



Telethon  
IS  
SHIT

WE  
DEMAND  
RIGHTS  
NOT  
CHARITY

We Don't  
need need  
IMAGES

RIGHTS  
FOR  
DISABLED  
PEOPLE  
NOW!

IS THIS A  
CRIPPLE  
FREE  
ZONE ?

DIG DEEP  
INTO YOUR  
POCKETS  
AND  
GANISE

WE'LL  
CALL YOU

DISABLED P

DON'T  
BE  
INFESTED  
BY THE  
BUG

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



# PISS ON PITY

A brief history of the UK disability rights movement

## CREDITS

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A special thanks to Simon Roy for his support

Piss On Pity is a part of National Disability Movement Archive & Collection, a Shape Arts project.

# NDMAC

The National Disability  
Movement Archive  
& Collection

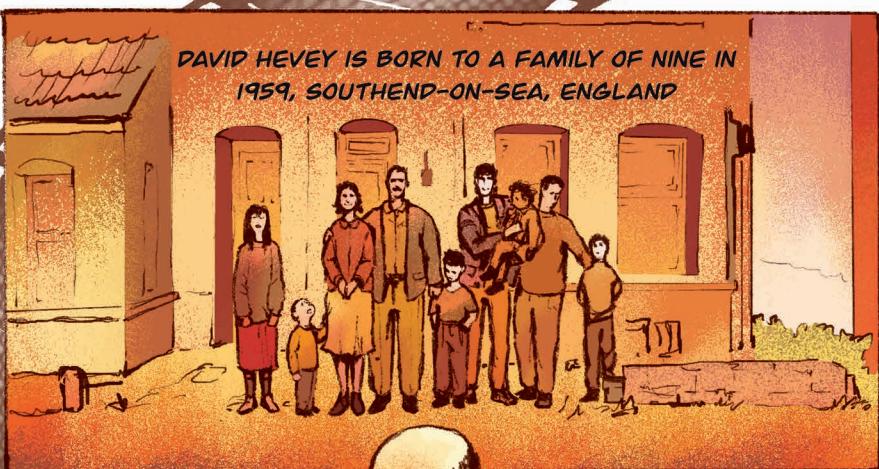
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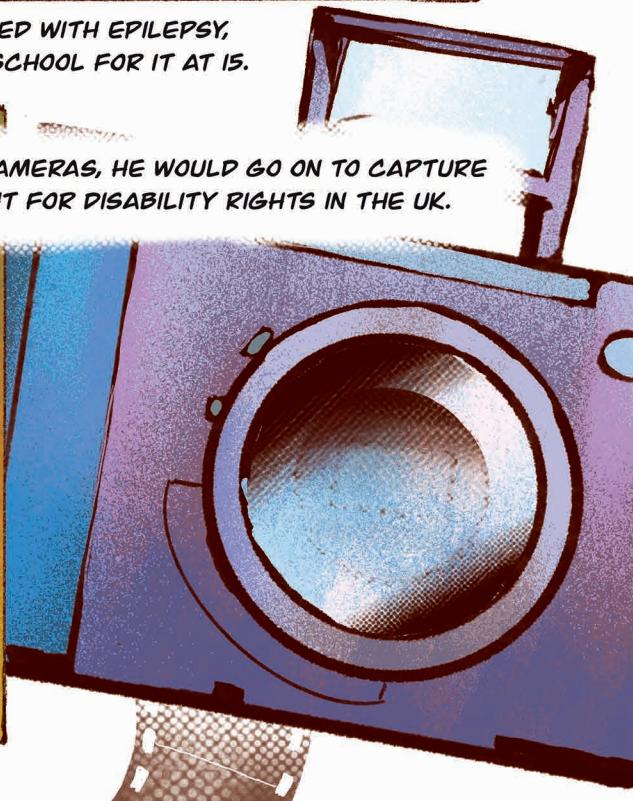
DAVID HEVEY IS BORN TO A FAMILY OF NINE IN 1959, SOUTHEND-ON-SEA, ENGLAND



I DON'T WANT YOU  
HERE NEXT YEAR  
HEVEY.

