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EDITORIAL

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In the NORTHERN WOMAN Vol.11 #4 we analyzed the election results and the free trade implications. At that time as said;

"We must mature our awareness and analysis of the full Conservative agenda - social policy, tax reform, trade - and determine what is in store for us in the next four years. Behind the mask of free trade lies a neo-conservative agenda (which would not on its own be risked) that will devastate the vulnerable in our society, will erode the modest gains that women have made, and will set back the cause of social justice and equality for a decade."

We now have the federal budget and our fear becomes reality. The propaganda about the deficit is, of course, a smokescreen. What the Wilson budget does is deliver the free trade agreement and begin the harmonization of our social and economic systems to the American model.

And what is the American model? We need to understand that the United States, among industrialized nations, has:

- the biggest gap between the rich and the poor
- the highest per capita poverty rate
- the most children living in poverty
- the most people without health care
- the most homeless
- the highest rate of adult illiteracy
- the poorest legislation governing working conditions.

So we have the Wilson budget. A budget that begins the process of destroying our Unemployment Insurance system. And make no mistake, it is women that will be most seriously hurt by the U.I.C. changes.

A budget that ignores child care...while the decade-long child care CRISIS escalates.

A budget...that begins the erosion of universality.

A budget that embraces privatization...again most seriously harming women.

A budget that reduces support for regional economic development and the development of Native communities.

A budget that reduces transfers payments for health and post-secondary education.

A budget that cuts funding to women's, Native and multicultural organizations...Decade Council cut 15%, Northwestern Ontario Regional Day Care Committee cut 30-35%, Women's Place Kenora cut, etc., etc.

If we are to avoid the erosion of our Canadian society until we are indistinguishable from the American we must act NOW.

We must inform ourselves. Inform others. Protest. Organize. Keep Canada alive.



In response to the federal budget, representatives of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, the Pro-Canada Network and the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Workers joined together to GET THE BUDGET BACK ON TRACK, travelling coast to coast protesting the budget and pointing out that:

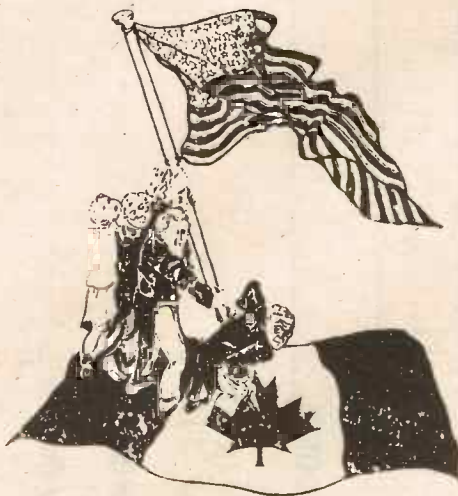
"Past and present generations of Canadians have developed a unique social contract with their government. Through this social contract, Canadians have claimed their basic democratic rights as citizens to a system of social programs designed to ensure decent employment, education, consumer protection, cultural development, and fair taxation.

The current federal government is now breaking that social contract. The Free Trade Agreement has set the stage for harmonizing our economy and social programs with the economy and social programs of the United States. The recent Wilson budget serves to accelerate this process. Together, these economic strategies will destroy the investment of past generations in our national and democratic future."

BREAKING THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

On June 9th, about 150 Thunder Bay people gathered at the CPR station with petitions outlining our Northwestern Ontario concerns for the protesting travellers to take to Ottawa. The Northwestern Ontario protest centred on child care, Via Rail and postal service cuts, Air Canada privatization, regressive sales tax, U.I.C., Old Age Security, Family Allowances and cuts to the Secretary of State Women's Programs.

Congratulations go to the Northwestern Ontario Women's Decade Council who spearheaded the Thunder Bay event, which was an energizing rally, complete with protest songs led by the "Raging Grannies". A similar rally was organized in Kenora by Women's Place, Kenora.



