

# Northern Woman Journal

April - May, 1979

50¢

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 2



## SEEING OURSELVES

this oil by Anna Akervall was one of the pieces at the art show. See centre spread.



# EDITORIAL

There will be little reason to celebrate the 50th anniversary of women becoming persons in Canada. 1979, the year of this anniversary is also the year that women are facing attacks unparalleled since 1945.

Over 50 years ago, Magistrates Emily Murphy and Alice Jamieson of Alberta, first women judges in Canada, were challenged by lawyers as to the legality of the sentences they were imposing, on the grounds that they were not legally persons under the British North America Act. Appointment to the Canadian senate was denied on these same grounds. Five women, Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Irene Parlby, Louise McKinney and Henrietta Muir Edwards petitioned the government for a ruling. The Five Persons Case was successfully settled when the Privy Council in England ruled on October 18 1929 that women are persons in the eyes of the law.

The courts continue to be biased and downright contemptuous when it comes to dealing with women. In Sept. 1976, Ontario Provincial Court Judge Vincent McEwan contributed the unreliability of a 48 year old woman's testimony to female menopause. In Sept. 1977, B.C. Provincial Court Judge Les Bewley in passing down a light sentence to a man charged with assaulting a woman stated, "You know, women don't get much brains before they are 30..." And then on October 31, 1978, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that Stella Bliss was ineligible to receive maternity benefits and stated that any inequality between the sexes under UIC rules "is not created by legislation but by nature."

Recognizing that attitudes usually change last in the courts, women have always held out more hope for governments and legislation. Now that hope too has been quashed.

To mark the fiftieth anniversary of women as persons, the Liberal administration has given women two special roles to play:

1) To be martyrs by accepting the blame for high unemployment; and 2) to be

the primary benefactors of government restraint.

It is not too difficult to come to the conclusion that the government has a strategy of discriminating against women, particularly married women to keep them out of the labour force. The campaign became most apparent in 1978 when the government introduced policies that will have a more detrimental effect upon women than men:

- 1) the tightening of the Unemployment Insurance Programme.
- 2) reduction of the Outreach employment services programme.
- 3) cuts in training allowance for married women
- 4) removal of women from its Employment

## Language difficulties

The Thunder Bay Multicultural Association opened an immigrant information centre in early January to provide assistance to people who are experiencing language difficulties.

The information centre is looking for people who are interested in working with newcomers. If you speak more than one language and have a few hours to spare, you are invited to join the volunteer staff. Call 683-6251.

## INTERESTED?

SHORT STORIES BY WOMEN:

Press Gang Publishers is collecting original, unpublished short stories by women for a book to be published next year. We are looking for stories which explore and illuminate the real experiences of women. Some possible suggestions to expand on:

- women working with each other, in offices, factories, restaurants, in the home, volunteer work;
- political activity
- women in the future
- girls together: at school, in groups

Whatever mode of fiction the writer may choose: realism, satire, comedy

Strategy and job creation programmes  
5) lay-offs in the public service as well as changing the rules for paying public servants.

Equally apparent is the plan by the Liberal Government to ensure that women are the primary benefactors of the restraint programme. The cutbacks will save the taxpayer very little, but deprive women of much needed services and benefits. Included in these are the revision of the family allowance system, the slashing of family planning grants and the discontinuation of funding to rape crisis centres.

So what's to celebrate?!

## ANTHOLOGY

For an anthology on the subject of child molestation, we are seeking first person writing--stories, poems, journal entries, etc, by people who have been molested as children. We are also interested in writing by other family members and by children. All material should be true, although you may change names or use a pen name. Please type and enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Mail as soon as possible to: Ellen Bass, 240 Day Valley Road, Aptos, California, 95003.

tragedy--

1. Length--1,500 to 6,000 words
2. Deadline for submissions--August 15, 1979 (We'll get back to you by Oct. 15, 1979)
3. Please enclose self-addressed, stamped envelope.
4. Stories should be typed double spaced.
5. Copyright will revert to the author following publication.
6. Author will be paid a \$100 fee for stories upon publication.

PRESS GANG PUBLISHERS

603 POWELL ST.

VANCOUVER BC

253-1224

(press gang is a feminist publisher)

# LETTERS

To whom it may concern:

I have just read for the first time, an issue of the Northern Woman (Oct. 1978) and have found it most perceptive and relevant in its portrayal of the very unique problems faced by the northern women. A recent immigrant from the "south", I have been struck by the inappropriateness of strategies developed by southern women to suit southern problems--a primary resource industry town just does not offer the range of options available to urban women and consequently it is harder to overcome the feeling of powerlessness many women experience.

From this end of the typewriter, Thunder Bay seems like a booming metropolis and although I applaud your very excellent efforts to address the northern situation, I would welcome articles whose focus moved to the smaller communities so that more women could feel truly included.

Perhaps other issues already do, in which case I apologize for the ill informed suggestion.

I look forward to the coming issues, and keep up the fine work.

Yours sincerely,  
Audrey Anderson  
Red Lake, Ontario

Dear Margaret,

Enclosed please find payment for the subscription to the Journal and a little something extra--thanks so much for sending the material down. This Journal is splendid, not only that, but it is becoming famous. A couple of days after it arrived, Mr. Theron Krawer, the Hamilton based representative for Secretary of State came to see me re: the summer programmes. I was attacking the department for its cutting of the women's programmes, showing him your material. He had seen the Journal before, and his remarks were very complimentary. So are mine. Thunder

Bay women have managed to sustain a great deal of the momentum in many of their activities. ...

Peace Love and all good thoughts,  
Novia Hebert Carter.

**The Northern Woman**  
316 Bay Street,  
Thunder Bay, Ont.

The NORTHERN WOMAN JOURNAL is a feminist newspaper that is published 6 times yearly for the people of Northwestern Ontario. Content is determined by an Editorial Collective which meets bi-monthly at 316 Bay Street. Submissions are welcome but subject to the Editorial policy of the Collective.



# MARCH 8th: The Celebration Lives

International Women's Day brought a host of celebrations in the region that were very well-attended and very successful. People attending from Thunder Bay were very impressed and inspired by the activities that were held in Fort Frances and Atikokan. The following are accounts from the two celebrations.

## RAINY RIVER DISTRICT:

The Rainy River District Decade Council held its first celebration of International Women's Day on March 8, 1979 in Fort Frances.

The event included a pot luck supper, arts and crafts displays, verbal and visual presentations from several district women's groups.

Over 150 women were present and many favourable comments were received from those in attendance.

Ruth Cunningham of Confederation College Women's Programs was keynote speaker and Gert Beadle gave a poetry reading that was a distinctive highlight. Because of the favourable outcome, the women hope to make the celebration an annual event.

## ATIKOKAN:

To commemorate International Women's Day in Atikokan, an article appeared in the local paper explaining the significance of the day. There was also a special television program put on by Atikokan TV Productions featuring an interview with Ruth Cunningham and Bernice Taylor of the Decade Council conducted by Linda Wiens. The interview covered women's issues, careers and opportunities, the aims and interests of the Decade Council, their sub-committees and regional efforts.

MARCH 8--a day that was acknowledged in many different ways all over the world. In Thunder Bay, March 8, International Women's Day was celebrated by approximately 80 women at the Thunder Bay Labour Centre. The evenings discussion centred around a rather serious set of issues.

Sponsored by the Northern Women's Centre and the International Women's Decade Co-ordinating Council, the program began with the showing of the film GREAT GRANDMOTHERS, which looks at the contribution of early immigrant women to the development of Canada.

Panel discussion was started by Mickey Murray, who was later awarded a scroll for her special contribution to the activities of the Decade Council. She spoke on the history of International Women's Day and the current international objectives of women, particularly in the peace effort and the preservation of the family.

Dr. Margeurite Neelands addressed the problem of hospital bed closures in Thunder Bay and the general lack of care facilities, for the chronically ill.

Margaret Boone who is active locally on Committees working to deal with and educate the public on the problem of child abuse, told of what is happening locally in this area. She stated that an increasing number of reports on the problem of child abuse does not necessarily indicate that the number of abused children are increasing, but perhaps that people are more aware of what to look for and more willing to report their knowledge of a problem.

Margaret Phillips of the Lakehead Social Planning Council closed off with a talk on the new Unemployment Insurance legislation and its adverse effects upon women.

The evening was wrapped up with coffee and cake.



## Open letter to the women: Rainy River District

Sharing the first International Women's Day held in Fort Frances, "In Praise of Women", I find myself unable to stop praising. With every opportunity that arises I find myself affirming that I am part and parcel of that valley where women are somehow bigger, deeper and less given to paranoid fears in their relationships with other women. It is normal, I say, no great surprise to find one hundred and fifty women of all ages, from every church and service club, praising each other, feasting together, showing and telling what they have done and what they hope to do, making music together. It is the northern air, I say, perhaps the water (ugh), certainly the mineral in the soil.

There is tension in the valley and although it is not of your making, nor will it even be partially solved by your input, the fact remains; it is you the women who will heal the wounds and restore the Valley to sanity. You will do this because you have always done it and because you are wise enough to know that bitterness and hatred has nothing to give to the future but destruction. The history of Women In The Valley has

shown us to be (you will notice I say us) resilient and resourceful. The future will hopefully prove us to be pragmatic in consolidating our strength to make the necessary changes in the roles that have up to now, discouraged the free sharing of viewpoints and the interchange of nurturing affection.

The level of consciousness in the CFOB radio station is abysmal. The term "LIBBER" dates the mentality. When in casual conversation, I expressed the need for women to establish a closer relationship, it was immediately equated as a sexual response and a further observation that women could never be equal to men, since the moderator had consulted some Hockey Jocks who had declared that we would never have enough muscle to shoot the puck. SUPERWOMAN also functions here, dismissing her six children with an airy wave of her hand, being all things to all people, feeling totally liberated from Pastor Peter, and having a great form as well. I could not decide whether she should be decorated or investigated. I wanted nothing so much as to be able to assure the moderator that only his mental capacity was under threat.