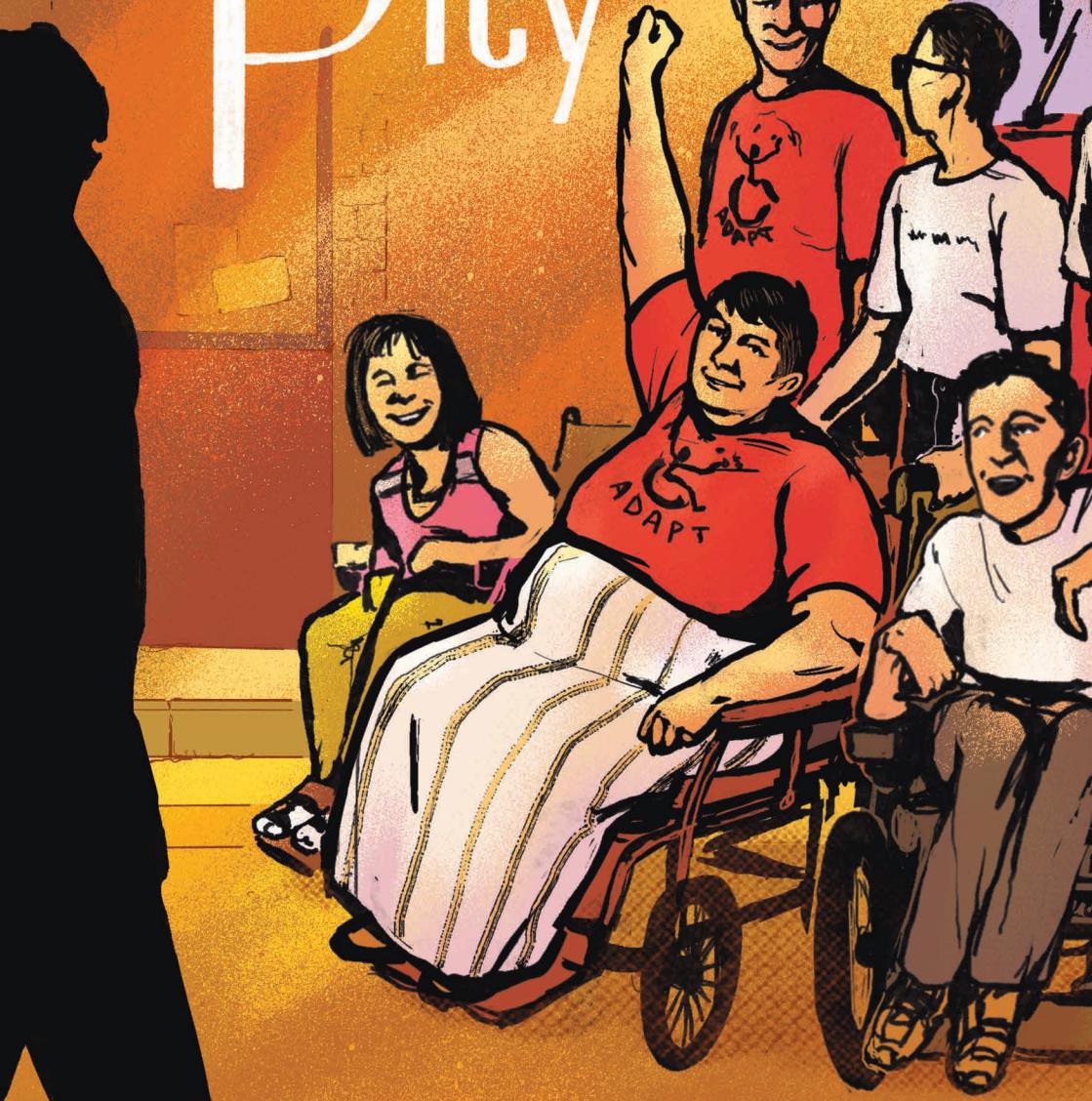
AT 14 HE IS DIAGNOSED WITH EPILEPSY,  
AND THROWN OUT OF SCHOOL FOR IT AT 15.

