

HUBBLE                    Ten thousand.

TOOLEY                    So we got ten thousand new Cortinas going rusty on an old airfield. Okay. Stop the line. Lay the men off.

**Music No. 13a: THIS IS AMERICA – Reprise**

HOPKINS                    You're cutting off the O'Gradys' money completely.

TOOLEY                    If you wanna eat steak, you've gotta shoot the horse.

MACER                    I can't lay off five thousand men just because you want to stop Eddie O'Grady's money.

TOOLEY                    Maybe you can't. Maybe you ain't man enough. Maybe this is a job for an American.

TOOLEY / TWO MEN  
THIS IS AMERICA

*(End of scene.)*

SCENE TWO

*The maisonette. A week later. GRAHAM is playing with a football and SHARON is attempting to play the recorder. RITA is on the phone to a reporter.*

RITA                    I'm not a Marxist, I'm not a Leninist, I'm a machinist. *(Into phone.)* I can't hear you . . . hang on.

*(Puts the phone down.)*

Go on, get some fresh air! You're not spending all half term in the house.

*(GRAHAM and SHARON exit with EDDIE, who is going to work.)*

RITA                    Eddie, remember Sharon's got the dentist at –

- EDDIE                    Six o'clock, I'm on it, relax. (*To GRAHAM.*) Graham, go to the park, don't accept sweets from naked men.
- (Door closed.)*
- Doorbell. RITA opens the door to LISA, dressed in an André Courrèges miniskirt.)*
- RITA                    Oh, it's you.
- LISA                    Hello, I brought the petition against corporal punishment.
- RITA                    Come in.
- LISA                    I just passed Graham in the street.
- RITA                    Yeah, they've been driving me mad. Hard work half term, innit.
- LISA                    Oh gosh yes, I've had to send Perry up in a glider.
- RITA                    For a week?!
- LISA                    Lessons. Now here's the petition.
- (She hands it over to RITA.)*
- RITA                    (*Reading.*) "If a man attacked a child with a stick in the street, he'd face legal action. Why is the same act permissible in this school?". That's brilliant. I'll sign that.
- (RITA signs.)*
- LISA                    Rita? Do you know who I am?
- RITA                    You're not Perry's mum?
- LISA                    I'm Jeremy Hopkins's wife. Ford Dagenham's general manager.
- RITA                    (*Beat.*) Oh Jesus. You'd better go. I got the girls coming round for their strike pay in a minute.
- LISA                    I want to help.

RITA How can you help?

LISA Did you know that women in America have had equal pay since 1963.

RITA Really?

LISA History is my subject.

RITA Are you a women's libber?

LISA Yes. And so are you.

RITA Me?! No, I'm not political.

LISA You're fooling no-one but yourself.

*(Enter BERYL wielding a paper. CONNIE, CASS, CLARE and SANDRA follow.)*

sodding / bloody

BERYL Rita, have you seen this? I look like a fucking dinner lady!

ALL Hi / Alright? / Hello / Hiya

SANDRA I seen that dress in Vogue.

LISA It's an André Courrèges design.

BERYL You'd need couregge to wear it.

LISA Rita, I'd better go. Good luck, girls. You're fighting a battle for all women.

BERYL Are we?

LISA Tarra!

ALL Bye / See you / Thanks

*(LISA is gone. CONNIE starts distributing envelopes containing the strike money and ticks off names in her union book.)*

CONNIE Your strike pay.

**Music No. 14: STORM CLOUDS**

SANDRA                   – How much is it?

CONNIE                   Two pounds a week.

SANDRA                   Two quid?

CONNIE                   Each.

SANDRA                   I thought strike pay was like a salary. I can't live on two quid a week.

WOMEN  
 EVERYBODY OUT  
 EVERYBODY OUT  
 EVERYBODY OUT

*(End of scene.)*

## SCENE THREE

*Outside the factory. Thump, thump, thump of rhythmic industrial production – specifically the sound of the continuous production line. The girls on the picket line outside the River Plant. Suddenly the sound design cuts, the plant has stopped running.*

CASS                    Whappen?

BERYL                   It's gone quiet.

CONNIE                  They've stopped the assembly line.

[MONTAGE #1.]

WOMEN  
 STORM CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON  
 TENSION IN THE TOWN  
 PRESSURE BUILDING UP  
 RUMOURS GOING AROUND  
 MONEY RUNNING SHORT