The accessibility of the local Cable TV station is a great asset

to communication. One immediately feels a youthful vision that is able to transcend old myths and the present prejudices. In that same vein, the Rainy River Decade Council, who sponsored the Celebration of Women, has opened the door to honest sharing that deserves the respect of every thinking woman. The groups represented here, whether sorority, church group, service club, artist, entertainer or worker in the cause of women, have one thing to offer that is basic; to be of some use in the evolution of the time allotted to them for action. Like a giant net spread under today's trapeeze artists, you have nurtured the arts, kept alive your cultural uniqueness, involved yourself in your community's welfare and your children's education. But nothing you have done so far will reap future benefits for your daughters like the celebration of yourselves as women and the praise of each other as productive and confident members of the human family.

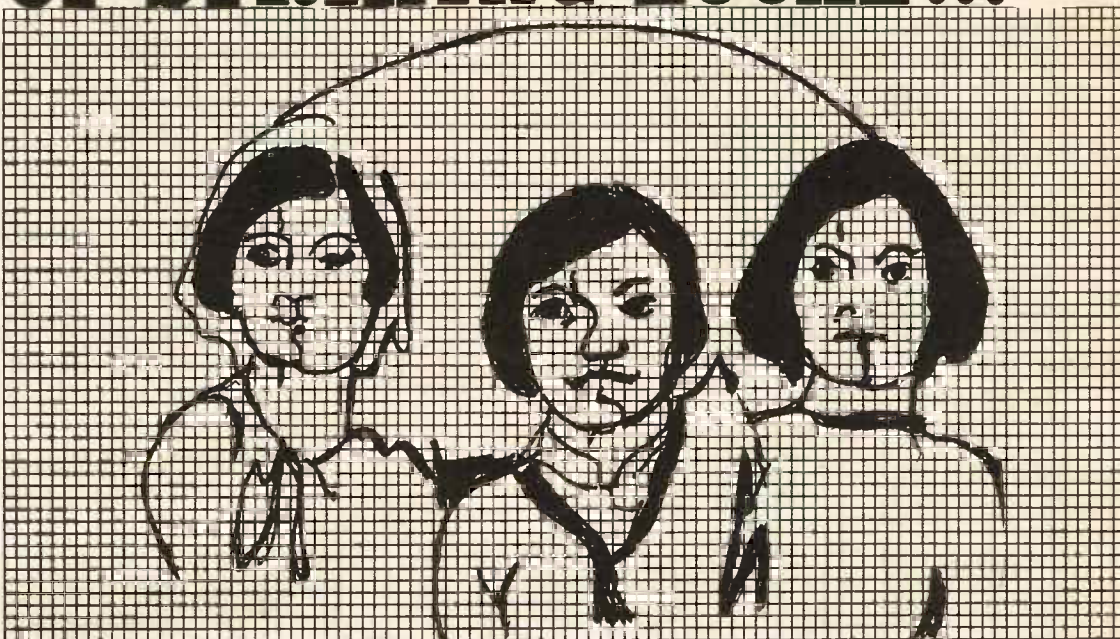
GERT BEADLE,



# WE THE WIVES OF STRIKING LOCAL...

**"What a farce! Those women had absolutely no business being on the scene at all. They don't work for Boise. Their husbands do...."**

D. Sinclair, pub.  
Kenora Miner.



In Kenora, Ontario, the strike at Boise Cascade Lumber and Sawmill drags on. Apart from the effects upon the striking workers, there have been serious changes in families, resulting in the militancy of the wives of the striking workers, who are striking for the removal of an owner-operator clause. The wives have joined their husbands on the picket lines, to the disapproval of the media and the police.

Shocked and angered over the treatment many of them have received, several of the wives have put together the following article to demonstrate to people outside Kenora that there is another side to a story that is often being ignored or distorted by the media.

## Logbook:

DECEMBER 11, 1978

Wives of the members of the union of Log and Sawmill workers local 2693 picketed at the Boise Cascade Mill entrance. Women were physically thrown out of the way when they proceeded to stage a sit in.

One woman was punched during the skirmish and at a later date, was seriously hurt. She is in the process of suing.

There is no support from the media. The Kenora Miner and radio news reports twist and censor the strikers

There is no support from the media. The KENORA MINER AND NEWS twists and censors all striker's letters. It took 2 and a half months before this paper would print a letter to the editor. And then it was only because a radio news broadcast noted the newspaper's refusals to print letters.

Women are being faced with charges that will never stand up in court but are being used by law enforcement people to keep the women off the picket line. The actual trial to deal with the charges laid so far is not until June but the women involved were forced to sign statements, UNDER THE THREAT OF IMPRISONMENT that made them promise not to join the picket line again.

To give people some idea of the flimsiness of the charges, here are a few examples:

"PUSHING AND SHOVING"

"THROWING AN EGG"

"OBSTRUCTION"

"MISCHIEF"

"BEEPING A HORN" (2 short beeps)

"ASSAULTING A POLICE OFFICER" (in our opinion this is a completely unfounded charge)

It is interesting to note that the 2 women that have spent the most time on the picket line were not only charged but also fingerprinted, given a mug shot and assigned a number.

We are very concerned with the safety of our children walking to and from school in the vicinity of the Boise Cascade mill. The Boise buses and pulp trucks travel at high speeds. One day, the children were actually made to walk some distance on the road because the police were blocking the sidewalk on Third Street North.

We are outraged at the sudden Prejudice being expressed against women. Don Sinclair, publisher of the KENORA MINER AND NEWS has been abusive to the women who feel that they have a right to participate in the strike... and has treated them as somewhat of a joke...as you can see in parts of his columns.

We feel we have a right to participate because we the victims of a total absence of income and we certainly can't ignore the number of police in a town of 11,000.

(\*Note: Don Sinclair claims he does not discriminate against women and demonstrates this by saying that 65% of the KENORA MINER NEWS employees are women---We wonder what the wages of these women are and are curious to know what their jobs are with that paper.)

Tragedy has been the result of this strike. We feel that the death of 53 year old James Portman would never have occurred if it had not been for this strike. Mr. Portman had been working 12 hour shifts, 7 days a week since October 11. The fellow who was responsible in the accident was not qualified to do the job he was doing--Jim Portman was not doing his regular job either. It is all rather ironic because Portman was also the Safety Supervisor.

When Leo Bernier was approached about this incident he said that it was up to the company and not the government to deal with the problem.

It is very surprising to see where CANADA MANPOWER stands. They have accused the strikers of strangling the economy and of robbing the company of profits. They ask the strikers how they can expect the company to pay \$100, per day in wages plus room and board.

WHOSE SIDE IS THE GOVERNMENT ON and why do they distort the facts. Our

men make \$64. per day with no room and board and in addition they pay for their own gas and transportation.

Not only is there the daily picket duty confrontation to face, but the conflict with the police has spilled over to cause incidents after hours. Off duty officers have been known to harass the women of striking workers, and have even pinched behinds on the picket line. In the local bars there is constant harassment from the police--we live here and we have the right to enjoy ourselves over a drink with out having the OPP breathing down our necks.

The following is a letter to the Journal from Shirley Ronald of Keewatin:

....We are all very nervous about the police. We women don't know which one of us will be picked up next and charged and treated like a criminal.

My husband has been arrested. As for myself, I have been struck, thrown, verbally abused etc, by our own FINE police force."

I am afraid of the law now. My children have lost all of their respect for the law...After they saw how the police treated their mother and the other women.

My Brother is a police officer here and we have not spoken to one another for 4 months. He told me that the extra police were brought in here for our protection. Then I showed him my bruises and he hasn't spoken to me since. When he is in the cruiser, and I pass him, all I can do is turn my head. I am afraid to admit that he is my brother now....

True to the cause,  
Shirley Ronald

THE FOLLOWING IS THE ACCOUNT OF ANOTHER STRIKER'S WIFE, ISABEL ULAK:

My husband has been involved in a legal strike since October. This has been a real education for me and my family.

I wrote to our local members of parliament. They both replied very politely but no help seems to be forthcoming in either case.

Our local newspaper does not seem to be very supportive either. On Friday February 23, Don Sinclair,

**cont'd**



Publisher. KENORA MINER AND NEWS wrote, "Those women had absolutely no business being on the scene at all." Surely this is not an illegal act or the women on the scene would have been charged. Why should women not support their husbands, fathers, or any men in their family emotionally, mentally or physically if possible.

This erudite writer with expressions such as "this one was also the pitts" (Not to be found in the Thorndike Barnhart World Book Dictionary--or is it a spelling error?) and sentences--"This time helped by the picketers wives." (sic)

He did not seem pleased with the article written in the Winnipeg Tribune or the Newsmagazine feature aired recently. He stated, "Tune into C.B.C. Newsmagazine Monday evening and watch our town be dealt another kick in the pants that isn't true. (misplaced adjective clause)

Mr. Sinclair wrote, "I didn't think the CBC news department prefabricated their journalism but I know now that they do." He wrote about this program at least nine or ten days before the public had a chance to see it.

As a woman, I am very unhappy with his remarks about women who are sticking by their husbands and trying to help them. Perhaps in the long run, we and our families will have become a far closer unit for having supported each other.

Sincerely,  
Isabel Ulak.

## Living on company land

I live in Camp Robinson, Ontario, ninety miles from Kenora. Camp Robinson is a bush camp owned by Boise Cascade, and the only family camp left in the area.

Since the strike started here on October 11, 1978, I've been heavily involved in it myself; writing articles to the newspapers, organizing campaigns for moral support, and writing articles to government officials, law authorities and Boise Cascade executives.

For the first couple of months after the strike began, I sat back and took in what was happening until I could stand it no longer and had to speak out. I could no longer stand to listen to the lies Boise Cascade told, or watch the O.P.P. act as strike breakers and harass our men and their families. It is evident that the O.P.P. are biased by their persecution of certain individuals and they seem to dream up any charge at all to get the picket leaders off the picket lines and away from the strike. To add insult to injury, the officials in Kenora and the government are supporting the company and the O.P.P. in their escapades.

When the strike began I thought it would be dealt with fairly, but as time progressed, I could not believe what I was seeing. I have lost all faith in our law authorities and government, and I never dreamt that Boise Cascade could be so callous, calculating, cannibalistic and down right dirty.