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.

# THE GUARDIAN

Printed in London and Manchester

NEWS IN  
BRIEF

Doctors  
hate this  
new  
regulation

## Socially Dead



Married men have a  
higher risk of heart disease  
than single men. The  
difference is believed to be  
due to social factors such as  
stress and social support.

Wearing  
heels  
leads to  
lower back  
problems

1972

VIC FINKELSTEIN

PAUL HUNT



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 'SOCIALLY 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.



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



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 'SOCIALLY DEAD'.



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 FOUNDED...

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





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.

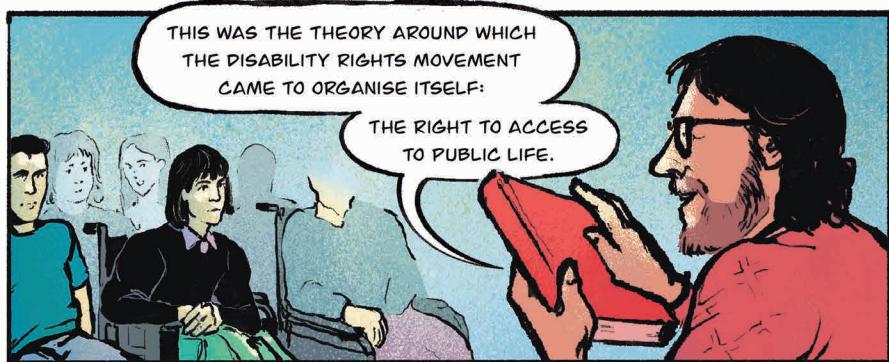
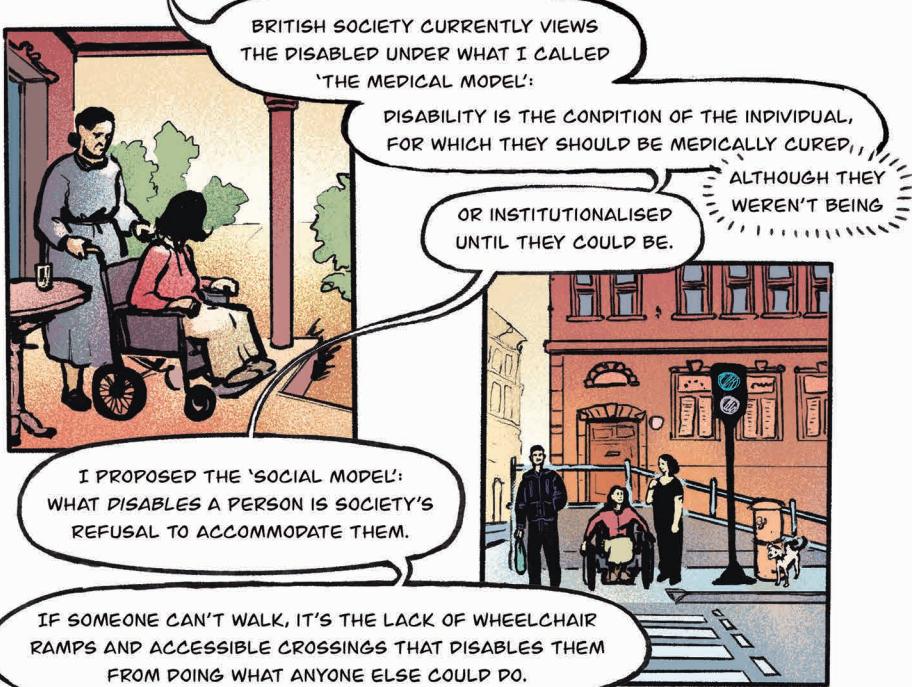




WE WON'T GET ANYWHERE  
WITH OBSCURE MARXISM.

MIKE OLIVER WAS BORN 1945.