Free
Canada
Trade
Mulroney



"I wish to share my belief about the ideological perspective from which I think this government operates. I believe that Mulroney's Conservative government before them, wish to change the fundamental balance between public good and private gain that has characterized our history. They wish to move Canada toward an economic model in the image of Thatcher's Britain and Reagan's America. They believe that the unfettered free market is the best arbiter of opportunity and that government should disengage itself from the distribution of wealth.

They have been joined by Corporate Canada (and I distinguish this sector from small and medium sized businesses who create most of the jobs, and who are suffering under this government as well), who have outgrown Canada, and whose self interest clearly no longer parallels our national interest. Canada is becoming a classic corporatist state, where huge corporations are the dominant institutions, and who pursue growth in wealth and power as their single overriding goal. National rules promoting competition and limiting their growth are seen as an impediment. In fact, big-business was seeking free trade, not to link business to the national purpose, but rather to free it from such a responsibility."

Maude Barlow
Chairperson
Council of Canadian

RED FLAG

BILL 124: An Act to Amend the Children's Law Act

by LENI UNTINEN

for: The Northwestern Ontario Women's Decade Council Sub-committee on Violence

The Violence Sub-Committee of the Northwestern Ontario Women's Decade Council recently submitted a brief to the Standing Committee on Social Development.

Sub-Committee members identified many concerns regarding the Bill 124 An Act to Amend the Children's Law Reform Act.

Under this legislation access by a non-custodial parent is assumed to be "in the best interest of a child". Further, "encouraging and supporting the child's continuing parent-child relationship with the other parent" assumably requires some co-operation. If co-operation were a factor in custody-access agreements a legislation of this type would be unnecessary and in fact is unnecessary in the majority of cases. Subsequently this legislation is designed for the minority of custody-access cases with implications for the majority and very serious implications for women and children ending a violent relationship. In reality shuffling a child back and forth, between parents 1) where there is a history of violence, or 2) where parents are in conflict, or 3) where one parent is in fear of the other, or 4) where one parent may malign the other, is definitely not in the best interest of a child.

Inclusion of this duty clause sets the stage for granting custody, weighing consideration of a parent's intention to co-operate in according access. This particular clause offers a dangerous choice of options for battered women: a) fight for custody, deny access and risk losing custody or b) agree to access and risk the safety of herself and her child.

We also challenged Section 24 (2c) in respect to custody and access: "The length of time the child has lived in a stable home environment" as a consideration. This clause does a disservice to battered women whose move from the home has been forced by fear and to the many shelters for battered women which have been established to provide stability for the women and their children in times of crisis.

Section 24 (2e) includes the "ability and willingness of each person seeking custody to provide ... the necessities of life and to meet the special needs of children". Clarification must be made in order to ensure that the lower average income levels of women (yet to be corrected by adequate Ontario Pay Equity legislation) does not penalize mothers and that custody and access are not "bought" by the higher income earner.

Concerns were expressed regarding "reimbursing reasonable expenses" when access has been denied and the ability of women on limited income to comply with this order.

Section 35 suggests "Appointing a mediator" and the possibility of court ordered mediation. Court ordered mediation between two persons where an equal negotiating status may not exist, particularly in circumstances where the past relationship between the two may have either been controlling or violent is a very dangerous option.

While the subcommittee supports the paragraphs listing the possibility of physical and emotional harm as reasons for denial of access, we are aware of many women leaving relationships after years of physical and emotional abuse and where "proof" of the violence has not been documented. The Ontario Government is well aware