I could spend hours writing about the injustices to the strikers and things that have taken place, but will confine myself to the Camp Rob-

inson area where I live.

The Camp Robinson men have been especially centred out by Boise Cascade, since the majority are active in the strike and strong union members.

Out of 14 members who have picketed seven have been charged and ordered off the picket lines, along with being jailed several times.

My husband has spent seven days in jail, and all seven of those days were needless. He was charged with making a threatening phone call to a foreman, and thrown in jail for five days. His conditions for release were that he surrender all firearms, keep away from Boise Cascade property and leave the district of Kenora within 36 hours. The District of Kenora is approximately 5 to 8 hundred miles square and we live right in the middle of it. Being that I am in a leg cast and have been for five months now, my husband refused to leave me. Our sewer is frozen til spring and we burn wood for heat. This along with other circumstances such as a shortage of money to move, no place to go, and the question of how authorities can banish a man away from his home in the middle of winter brought cries of outrage. My husband contacted a union lawyer, who appealed and notified my husband that papers were being drawn up in the Kenora court for a stay until court five days later, and that he was to remain at home until then.

On Saturday afternoon, the O.P.P. arrested him for failure to comply with the conditions and stated that they had no knowledge of any such papers and he was kept in jail until Monday, when the judge signed the necessary paper. It appears that the judge took sick and the papers never got to him to be signed although they were there, and the courts are closed on the weekends. Is this justice?? He spent those days in jail needlessly. At court on Wednesday, the 36 hour condition was dropped and the case remanded until June 20. It would appear that this strike has created the rule that a man is guilty until proven innocent and is sentenced before trial. Meanwhile who will repair the damage done to my husband by having his name broadcasted on radio and TV like a common criminal. He has never had a criminal record previous to this.

Boise Cascade has constructed a shack at Camp Robinson for their security guards, hired from Sentinel Security in Winnipeg. These security guards patrol the camp 24 hours a day and we are under constant surveillance. The shack is full of cameras, and radio equipment. Our every movement closely watched, written down and reported. We have had OPP cruisers stationed at the Camp Robinson turn off for over a month now since Boise Cascade started moving equipment and hauling wood. Several homes in the camp have been searched and the women and children harassed by the officers. Will our children respect the law after what they have seen and heard?

All vehicles travelling in and out of camp are checked and reported. It baffles me as to why this harassment is necessary. It's evident that the only reason they are doing this is because this is Boise Cascade property, for there are no check points for people going through Kenora or Fort Frances.

An O.P.P. helicopter flies over the camp site regularly, checking for vehicles and snow mobile trails to report to the cruisers. Some vehicles have been stopped and checked as many as four times within fifteen miles. It is also known that our phones are bugged as several incidents have happened to make this a fact.

I don't know how much longer the government can take the back-benching stand that they are taking. Are they so misinformed or near sighted that they cannot see what is happening here? They are the only ones who can put forth some rules and regulations for the O.P.P. and Boise Cascade to follow instead of letting them run the strike as they damn well please. Our livelihood is at stake here. We are respectable citizens who can only take so much injustice or pushing around and it is time to put a stop to this charade before more families and people's lives are torn apart. ...we stand by the facts 100 percent.

Marlene King,  
Camp Robinson, Ont.

**"...I think their husbands are big enough boys to handle their own disputes. ...they do it more orderly than the women."**

D. Sinclair, PUBLISHER  
—KENORA MINER AND NEWS—

THE FOLLOWING IS A STATEMENT PREPARED BY THE WIVES OF STRIKING LOG AND SAWMILL WORKERS UNION 2693 MEMBERS THAT HAS BEEN WIDELY DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE KENORA REGION:

For eight months now, we have viewed the Boise Cascade strike in Kenora and Fort Frances with keen interest and involvement, being the wives of Strikers local 2693.

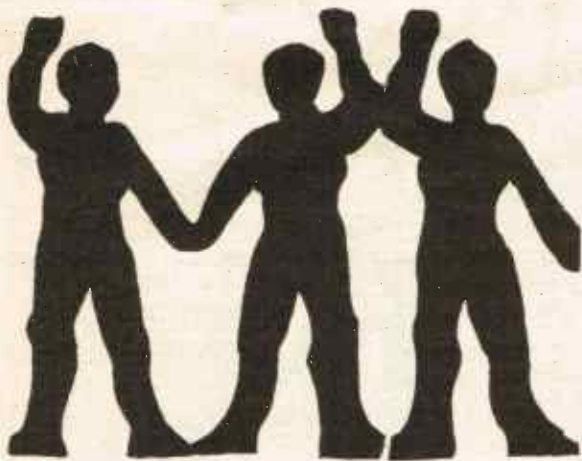
We have been filled with sadness, disgust, and frustration. We've watched helplessly as our men have been needlessly and unjustly jailed, given criminal records for being strong minded and fighting for what they believe in. We've watched families and friendships fall apart because one or the other is on "the wrong side of the fence."

We have seen our men off to the negotiating table full of optimism, only to have them arrive home more bitter and militant each day. We have burned with rage as company security guards patrol our homes continuously...Is it really necessary for Boise Cascade to know how many times a day our vehicles leave the driveway, or what time each night our lights go off? They are only serving to antagonize an already explosive situation.

We have spent many hours protesting and calling out for logic and fairness in this situation, only to watch hundreds of O.P.P. officers, supposedly called in to keep the peace, aid Boise Cascade in their daily whims and strike tactics, by allowing Boise free run of our towns and woodland areas. Were they sent to keep the peace, or to be put at the disposal of Boise? These O.P.P. Officers are merely puppets to this multi-national nightmare. Where does the O.P.P. involvement end? Does their involvement involve

**cont'd to page 6**





flying Boise executives to woodcutting sites in their O.P.P. helicopter, or include taking full control of our highways and town roads? The O.P.P. stops traffic for any length of time to suit Boise, while we, the taxpayers must sit and wait, taking a back seat. Boise is moving equipment to woodcutting sites and hauling wood that they promised they would not do at the beginning of the strike. Do we have faith in these people? Contractors have been cutting wood and stockpiling since the strike began. It seems that they meant to break their promise all along.

The O.P.P. is costing millions. Are we the taxpayers not paying for this calamity!!

We have sat and listened to our Federal government quote statistics on inflation and repeated warnings of, "Canadians must tighten their belts, we are nation living in debt and must stop living so high off the hog and start budgeting." And then we listen with amazement as our government states that millions of dollars (\$400,000,000 to be exact) will be granted to Pulp and Paper companies to help build their industry. WHO WILL BENEFIT MISTER PRIME MINISTER?? Will we benefit? We who face life-time debt and multiple lay-offs if the "owner-operator" issue goes through?

Are we not also a part of the pulp and paper industry as a human resource, does this industry not also belong to us? Should we not also benefit?

Since it is our taxpaying dollars that you are so liberally granting to Boise Cascade to upgrade their operation, then it seems a shame that Boise Cascade sees fit to force us into debt to upgrade their operation.

We have met with the Minister of Labour and called out to the government officials to really see what is happening and speak their minds. Are they afraid to incur the wrath of Boise Cascade?

Is this multi-million dollar corporation more powerful than our government and more important than our people? Are you afraid that they may close up operation? This area is one of the best pulp and paper areas in the world. We are worth millions to Boise, so fear not my friends, they won't pull out. Even if they did, there are plenty of speculators who would jump at the chance to buy this area from Boise, and probably would do a hell of a lot better job running it too. Are we, the people of Northwestern Ontario not worth anything to you?

Mr. Leo Bernier, our honourable MPP, where have you been the past eight months? Come out, come out wherever you are. It seems that you have not wished to comment on the strike at all

Were you not elected by the people, for the people? Are we only votes on election day? If this is so, then I guarantee you, you will have a good deal less votes next election day.

That Boise is trying to break our union is evident. People may call down unions if they wish, but in this issue we back ours 100%. If not for our union we would be totally at the mercy of companies like Boise Cascade that cares more for profit than it's employees. To this company, who is steadily reaping the wealth from our country, we are nothing more than numbers on the payroll, as dispensable as toilet tissue.

Most of us were born and raised here, and others have moved here by choice and we'll be damned if we will give up our right to live and work here by a company such as Boise forcing irrational issues upon us. They should feel priv-

ileged to make the money they make our country.

So to Boise Cascade, primary employer of our region, our only message is that intend to stay and work in Northwestern Ontario, by choice, not necessity; to build it into a better place to live for ourselves and our children. In order to make anything work, we must all give and take. We have given a lot to you in the past and you have taken, No! It's your turn to give.

To all others, our government authorities, labour boards, and the media who grumble about the inconvenience of this strike and wonder what we are complaining about....come on down here for a while and do our husbands jobs and work with us a while. We guarantee you, you won't wonder what we are complaining about, you'll know.

WIVES OF STRIKERS  
LSWU 2693



*Northern Women's*

*Credit Union*

## Tell your friends!!

The Northern Women's Credit Union is on an intensive membership drive. We encourage our members to seek other potential members. Tell your friends about us.

Recently the Ontario Credit Union League raised its interest rate to 12 percent on borrowed money. This could have adverse affects. If our capital should fall short of meeting the loan demand, we will have to borrow from the OCUL at this rate of interest.

To encourage new members and to better serve our existing members, we have recently expanded our services:

A) **TERM DEPOSITS** of a minimum of \$100. will gather an interest rate of 8.5% if left in for a period of six months. **TERM DEPOSITS** of a minimum of \$100. will gather an interest of 9% if left in for a

period of one year. The interest for both term deposits is to be calculated semi-annually.

B) **SAVINGS ACCOUNTS** with a minimum of \$50. which can be added to in multiples of \$5. with an 8% annual interest rate, calculated quarterly on the minimum monthly balance.

Chris Torrie has recently been hired as the Credit Union's Treasurer Manager.

It is now possible for women's groups and organizations to belong to the Credit Union under one membership. The former stipulation for a group membership was that 50% of the members of the organization had to be members of the Credit Union individually. Since this has been changed, we encourage organizations and groups who have bank savings accounts to keep their savings in the Credit Union.