# CHAPTER II

# ACTION



AFTER THE GROUNDWORK  
HAD BEEN LAID,

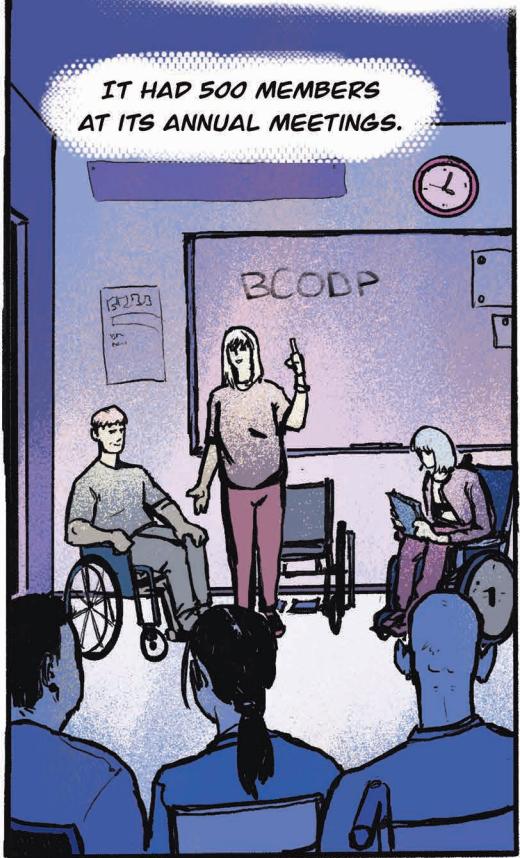
MAJOR PROTESTING  
BEGAN IN THE 90S.

**NOTHING ABOUT US  
WITHOUT US**

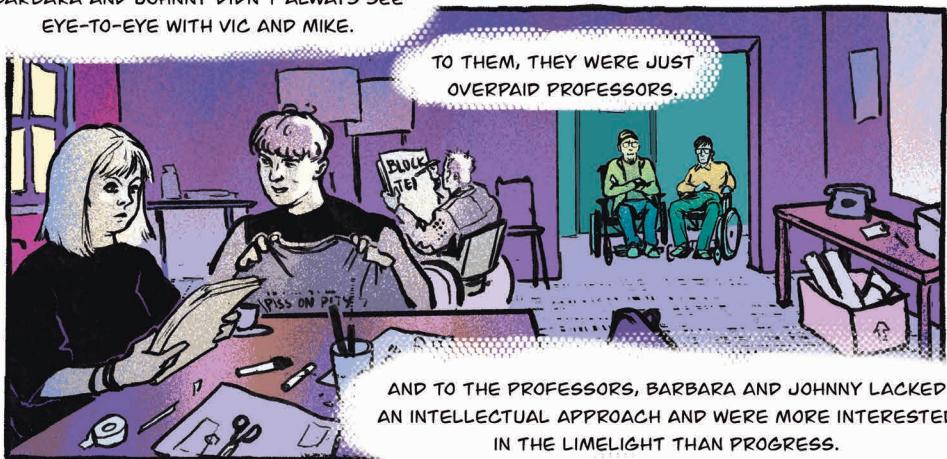


THE BCOPP WAS THE EARLY HUB FOR ORGANISING THESE PROTESTS.

IT HAD 500 MEMBERS AT ITS ANNUAL MEETINGS.



BARBARA AND JOHNNY DIDN'T ALWAYS SEE EYE-TO-EYE WITH VIC AND MIKE.



TO THEM, THEY WERE JUST OVERPAID PROFESSORS.

AND TO THE PROFESSORS, BARBARA AND JOHNNY LACKED AN INTELLECTUAL APPROACH AND WERE MORE INTERESTED IN THE LIMELIGHT THAN PROGRESS.

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.



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.