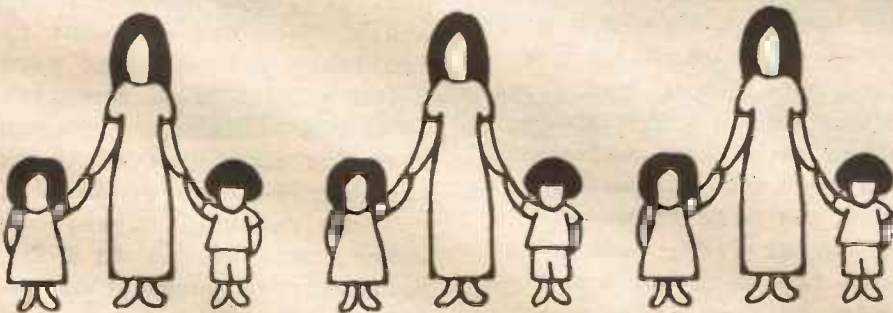
of the many reasons for this and through their literature have titled wife assault as "the silent crime". However, we are not convinced of the judicial system's sensitivity to this characteristic of family violence. This particular status leaves open the possibility that women who cannot prove past violence may be forced to agree to access in order to not appear uncooperative and risk losing custody, or, the possibility that women who have left violent relationships will not seek child support knowing that access may be a condition and possibility of further harassment may be realized.

"Require Supervised" access as referred in section 35 a (6) (a) is not available throughout Northwestern Ontario. The region has, at best, minimal support services to deal with both family breakdown and family violence. Laws applicable to Ontario should consider the reality of all Ontario regions, in order, that courts do not order support systems which a community cannot provide.

No clear data exists that access denial is a major problem. The lack of consultation with persons that will be most affected by the proposed legislation leads to speculation that Bill 124 is a political response to pressure groups reacting to The Support and Custody Enforcement Act. Reforms put forth in the best interest of children require in depth study and consultation. Legislation presented to protect children must not be initiated as a political maneuver.

Drafted pieces of legislation are always complicated documents. By their very format they tend to intimidate the average person. It requires time and hard work to absorb the meaning of clauses and to think through the implications.

But legislation, policies or programs involving custody, access and mandatory mediation should be a red flag to women's organizations across the country. This is not a time to be apathetic to drafted legislation because of the complexity of the language. Study it, understand it, react to it. The future safety of thousands of women and children may depend on it.



"THE SWIMMER"

LONG DISTANCE DELIVERY: A Guide to Travelling Away from Home to Give Birth

by HOLLY RUPERT

Birthing is a special health issue for Northern women. The medical services women need during pregnancy, labour and delivery, are not always available in the small towns of Northwestern Ontario. That means women must travel, often to a large hospital in a distant city, to get the care they need.

The Project on Out-of-Town Birth grew out of a concern about the impact birthing away from home has on women. We wanted to find a tangible way to help women in our region find positive ways to cope with the demands of this situation. We decided to research and write a booklet that would serve as a practical guide to out-of-town birth.

The project, which began in December 1987 and will come to an end this summer, has been funded by Health Promotion Directorate, Health and Welfare Canada. It is co-sponsored by two women's groups - the Red Lake Women's Information Group and the Northwestern Ontario Women's Health Information Network based in Thunder Bay.

In the early stage of the project, we went to several small towns in Northwestern Ontario to hear what women could tell us about out-of-town birth. We travelled to Marathon, Terrace Bay, Manitouwadge, White River, Sioux Lookout, Ignace, Vermilion Bay, Dryden, Ear Falls and Red Lake. At an open meeting in each town, women talked about the problems they had faced. They suggested things that would have made the trip away easier.

The women in towns like Ignace and Vermilion Bay, which lack a hospital, told us about the many practical details they had to plan for in addition to finding a doctor and thinking about the obstetrical care they would prefer. For instance, they had to arrange for friends or neighbours to care for their children and homes when they left for hospital.

"With my second pregnancy I had a girlfriend lined up" an Ignace woman said. "If I went into labour during the night, she said she'd come and stay with my daughter. She was basically on call for my last month. And if she couldn't do it another woman would."

Some spoke of the tremendous fear that took hold when things went wrong during labour or delivery. In many communities, the local hospital is not equipped to handle emergencies and women must be sent to another hospital by air ambulance. When this happens, women may feel they are being swallowed up by events beyond their control. Many told us about the loneliness they felt giving birth in a hospital far from family and friends.