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MY NAME IS

MY ADDRESS

CITY

PROV

CODE



# THE UIC GAME! NEW RULES & VICTIMS

Women in the workforce have yet to be contended with by the government as is evident in the recent changes to Unemployment Insurance in the area of eligibility and new policies on Daycare, said Marg Phillips who gave a presentation on the Unemployment Insurance issue at the March 8 IWD celebration at the Lakehead Labour Centre.

Restraints in government spending since 1976 have mainly been in the area of human services. Women have been the first affected by these restraints.

## EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT:

All Canadians are aware that the country has had some problem with unemployment over the past few years. However, women should perhaps be especially aware of the problem.

"We must attack propaganda that we presently encounter that 'blames' women for the present economic crisis!" Marg Phillips emphasized.

For example, one myth alleges that working women are all secondary wage earners and only marginally attached to the workforce.

"By wage standards, yes women look to be secondary wage earners, but not because they want to be," said Phillips. "And how can women become anything but marginally attached when they can't get adequate daycare and training programmes that make them eligible to become full fledged members of the labour force?"

To demonstrate the way in which this assertion distorts the actual situation of women, Phillips cited several statistics.

In fact, of the 3,600,000 women in the Canadian Labour Force in 1975, 1,146,000 were single and self-supporting, 347,000 were widowed, separated and divorced and 767,000 were married to husbands making less than \$10,000 per year. One would be forced to conclude therefore that women were not working for superfluous cash, but to support themselves, their children and share in support of the family.

Women are accused of being the cause of unemployment. However, Ms. Phillips countered, women are the victims not the cause of unemployment. Women are the victims not the cause of unemployment. Women are laid off jobs in higher numbers than men. Women usually assume low paying jobs, are less likely to belong to unions and are often part time workers. All of these factors amount to an ineligibility for seniority and special training, thus making women more dispensable.

Another accusation directed toward women is that they take jobs away from men.

"Not so," stresses Ms. Phillips. "Women are in different labour markets from men., therefore they are not directly competing. Women are in job ghettos performing tasks that men are not willing to do at wages men would never accept. The large percentage of unemployed men are in occupations that have very few women."

"Women are accused of abusing UIC," she continued, "But they are in a catch 22 situation. They are cut off UIC because of unavailability for work...i.e. they are unavailable because they haven't the proper child

care arrangements. But women can't qualify for daycare unless they are already working."

The UIC benefits have been cut this year from 66 2/3% of a person's wages to 60%. This will mean additional hardship for women because they only make an average of about 53% of what men make, to begin with.

Part time workers will no longer have access to U.I. unless they work 20 hours per week. More women than men are part time workers.

Changes deny benefits to people unable to find long term employment. Women are the last hired, first fired which makes them largely affected by the higher entrance requirements for repeaters. After collecting UI, the claimant must find work for at least as long a period as they collected. Many women can only get work on a part time or temporary basis.

New entrants and reentrants into the labour force will have to work 40 weeks in the last 2 years and 10 to 14 weeks in the previous year to qualify. This will affect all young people, male and female, but will uniquely affect older women trying to re-enter the work force after years of homemaking.

What these changes amount to for older women and women in other categories is that 263,000 people will

not qualify for UI benefits under the new legislation and therefore at least an additional 130,000 people will be turning to welfare.

## CUTS IN TRAINING ALLOWANCE

Adverse effects can be expected from the cuts in government training grants. It is, under the new legislation, impossible to collect UI benefits and receive training allowance to make a person able to get off UI and onto the labour force.

Further, training allowance to a woman whose husband is working will be cut from \$45, per week to \$10. per week, hardly enough to cover the cost of transportation, let alone daycare, said Phillips.

Cutbacks will also apply to OUT-REACH Programs which funded a number of women's employment centres.

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women recently put forth the following resolution in response to the government legislation:

"BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE WOMAN, JUST AS THE MAN AND THE YOUNG ADULT OF BOTH SEXES, SHOULD HAVE THE UNDISPUTED RIGHT TO WORK AND THAT THIS RIGHT SHOULD BE FUNDAMENTAL FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS: ECONOMIC, PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION FOR THE COMMON GOOD OF THE NATION."

## FROM the RESOURCE LIBRARY

by Monika McNabb

Sexual harassment on the job and consumerism have several things in common - they are commanding more news coverage as relevant, problematic areas of concern to women, they further illustrate the case of woman as victim and they are two items which have been added to the Resource Library.

Sexual Shakedown: the Sexual Harassment of Women on the Job by Lin Farley is now available in Thunder Bay only at Women's Centre. The Canadian counterpart Secret Oppressions: Sexual Harassment of Working Women by Leah Cohen and Connie Backhouse will soon be published and Leah Cohen will be giving a speech and workshop on this subject at the Women Against Violence

Conference here in May.

On sexual harassment, Lin Farley says "In the history of men's misuse of women, this abuse is a relatively recent arrival and is related to man's need to preserve his dominion over modern work". Because men do have dominion and control over most of modern work, women are "prey" as consumers as well eg: car and house purchases and repairs; unfair business practices; high prices; phony schemes - and because we are not informed about Consumer Rights and Responsibilities, we leave ourselves susceptible to being ripped off. As the result of a two-day workshop with the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations we are better able to provide information and guidance for you on this subject.





# A



stained glass by  
Estelle Howard

live now  
know what you have done  
realize  
you have affected a life  
mine.  
remember my terrorizing moments  
the emotional pain will last  
forever.  
in your sick mind  
it was lovemaking  
simple fucking  
it was much more.  
it was oppression  
degradation  
humiliation  
violence.  
know this.  
understand.  
and then  
with your conscience  
i dare you,  
live.

gayle o'hanlon

### SONG OF SOLITUDE

I often wonder at the time  
what chance had I  
a dark hebraic maid  
against fair Helen?

Poor Miriam  
I think you knew  
your savage knowledge of the world  
and black nocturnal lust  
must fade beneath those northern lights;  
how could you not lose dusky face  
beside that myth  
that launched a thousand men?

Nevertheless you understand  
the rose of Sharon never will a lily make  
nothing  
can whiten this small hand.

LYNNE KOSITSKY



Batik by Claire Cikalik

Donna Phoenix  
which is do  
material. D  
Women in Ar  
eration Col  
presentation  
the opening  
on March 29



### TOO SOON

From out of the past  
Like some unawakened dream  
Realism comes -  
I hear them say,  
They feel sorry for me,  
Sitting all day  
Doing nothing-

T'was only yesterday  
Mother grew old.

ALEATA E. BLYTHE  
Makwa, Sask.

### THE YOUNG GIRLS

The young girls  
spend too many daydreams  
misting over tattered pictures  
that burst into ...  
amber and gold  
Flashing  
like the blade of a knight  
who's coming -  
always coming  
Yet-  
never there.

JUDY ROBINSON,  
Espanola

in the silence  
the chrystal po  
when all the pr  
beyond  
the seeing in t

weaving by Pat Ryan



### son flower

she wished  
she had carried him  
when he was small and brown  
as a betel nut  
waiting to birth

now  
he grew  
dark and luminous  
into her life  
and she wondered  
how long  
his first mother  
mourned him

Lynne Kositsky

CHINOOK  
Like leav  
her stemm  
She bends  
that b  
Another .  
too cold  
for a



# RT



h her art work  
a variety of  
who teaches a  
se at Conferd-  
gave a slide  
discussion at  
EING OURSELVES



ils by Diane Paroby

dedned night,  
es from a crying heart  
ere never intended

Viola Goderre.

ing together  
s wave wantonly  
the sterile storm  
er boughs

ROBINSON,  
panola



Looking it over.

## Lifeline

There is engulfing loneliness  
which lies outside  
my window every night  
as I decipher and recalculate  
the length from here to other lives.

The world rotates  
and I taut spider  
spinning off the Earth  
wave thread  
into a timeless universe  
dull blackness which negates my insect gaze

in the webbed finality of silent nights  
I understand  
we lose our  
scanty tightrope strung across the stars  
and go crashing  
sightlessly  
into eternities  
of dark galactic forests.

Lynne Kositsky

like a long ago school day,  
the street looks amiss,  
an once stolen kiss  
by stringed mitts  
freezing to metal railings.

Viola Goderre

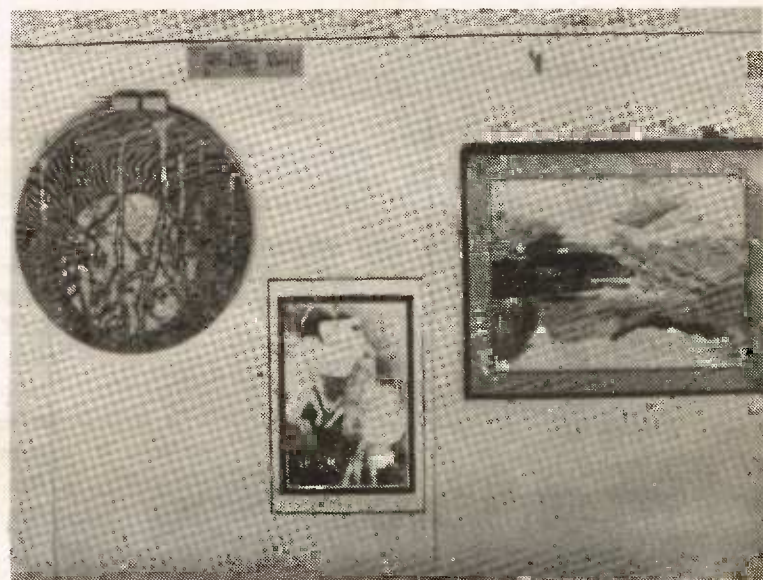
## WARD 2- SHIFT 12-8 AM

The old lady looked  
Over her thick rimmed specks  
And glared at me-  
Envyng my youth?  
My apple red cheeks?  
My light, quick step?  
I doubt it-  
She said, "You know,  
One half of this world  
Is made to screw the other half  
And I think we got  
The short end of the stick."

ALEATA E. BLYTHE  
Makwa, Sask.

SEEING OURSELVES....an art show of  
work by women, many of whom have  
never put their work on display before.  
The purpose of the exhibit was to  
get the art work of women where  
people could see, discuss and  
appreciate it.