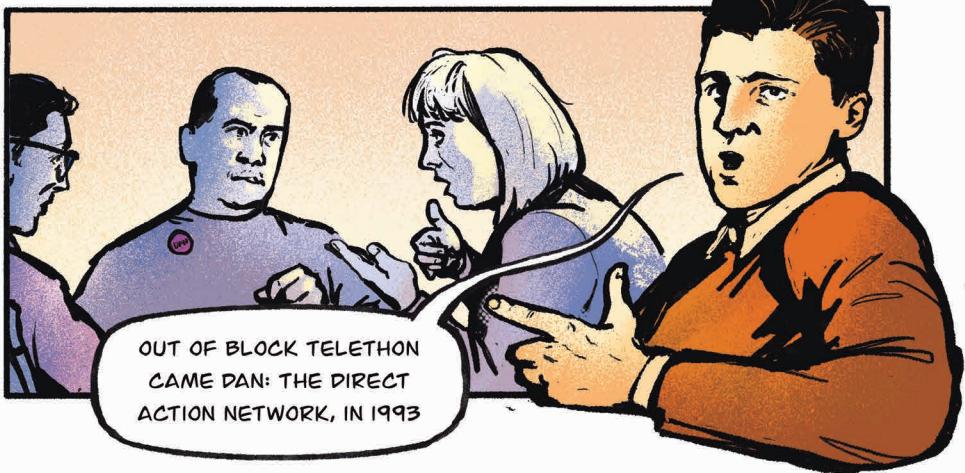
MIK SCARLET, PUNK ROCKER  
AND CAMPAIGNER, WAS ONE OF  
THE HOSTS, TRYING TO CHANGE  
THINGS FROM THE INSIDE.

THE PRODUCERS KEPT  
THE PROTEST OUTSIDE  
A SECRET FROM HIM.

BLOCK TELETHON RETURNED  
TO PROTEST IN 1992.

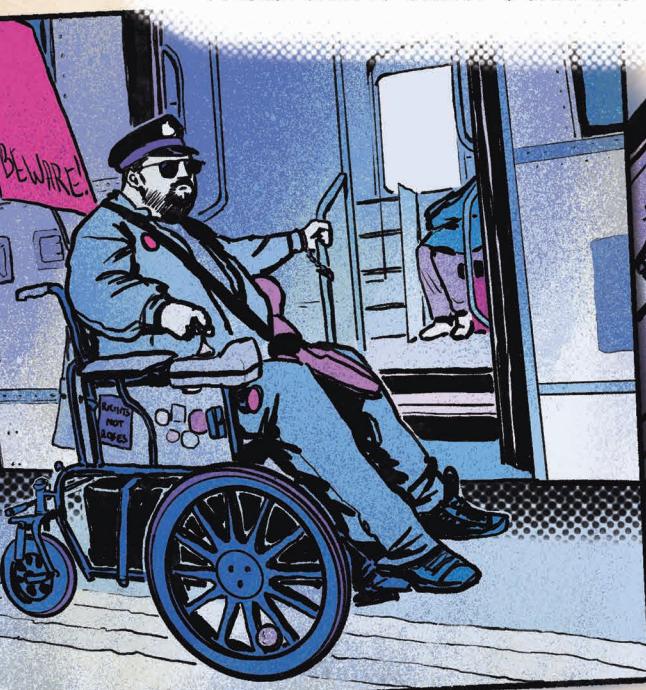
THIS TIME THE PROTESTERS NUMBERED  
OVER A THOUSAND AND ITV SHUT DOWN  
THE PROGRAM.

MOMENTUM  
WAS  
BUILDING.





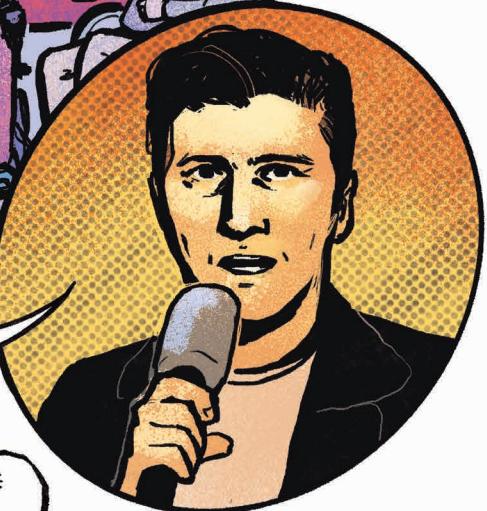
DAN WOULD GO ON TO HOLD OVER 100 ACTIONS  
BETWEEN 1993 AND 1998.  
THEIR MOST HIGH-PROFILE ACTIONS WERE...





