

# DOCTOR AT LARGE

LIVERPOOL'S first mental health after-care home faces an up-hill task when it opens in the summer. The government have at last given the go-ahead for the Richmond Richmond Fellowship to use No5 Carnatic Road, Mossley Hill, as a hostel for discharged mental patients.

The decision comes after a two-year battle and a wild and emotive campaign against the home. Some anxiety was only natural, but there was little ground for the more alarmist claims. There are 17 other homes owned by the Richmond Fellowship in Britain. The hostel in Carnatic Road will be a half-way house for patients who are ready to leave hospital but need a short period of rehabilitation.

Surprisingly, in the forefront of the campaign against the hostel was a doctor, Mr H G Francis, one of Liverpool's leading gynaecologists.

There is little doubt that the campaign greatly influenced the Conservative city council, which refused permission for the home.

Mr H G Francis lives at No 3 Carnatic Road... next door to the home. Since he started his campaign he has become Conservative councillor for Aigburth and is a member of the Social Services and Health Committee.

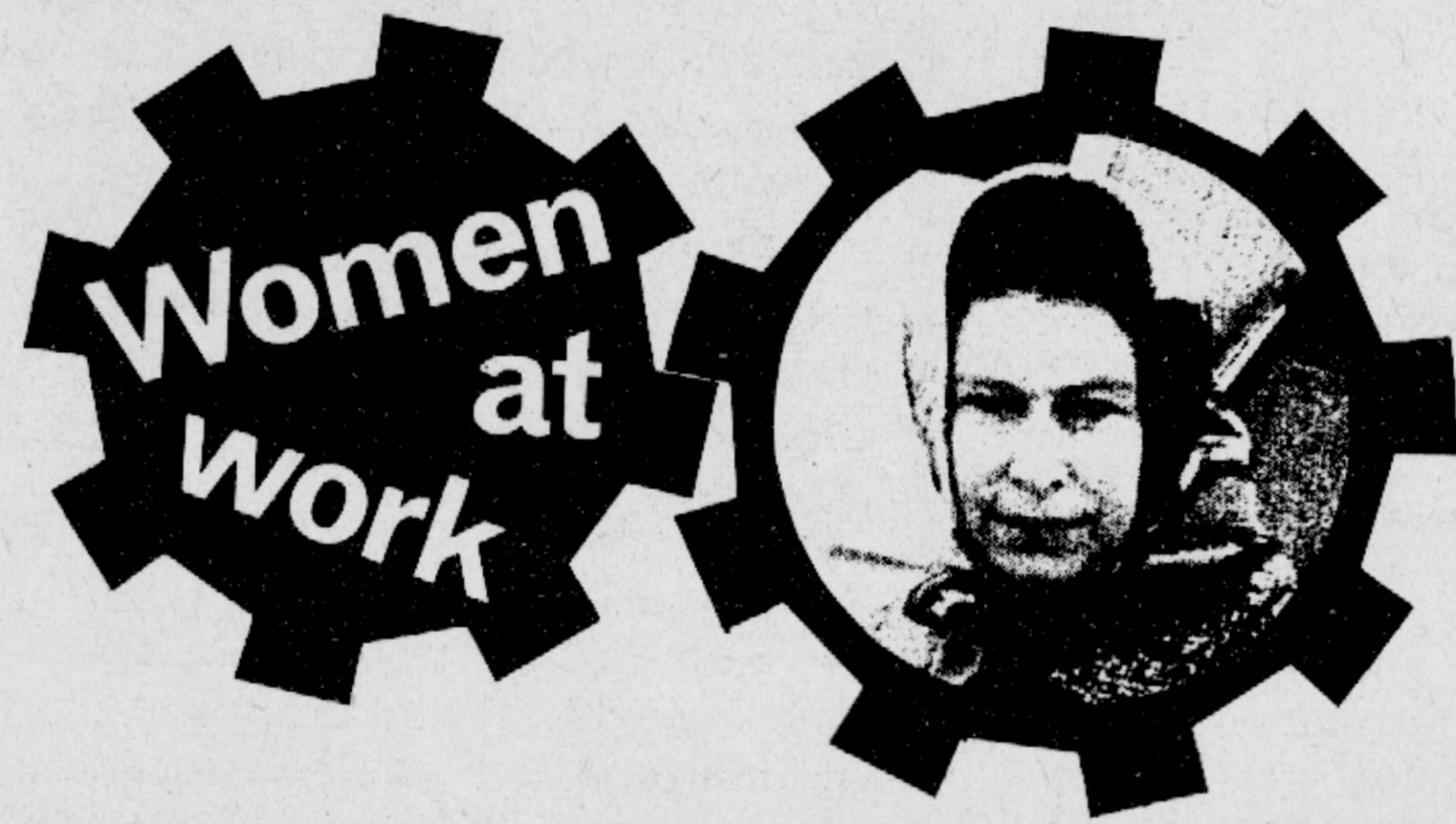
Mr Francis never lost a chance to speak out against the hostel. He even wrote a ten-page document on the dangers of having the home in Carnatic Road.

