



Teletthon
IS
SHIT

WE
DEMAND
RIGHTS
NOT
CHARITY

RIGHTS
FOR
DISABLED
PEOPLE
NOW!

We Don't
need need
IMAGES

IS THIS A
CRIPPLE
FREE
ZONE?

DIG DEEP
INTO YOUR
POCKETS
AND
ORGANISE

TELE
THON

WE'LL
CALL YOU

DISABLED PEOPLE

DON'T
BE
INFESTED
BY THE
BUG

IS TERRY
WOGAN
SHOWING
HIS PANTS
ALL MY LIFE
IS WORTH?

D
B
TH
TE

WHAT
NO
TELE
THON

PISS ON PITY

A brief history of the UK disability rights movement

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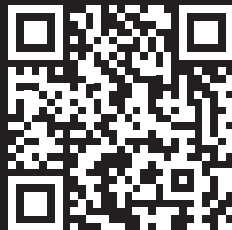
Alex Cowan

A special thanks to Simon Roy for his support

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NDMAC

**The National Disability
Movement Archive
& Collection**



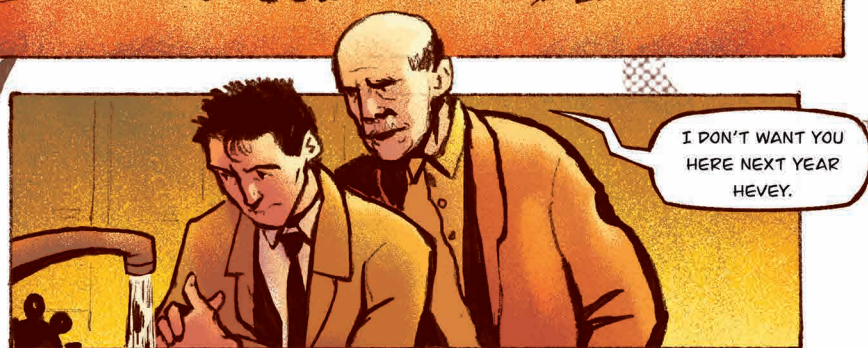
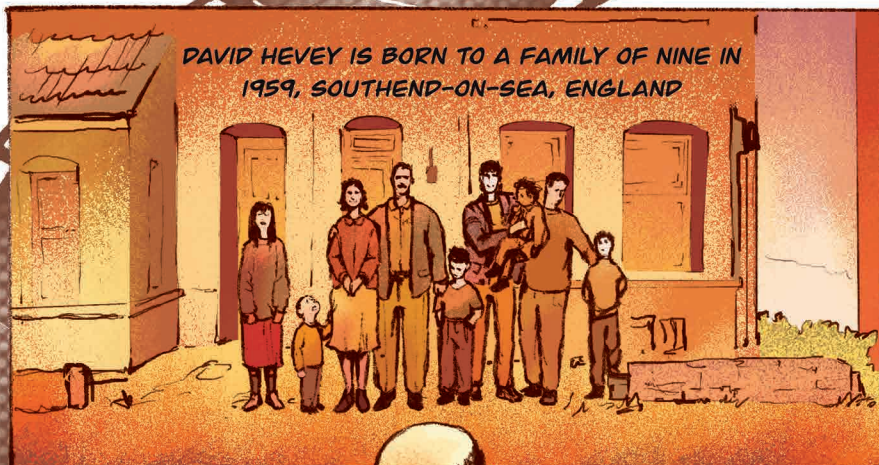
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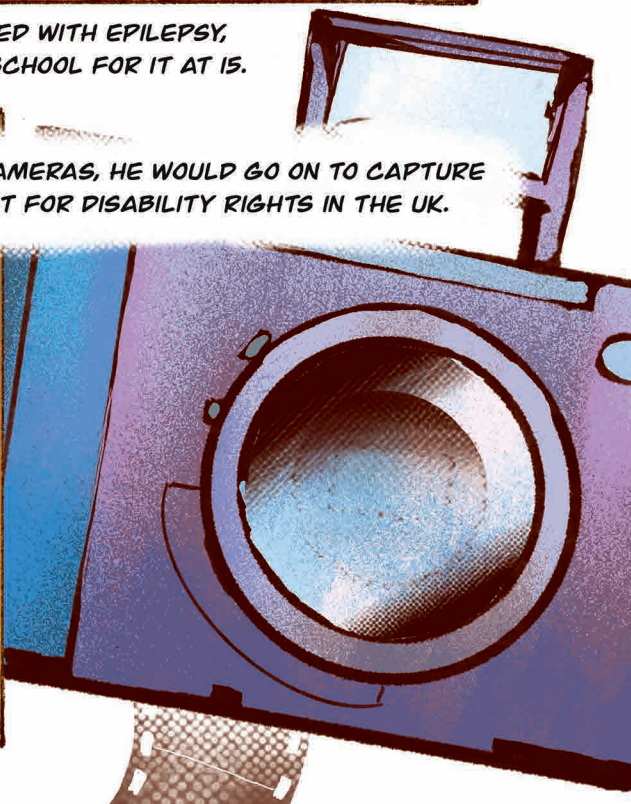
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



AT 14 HE IS DIAGNOSED WITH EPILEPSY,
AND THROWN OUT OF SCHOOL FOR IT AT 15.