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 CUN;



Altrincham

4



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.

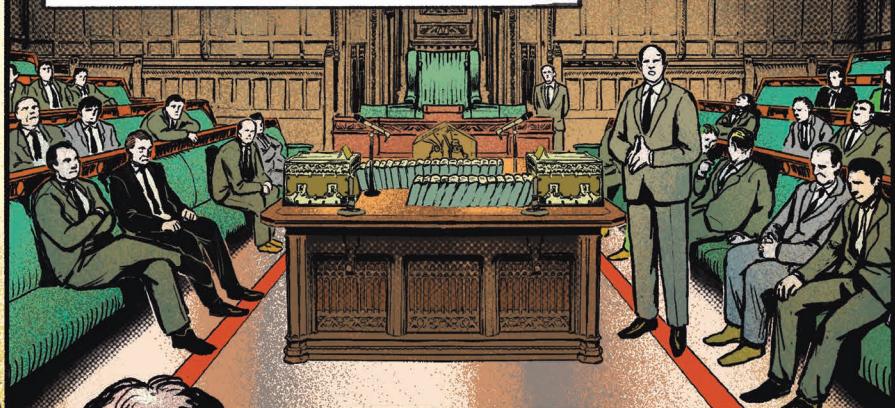


# CHAPTER III

# NEGOTIATION



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.

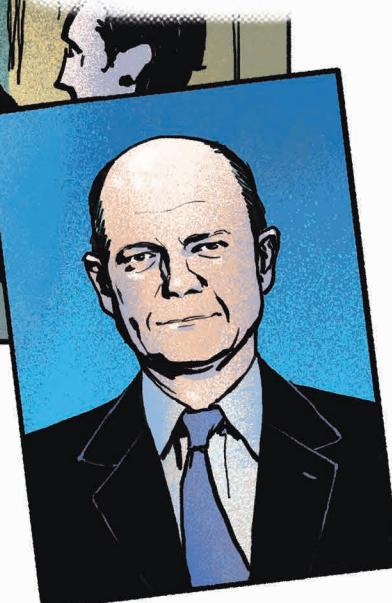




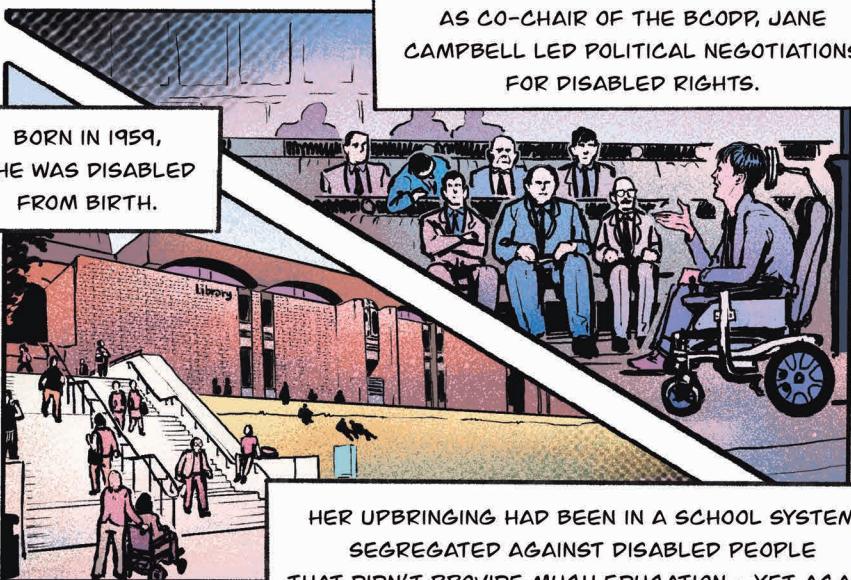
THE BILL WAS SQUASHED BY CONSERVATIVE MP NICHOLAS SCOTT, WHO HAD BACKBENCHERS INSERT WRECKING AMENDMENTS.



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.



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.



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

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



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



HAUGE 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.

A F1.8 AUTO ISO



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.