Organized by Monika McNabb,  
SEEING OURSELVES presented the work  
of 10 women. The opening night was  
well attended and generated some  
interesting discussion.



Anna Akervall,  
batik, ink, photography

## SEASIDE HOME IN WINTER

The cottage greets me empty  
dampness clings and hovers  
I'm MOD though and walk  
through silent rooms  
to switch on the electric blanket

Seems its raining out and in...  
that damned roof again!

Now to light my old black iron heater  
then the fireplace  
a well thought plan to avoid  
a coughinghouse of woodsmoke!

Only rainwater dripping steadily  
into the bucket  
punctuates the stillsad quiet.

Violet Winegarden

landscape in oils by  
Lorraine Harris



Northern Woman Jounral, page 9



# life in a small town

Remember when the Royal Commission on the Northern Environment came tramping through the north? If so, you may be interested in the background paper that expresses the cumulative opinions expressed at the various hearing held in the small towns throughout the region.

The entire publication can be acquired by writing The Royal Commission on the Northern Environment, Manulife Centre, 55 Bloor St. West, Room 801, Toronto, M4W 1A5. However, to deal with it in part, the following is a representative portion of Chapter 5 from the section entitled *WOMEN IN THE NORTH SEEK JUSTICE*:

...the Commission learned that traditionally, it would be left to the native women to break camp, move family and belongings and set up another home following the seasonal pursuits of hunting, trapping, fishing and gathering. Trapping has often been a male-female team effort among native people, with the women helping to set traps and retrieve the catch and invariably scraping the furs and tanning the hides. Today in the north, trapping, commercial fishing and wild rice harvesting are usually partnership efforts for men and women.

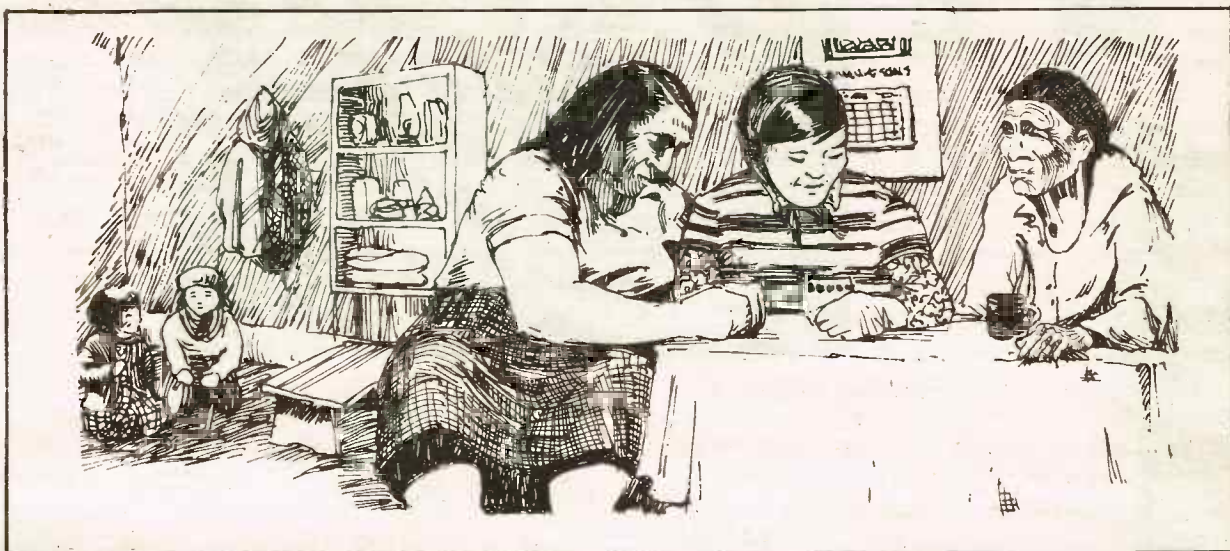
At the turn of the century, white women came to live in the north in some numbers during the second phase of "civilizing" the country, the period after the wilderness had been mapped. Traders' wives, missionaries, teachers--they all contributed to life in the north. Later came the miners' wives, the bullcooks working in the lumber camps and the women of easy virtue in the mining boom towns. For women, the north meant adapting themselves to a rough and narrow lifestyle created and dominated by men. It was not a comfortable life nor a familiar one...

While there was some contact between native and white women over the years, close friendships were unusual... The division still exists to a considerable extent today in northern towns, i.e. white people live in towns, native people mainly in shanties on the outskirts or on reserves....

In recent years, some younger women of both cultures have been learning to recognize feelings and life experiences that they share in common, goals which can bring them together as women...

Issues raised by women in the north were basically similar to those voiced by their sisters in the south. They need facilities for pre-school children to allow mothers freedom to seek employment or pursue cultural interests. They want interval houses to allow them protection from beatings or abuse. They want job opportunities to give them greater economic independence and allow them to have a greater say in the development of the area.

The problems northern women share with their southern sisters are compounded by the realities of living in a remote community. Isolation, inadequate housing, lack of cultural and recreational facilities and a shortage of activities and Northern Woman Journal, page 10



occupations outside the home all serve to make life harder for women in the north:

*"Fear, isolation, lack of financial resources, transportation and child care are all factors that make living in the north a very difficult place for women to grow and participate as citizens of Ontario." (NWO International Women's Decade Co-ordinating Council, Nakina)*

An almost total absence of paid employment opportunities for women characterized a number of communities visited by the Commission. One reason for this lack, the Commission was told, was the dependence, typical in the north, of an entire community on a single employer, generally a resource extraction industry:

*"In single industry communities... the majority of jobs will be male oriented and the traditional female employment opportunities will not be as prevalent as in a more diversified southern community." (Timmins Women's Resource Centre, Timmins.)*

In part, there are few jobs for women, daycare services and facilities are inadequate and costly; and without daycare facilities, the new jobs for women are further out of reach...

With few opportunities for employment outside the home, a northern woman is restricted to her home and family. Concern was expressed about:

*"...the alarming increase of mental illness of young women attributed to the never-ending stress associated with caring for small children in cramped company houses, trailers or mobile homes." (NWO International Womens Decade Co-ordinating Council, Nakina.)*

Not only do women experience the psychological strain of isolated northern communities. Men too suffer the tension of an unstable way of life. Tragically, the victims of their frustrations are often their wives and their children:

*"...The top priority expressed by women in the communities we visited was the desperate need for crisis or interval housing. Small communities lack even the minimal social support services..."*

The stresses of women living in isolation are compounded for those who come to the north later in life, perhaps following a husband who has found employment:

*"Those of us born here are accustomed to the conditions. We value our environment, our independence, self-reliance and pace of life while recognizing mutual dependancy in times of emergency...To newcomers...the weather conditions can be debilitating, inadequate housing...demoralizing, the absence of medical service close at hand frightening; and recreational and educational facilities virtually non-existent for women, depressing.... (Kenora Women's Coalition, Kenora)*

Many women are concerned that expansion and new development would cause further problems. An influx of workers, both single and married, imposes a burden on a community which may not be able to support it. Once again, those who suffer most tend to be women and children:

*"The social impact of (development) will effect all members of the community, but it may have a particular impact on women, their children and their communities. Aggravated housing problems, the pressures of overcrowding and the deterioration in the public utilities...would fall mainly on women who, during the long northern winters are often alone at home." (Kenora-Rainy River District Health Council)*

Native women in particular feel the negative impact of development. Sometimes an isolated native community is forced to absorb an influx of people without any preparation or assistance...

The Commission was reminded that development, with its influx of transient workers, creates other problems for native women:

*"We are concerned with the sexual exploitation of our native women, through the availability of alcohol and out communities being close to the camps; the evidence of violent attacks on women, rape, illegitimate pregnancies, unwanted children, prostitution and venereal disease will rise beyond a social problem. (Ontario Native Women's Association, Geraldton)*

Generally, the women of the north, both women and non-native women, recognized that industrial activities of some sort are inevitable. Consequently, they were determined that



future undertaking not bring with them problems comparable to those experienced in past developments...

"Traditionally, economic development in single industry northern communities has not included the experience, knowledge and concerns of women. This has resulted in male oriented communities at all levels, economically, socially and politically. The needs of women and children have been given only marginal recognition. (Kenora Women's Coalition)

From their submissions to the Royal Commission, it was clear that northern women want the opportunity to be involved in decision-making, to help determine the future of the communities in which they live and to secure equal rights for their sex...

The story being told by the women in the preceding report may not be exactly encouraging....But there may be hope.

The same Royal commission that conducted the hearings and published the report that you have just read will fund a three month QUALITY OF LIFE study this year that will cover phase one of a hopefully, positive process.

The Quality of Life Study, which was first tried in the one industry towns of northern British Columbia had a very positive effect. It got women together talking about economic development and hopes for their communities. They began to feel confident that their input into economic decisions was not only valid, but extremely beneficial to both themselves and the other members of the community. Let's hope the same process is started in Northern Ontario.

## ENDNOTE:

Jill Torrie was recently employed by the economic development committee overseeing this study, to carry out Phase one.

She began work February 25 and will

complete her term in mid May.

The communities designated for the study are Red Lake, Ear Falls, Souix Lookout, Hudson and Ignace. Each community is at a different stage in the economic development process.

A woman or group of women will co-ordinate activities in their communities and bring other women together to discuss issues relevant to their experience as women in single industry towns. The contact women in each community met for a training and introductory seminar in Dryden, March 20.

The contacts are as follows:  
Red Lake--Freda Isaac, Ear Falls--Josie Barlow and Rae Kiebusinski, Souix Lookout--Kathy Keisel, Hudson--Barb Lewis and Bev Engstrom and in Ignace--Isabel Huston and Christine Jacobs.

As well as bringing together women in their communities, the contacts will be responsible for producing an informative document on their community and assist in organizing a workshop.

## A SHORT STORY

# FEATHER IN A CANYON



by JOYCE DUNN

"She reigns supreme  
In her garden,  
Crowned in a riot of colour,  
Delighting in the fragrance  
Of her flowers.  
That surely is her life  
And when she says:  
'I don't do anything!'  
I think we answer her  
By saying:  
"Neither do the flowers."