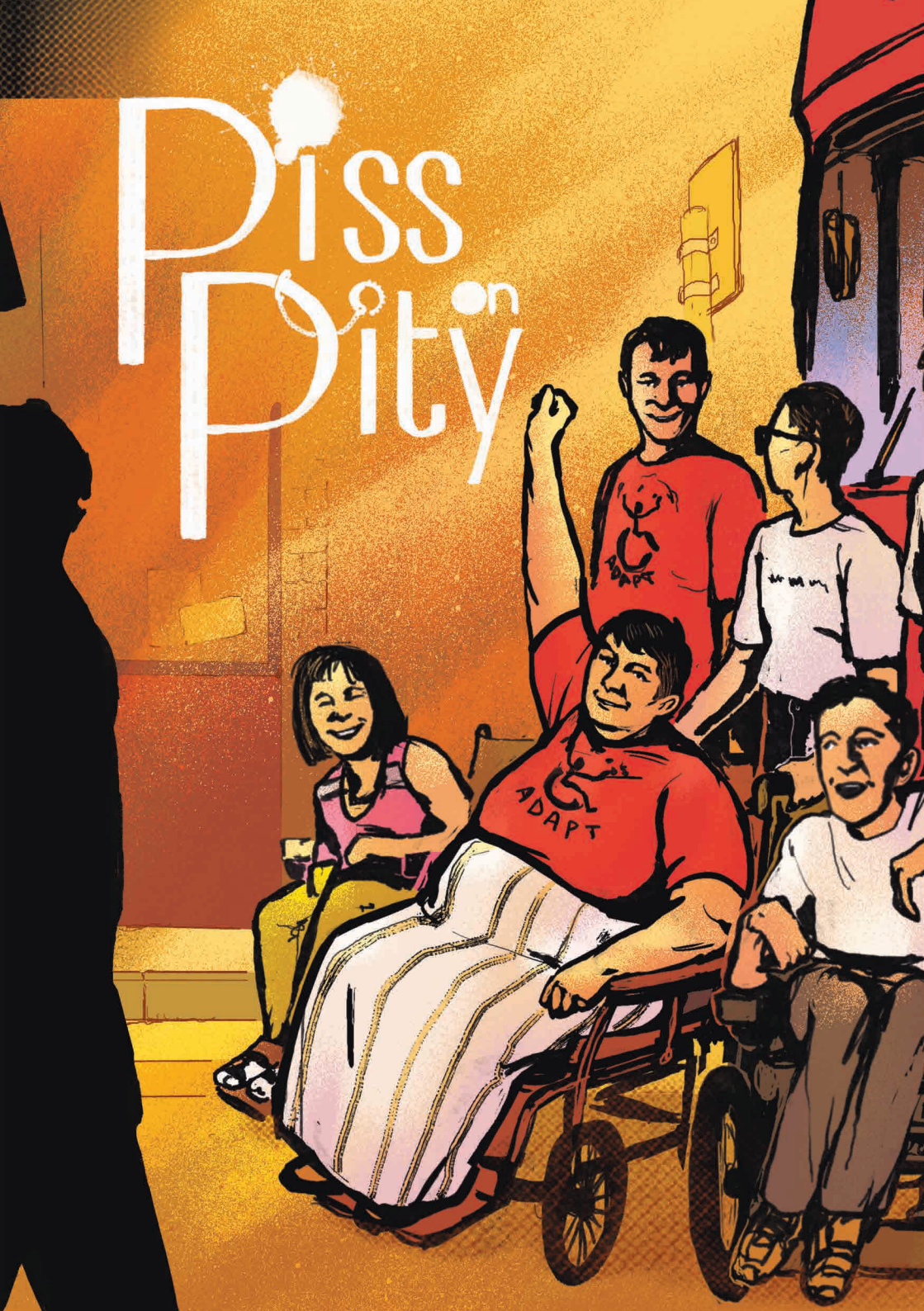


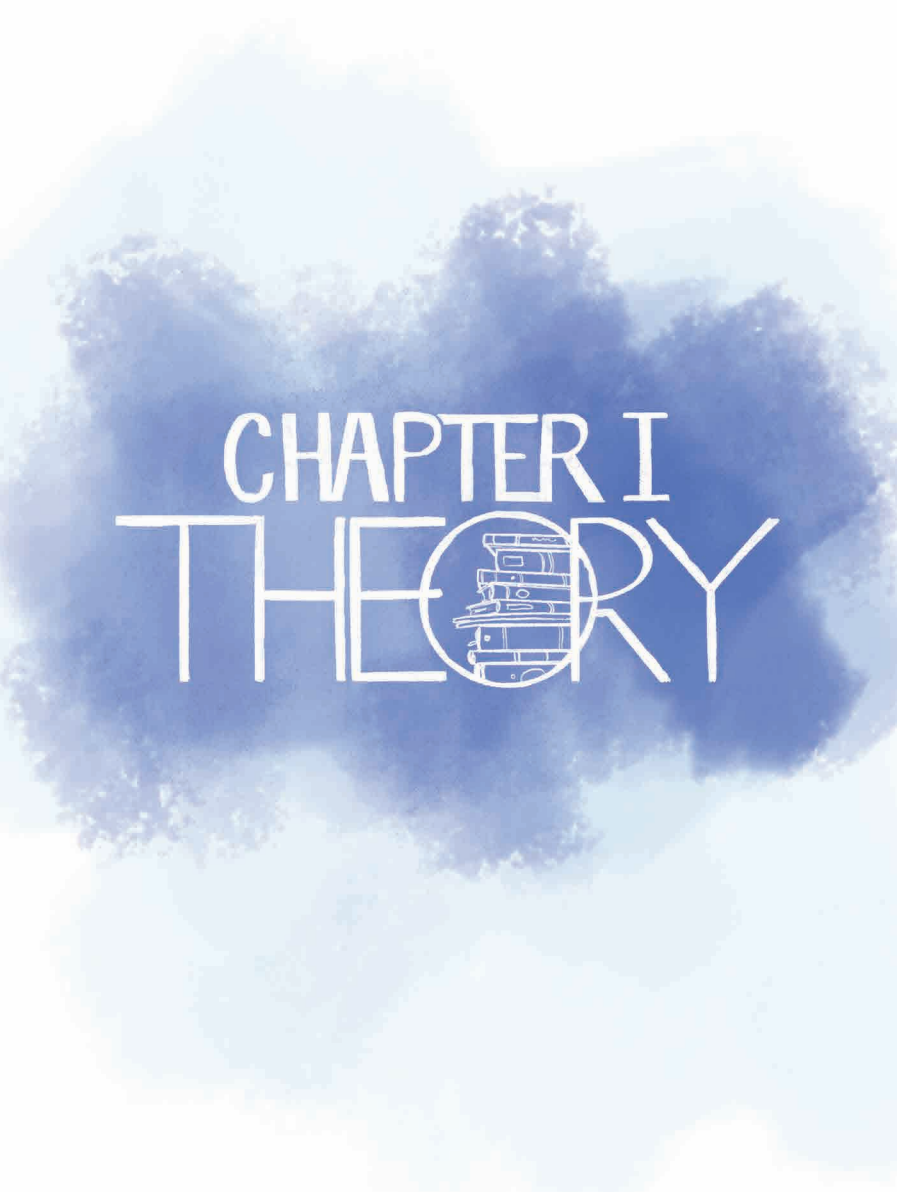
THROUGH CAMERAS, HE WOULD GO ON TO CAPTURE
THE FIGHT FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS IN THE UK.





Piss Pity

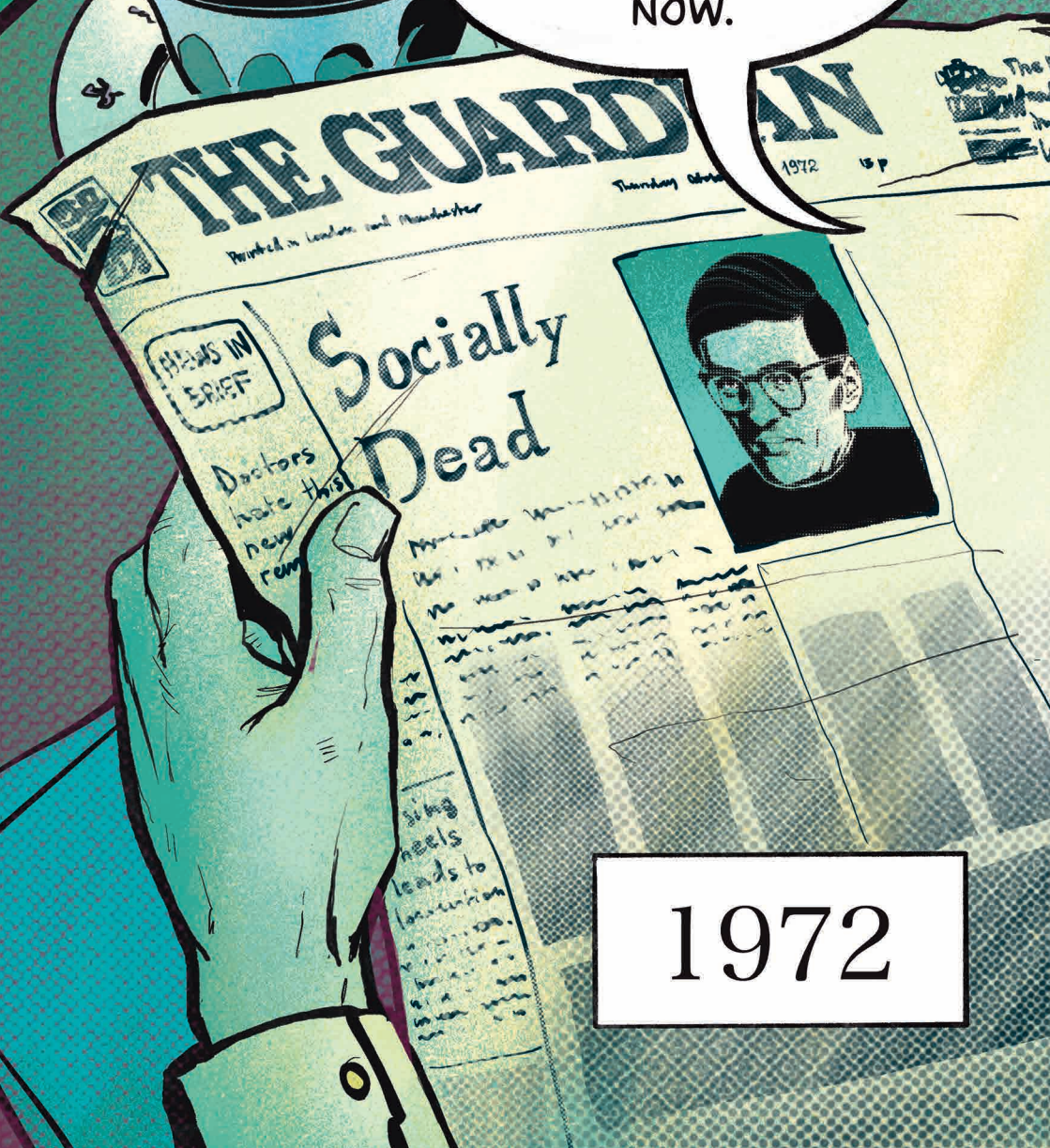




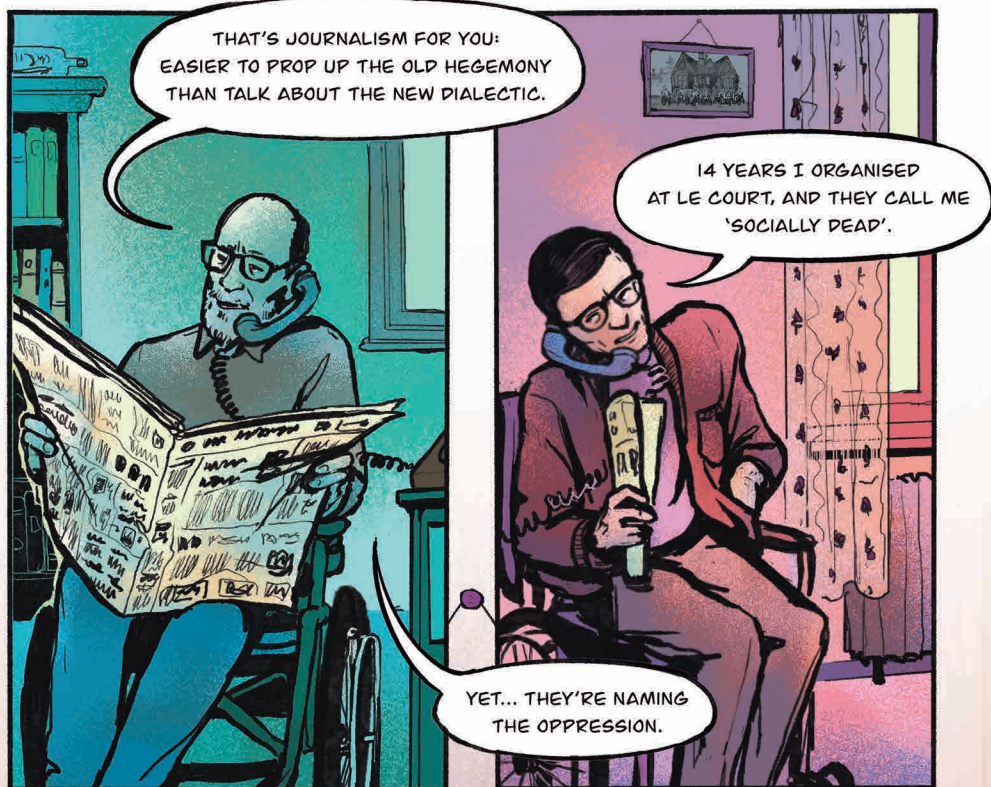
CHAPTER I THEORY



YEAH,
I'M READING IT
NOW.



