


MR

DENMARK

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We, your sisters in Denmark, wish you success with your conference at Skegness, and strength for your everyday struggle. We hope that this short account of our activities here in Denmark will help unite us in our struggle. That our experience will become yours, and these few things we have tried to make happen will be a strength to us all.

REDSTOCKINGS
AABENRAA 26
COPENHAGEN

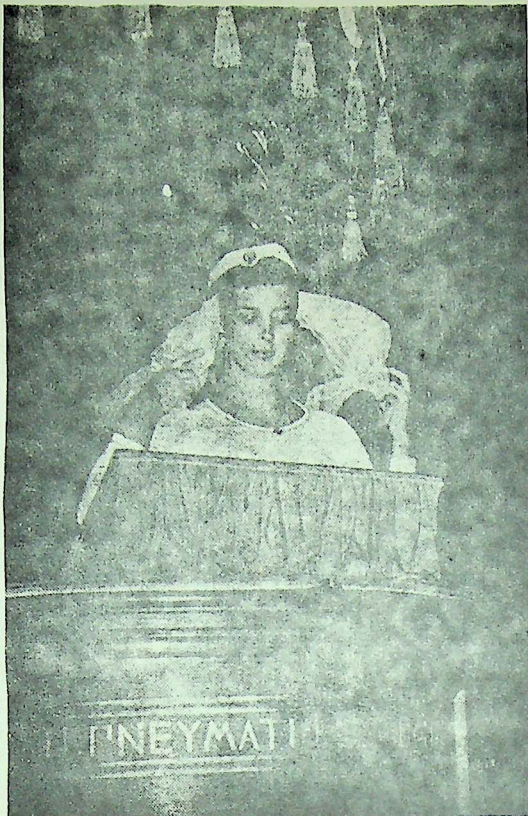


This summer we organised a camp for women on a small island, Femø in southern Denmark. The camp lasted for five weeks from July 3 until August 7. Approximately 800 women took part during that time. One group of Redstockings made the arrangements regarding economical and practical support from the Ministry of Culture which usually finances camps for mixed groups. We had 2500 pounds at our disposal, consisting of a grant, a gift and a bank loan. Participants paid just under a pound a day, children half price. We hired 15 tents from the army for our various activities: eating, sleeping, drinking, meeting, carpentry, yoga, drama, printmaking, a children's tent, an office, and a canteen. As we arrived at the camp, we divided up into tent groups which gave us possibilities to get to know each other. These tent groups functioned as centers for our group discussions, where we were to become more conscious about ourselves and others. These groups also took it in turn to work with the practical running of the camp, in the kitchen, keeping the camp tidy and meeting the new arrivals. The whole camp took part in the discussions concerning special subjects, such as "the pill". During this discussion, for example, each person said if she had used the pill, if she was still using it, what effect it had on her. We discussed the responsibility of birth control, many considered it the man's responsibility.

By taking the pill many considered their bodies were being experimented on by society. Other subjects were also discussed: insanity, ambivalent attitudes towards one's children, sexuality, and orgasm. One of the subjects discussed has proved both crucial and relevant for the movement. One evening at a camp meeting a basic group had suggested that we should talk about our feelings towards each other. It was a very emotional meeting. A woman said that as a child she had felt herself a bisexual but society had forced her to make a choice. Another said that she considered it a good thing that the attitude towards homosexuality had been liberalised so that we are not making people criminals because of their feelings. Another said she did not notice if people had brown eyes, one leg or if they were Lesbians, because it was of no importance. Later one woman said that she had not experienced warm feelings for other women before the camp, but that after she had done so she felt richer. But it is, however, a problem for the movement. Many are afraid that the movement will be identified as Lesbian and therefore will not become involved with the movement. Many are afraid of being thought of as gay, likewise being a member of a minority group. Therefore this is a situation that we are continuing to discuss in the women's house. Should women who want to express their personal feelings toward each other be denied this expression in the women's house because it might turn other women away from working in the movement? Or should we accept that some women have these feelings toward each other and need to express themselves too. Here we stand at the moment--struggling to recognise all women as women and struggling to find and practice women-identified politics. The pressure on the women in the camp from their husbands to come home was a great problem and many had to go home. We talked a lot about why and how quickly we develop bad consciences, leaving us to neglect our own needs, and how we felt guilty and egoistic when we were doing what we liked instead of playing roles. The last week: a colossal anxiety about returning to the roles and relationships we had before.



