

# NOTES.

## NAMIBIA SUPPORT COMMITTEE

*The Namibia Support Committee writes:* We are renewing our appeal for medical aid for the people of Namibia, who are struggling to free themselves from South African rule. South Africa, with 80,000 troops in the territory, is engaged in an evermore brutal and indiscriminate war against the people of Namibia. As the casualties have increased and the number of refugees has grown, the need for medical supplies has become desperate.

The Department of Health of SWAPO has asked the NSC to send out 100 portable medical kits for use among refugees and casualties. We call upon sympathetic organisations and individuals in Britain to contribute to the appeal. Britain is deeply implicated in South Africa's occupation of Namibia, and backs the regime at every level, and accordingly the British people have a particular responsibility to support the Namibian people at this critical time. Please send donations to: 188 North Gower Street, London NW1 2NB.

technology initiated by the Vickers and Lucas Aerospace workers. It has also sent three times this amount to support vital Third World anti-poverty projects — including rural development, health and refugee work, cooperatives and women's projects. But if this ambitious programme is to be possible the charity needs to raise £250,000 in the next six months.

To launch the new 'One hour's pay campaign' in April 1981 celebrities, trade union leaders, MPs and TV personalities have already contributed one hour of their pay. Alongside this early pledges of support have come from firemen, farmworkers, nurses, dustmen, tube workers and office workers who have all given one hour of their pay-

Ten regional campaign centres have been set up which include Manchester, Glasgow, Bristol and Liverpool. A major campaign guide has been prepared and is being sent to interested activists now. For further information contact: WOW, 467 Caledonian Road, London N7 9BE. Tel: 01-6090211.

work, but are also forced to remain in the home to provide unpaid, essential services such as childcare and old peoples care that the state should provide. This situation reinforces our dependence on the family and the ethos of the male breadwinner which we have consistently fought against.

Erosion of the limited 'independence' that women have gained in recent years cannot be understood simply in terms of a material attack. We are faced with a more fundamental and coherent ideological attack for, embodied in Tory policy and explicit in their statements is a reinforcement of the rigid, patriarchal values of the family and women's place by the hearth within the home.

This ideology has its roots in 'common-sense' notions of women's biological destiny and has strong appeal at a time of economic dislocation when people have real fears for the future. By its very nature, such an ideological attack undermines our resistance and dampens our sense of individual and collective struggle to control our own lives.

At the moment even resistance is being phrased in terms of women's rights — not women's liberation. We are under pressure to ask for the minimum rather than demand the maximum — our liberation.

However, Tory policies are also fragile and inconsistent. In real terms women will still be called upon as workers while reductions in spending power arising out of unemployment and the poverty created by reduction in the family wage also mean that women will need to carry on working in order to sustain living standards — without the services which make this (more or less) viable.

Men's unemployment has serious consequences for women. For instance, a recent report by NAWF indicates that social dislocation due to unemployment — although not the cause of violence to women — exacerbates it. Unemployment is a threat to masculinity. What are the consequences of this for women?

We are holding this conference to examine what faces us as women and as a WLM. Workshops include unemployment, women and Tory policy, young women and the cuts, and welfare state versus warfare state. It will be held on May 16 at Highgate School/Mount Pleasant Community Centre, Highgate Road, Balsall Heath, Birmingham 13. For further details and registration write to Stacey, 44 Clarence Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.

Contributions to *Notes* (brief please) are welcome. We need copy before the 1st of the month preceding publication.



## WANTED—ONE HOUR OF YOUR PAY

*Steve Godfrey writes:* War on Want — the campaigning charity set up thirty years ago to tackle world poverty — is launching its biggest ever appeal.

Its theme will be the fight-back against poverty and unemployment in Britain and the Third World. People in jobs are being asked to contribute one hour or more of their pay to War on Want. The money will be used to support job creating initiatives and help in education facilities both at home and abroad.

In the past year War on Want has spent £100,000 on new support in Britain, including workers' cooperatives in the north of England and research into alternative

## AGAINST THE CUTS: A FEMINIST STRATEGY FOR THE 1980s A NATIONAL WOMEN'S LIBERATION CONFERENCE

*The Planning Group writes:* The current government seriously threatens the aims of the WLM even more than the previous Labour government. Cutbacks in public expenditure in areas such as housing, education, social services, healthcare and local authority provisions are just part of a fundamental reorganisation of the social, political and economic structure in ways that deeply affect women.

Women are not only directly made redundant by cuts and denied the right to