1972



LE COURT WAS A CHESHIRE HOME, A RESIDENCY
FOR THE DISABLED SET UP IN THE WAKE
OF WORLD WAR 2.

1970S BRITAIN WAS BASICALLY
SEGREGATED
FOR DISABLED PEOPLE.

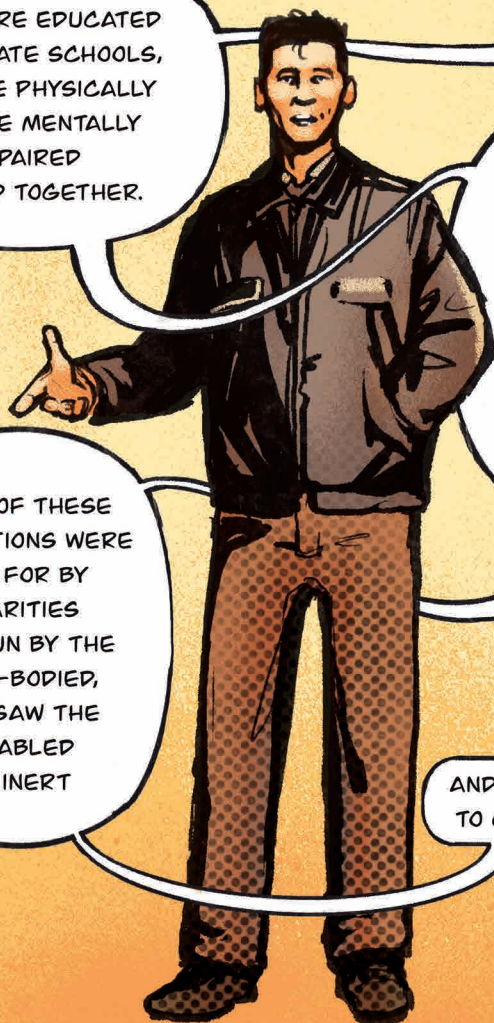
THOSE WHO NEEDED CARE WERE OFTEN KEPT IN
DISABLED HOMES LIKE LE COURT - OUT OF
THE WAY FROM 'NORMAL' SOCIETY.

THEY WERE EDUCATED
IN SEPARATE SCHOOLS,
WITH THE PHYSICALLY
AND THE MENTALLY
IMPAIRED
LUMPED TOGETHER.

YOU WEREN'T BANNED
FROM GOING
ANYWHERE -
BUT NO ONE HAD TO
MAKE ANYTHING
ACCESSIBLE,
SO MOST PLACES,
AND MOST TRANSPORT
TO IT, WASN'T.

MOST OF THESE
INSTITUTIONS WERE
PAID FOR BY
CHARITIES
AND RUN BY THE
ABLE-BODIED,
WHO SAW THE
DISABLED
AS INERT

AND PITIABLE PROPS
TO GAIN DONATIONS.





IN 1999 THE BBC COMMISSIONED ME TO DIRECT A SERIES ON DISABLED CHARITY.

WE HIRED A POLLING COMPANY TO FIND OUT HOW MANY DISABLED PEOPLES' NEEDS WERE BEING MET.

THE NUMBER THEY CAME BACK WITH WAS ABOUT 0.03%.

ALMOST NOTHING!

THEY SAID THE RESULT WOULD DAMAGE THEIR REPUTATION - PEOPLE BELIEVED DISABLED PEOPLE GOT A LOT MORE THAN THAT - SO TOLD US TO CLAIM IT WAS '3%'. A HUNDRED TIMES MORE!



SO IT WASN'T A SURPRISE WHEN THE GUARDIAN CALLED PAUL HUNT AND THE OTHER RESIDENTS AT LE COURT 'SOCIALY DEAD' -

IT WAS A MIX OF A CORRECT DIAGNOSIS AND THE SAME CONDESCENDING ATTITUDE THAT HAD MADE THINGS THIS WAY.

DISABLED FROM 14 YEARS OLD,
PAUL HUNT LIVED IN THE LE COURT HOME
FOR DISABLED PEOPLE UNTIL 1970.



HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE LE COURT
WELFARE COMMITTEE AND AN EDITOR
FOR ESSAYS ON DISABLED POLITICS.
AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN HIS LIFE, HE HATED
BEING CALLED 'SOCIALY DEAD'.

VIC FINKELSTEIN WAS BORN IN 1938
IN SOUTH AFRICA. HE WAS EXILED UNDER
THE SUPPRESSION OF COMMUNISM ACT
FOR OPPOSING APARTHEID.



BRITAIN BECAME VIC'S NEW HOME IN 1968.
HE WOULD BECOME AN EARLY THEORIST
OF DISABILITY POLITICS.

**REALISING INSTITUTIONS RUN BY THE ABLE-BODIED
WOULDN'T ADVOCATE FOR THEM, PAUL PUBLISHED
A LETTER IN THE GUARDIAN IN 1972 INVITING
DISABLED PEOPLE TO FORM
A NATIONAL ORGANISATION.**

TOGETHER, VIC AND PAUL FOUNDER...

...UPIAS, THE UNION OF THE PHYSICALLY
IMPAIRED AGAINST SEGREGATION

U.P.I.A.S.





UPIAS CAMPAIGNED FOR YEARS,
RUNNING WORKSHOPS TO DISSEMINATE
RADICAL DISABILITY POLITICS...



...INCLUDING A YOUNG JANE CAMPBELL, WHO IN TWENTY YEARS
WOULD HELP NEGOTIATE THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT.



IN 1981, UPIAS HELPS FOUND BCODP,
THE BRITISH COUNCIL OF ORGANISATIONS
OF DISABLED PEOPLE, BRINGING TOGETHER
DISABLED-LED ORGANISATIONS.

AND IN 1985, VOADL IS FOUNDED.

THE VOLUNTARY
ORGANISATIONS
FOR ANTI-DISCRIMINATION
LEGISLATION BRINGS
ORGANISATIONS THAT ARE
FOR DISABLED PEOPLE
BUT NOT OF DISABLED
PEOPLE INTO THE FOLD.

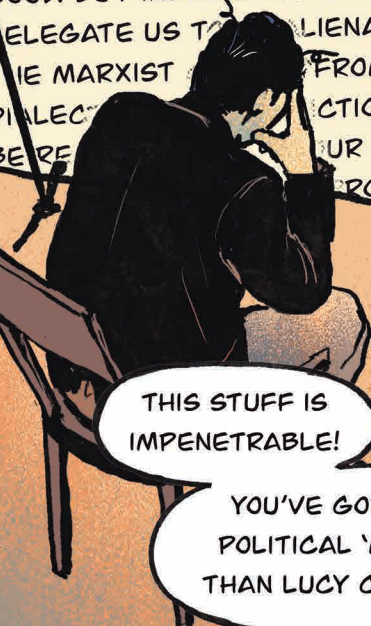


FROM 1993,
DAVID WAS WORKING
FOR THE COMMUNITY
AND DISABLED
PROGRAMMES UNIT
AT THE BBC.



A KEY FIGURE IN THE DISABILITY
RIGHTS MOVEMENT AT THE TIME,
DAVID WAS SENT TO INTERVIEW VIC.

BECAUSE OF
THE MISAPPLICATION OF LENINIST
PRINCIPALS THE INTERPELLATIVE
DEONTOLOGICAL: IMPAIRMENT
WATER SHOULD BE UTILITARIAN
INSTITUTIONALISES US WITHHOLDS
GOOD. BUT INSTEAD WE'VE FOCUSE
ELEGATE US TO
THE MARXIST
BE RE
FROM EACH
CTION ENCA
OUR OF A B
PRODUCE



THIS STUFF IS
IMPENETRABLE!

YOU'VE GOT MORE
POLITICAL 'MODELS'
THAN LUCY CLAYTONS!





MIKE OLIVER WAS BORN 1945.

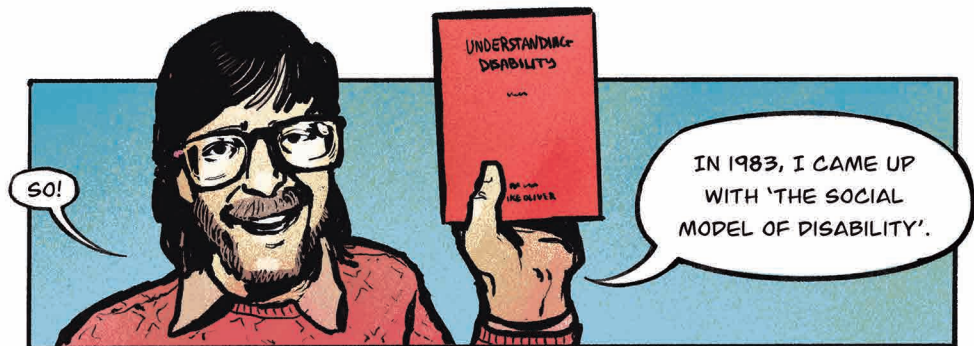


A WORKING-CLASS
ACADEMIC,
A DRINKER,
AND A FAN
OF BETTING
ON HORSES.