It had been an oppressive day. Holding the long envelope in her hand Kay sat at the kitchen table and looked through the window of the grey and brown world of November, letting the full flood of cold momentary despair engulf her. She knew again the destructive force of failure and disappointment. That warm small glow in the back of her mind, or was it deep in heart?, extinguished. It had started when she first mailed the precious manuscript, punctuated, neat; a cool result of all the scribbles, the torn sheets from the typewriter, all products of the original inspiration which had launched the agony and ecstasy of writing the story. And here it was, fat and slightly worn looking in the self-addressed envelope, rejected.

Over the years, Kay had invented a little game. After mailing the manuscript, she would consciously despatch its existence to the farthest part of her mind and bury it deep, forgotten for

now, feeling relieved, slightly exhilarated. All the while, that small glow growing a little, to remain there, in her consciousness.

As the span of time lengthened, hope grew and she wandered through her days with suppressed excitement: "they" were giving it a second look, that faceless group of persons who worked for the magazine and read unsolicited manuscripts, relegating hers perhaps, to that special pile of "possibles".

Kay, freelance journalist-photographer covered local events in her small town for three newspapers and two radio stations. This led to further coverage for the women's page in the daily syndicated paper which ultimately launched her into feature stories and a weekly column.

She attended Council meetings and sat through countless stultifying sessions, dashing home later that night to evolve a coherent report out of what had been the trite haranguing of a group of well-meaning aldermen. In order to fight back the antipathy she felt radiating from the mayor, who, with his back to her, was constantly trying to silence the vociferous aldermen, she developed a callousness, a poker faced indifference. At public hearings, she would wedge her way through the small group of citizens squeezed into the small village office, as they protested the attempt on the part of the paunchy real estate agent, to turn their residential area into a commercial zone. Or she would sit stolidly through lengthy discussions on garbage disposal, or the installation of water pipes.

Sometimes she got angry phone calls. At first she shook and stammered, but as time went on, she grew brave, developing a toughness, doing her research thoroughly, avoiding obvious pitfalls. Conquering sheer panic at camera failure, her palms sticky with sweat, she faced the group of posing Chamber of Commerce executive members, her confident smile belying confusion. That too, she overcame by learning the intricacies of the camera which, in her profession, became an extension of herself, the visual reflection of factual reporting

or creative feature writing.

All this, for the sake of 'exposure', in an attempt to develop that special discipline that she felt was necessary to write well.

She withstood the unspoken and sometimes spoken judgement of friends who referred to her reporting as a hobby, which no doubt kept her busy now that "the children had left". These remarks relegated her to an odious position of filling in time, now that the important things of her life had slipped away (the bearing and rearing of children), rather than the fulfilment of a life-time ambition to write. And then the feeling of panic, in case, perhaps, that she was indeed indulging in a silly hobby that "kept her busy". Surely this was striving, this force within her that had to be put into words was real, was indeed a talent which had to be heard? The long working hours: her apprenticeship towards fluency.

This summer she had gone camping and canoeing with her husband. Coming home from these trips, tired and sunburned, the sleeping bags and boxes of stale left-over food crowding her kitchen floor, she would look up her hurried scribbles and remember the glow of sunsets and the opalescence of early mornings. In between the plague of so-called friends, who dropped in uninvited as they passed, through in their campers, crowded cars or worse, the grown children of friends long forgotten, who stopped for a free meal, she managed to write of her travels, jubilant of the good coverage she got, and best of all, the reward of extra payment. She felt gratified, and her growing bank account gave her a sense of self worth. But, late at night, thoughts tumbling in her mind, she would go down to her basement room and write her stories.

Kay looked down at the letter and smiled wryly. Sometimes a few words would be added to the rejection slip, or a letter inclosed instead with some kind criticism telling her either that her story was banal, or too melodramatic or, from a small magazine, that the back log of manuscripts was too big to accommodate her contribution. She would seethe, die a little, the glow extinguished, leaving in its stead, a world where there was no life, therefore no tastes, no scents, no colour. For days after a rejection she would car-

**cont'd next page**

Northern Woman Journal, page 11





NOT  
THANK  
YOU

ry this dead weight in her heart, her normal good humour gone, the edge of her temper sharp. But eventually an inner strength would rise within her. Undefeated she would gather up her forces and go back to her old self and to interviewing local celebrities, old-timers, attending Friendship teas and Council meetings.

Trapped in her local environment, Kay longed to soar, to reach out beyond her boundaries. The closest thing to an escape was her column., which was an expression of either her concern, humour or sometimes a description of a rural scene in her own small town.

It was her poems, however, that gave wings to her spirit, creating a momentary perception of life, a total joyful understanding of the world around her. On sunny days she would run down to the river with Domino, the black and white mongrel dog, to sit by the shore and watch the water turn black, as the rays of late afternoon sun emblazoned the leafless trees to gold, against the dark autumn sky. Picking up a stick for the dog to chase, she walked along the gravel shore and as she did the poems would echo in her brain and clearly, like music in words, spring to her mind. Like a girl then, laughing, she would chase the dog back up the hill to the house and there, at the kitchen table, quickly snatching up a piece of paper, she would write in words the poetry of sound she had heard by the river.

It was last week that Ruth Brown, editor of the local weekly paper, had asked if Kay would write a "little something" for the S-- Weekly, to commemorate the occasion of Kitty Blossom being chosen Mother of the Year.

As she sat down to write the "little something" for Mrs. Blossom, Kay had smiled happily at the memory of the old lady showing her around her small garden.

Each spring, by special invitation, Kay was summoned to this bowery of colour, with the important news that "the orange lilies were out in bloom" and that the delay of even one day would diminish their glory. In the balmy fragrance of the spring day, Kay was introduced to each and every flower, until with suppressed excitement, which had begun with the careful study of the first flowering bush, the old woman guiding Kay round the corner of the house, would come upon the orange lilies and point them out proudly, their gleaming petals unfurled like mute horns proclaiming the joy of spring.

Later on, the tour over, Mrs. Blossom would lead Kay into the dim parlour, cluttered with the memories of a long life and invite her to partake of that special dish, Gooseberry Fool. The del-Northern Woman Journal, page 12

icacy proffered with the same enthusiasm as the showing of the flowers, would be followed by accounts of grandchildren, whose pictures crowded the top of the old upright piano.

At last, ready to leave, Kay would kiss the faded cheek, detecting that quick flash of sadness clouding the bright eyes. As Kay reached the rickety gate, she would smile, adjusting it back on its warped hinges, a small delay as she turned her back on her old friend. By the time Kay had slipped behind the wheel of her car, Mrs. Blossom had moved forward a little and was standing amongst her flowers with that look of yearning that Kay was noticing more and more, a look which betrayed the impatience that the 88 year old woman felt toward her great age, compelling her to say often as she now stood on the periphery of the life she loved so well: "I don't do anything."

Kay decided to write her tribute in the form of a poem. As the clock ticked away the afternoon, she wrote effortlessly, each word carefully chosen, comparing Mrs. Blossom's special charm, to her bright garden. Later on, she took the poem down to her den, typed it and mailed it off to the little weekly paper.

Kay did not think too much of her poems. She likened them rather to the lyrical tunes children could dance to, or to the violets that grew in the shade of tall grasses by mountain streams in the summer. Happy and insignificant, a personal pleasure, an indulgence which the people who read them enjoyed. Once, she had sent a group of what she considered her best poems to a magazine, but she had never heard... A great writer had once compared sending off poems for publication, to the dropping of a feather into a canyon.

In flashes of cruel self-analysis Kay wondered what possessed her to continue in this pursuit of life as she so often saw it--the trembling vision caught on the wings of a song,

the impact of the glittering river seen from her living room window. All ephemeral in texture, the force of imagery pressed upon her mind's eye, to be revealed in the written word.

It was later on in the day when the phone rang. By this time Kay had thrown the manuscript in the drawer already full of other such dismal failures. Giving the rejection slip a cursory glance (no comments this time) she went back upstairs and started to make her Christmas cake. She was happily mixing the fruited batter with her hands when the persistent ringing of the phone interrupted her.

Nerves taut, exasperated, and edge to her voice, Kay snapped: "Hello..." There was a slight pause, a rustling then the sound of Mrs. Blossom's voice, a little frightened, saying, "Hello, hello, is that you Kay? I hope I have the right number..."

Ashamed and contrite, reassuring her caller, Kay held the receiver delicately, as she would a flower, and listened humbly with child-like gratitude as the familiar rough old voice in its hesitant, modest way rejected the poems praise, thanking the writer for its tribute. Her increasing deafness making conversation over the phone virtually impossible, Mrs. Blossom acutely embarrassed as always, by her lack of hearing bid Kay an abrupt goodbye.

Replacing the telephone delicately, in order perhaps not to break the magic of the moment, her moment--this special joy, Kay deposited the instrument back soundlessly, the oppressiveness of the day gone. No one could mar, criticize or reject the intrinsic happiness she felt at times like these.

Joyce Dunn is a freelance journalist, and creative writer who lives in Chase British Columbia.

# women against violence

**A CONFERENCE  
MAY 18, 19 & 20, 1979**

FEATURING KEYNOTE SPEAKER .....HELEN LAFONTAINE  
TRUDY DUNNE  
LEAH COHEN  
JOANIE VANCE

TOPICS COVERED: RAPE\*\*\*\*\*BATTERED WOMEN\*\*\*\*\*SUBTLE VIOLENCE

TO BE HELD AT Confederation College in the Shuniah Building.

THE CONFERENCE IS FREE OF CHARGE, HOWEVER IT IS NECESSARY TO PRE-REGISTER FOR MEALS.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND BROCHURE WRITE: Women's Centre,  
316 Bay St.,  
Thunder Bay P or  
call 345-5841

sponsored by: NORTHERN WOMEN'S CENTRE, RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT,  
NWO INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DECADE CO-ORDINATING COUNCIL,  
WOMEN IN TRANSITION  
CRISIS HOMES INC.