"My husband stayed with me until they put me in the ambulance" said a woman from Marathon who was sent to Thunder Bay by airplane. She had begun to hemorrhage with her fourth baby, now a healthy preschooler.

"When I got to the Thunder Bay hospital, I was alone. My husband was left behind, so were my three other boys. You're really lost and alone. I asked the nurse who went with me for a hug -- I really thought I was going to die, or that the baby would die. That's why I was willing to get a hug from anyone."

If a woman is sent by ambulance to another hospital, often her partner or relative is not allowed to accompany her. The space in an ambulance is limited, especially if an air ambulance is used. If an incubator is needed for the baby, there may not be room for an extra passenger. Sometimes poor weather conditions mean more fuel is needed for the flight and that too, restricts the number of passengers who can be on board. For many of the women we spoke to, being separated from their partner or other relative was the most difficult aspect of an out-of-town birth.



Often the things that worried women reflected the isolation and natural challenges that characterize life in the bush.

For instance, being stranded on the highway by poor weather was a concern for women who must travel to hospital in their own car. We heard of a couple who, in their panic to get to the hospital once labour had started, hit a moose calf on the highway. One woman talked about her confusion when the whole town was evacuated just before her due date because of a threatening forest fire. Some even said they would try to avoid a spring or fall delivery as the flying weather is notoriously fickle at those times of the year.

The ideas, advice and stories we gathered during the community meetings have become the basis of the booklet to be distributed this summer. As we listened to women talk about their experiences, we were moved by the loving courage with which they face birth under these circumstances.

In the second stage of the project, we asked health care workers what they felt women need to know about out-of-town birth. We sent a survey to prenatal instructors who help to prepare women for birth. We asked doctors and nurses who care for women in small and large hospitals for their ideas. And we surveyed public health nurses who visit women when they return home from the hospital. The res-



ponses gave us a clearer picture of the medical reasons for out-of-town birth. We learned about the problems in providing continuity of care for women before and after their birth.

Why are women having to travel away to give birth? The most common reason is the lack of local birthing services. In most places, the local doctor provides prenatal care, but another doctor in a large city hospital will assist at the delivery. If that hospital is far away, it may be difficult to have prenatal visits with the doctor before the birth.

This situation affects many Native women from reserve communities. In our region, they represent the majority of those having out-of-town births. The demands of travel and separation from family and friends are especially hard for Native women. They must make the trip out to hospital about two weeks before their due date and wait for their baby's arrival. They may feel lonely, displaced and bored as they try to cope in a world so culturally different from their own.

In some places, such as Nipigon, the doctors have chosen not to deliver babies although there is a local hospital. In 1985, the Nipigon doctors decided the number of babies they delivered the previous year -- about 25 -- was too low to ensure necessary competency level for obstetrical care. That is, the doctors weren't getting enough practice at delivering babies to feel that they could do it safely.

When the Nipigon doctors announced they would be sending women to out-of-town doctors for labour and delivery, some community women were angry. They did not want to lose their familiar, personalized care they had known at the local hospital. Despite lobbying efforts and community support for continued birthing services, the doctors have stood firm.

An informal survey of Nipigon women, carried out in 1987 by the Northwestern Ontario Women's Health Information Network, found that there were at least 68 births that year. Even with this apparent increase, birthing services have not been reinstated.

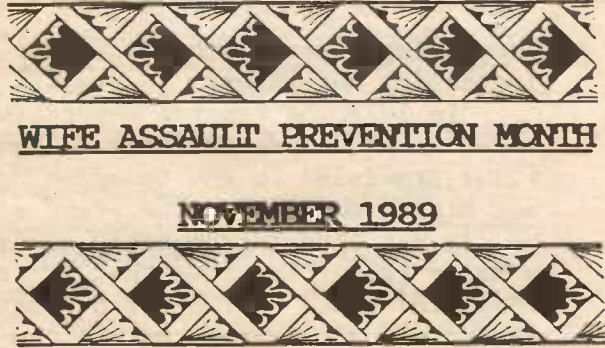
There has been a growing trend in the last decade, in Northwestern Ontario as in other parts of the country, to use a regional model in providing birthing services. Within a given region, hospitals provide birthing services based on their geographic location and the specialized people on their staff. In some cases, smaller medical units may be closed to consolidate services. Women with greater medical risks are sent to hospitals which can offer more specialized care. Those who support