ANTI-CAPITALIST LIKE VIC,
THEY DISAGREED
ON WHETHER THE FOCUS
SHOULD BE ON DISABLED
RIGHTS OR A BROADER
COMMUNIST LIBERATION.





BRITISH SOCIETY CURRENTLY VIEWS THE DISABLED UNDER WHAT I CALLED 'THE MEDICAL MODEL':

DISABILITY IS THE CONDITION OF THE INDIVIDUAL, FOR WHICH THEY SHOULD BE MEDICALLY CURED,

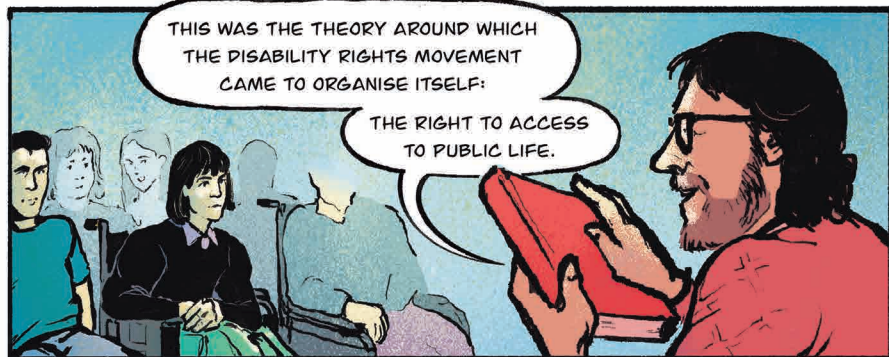
OR INSTITUTIONALISED UNTIL THEY COULD BE.

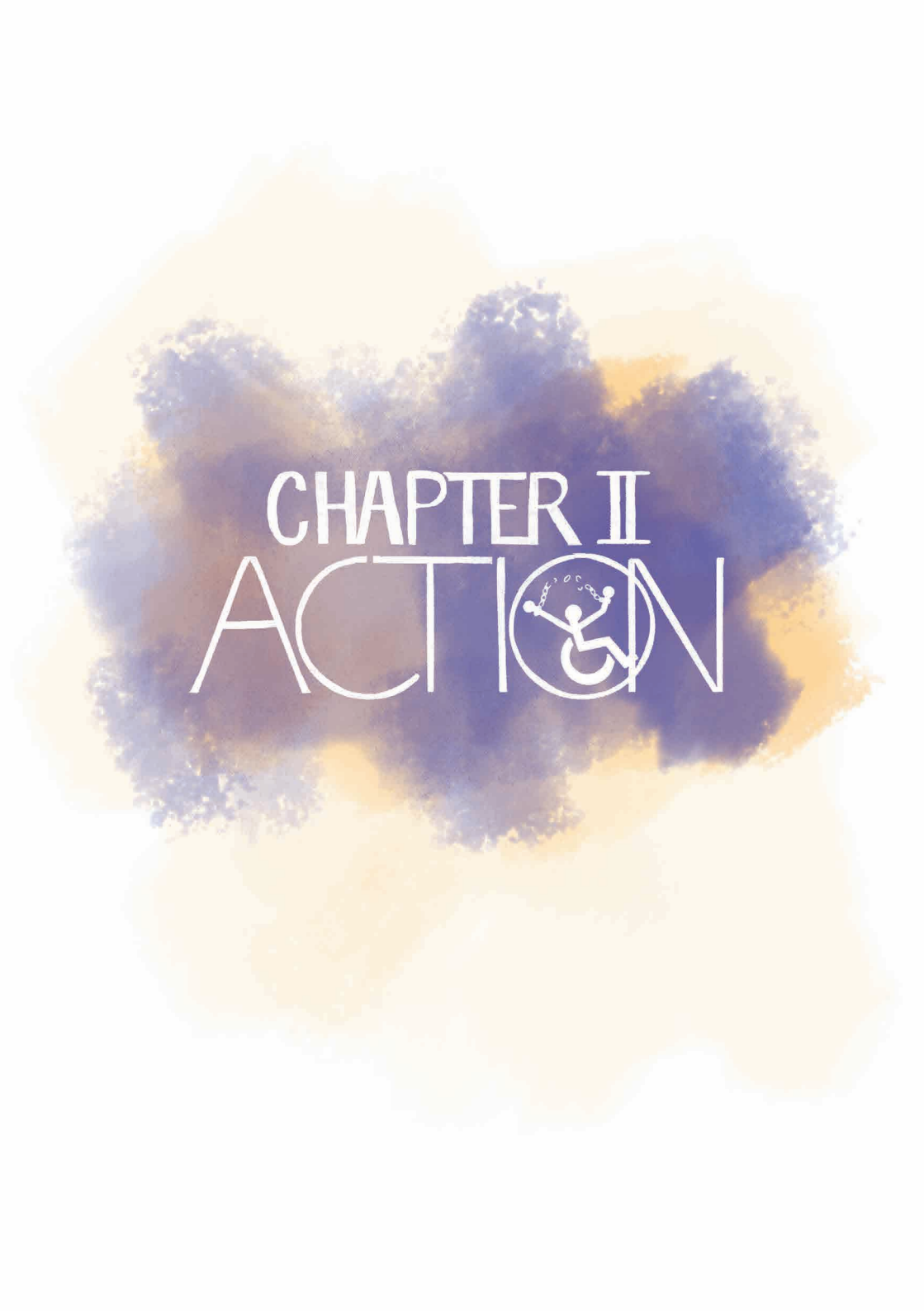
ALTHOUGH THEY WEREN'T BEING

I PROPOSED THE 'SOCIAL MODEL': WHAT DISABLES A PERSON IS SOCIETY'S REFUSAL TO ACCOMMODATE THEM.



IF SOMEONE CAN'T WALK, IT'S THE LACK OF WHEELCHAIR RAMPS AND ACCESSIBLE CROSSINGS THAT DISABLES THEM FROM DOING WHAT ANYONE ELSE COULD DO.





CHAPTER II ACTION



AFTER THE GROUNDWORK
HAD BEEN LAID,

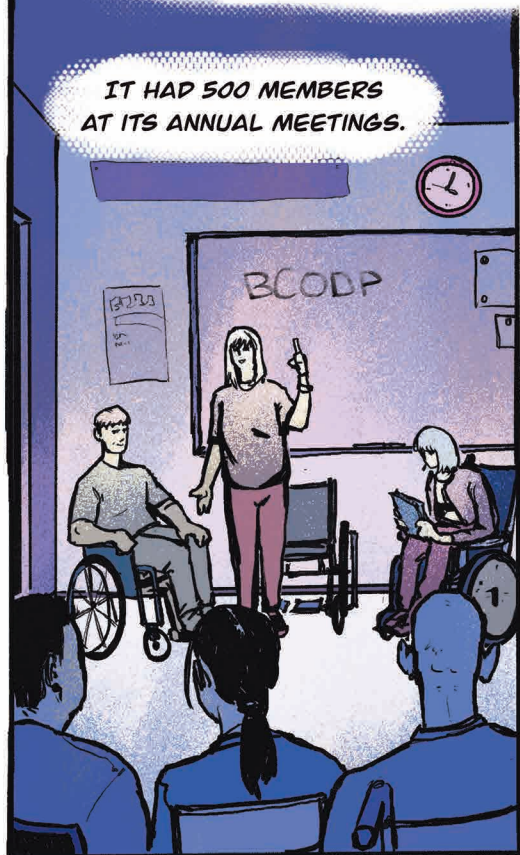
MAJOR PROTESTING
BEGAN IN THE 90S.

NOTHING ABOUT US
WITHOUT US



THE BCODP WAS THE EARLY HUB FOR ORGANISING THESE PROTESTS.

IT HAD 500 MEMBERS AT ITS ANNUAL MEETINGS.



BARBARA LISICKI AND JOHNNY CRESCENDO STOOD OUT AS VOICES AMONGST THE ORGANISERS.