It's spring....a time when fashion designers haul out their new lines and attempt to create an excuse for people to spend money. Although women are pretty much past the question of clothes, it is interesting to note the re-emergence of the emphasis on fashion that has taken place over the last few years. Even MS. MAGAZINE finds it worthy enough

of a feature article entitled "How to get dressed and still be Yourself". Fortunately most of us are beyond the mentality where it is of any great concern. But here, just for a laugh, we reprint an article that appeared as a "RETORT IN A SPIRIT OF SERIOUS LEVITY", in the CANADIAN HOME JOURNAL January 1932. The author, Martha Banning Thomas has gathered her wits to respond to an article that the CANADIAN HOME

JOURNAL, November 1931 by one Dr. Bengel Atlee entitled "Are Women Sheep?". The article accuses women of frivolously modelling themselves on the Paris and London dictators of fashion. The response to his assertion was overwhelming, but two responses were chosen...the following and one by Judge Emily F. Murphy, first women magistrate in all of Canada. Both are witty and thought provoking. Add so we present:

# BUT

# AREN'T MEN PENGUINS?

BY MARTHA  
BANNING THOMAS.  
(circa, 1932)

Yes, it's a man-made world--bless their pompous little hearts!! And it all began a number of thousands of years ago during a period known as "THE BRUTE MANAGEMENT SITUATION." A girl had to be pretty and sly and crafty in those days to get her own way. And more often than not, she got a smart clip on the head with the family cudgel. All this must have been rather trying.

But what could she do? What can a canary do about an eagle? Absolutely nothing but chirp at it and hope for luck. Of course, in a manner of speaking, the woman got used to being dragged around by the hair of her head, of being hurled hither and yon in the spirit of sport, of being tossed about at the caprice of her darling, protective Neanderthal hubby.

This went along for quite a while, in fact several hundred of cycles. Then the beginnings of civilization began a faint, feeble twitter. Caves were more or less abandoned, bludgeons thrown away in favour of swords, art, literature, buildings and organized war cropped up determinedly. Women learned to manage their affairs with greater craft and skill. Helen of Troy happened. She did not erect an assembling plant for cars, but in her girlish (sheepish) way she was the cause of assembling large armies who fought and raged about the city gates, and kicked up a memorable dust. She wrecked heroes, homes and humanity. Not a noble achievement, but they couldn't stop her! Take this idea home and live with it a while; it's a good one. One woman had the world by the ears. She got results. Poets sang of her, wrote volumes of blank verse which boys and girls to this day must translate in order to be called educated. Certainly you must allow Helen her slice of international influence? She did not require a Wall Street...she was a panic all by herself.

Quite a while before this, men's clothes took a turn for the better. They discarded for good and all, the old fashioned one piece leopard skin. They went in for pleated, short skirts with a smart design embroidered on the hems. They wore flashy helmets, and belts and breastplates. And tunics. You simply got nowhere without a tunic. And there was much purple and fine linen here and there, even rings and bracelets.

Then naturally, there was Patty, I known to students of history as Cleopatra. But her pals called her all sorts of cute little names, even great big strong men who should have been

busy for their firms some where else. No one with an honest heart, will try to lay the invention of a single, modern convenience at her door, not even the hump-hair pin or freewheeling. But she did her bit about destiny. By being beautiful in a deadly sumptuous way, and by selecting important people like Caesar and Antony for her playmates, she nearly cracked up civilization. She invented high blood-pressure, and gave the outstanding portrayal of a vamp. Those men were intelligent, too. Emperors and such in their own home towns, orators, dictators, the leaders of their people. Don't deny that the woman had as much power as a fleet of oil-burners.

After that, time went on, as it always does somehow--until fashions for men got gayer and gayer. Women just about gave up competing, and went around in the sulks. Silks, satins, plumes, laces, curled ringlets, slashed sleeves. Magnificent! But was it manly? Everybody thought so at the time. Men put on stylish wars, and women praised them in a crafty manner, and did more and more what they wanted.

There were the female Medicis for instance. There's a family for you. Some of them bad, very bad. And the Borgias. But literature still works up a fever and dumb ague for them. The hand that rocked the cradle, fooled the world. Give them gals their due. They matched their wits with strength, precedence and crushing dominance. And they've sent their somewhat doubtful names ringing down the centuries.

And so forth. There was Good Queen Bess. No use going into that. Everyone knows what a booby she made out of the elegant Essex. Women such as she do not need to herd together in corporations, and holding companies, and lodges and parades. They encompass a whole epoch in themselves.

Now we come to something else. It's pitiful to think how soon after this men got scared. Scared of being pointed at, picked out in a crowd, commented upon. Gradually they laid aside their beautiful, colourful attire. They swarmed by the thousands, into homespun, dull, drab fabrics, that made them look exactly alike. (It has occurred to that magnifying glasses might have been made at this time, though I really don't know. Anxious wives could thus go about searching for their husbands in the dun coloured crowd (But this is beside the point))

Pilgrims and Puritans clung to wide, white collars and silver shoe buckles, but a cherry ribbon for the hair of their ladies, was blasphemy. Yes, the woman submitted. They had to. Give them the bone and frame and sinew of the male, leave out the charm, gaiety, love, mat-



ernity, etc. What a place man, oh what a place this poor spinning world! Wheels turning, Whistles blowing. Factories screaming with energy and production. No colour anywhere, but possibly flowers. (Was God all wrong about beauty?) No parties, no fun, no quarrels, no children bothering about...just millions upon millions of business suits going to work in the morning.

It's a deperate vision, rather. Isn't it--honestly? And here we might be bold enough to mention the names of a few out of hundreds of women, who have exercised a world-wide influence? Florence Nightingale, Clara Barton (organization here, surely), George Eliot, Mrs. Siddons (the great tragic of the English stage), and in modern days, the Pankhursts, Jane Adams, Edith Cavell, Margaret Sanger. Who can calculate what they have done? Nobody.

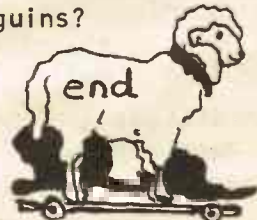
But to return to clothes--always a man's petulant wail. Is there (be brave) anything more depressing than a bowler hat? More fatiguing than a claw-hammer? More dismal than masses of white shirt bosoms, stiff ties, black evening clothes...the endless formal procession of Penguins at a party?

Oh, sometimes I could scream for a dashing, red sash, satin knee breeches...anything to lift the deadly pall of black. They're all alike. All scared of being conspicuous.

Dispiriting sight! And if we women wore the same? The world would go insane. I haven't more time now. I've got to whip around the corner and order a couple of solid business suits. One will have to do for frying eggs and doughnuts and washing the dishes and sweeping etc. It will soon be smelly and spotty and reeking of a thousand kitchen odours. The other will due for calls, having the parson in for tea, errands, picnics, movies, informal suppers given for the husband's law partner.

And I'll be laughed at, and hooted at and made utterly miserable. By whom? By men...dear brothers and sisters...! men who like their ladies well-dressed. By men who poke fun at plain straight-thinking, resolute, somewhat unfeminine women who have fought valiantly for their less vigorous sisters.

Women are not men, nor ever can be. But aren't men...penguins?





# Understanding PRO-CHOICE



## Canadian Association for Repeal of Abortion Law

For an individual membership (\$15.) or family membership (\$25) send a cheque to CARAL, Box 527, Station Z, Toronto Ont. M5N 2A6

Recently the Right to Life organization in Thunder Bay has been appearing on local talk shows, and carrying on a drive for memberships. To balance the picture, we present the following explanation of what it means to advocate Childbirth by Choice. It is important when pondering this often emotional issue to keep the facts in mind. It is only then that a sane and healthy decision is made.

### WHAT IS CHILDBIRTH BY CHOICE?

Briefly, childbirth by choice means freedom in planning one's family. It means not being FORCED to bear a child. It means not being FORCED to have an abortion. We believe that a woman should have the freedom to choose whether or not to continue an unplanned, undesired pregnancy. We believe that restrictive abortion laws, far from solving the abortion problem, only make it worse.

### A WORLDWIDE TREND:

At the beginning of 1971, 38% of the world's people lived in countries where legal abortion was liberally available. By early 1976 the figure had increased to 64%, nearly two thirds of the world. Few social changes have ever swept the world so rapidly. The worldwide movement, in evidence on every continent, reflects an increasing willingness by national legislatures to face the reality of abortion as a major public health issue. The international record shows that prohibition of abortion does not prevent its practice. Restrictive laws only assure that abortion will often be ineptly carried out under clandestine circumstances, rather than safely performed under hygienic conditions with competent medical supervision.

### LIBERALIZATION AND WELL-BEING

Many countries have liberalized access to abortion, including several societies that have much in common with our own -- U.S.A., France, Great Britain, Austria, Israel, Italy, and the Scandinavian countries.

Although different laws, policies and judicial decisions have evolved in each country, the official jurisdiction in each case is the same -- the physical, mental, social and economic well-being of the woman concerned.

None of these countries encourages abortion, or enforces compulsory abortion through its laws or policies and most emphasize strongly the advantages of preventative contraception. But each state tacitly recognizes in its laws that without broad access to abortion, legally, for the poor as well as the rich, maternal health and family well-being will suffer.

### ADOLESCENTS

Many women seeking abortions in Canada are adolescents. Statistics

Canada reveals that one third of those obtaining legal abortions in 1976 were under 20. This is a regrettable situation. But consider what might have happened if those abortions had NOT been granted. For women under 20, the physical costs of compulsory childbirth are particularly high, since it is a well documented fact that pregnancy in either the early or late childbearing years increases the risk of maternal mortality. Further adverse consequences for the adolescent may be interrupted education, restricted marriage opportunity and general economic hardship. There is also a greater risk of mortality and illness in the infants born to adolescents. One sees then, that compulsory childbirth in adolescence costs society dearly, in both human and dollar terms.

### UNWANTEDNESS

Opponents of abortion law repeal appear to centre their concern for life on fetal life. They do not seem to consider the fate of the unwanted child produced by compulsory childbirth. Two studies, comparing children born to mothers whose request for abortion has been refused with a control group of children born to mothers who had not requested abortion indicate that the former are worse off in every respect... Forssman and Thuwe, after a 20 year study in Sweden, reported that children born to women whose applications were rejected showed a significant pattern of social and emotional disability. A study in Prague of 200 children under the same circumstances yielded similar results. Of course psychiatrists have long recognized the damage caused by maternal rejection, and some of them believe that one of the most important goals of preventive psychiatry is the prevention of unwanted offspring.

