

--"The women workers to whom we had given it to read were categorical: it did not talk about a women's strike but about a man's strike." In order to learn more the crew investigated two strikes.

--"The first was in Troyes. We came, we took photographs, we discussed with the women of Bessin and recorded them on cassette tapes. There remained a negative aspect: we still remained on the outside of the struggle in Troyes. We had observed it as sociologists looking for information...we had to improve our methods of work."

--"This is when we took part in a struggle at Saint-Omer at the C.G.C.T. factory which employs 2000 workers, the majority women.... We brought along a video camera. The strikers wanted to stop production completely and to prevent the white collar workers and the non-union workers from going in. They blocked the gate and we took part in the action while shooting at the same time.... In the evening we showed the footage and discussed and criticised it. Our relationship to the workers was absolutely different than it had been at Troyes."

--"Our action led some women workers of the area to come and play in "Blow for Blow" bringing with them their own experiences.... Since it was the unemployment office that sent most of the workers to us, they represented a cross section of the population taken at random. There were some activists, others with a very strong trade union bias and then a majority who were less committed."

--"(A screening in Paris) made us realize the cheerfulness of the struggle, the kind of joy which comes out of it and which people who were used to seeing men's strikes were not accustomed to. Violence was linked to this joy. Women put on plays spontaneously. There was music all the time. We danced. This led us to transform the script completely and in addition to leave the dialogue blank. Only the women workers themselves were capable of inventing it, or even transcribing it."

--"There is a huge gap between a woman worker telling us about her life and an actor who tries to relate what she does not know and what she re-creates from the images she might have of it-the image the bourgeoisie might have of the working class. This problem the actors were incapable of solving and it will still be a long time before we can resolve it. They can't find in the resources of their imagination the reality of the workers, they don't have it, they can't have it...."

--"We had a meeting everyday at 12:30. We said, 'We are going to shoot such and such a sequence. How do you see it?' The actors and the women workers were present. They said, 'That's not all right.' Or else, 'that's O.K., that's real.' And we shot the scene later on, based on that discussion ... (But) the meetings at 12:30 didn't take place just to create the dialogue. I'll give you a concrete example. Before shooting the scene on the pay slip, we had a discussion on the cost of living, the cost of a living bonus, jobs. etc. And this made us see what the political idea was that had to be brought out in the scene."

--"Our original idea, and we stuck to it, was to systematically take sides. We asked ourselves: How do the women workers see the boss? How do they see the local union representative? How do they see the enemy? They don't see them in psychological terms. They do not worry about their character, not even about their contradictions. They are the enemy, that's all. And to us that was a new way of looking at the problems of acting. For instance in most of the war films where the event is seen analytically, from a distance, one 'humanizes' the enemy. But if the fighters think that the enemy they have in front of them has such a rich character, such complexity, they don't shoot. Yet the workers who made the film were engaged in the battle."