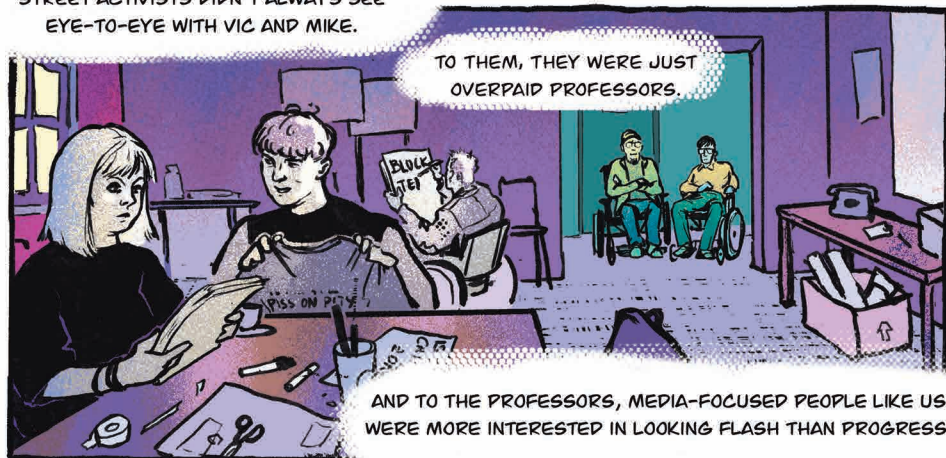
BARBARA WAS THE BRAINS BEHIND A LOT OF DIRECT ACTION PROTESTING.



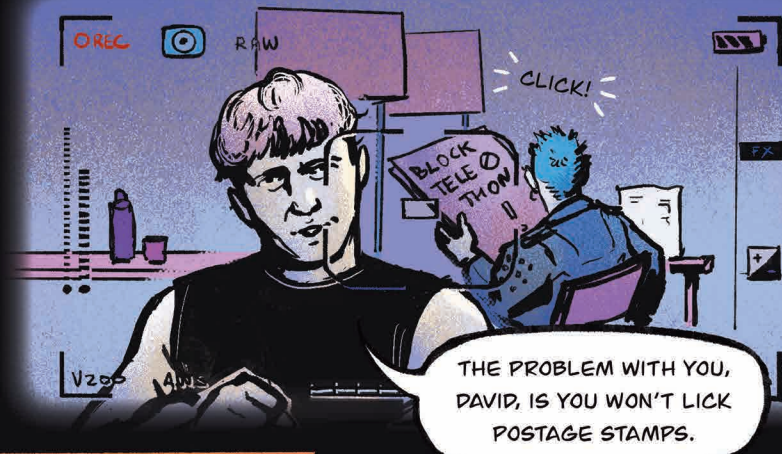
JOHNNY WAS A MUSICIAN, CREATING PROTEST MUSIC HE PERFORMED LIVE AT DEMONSTRATIONS.

STREET ACTIVISTS DIDN'T ALWAYS SEE EYE-TO-EYE WITH VIC AND MIKE.

TO THEM, THEY WERE JUST OVERPAID PROFESSORS.

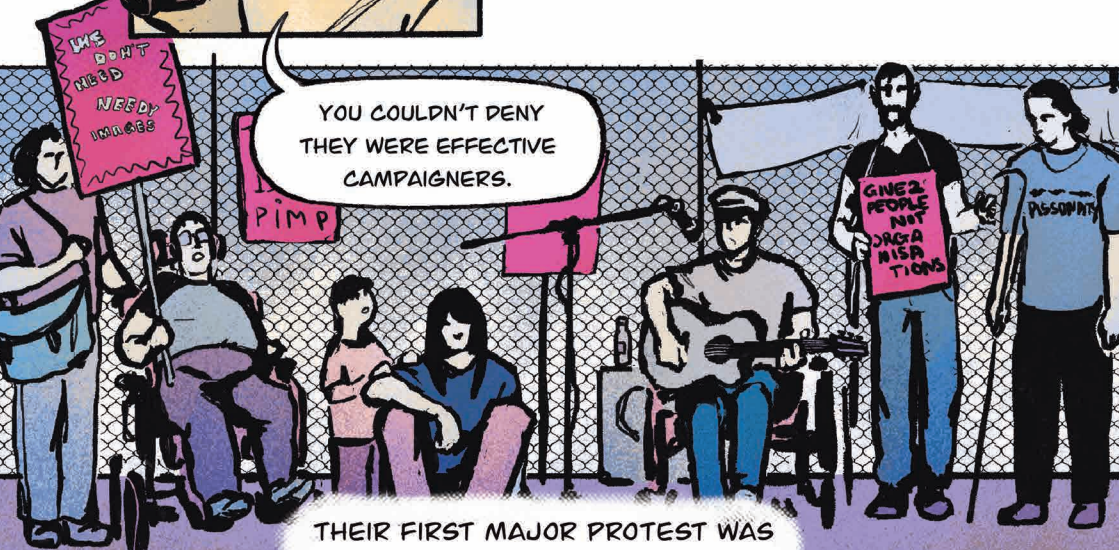


AND TO THE PROFESSORS, MEDIA-FOCUSED PEOPLE LIKE US WERE MORE INTERESTED IN LOOKING FLASH THAN PROGRESS.

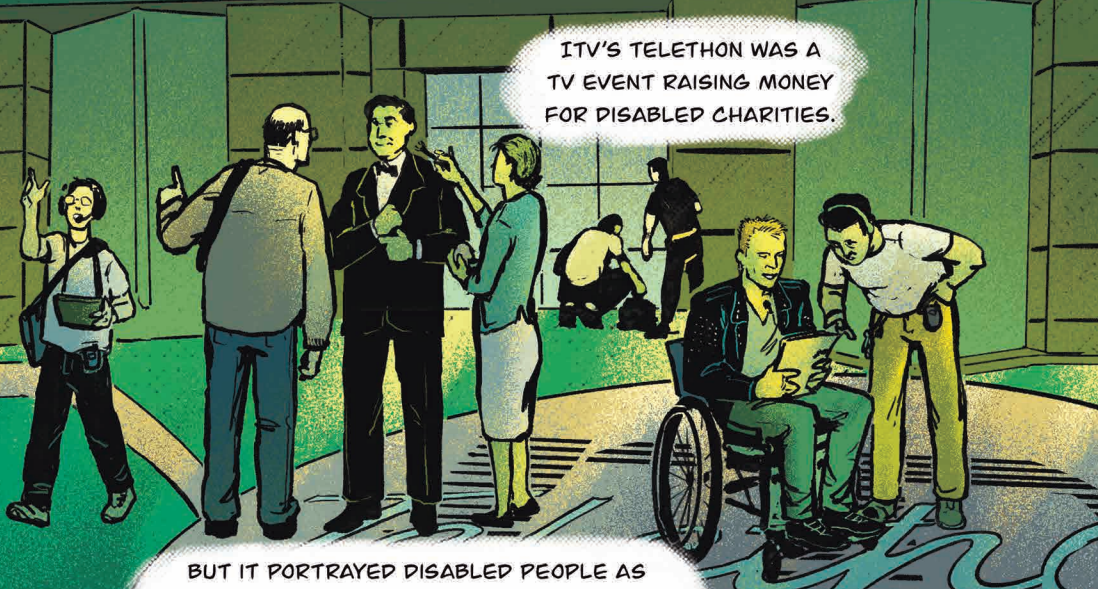


HE MEANT I DIDN'T HELP
WITH DEMONSTRATIONS, JUST
SNAPPED AND FILMED THEM LIKE
I WAS ABOVE IT ALL.

I KNEW WHAT THEY MEANT - BUT I THOUGHT
IMAGES MATTERED, AND SO DID THEY. THEY
WERE GOOD AT GETTING ON THE NEWS.



THEIR FIRST MAJOR PROTEST WAS
BLOCK TELETHON, IN JULY 1990.



ITV'S TELETHON WAS A
TV EVENT RAISING MONEY
FOR DISABLED CHARITIES.

BUT IT PORTRAYED DISABLED PEOPLE AS
PITIFUL AND INERT - THE KIND OF PATRONISING
IMAGE THE MEDICAL MODEL ENCOURAGED.



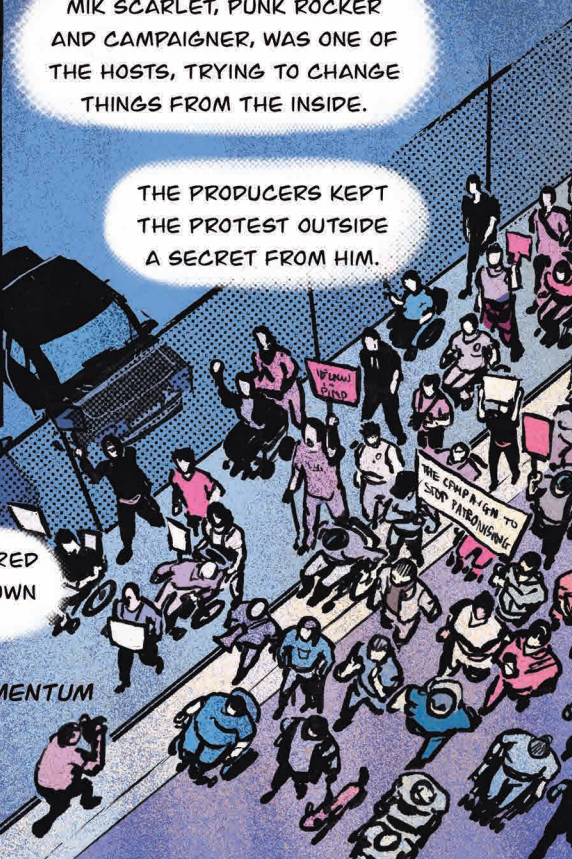
MIK SCARLET, PUNK ROCKER
AND CAMPAIGNER, WAS ONE OF
THE HOSTS, TRYING TO CHANGE
THINGS FROM THE INSIDE.