### ADOPTION

One often hears the glib slogan, "Adoption not Abortion". Those who hold this view are either unaware of or indifferent to the trauma of giving a child up for adoption. In fact, women who have experienced both giving a child up for adoption and having an abortion invariably say that abortion is less traumatic, and studies which compare the psychological reactions of three groups of women (those who had an abortion, those who gave the child up for adoption, and those who kept the child that they bore), found that although all groups experienced some stress, it was clear that the abortion patients fared better considerably than those giving up children for adoption.

The number of newborns available for adoption have in fact declined in past years for a variety of reasons. The idea that some women should be FORCED to have babies so that others may adopt them is surely unthinkable in a democratic society.

### GREATER HEALTH RISKS WHEN ABORTION REFUSED

Advocates of Compulsory childbirth often make the claim that women who seek and obtain abortions suffer grave psychological and physical consequences. This is refuted by the eminent psychiatrist Dr. Wendall Watters, who, after a thorough and painstaking analysis of many studies states that "A woman is at greater risk to her mental health when she is refused safe, legal abortion, if that is what she really wants, than if she is granted one. Committees refusing abortions in such instances are contributing to the ill-health of Canadian women."

He continues, "Apart from the risk to her emotional health is she is forced to carry an unwanted pregnancy to term, a woman is at a greater risk medically. The mortality rate following childbirth is much higher than that following abortion." In addition, he states, "The rate of immediate complication following induced abortion is low. Further, it is related to the length of gestation (very low in first trimester abortions) it is related to the procedure utilized (very low in vacuum aspirations), and it is related to the experience and expertise of the health care personnel (very low in free standing clinics, where high volume provides an opportunity for operating skills to be perfected).

### SUBSTITUTES FOR CONTRACEPTION?

Supporters of restrictive abortion legislation argue that readily available abortion becomes a substitute for contraception. Studies carried out recently in the U.S., however, indicate the contrary: most women who have sought and received legal abortions request contraceptive advice and materials and go on to use them responsibly. This experience is similar to that reported in other countries.

In Great Britain, where ready access to abortion is combined with a thorough programme for public education in contraception, the abortion rate is one of the lowest in the world. Conversely, in most Latin American countries, where abortion is severely restricted and contraception is not promoted, the abortion rate is among the highest.

It is not surprising, in fact, that most women, given the choice, prefer contraception to abortion. Even if there were no other dimensions to the abortion decision, it is common sense that few people regard any surgical operation lightly.

### CONTRACEPTION

Many people believe that there would be no need for abortion if all couples used contraception except when they desired pregnancy. It is true that if reliable family planning information, education and services were universally available, the number of unwanted pregnancies could be significantly reduced.

However, failures can occur with all current methods of contraception, and even responsible users of EFFECTIVE methods may occasionally find themselves faced with unwanted pregnancies.

More significant is the fact that several conditions existing in our society create a climate where couples may experience unwanted pregnancies.

more →



\*Since contraception was against the law until 1969, there is no tradition of sexual responsibility in this country.

\*Many people still rely on INEFFECTIVE methods of birth control to prevent pregnancy.

\*It is often difficult for adolescents to obtain contraceptive services and information.

\*In this age of effective female contraception, the male may not always be aware of his equal responsibility.

\*In this age when doctor-provided contraception receives so much emphasis, many people are not aware that effective contraception (especially effective when used in combination) are easily available at the corner drugstore.

\*Contraception and allied subjects are inadequately covered by our medical schools and thus doctors often give poor advice on this subject.

\*The government supplies free brochures about birth control to all who ask for them, but unfortunately the quality of information is not always reliable or useful, especially with respect to teenagers.

#### WHO IS PRO-ABORTION??

The most effective way of reducing the abortion rate is ofcourse the active promotion and encouragement of contraception. It is difficult to understadd therefore, why self-styled "right to life" organizations either ignore contraception or actively oppose it. Malcolm Muggeridge, a leading spokesman for these groups, has publicly proclaimed his opposition to contracpetion. One "right to life" organization, Birthright, includes the following position on contraception in its constitution:

"The policy of every Birthright Chapter and everyone of its members and volunteers in all the Chapter's efforts shall be to refrain in every instance from offering or giving advice on contraception or sterilization and to refrain from referring any person to another person, place or agency for this type of advice."

This attitude is one which helps to create conditions resulting in more unwanted pregnancies and thus more abortions. The claim of such organizations to be "anti-abortion" is therefore not entirely accurate, and, objectively, their stance could almost be described as "pro-abortion". (The only other "pro-abortionists" are back street butchers and some questionable commercial agencies who profit excessively from restrictive abortion laws.)

#### SANCTITY OF LIFE

It is often held that the sanctity of life is an absolute moral prohibition against abortion. But this view is far from universal, even within the Roman Catholic Church. A well known Catholic philosopher, Daniel Callahan, urges that a "mother should have a bias in favour of the sanctity of life so that abortion would be the LAST rather than the first choice when an unwanted or problem pregnancy occurred. It ought to be avoided if at all possible, but as a part of responsibility for the dignity of life, it would be morally acceptable if duties to self, family and society, made it the only reasonable choice for her."

#### EUTHANASIA

The opponents of freedom of choice often link abortion with what they term a progressive deterioration of

respect for life in society, leading to the advocacy of euthanasia and other Nazi policies. In fact, no country in the world has legalized euthanasia, not is considering doing so, although 64% of the world's population live in countries where abortion is legal. It is also note worthy that Nazi Germany was the only durisdiction in modern history which has punished ABORTION WITH THE DEATH PENALTY. And Nazi Germany was the only jurisdiction in modern history that legalized and enforced euthanasia.

#### CANADA'S LAW

Abortion is legal in Canada only when a hospital abortion committee certifies that a women's life or health is likely to be endangered by the continuation of a pregnancy. While appearing to promise access to abortion for serious reasons, the law places many obstacles in the way of women seeking the termination of unwanted pregnancy, and in fact denies abortions to many Canadian woman who need them.

Section 251 of the criminal code requires that abortions be performed in only approved or accredited hospitals which have a Therapeutic Abortion Committee of at least three doctors. The Committee must rule on applications for abortions and none of the doctors on the Committee is allowed to perform the operation. There are several shortcomings in the law as it stands:

\*No hospital, even though publicly financed is encouraged to establish a Therapeutic Abortion Committee.

\*No hospital, even if it has a Therapeutic Abortion Committee is required to perform any abortions.

\*No provision is made for the many hospitals outside the major cities which cannot find the means to establish such committees and perform abortions.

\*No woman applying for an abortion is allowed to appear before the Therapeutic Abortion Committee.

\*No right of appeal is allowed where a woman's application for abortion has been denied.

#### DISCRIMINATION

According to Statistics Canada, only 271 out of 1359 hospitals have Therapeutic Abortion Committees. A survey done by DOCTORS FOR THE REPEAL OF THE ABORTION LAW reveals that the number is even in lower. And some Committees never grant abortions at all. Thus, Canadian women cannot be assured of equal access to legal medical procedure.

Opponents of freedom of choice deplore the fact that a disproportionate number of abortions are carried out in some hospitals in big cities like Toronto. They neglect to add that these are the hospitals that often provide safe abortions to women deprived of them in their own community. (Some women have come from as far as Newfoundland to obtain an abortion in Toronto. These same women, of course, do not and need not travel to Toronto to obtain obstetrical services.)

#### INTERPRETING THE STATISTICS

Supporters of restrctive abortion laws claim that the annual government statistics for therapuetic abortion demonstrate "a maasive and accelerating increase in the number of abortions in Canada." This view of the statistics seems to suggest that Canadian

women began having abortions when the present law was passed in 1969. In fact, women have always sought abortions when they were unwillingly pregnant, and have had to resort to dangerous illegal procedures when no safe, legal help was available. It is obvious during the past seven years, safe, legal abortions have been replacing illegal ones. But because of our restrictive abortion law, many Canadian women are still forced either to travel to other countries for safe abortions, or to seek out dangerous back street abortions in this country.

#### PUBLIC OPINION

As long ago as 1971, the Canadian Medical Association resolved that the decision to have an abortion should be made solely by the woman and her doctor. The Canadian Psychiatric Association has stated that abortion should be removed altogether from the Criminal Code of Canada. Many other well respected organization have echoed these resolutions. A majority of Canadians agree. A Gallup Poll in October 1974 revealed that fully 62% of the adult population believe that the abortion decision should be left to the woman and her physician.

#### DEMOCRACY

Criminal law in a free society fundamentally reflects a consensus that certain activities should be forbidden. There is a consensus in Canada, for example, that attacking a person on the street or robbing someone are criminal acts. But there is no such consensus about abortion. To impose one moral view of abortion upon everyone in a pluralistic society, therefore, contravenes the very basis of our criminal law.

As Alan Borovoy, general counsel for the Canadian Civil Liberties Association states, "In a totalitarian society the tendency is for the rulers to decide how the citizens shall live. In a democratic society, the objective, as much as possible, is for each citizen to decide for himself."

## THUNDER CLAP

to the Fort Frances/Rainy River District women for their admirable celebration of International Women's Day.



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## Spring Programs For Women

ZW 002

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ZW 011

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Thursday evenings, April 5th to April 26th- 7 to 10 p.m.

Instructor: L. Johnson

Fee: \$15.00

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ZW 015

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3. The Pill and its Alternatives
4. "It Could Happen To You"
5. How to Talk to Your Doctor
6. Stress-Distress
7. Menopausal Myths
8. How You Stand--the importance of good posture.

\*PLEASE NOTE: This Conference is open to regional women teachers until April 1.

After April 1st, remaining empty seats will be open to other interested women, on a first-come basis.

April 27 and 28th, 1979

Fee: \$7.00

ZW 007

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Facilitator: J. Evans

Fee: \$15.00

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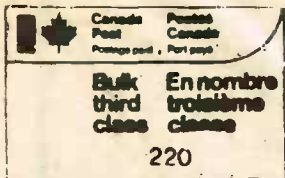
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