

There are also women still there who will carry on the work.

Natalia and the two Tatanas were forced to leave the Soviet Union as the Olympics started, soon after Club Maria had made a public protest against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. A Polish exile in the Sakharov Committee in Denmark heard of their expulsion and brought Natalia over to the UN conference. Refused press credentials and permission to speak, Natalia gave a press conference outside the conference centre. Later several of us from feminist magazines talked with her — through translators — at the Polish woman's flat.

It is very important for women in the Soviet Union that I was able to come and speak out for women during this conference. Our main aim is to stop women in Russia being slaves so a women's consciousness can develop. Support here gives women there courage.

While Western women know they are unequal, Soviet women are constantly told they are equal. In our country all real and interesting questions are suppressed — the religious

question, the question of racism in the Soviet Union, and the question of women, which concerns half the population and is the most suppressed of all.

*What will happen to your movement now?*

If those still there don't get known and can survive as a conspiracy, the movement can develop quickly. Everyone who knows of us, supports us — all those who hear and do not fear.

*How will you continue now so many important women are in exile?*

We were troubled when they told us we had to go. In May, when we felt they were spying on us, we prepared for that. Maybe it's because we were praying so much that we found some women who will continue our work. Very talented, active and self-sacrificing women. They are not just from Leningrad, but I don't want to say where and give a clue to the KGB!

*How much of a religious identity does the group have?*

For some reason almost all our members are Christian — mostly Orthodox, some Baptists and a few Catholics.

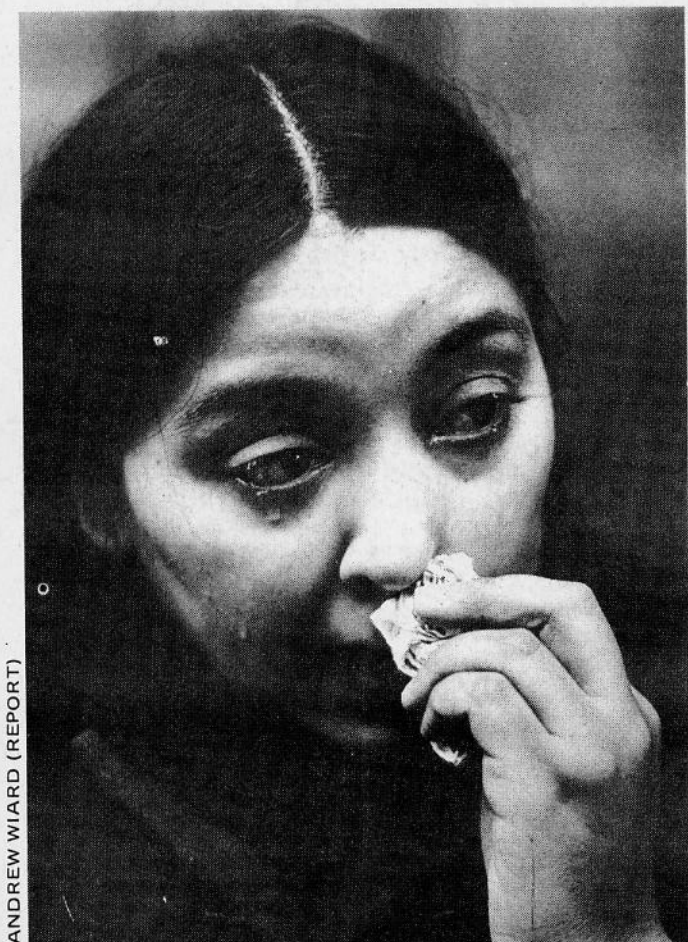
The situation for us is different from that in Western Europe. In your countries, the situation of women is complicated, in some aspects better, some worse. In Russia the situation of women is bad in all aspects. We understood we were living in a Satanic world. From all around we were surrounded by hate. When we wake up in the morning we feel hate from our husbands; we meet our neighbours in the communal flat and feel hate; we meet hatred in the magazines, the buses, at work. There is no place to hide from hatred. You can only hide behind love. So step by step, through love, women come to God, God is love. They pray to God and it saves them from the hate waiting everywhere. In our country religion is saving us, it's not the same as in your countries. I'm talking about what we feel in our souls, not what we are told in our churches.

*I thought Woman and Russia gave a good analysis of patriarchy but didn't analyse the church as it did other institutions of patriarchy.*

Women there have become reproducers, like animals. When we talked about

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# NEWSHORTS



Anwar Ditta

## ONE WINS ONE LOSES

The daily newspapers reported the decision on July 30 to allow Nasira Begum, an Asian woman threatened with deportation because her British husband deserted her, to remain in this country. They failed to report another case being announced on the same day by the adjudicator which did not have such a happy ending. Anwar Ditta, a British-born Asian woman, was refused permission to bring her three children from Pakistan to join her here.

Anwar and her husband entered Britain under the wrong procedure, though both were legally allowed to enter. The Home Office had never previously raised the issue of their entry and does not dispute their right to stay. In his decision, the adjudicator took these irregularities as the sole reason for disbelieving that the children are Anwar's, despite the substantial evidence put before him that they are hers.

Sushuma Lal, Anwar's solicitor at the Manchester Law Centre (which also handled Nasira's case) believes the authorities did not think it wise to refuse both applications, and so chose to allow Nasira to stay as it would have been more difficult to deport her than it is to refuse Anwar's children entry. Sushuma believes the two cases were purposely

juxtaposed to soften the blow: Anwar's decision was held up an unusual two and a half months until Nasira's was heard.

Anwar's only recourse is to take an appeal to a tribunal, if she is given leave to do so. But as Sushuma says, that would entail convincing three people instead of just one, and they are all of the same 'persuasion'.

Pat Fitzsimons and Kath McKay

*The Anwar Ditta Defence Committee continues, hoping to get firmer roots in local communities and to become a bigger, more national campaign. In October a march will go from Anwar's home town, Rochdale, round all the local towns. On November 29 there's to be a national demonstration in London, where her appeal will be heard. Contact the Committee at 127 Crawford St, Rochdale (donations welcome).*

## Rigged exam?

Teachers in East Devon suspect that this year's 11-plus results in the county have been secretly rigged against girls. Until now, places at grammar schools have officially been allocated in equal numbers to girls and boys, even though girls as a whole get higher marks. In other words, girls have to get a higher mark to pass.

This time, in the name of the Sex Discrimination Act, the education authority said it would give places purely on marks. From all the evidence over many years and from all over the country, everyone expected that more girls