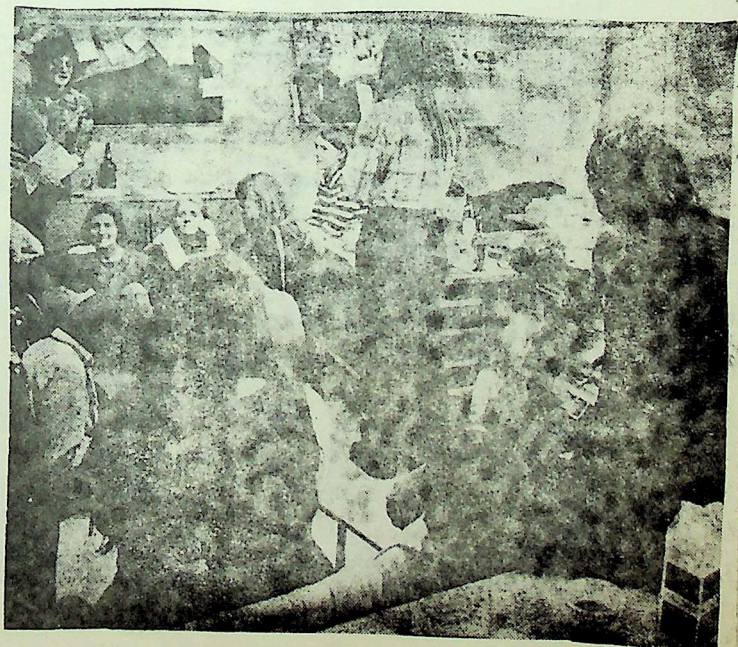
"Equal
Don



The holy state of matrimony has also been on the firing range. Karen took over the speakers platform during the introductory speeches for the new university students. Dressed in a bridal dress and veil, plus a student hat with the R.S. symbol instead of the usual badge. Karen bade the new women students welcome to the best of all marriage markets.

This the editor of one of Denmark's women's magazines, Eva, invited a group of four red stockings to write an article on Women. Before they agreed to do so they asked for an assurance that there would be no form of censorship.

When the article went to press the section, concerning a woman's position and suppression, as dictated by the political machine; had been censored. In protest the R.S. invaded the editor's office and made a sit in. This action as planned received publicity in the newspapers and on television.



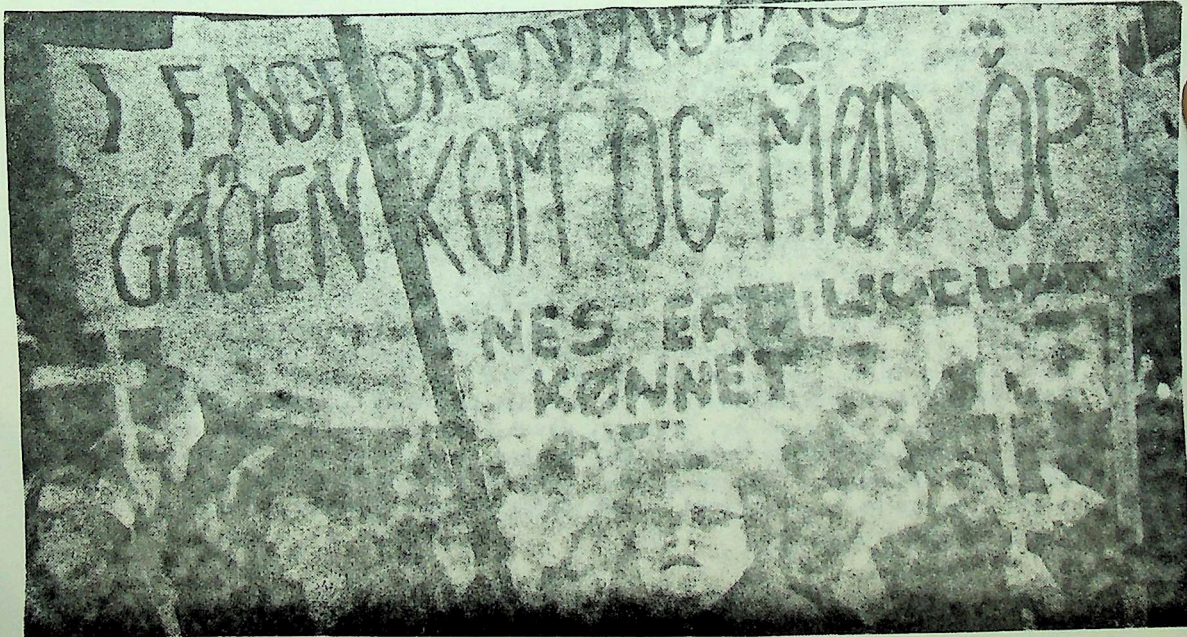
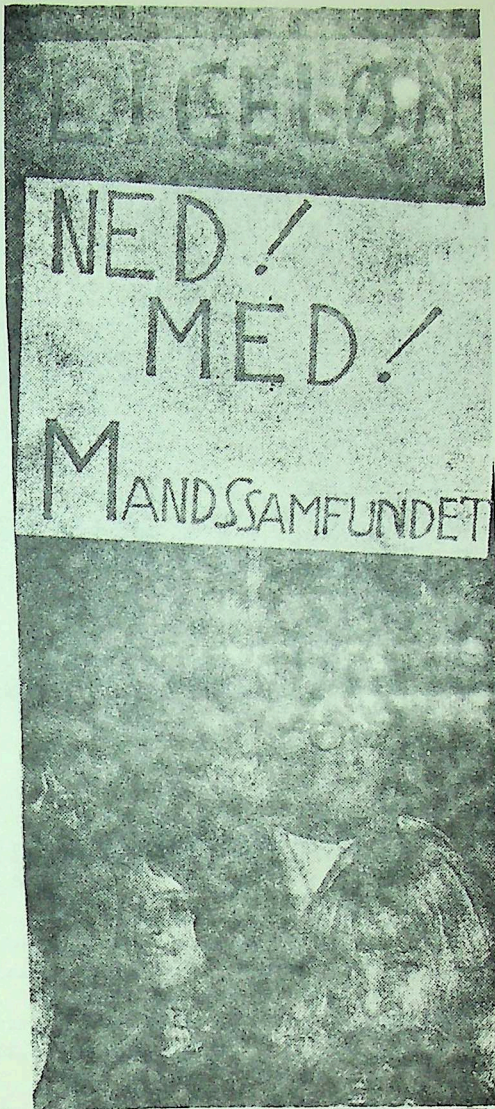
"Equal pay

