

INTERNAL BULLETIN NO.47

MARCH 1983

Build for a Women's General Strike Wheeler

Some critical remarks about WSL politics

towards the LP LOR

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The second session of conference is April 15-16-17.
Articles for the Internal Bulletin should be sent, typed
A4 on Roneo stencils if possible, to the centre.

Build for a Women's General Strike

Despite massive media coverage since December 12 & 13 on Greenham Common, our movement has scarcely touched on the issue. I welcomed Cde. Oliver's discussion document for the broad group and although I have some criticisms of the document I will not dwell on these here but urge comrades to read it in conjunction with this one. Its approach is a positive refreshing one, and it clearly argues why we should support the women's peace movement.

The women around Greenham Common have been organising action and making the political links between the arms race and other issues affecting the working class, long before December 12 put them on the map. (E.g.: economic - their blockade of the Stock Exchange on June 6; the cuts - their contingent on September 22 NHS demo carried a banner saying "Hospitals not haulocaust"; alternative technology - they are in contact with workers at Lucas Aerospace; imperialism - they (bravely) demonstrated against the "Falklands Victory Parade").

Now the Women from Greenham Common and the entire European Women's Peace Movement are calling for a women's General Strike!

The following is quoted (whole) from a leaflet produced by one of the Greenham Women for the East Midlands Region:

"omen all out for Peace

May 24 - International Women's Day for Disarmament

After the success of the December 12 and 13 actions women from Greenham Common Peace Camp together with other women's peace groups, throughout Britain and Europe, are calling for a women's day of action for peace on May 24.

We are asking all women everywhere - women in paid employment, unemployed women, women working in the home, women students, etc. to leave their normal jobs for the day and to take non-violent direct action and other forms of creative and imaginative action against the siting of nuclear weapons in Europe. Actions on this day can range from pickets and blockades of nuclear bases and construction complexes engaged in work on nuclear installations, to silent vigils in town centres, to simply meeting together as groups of women to discuss our feeling about nuclear weapons/show slides and videos/put on exhibitions.

Why is May 24 a Women's Day of Action?

Women constitute over half the population and occupy many (mostly low-paid and unpaid) vital jobs. By withdrawing our labour for a day, or part of a day, and taking positive actions for peace we will make a powerful statement about our opposition to all weapons of mass destruction, whilst at the same time drawing the links between low pay, unemployment, the cuts and the increasing amounts of money being spent on nuclear weapons.

As the urgency of the situation increases (Cruise missiles are scheduled to arrive in Britain this year) it is important that everyone who opposes this madness can make their voices heard. A women's day of action is important because it will give women the confidence to act, and the realisation that we do have the power to change things.

In order to make this Day of Action successful we need the support of men. Men are asked to take supportive strike action and to organise creches in workplaces, and look after the children at home, so that women can be free to take action. Men can also help by fund-raising and by working to make this an official day of action within their unions.

What the unions can do.

To make this an effective day of action working women need to know that they can leave their jobs for the whole, or part of, the day without fear of redundancy or loss of pay. We need the backing of the trade unions to make this an official day of action for peace. Unions who have policies in favour of unilateral disarmament should move resolutions in support of this. Below is a list of