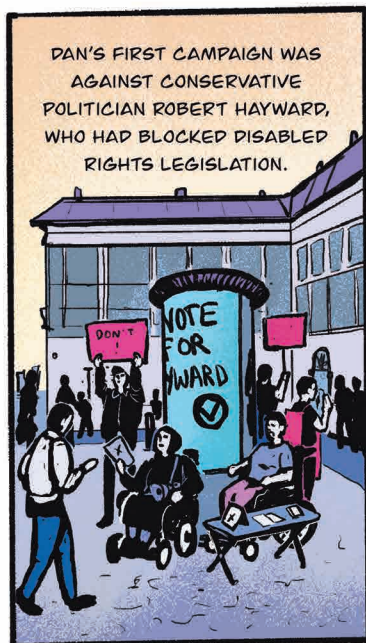
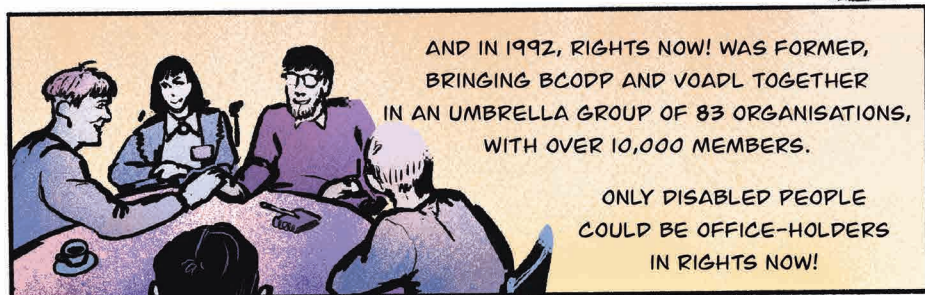
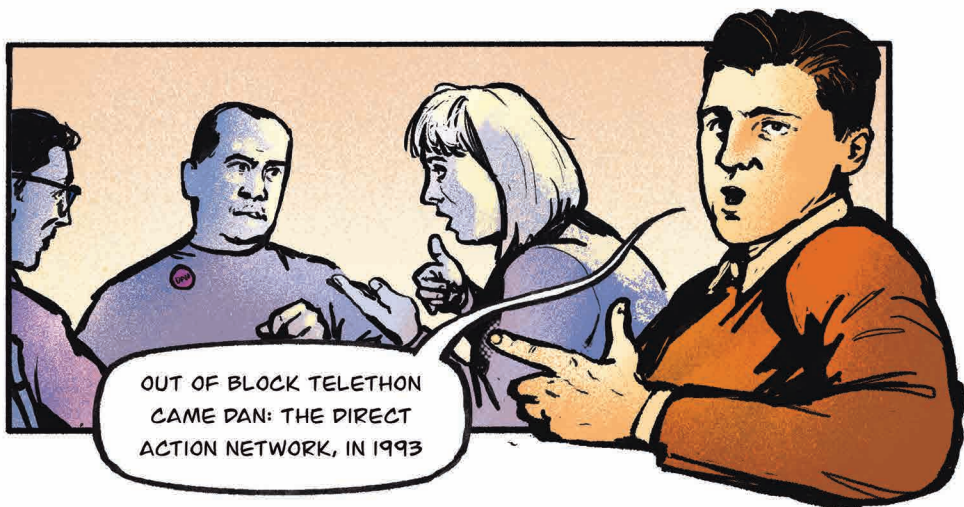
THE PRODUCERS KEPT
THE PROTEST OUTSIDE
A SECRET FROM HIM.

BLOCK TELETHON RETURNED
TO PROTEST IN 1992.

THIS TIME THE PROTESTERS NUMBERED
OVER A THOUSAND AND ITV SHUT DOWN
THE PROGRAM.

MOMENTUM
WAS
BUILDING.







DAN WOULD GO ON TO HOLD OVER 100 ACTIONS
BETWEEN 1993 AND 1998.
THEIR MOST HIGH-PROFILE ACTIONS WERE...





...BLOCKING
THE BUSES!

DAN'S TACTIC WAS TO
HANDCUFF THEMSELVES
TO BUSES. INACCESSIBLE
PUBLIC TRANSPORT
WAS A BIG ISSUE.

THE PUBLIC TENDED TO HAVE
POLAR RESPONSES.



I GET WHERE
YOU'RE COMING
FROM LOVE,

I JUST NEED
TO GET BACK
TO MY ROUTE.

GET OUT OF
THE **FUCKING** WAY
YOU
CRIPPLED CUNT



THIS PARTICULAR PHOTO ACTUALLY HAPPENED BECAUSE SOME MEMBERS OF DAN GOT FED UP WITH ALL THE TALKING AT A BCODP CONFERENCE,

SO JUST THEY RUSHED OUT TO STOP ANOTHER BUS.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT, OR CAT, WERE THE ORIGINAL BUS-BLOCKERS, STARTING IN NORTH ENGLAND.

DAN WASN'T A MONOLITH - IT WAS MADE UP OF LOTS OF SMALLER GROUPS:

CAT, ACT, AND MORE.



THE FUZZ HAD A HARD TIME
ARRESTING WHEELCHAIR USERS
BECAUSE THEIR POLICE VANS ALSO
WEREN'T ACCESSIBLE.



THAT'S OFFENSIVE
TO WEAR MA'AM

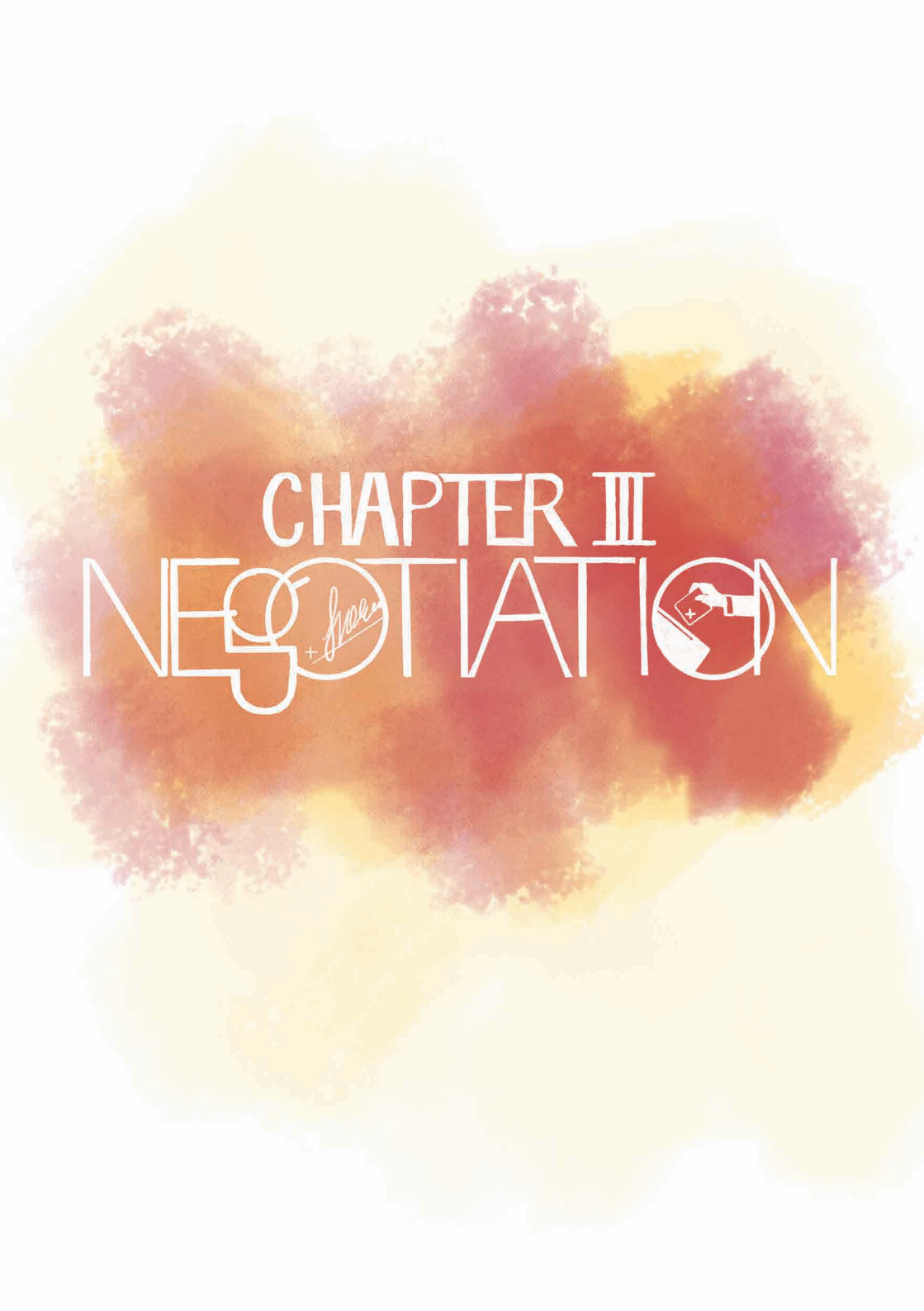
WHAT, DO I TAKE IT OFF
AND SHOW MY TITS?

