection which we thought
we had ' Big Flame Manifesto



CONTENTS

DIARY

FESTIVALS

OFFICIAL SECRETS

FIGHTING FASCISM

POSTERS & THINGS

MEN'S MEETING

HOME BIRTHS

LETTERS

PERSONAL & POLITICAL

BOOKS

ALTERNATIVE CHILDREN'S PARTY THURS JUNE 2
1 PM AT THE BUILDING, GREGORY BOULEVARD
FOREST GREEN COMMUNITY, NEAR THE LIBRARY
BRING DRINKS CAKES TOYS ETC ALL WELCOME

DISCO 9-12 FRIDAY NIGHTS AT THE BUILDING

CELLAR AVAILABLE FOR MUSICIANS
£1 PER SESSION TEL: 77194

REPAIRS/SERVICING CARS STEREOs
TVs ETC TEL: 77194/600337

ANTI FASCIST EXHIBITION AVAILABLE FOR
DISPLAY. SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, LIBRARIES
COMMUNITY CENTERS. IF INTERESTED IN
BORROWING IT CONTACT 601593/789826
12 20" X 25" ILLUSTRATED DISPLAY CARDS

BIG FLAME COMMISSIONS: ANTI FASCIST,
WOMEN, INDUSTRY, PUBLIC SECTOR. IF
YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING, WRITE
TO: CHRIS DAVIDSON, BIG FLAME NATIONAL
SEC, 217 WAVETREE ROAD, LIVERPOOL 7