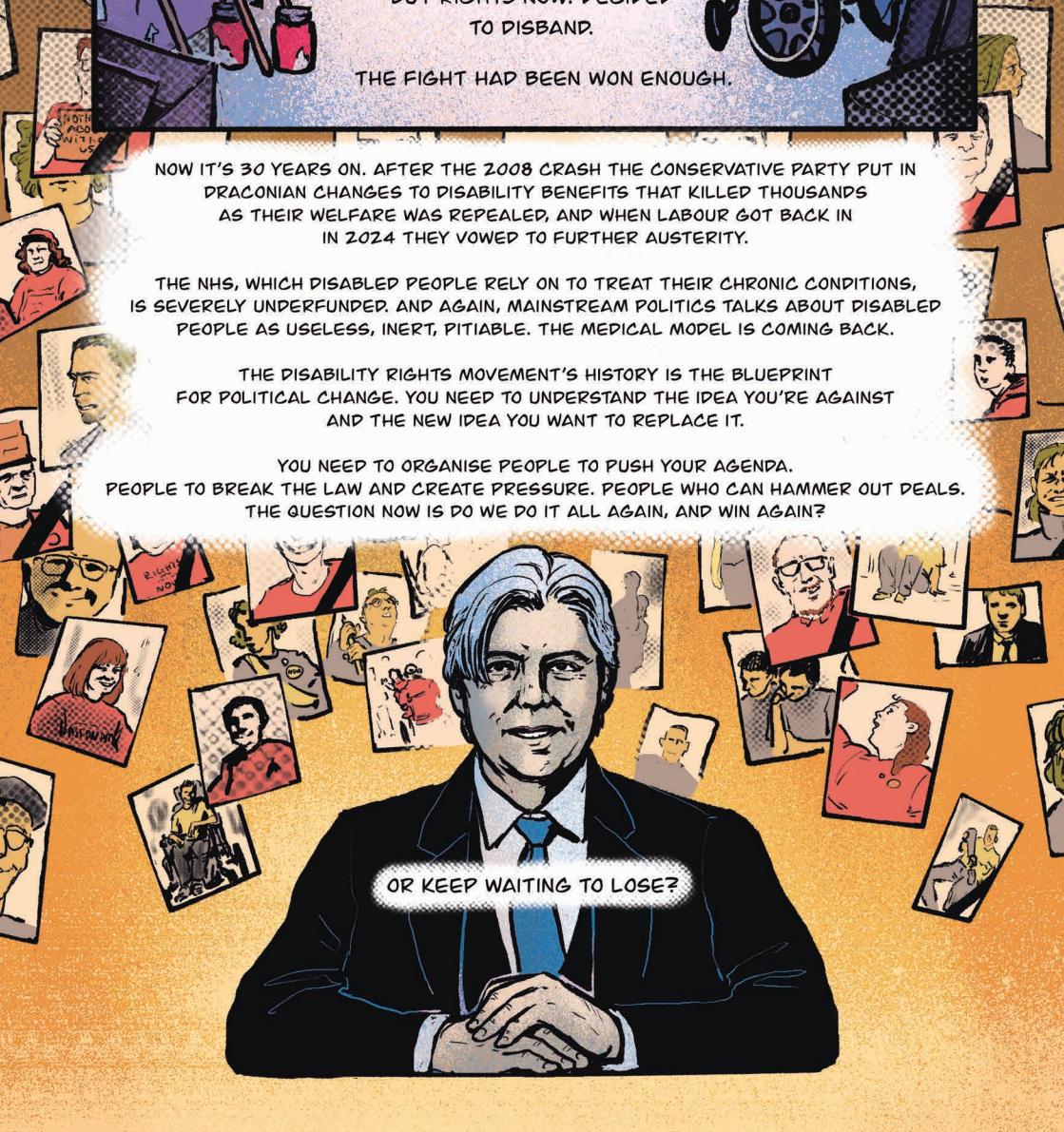


THE FIGHT DIDN'T END  
AFTER THE DDA PASSED.

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?



THE

FIGHT NEVER ENDS