RIGHTS NOW! WAS THE BIG
POLITICAL MACHINE,
DAN WAS THE SMALLER
DIRECT ACTION GROUP.

TOGETHER THEY CREATED
A DISABLED POLITICS BLOC
TO LEVERAGE RIGHTS
FROM THE GOVERNMENT.

IT WAS TIME TO PUSH THROUGH
SOME LEGISLATION.

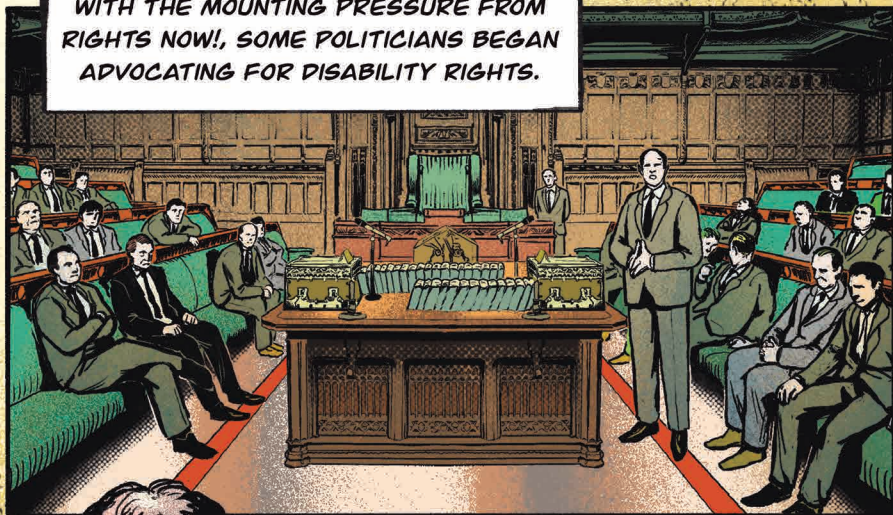




CHAPTER III NEGOTIATION

The word "NEGOTIATION" is rendered in a large, white, serif font. The letter 'O' is replaced by a circular emblem containing a stylized signature and a small plus sign. The letter 'I' is replaced by a circular emblem containing a stylized illustration of a hand holding a card with a plus sign.

WITH THE MOUNTING PRESSURE FROM RIGHTS NOW!, SOME POLITICIANS BEGAN ADVOCATING FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS.

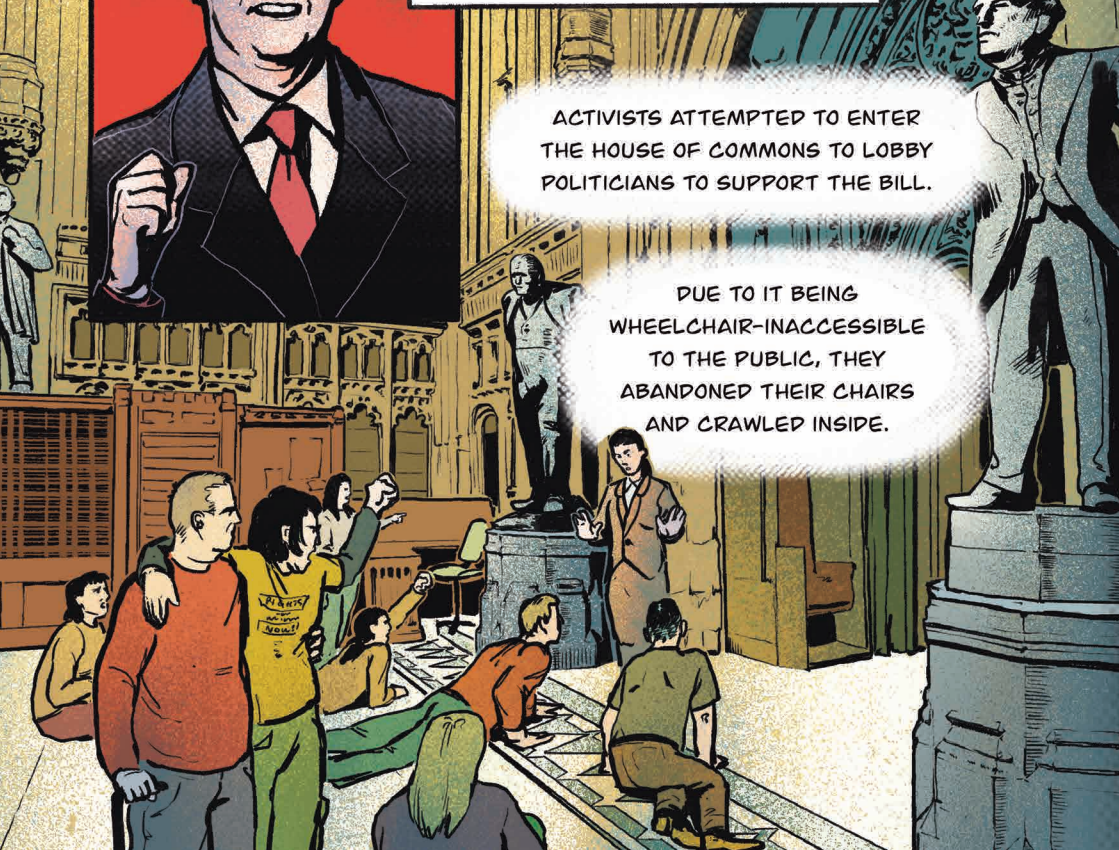


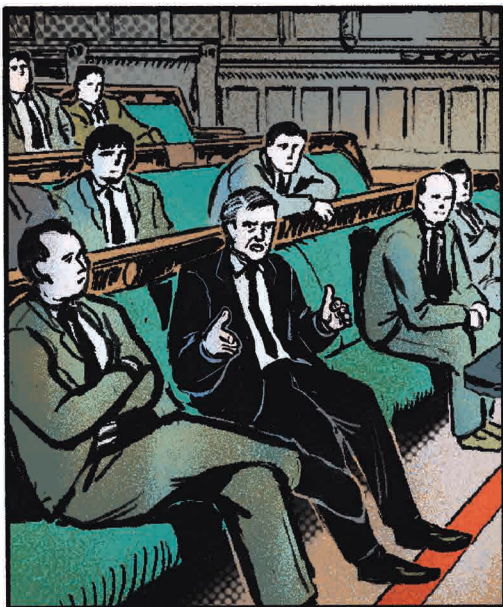
THE LABOUR PARTY ADVANCED A BILL OF CIVIL RIGHTS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE IN MAY, 1994.



ACTIVISTS ATTEMPTED TO ENTER THE HOUSE OF COMMONS TO LOBBY POLITICIANS TO SUPPORT THE BILL.

DUE TO IT BEING WHEELCHAIR-INACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC, THEY ABANDONED THEIR CHAIRS AND CRAWLED INSIDE.





THE BILL WAS SQUASHED
BY CONSERVATIVE MP
NICHOLAS SCOTT, WHO HAD
BACKBENCHERS INSERT
WRECKING AMENDMENTS.



THAT WASN'T THE CONSERVATIVE
PARTY LINE.

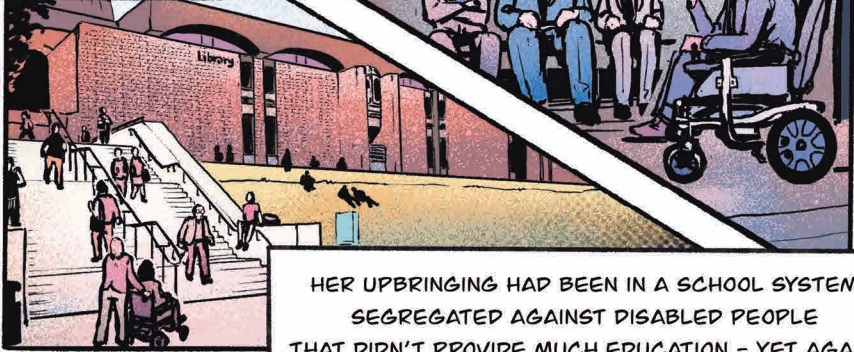
SCOTT WAS SHORTLY AFTER SACKED
AS MINISTER FOR DISABLED PEOPLE
AFTER CLAIMING HE WAS
NEUTRAL ON THE BILL.

HE WAS REPLACED
BY WILLIAM HAGUE.



AS CO-CHAIR OF THE BCODP, JANE CAMPBELL LED POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS FOR DISABLED RIGHTS.

BORN IN 1959, SHE WAS DISABLED FROM BIRTH.



HER UPBRINGING HAD BEEN IN A SCHOOL SYSTEM SEGREGATED AGAINST DISABLED PEOPLE THAT DIDN'T PROVIDE MUCH EDUCATION - YET AGAIN, THE MEDICAL MODEL AT WORK.

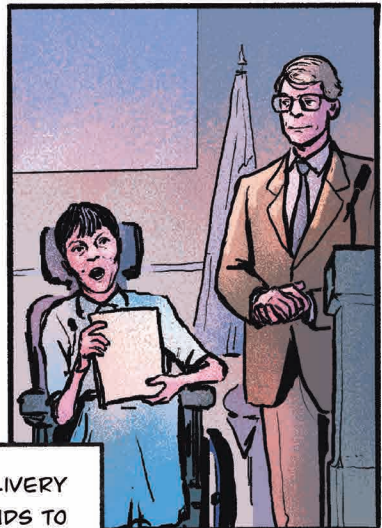
THROUGH HARD GRAFT SHE GRADUATED UNIVERSITY AND WENT INTO POLITICS IN THE 1980S.