The Richmond Fellowship were able to refute, with documented evidence, all but one of the scare cases he cited.

## Teach-in

IN ANTICIPATION of Malcolm Muggeridge's anti-abortion rally scheduled to hit the streets of Liverpool at the end of April, Merseyside Women's Lib Group are holding a teach-in on contraception and abortion at the Co-op Hall, 300a, Park Road, Liverpool 8, on April 14 at 8 p.m.

Also, the Birth Control Campaign is holding a public meeting on Friday, April 7 at the Royal Institution, Colquitt Street, when Dr John Dunwoody will speak on "Contraception and the NHS - what next?"



IN THE GENERAL DEBATE over discrimination against women the various issues involved tend to overlap and become confused. The frivolous way in which the media treat the subject obscures the real issues even further.

The introduction of the Equal Pay Act (due to come into operation in 1975) at least presents a yardstick to assess just how far employers unions and workers are prepared to go.

Briefly the Bill says:

- Where women's wages and conditions are governed by collective agreement their terms cannot be less favourable than those for men.
- "Like work" is defined as 1) The same job as that done by a male or 2) a job which has been rated equivalent to one done by a man by an independent job evaluation exercise.
- But many loopholes have already been found:
- Avoiding direct comparisons of wages by ensuring that men and women do different jobs.
- Offering high shift and night work rates - which women can't do without permission from the Department of Employment.
- Long service payments are more likely to benefit men, as women tend to stop and start jobs according to domestic circumstances.
- As from December 1975 the Act forbids agreements to distinguish between men and women but by grouping all jobs by women in Grade Six, for instance, and then grouping all male workers into the higher-paid Grade Five, a company can stay within the law and still discriminate.
- Women usually do not do overtime for which an employer will pay above the flat rate.
- Employers can give financial incentives for 'dirty' or 'heavy' jobs not generally regarded as women's work.

A survey carried out on 44 firms to assess what progress and provisions they were mak-

"I'm an Englishman and I think that most people like me would never work for a woman or a black"  
-personnel manager from Hawker Siddeley.

ing for the Act showed that 32% had done nothing while only 61% had a scheme in mind.

And a staggering 91% admitted to jobs for women only, while 73% had jobs exclusive to men.

Between 1963 and 1970 wages rose overall by 37.2%, while those in the female labour intensive textile industry rose by only 19.8% although output increased above the average.

On average, women's earnings are 60% of male earnings.

## Unskilled

Women's work is usually given a low grading, being unskilled, and therefore "meriting a lower rate of pay."

This does not necessarily imply that such work is without skill, but even those women classed as "skilled" tend to receive less pay than the most unskilled grade of male worker.

For married women, who constitute about 58% of all working women, the problem is even more acute. Because of family pressures many of them find it more convenient to work part-time. As a result they are paid even less - though they may be working only very slightly less than full time. Employers benefit to the tune of £1,200,000 from this underpayment.

The differential between male and female workers extends much further than the debate on equal pay. The advent of equal pay will be meaningless until job training and educational opportunities are also realised.

There are prejudices from many quarters - male workers, employers and the unions themselves - to overcome before any real progress is made.