Down with Man's Society"

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Last winter women from the R.S. movement and women working in factories grouped together and called themselves "The initiative for equal pay". As the unions are negotiating with the employers for wage increases, this group organized a demonstration. 5000 women marched through the streets of Copenhagen to the place where the negotiations were taking place. We didn't win our fight this time - for as everybody knows the employers are interested in our cheap labour and they can just keep this situation going by treating women as an inferior working class.

However as a result of this demonstration women have begun to organize themselves into active groups - we are getting stronger.



Rødstrømperne kæmpede for deres søstre i De Seks

Erobrede mikrofonen under en antimarkedsdemonstration

-og så blev den slukket

"Red Stockings fight for their sisters in the six, capture the microphone during anti common market demonstration - and then it is disconnected" (even though we were given the headlines the article didn't mention anything about what we said!)

This demonstration against the Common Market was organised by the Vietnam Committee. Though the R.S. were mentioned as supporting the demonstration our revolutionary, yet still chauvinistic, brothers refused to allow us to say why we were against E.E.C. at the demonstration. Once again it proved necessary to storm the speakers platform. After several minutes of pushing, arguing, abuse, the microphone being disconnected, and the crowd demanding to hear what we had to say, we finally were allowed to speak. Yet again have we proved, both to ourselves and to others what little ground we have covered in our fight against discrimination against women on all fronts.

We have been talking about a house for women for the past year.
After the Femø camp our need became a necessity.



So the 14th of September we took a house in the centre of Copenhagen. Well that is three houses standing in a terrace. They have been empty for the past two years. A group of fourteen lives in two of them and the third is open to all women. Later one of the two will be used to accommodate women who have left home or just need a place to stay. Outside the open house we have set up posters inviting women to come in and have a free cup of coffee. Many have come, also those that have never had anything to do with the movement before. We sit and talk together, some read the publications written by the R.S. these publications are also for sale. Of an evening the café becomes a bar. In the open house there are twenty large and small rooms which are in the process of being decorated by the various basis groups. We hope that in this way we will all develop a relationship to the house. When they are finished they will be used for various activities; meetings, group discussions, children's play rooms, drama, workshops, etc. But this is a new project, we have no

fixed plans as to what shall be where. The environment we create will decide the house's future. We don't know if the pigs will throw us out one day soon, because we didn't exactly ask anybody, we just moved in! The houses are owned by the Home Office but because they don't know what to use them for they are considering selling them to the Ministry of Culture. Therefore we have contacted the Ministry of Culture to try to negotiate an official take over.

ALL OF OUR SISTERS ARE WELCOME
TO VISIT THE WOMEN'S HOUSE.
BRING YOUR SLEEPING BAGS AND
COME SEE US.
BUT IT IS AN ON-GOING EXPENSE
TO US AND IF YOU CAN OFFER ANY
SUPPORT, WE WOULD APPRECIATE
IT.

This report was written by
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