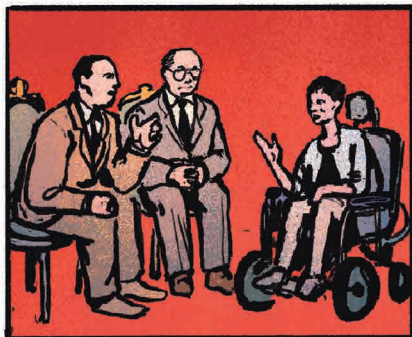
ALTHOUGH THE BILL HAD BEEN SQUASHED, RIGHTS NOW! AND DAN CONTINUED TO MOUNT PRESSURE.



TWO MONTHS AFTER THE BILL'S DEFEAT, RIGHTS NOW! STAGED A PROTEST IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE AND WHITEHALL.

DAN MADE A DELIVERY OF THEIR DEMANDS TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

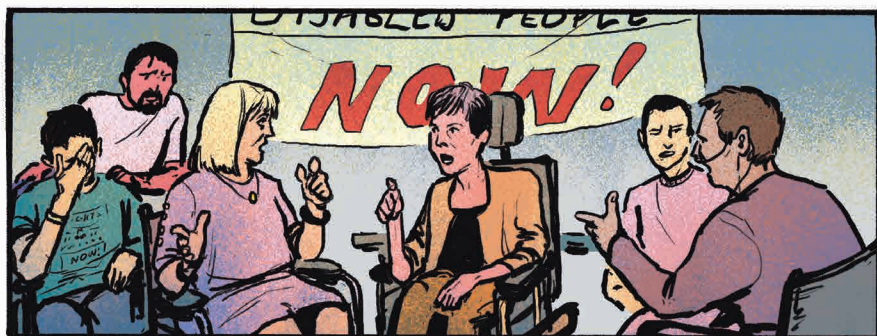




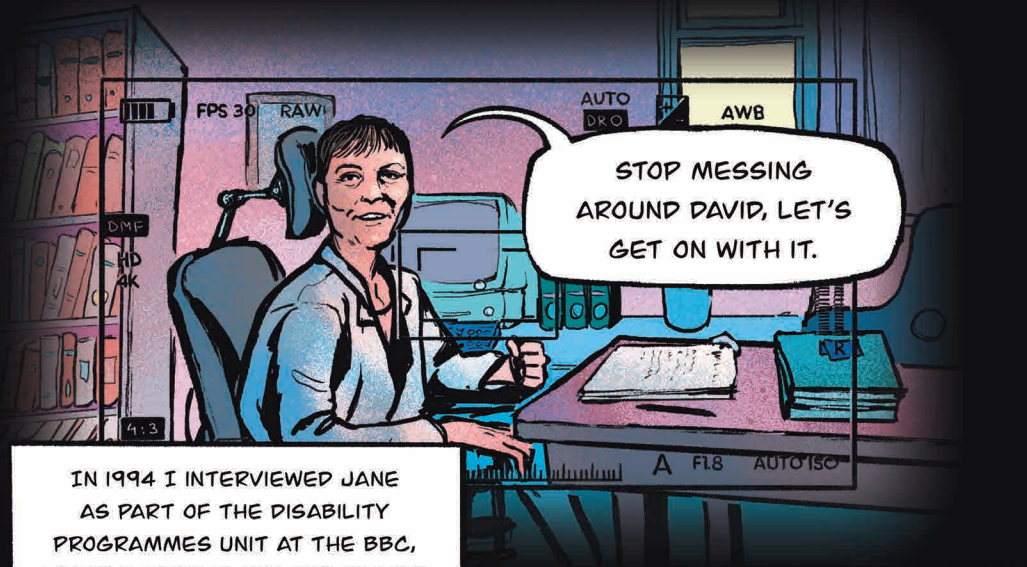
THE FOLLOWING YEAR, LABOUR ADVANCED A NEW BILL
OF DISABLED RIGHTS.



HAGUE AND CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT INSTEAD INTRODUCED
THEIR OWN BILL, THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT.



THE DDA FINALLY INTRODUCED RIGHTS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE,
GIVING THEM WELFARE AND ACCESS THAT WOULD LIBERATE
THEM MORE IN LINE WITH THE SOCIAL MODEL, BUT IT WAS
WEAKER THAN LABOUR'S BILL.



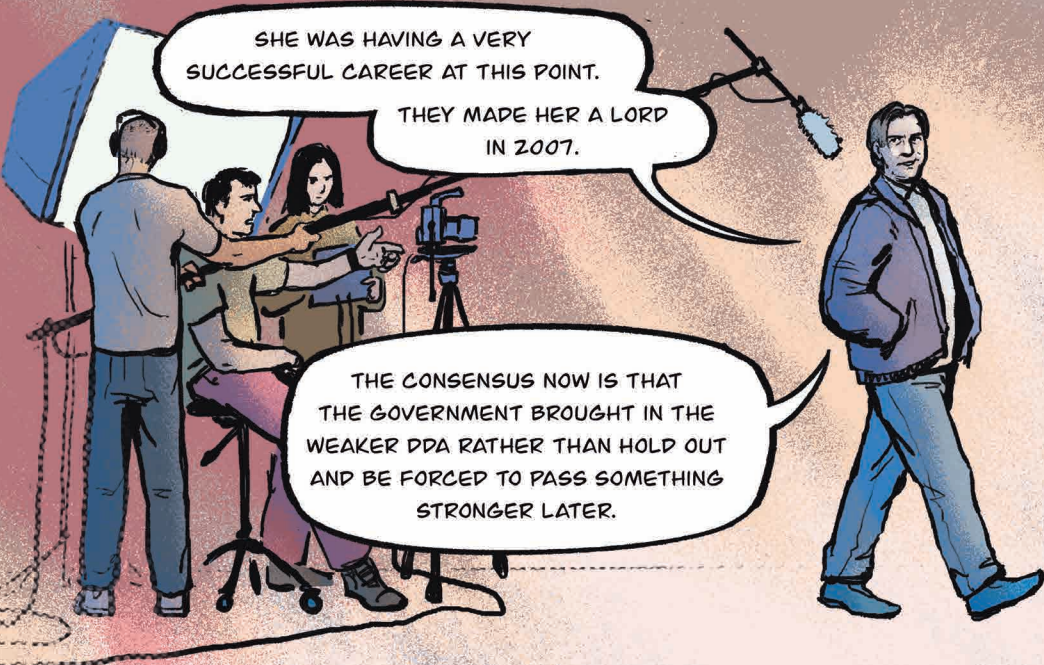
IN 1994 I INTERVIEWED JANE AS PART OF THE DISABILITY PROGRAMMES UNIT AT THE BBC, A LITTLE BEFORE THE DDA PASSED.



SHE WAS HAVING A VERY SUCCESSFUL CAREER AT THIS POINT.

THEY MADE HER A LORD IN 2007.

THE CONSENSUS NOW IS THAT THE GOVERNMENT BROUGHT IN THE WEAKER DDA RATHER THAN HOLD OUT AND BE FORCED TO PASS SOMETHING STRONGER LATER.





THE FIGHT DIDN'T END
AFTER THE DDA PASSED.
BUT IT DID FIZZLE.
JANE STAYED IN POLITICS,
AND DAN CONTINUED
TO DO ACTIONS
FOR A FEW MORE YEARS.

BUT RIGHTS NOW! DECIDED
TO DISBAND.

THE FIGHT HAD BEEN WON ENOUGH.



NOW IT'S 30 YEARS ON. AFTER THE 2008 CRASH THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY PUT IN
DRACONIAN CHANGES TO DISABILITY BENEFITS THAT KILLED THOUSANDS
AS THEIR WELFARE WAS REPEALED, AND WHEN LABOUR GOT BACK IN
IN 2024 THEY VOWED TO FURTHER AUSTERITY.

THE NHS, WHICH DISABLED PEOPLE RELY ON TO TREAT THEIR CHRONIC CONDITIONS,
IS SEVERELY UNDERFUNDED. AND AGAIN, MAINSTREAM POLITICS TALKS ABOUT DISABLED
PEOPLE AS USELESS, INERT, PITIABLE. THE MEDICAL MODEL IS COMING BACK.

THE DISABILITY RIGHTS MOVEMENT'S HISTORY IS THE BLUEPRINT
FOR POLITICAL CHANGE. YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE IDEA YOU'RE AGAINST
AND THE NEW IDEA YOU WANT TO REPLACE IT.

YOU NEED TO ORGANISE PEOPLE TO PUSH YOUR AGENDA.
PEOPLE TO BREAK THE LAW AND CREATE PRESSURE. PEOPLE WHO CAN HAMMER OUT DEALS.
THE QUESTION NOW IS DO WE DO IT ALL AGAIN, AND WIN AGAIN?



OR KEEP WAITING TO LOSE?

THE
FIGHT
NEVER
ENDS