## £2,000 - that's the cost of punishing a £54 debt

IT HAS COST Bootle Council over £2,000 to punish a mother with five children for being so hard-up she couldn't pay £54.84 rent arrears.

That's the inexplicable kind of justice meted out to a woman who used to live in Creswell Street, Sefton. Mrs B was in hospital having her fifth baby when the eviction was carried through - just after her husband left her - which shows the extent of the Corporation's humanity.

Immediately the family had to be split up.

All the children were taken into care and are still there. Even the new-born baby had to be looked after. It costs corporations at least £15 a week to keep a child in care. That's £75 a week for the five children.

The eviction took place on September 13 last year. So the corporation have been paying out £300 a month for six and a half months... making at least £2,400 - and all for a £54 debt.

## Notices that terrify tenants

NOTICES TO QUIT are probably terrifying a large number of tenants into leaving their homes unnecessarily - according to the Sefton and Netherton Tenants Association.

When rents are three weeks in arrears in Bootle, the Housing Manager informs the Chairman of the Housing Committee, who can then issue notices to quit.

These notices give the tenant 21 days to pay up, and inform them that they are no longer council tenants if they don't pay within this period. What they don't say is that the Corporation would first have to apply to the magistrates' court to carry out the eviction. Some corporations send a letter with the notice explaining the tenant's legal rights and the eviction procedure - but Bootle doesn't.

From November 1970 to November 1971, 342 notices to quit were issued. In 132 cases the Town Clerk was authorised to take proceedings. Forty warrants to evict tenants were applied for and granted, under the ancient 1838 Small Tenements Recovery Act. Twenty-eight tenants were saved by Bootle's Social Services Department stepping in - or voluntary bodies such as the NSPCC - to pay off arrears.

Seven families were physically evicted and another five left just before the eviction was carried through to avoid humiliation.

The 1838 Small Tenements Recovery Act under which Bootle evictions are carried out has been condemned by the Labour Party and the Conservatives have promised to repeal it.

But when Councillor David Dent (Independent) stood up at a council meeting in Bootle on March 22 and discussed it, the matter was quickly dismissed by the Labour-controlled council. Only two other councillors bothered to speak. The whole meeting was over in an hour.

## They've seen the light!

BRADFORD council, which last year issued 3,278 notices to quit, have now seen the light and stopped using the 1838 Act to evict tenants. Instead they are appointing five rent collectors to help families in rent arrears, to support them with specialist officers of the Social Services Department, and to speed up, by the use of skilled casework supervision, the turnover of families using temporary accommodation. Couldn't Bootle be equally humane?

## ODDS ON-CONNOR TO MOVE?

TENANTS in Kenmay Walk, Kirkby, have been asked by the town's engineer and surveyor - a Mr C Rigby - to do his job for him and suggest alternative sites for the unsightly Connor's betting shop that stands only a few yards from their homes.

The women in Kenmay Walk have fought a long battle against the betting shop - next to the Peacock pub - and are ready to challenge Connor in April when his licence comes up for review.

## Expensive Easter

WITH THE ARRIVAL of Easter yet another loophole in the Trade Descriptions Act has raised its head. As we pointed out in Free Press No 6 chocolate bars under four ounces don't need to have any weight marked on them. And neither do Easter eggs.

"We don't think people would be interested in the weight," a spokesman for Suchards assured us. One egg in the shops selling at 55p contains 4 ounces of cream centred chocolates, and the plain chocolate shell weighs only 3 ounces - which works out at £1.26 a pound.

At any other time 50p a pound would be a more usual price for this type of chocolate. Which leaves 76p for the box.

NOTICE in a school: You must learn a trade or you will not be able to say what kind of work you are out of.

Over 100,000 unborn children were killed last year as a result of the present abortion act

HELP TO GIVE OTHERS A LIVING CHANCE

ENTER THE MARCH RALLY

TO PROTEST

Friday April 30

DR MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE &

AND JOHN ABSE, M.P.

Starting point: 11.30 a.m. - Islington Square

For full details phone: 709 6621

Society for the Protection of Unborn Children

Annual membership 50p. Life membership £5

Hon. Secretary: 104 Tarbock Road, Huyton,

Liverpool L36