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Ontario
Women's
Directorate

UPCOMING EVENTS



WIFE ASSAULT PREVENTION MONTH

NOVEMBER 1989

November has again been chosen for the public education campaigns of Ontario Women's Directorate and community groups. This public education campaign ties in with November 25th - International Day Against Violence Against Women.

Shelters, Coordinating Committees and groups active in area of wife assault prevention will have received information and grant applications for funding up to \$1,500 for a public education project.

Projects must reflect that "Wife Assault is a Crime" and that the community has a responsibility to address this issue.

REMINDER: -APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY AUGUST 4th



SUMMER EXPERIENCE



Beendigan, Women in Crisis, Sioux-Hudson-North, Women's Place Kenora and Mattawa Family Resource Centre are northern community organizations chosen by the selection committee to participate in the Summer Experience '89 program.

The Directorate's Northern Office will have a student working on several projects this summer:

- the development of an employment equity information mailing list
- the cataloguing of written materials in the Resource Centre
- the development of a catalogued video/film section of the Resource Centre, and
- the updating of last years Directory of Women's Organizations in Northern Ontario

*
* RESOURCE CENTRE *
*

A new TV and VCR for previewing videos in the office are two new resources available to the community.

We now have an audio cassette of THE COURAGE TO HEAL: A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Assault and a cassette of Elly Danica's Morningside interview. Elly Canica is the author of DON'T: A Woman's Word/ Four copies of each book are also available to borrow.

WOMEN AND POLITICS consists of six one-hour programs designed to help women achieve, exercise and hold on to political power. This video series presents highlights of a two-day conference held in November 1986 at Ryerson. Host Rosemary Brown introduces participants such as Chaviva Hosek, Michele Landsberg, Kay Sigurjonsson and Maude Barlow. A 48 page booklet comes with the series.

BREAKING FREE is a video recently purchased from the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women Disability Awareness Project. Disabled women present their experiences.

PS WE CARE, a K-13 school curriculum discussing the issue of family violence prepared for and used in schools in London, Ontario is also available.

SOME NEW BOOKS

Amazons and Military Maids: Women who Dressed as Men in Pursuit of Life, Liberty and Happiness, Julie Wheelwright

Seam Allowance, Industrial Home Sewing in Canada, Laura Johnson

Politics of Reproduction, Mary O'Brien

In the Name of the Fathers: The Story Behind Child custody, Susan Crean

Children's Story: Sexually Molested Children in Criminal Court, Judge Sandra Butler Smith (US).



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Milestones for feminism

- 1960 - Birth control pills go on sale.
- 1963 - Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* becomes war cry of women's movement.
- 1967 - Ottawa appoints Royal Commission on Status of Women.
- 1969 - Criminal Code amended, making abortion legal if approved by a hospital's therapeutic abortion committee.
- 1970 - First women's studies course given at University of Toronto.
- 1971 - Robert Andras appointed first federal cabinet minister responsible for status of women.
- 1972 - National Action Committee on the Status of Women founded.
- 1973 - Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women established.
- 1982 - Bertha Wilson first woman appointed to Supreme Court of Canada.
- 1984 - Jeanne Sauve appointed first woman Governor General of Canada.
- 1986 - Ottawa passes Bill C-62, dealing with affirmative action for women, visible minorities, disabled.
- 1987 - Coalition of women's groups protest Meech Lake constitutional accord.
- 1988 - Abortion law struck down by Supreme Court.



IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN THUNDER BAY



The Thunder Bay Immigrant Women's Planning Committee is trying to open doors for immigrants to enter educational programs. Why are they looking for this?

Immigrants need to be part of the Ontario Community and contribute to its economic and social development.

Ontario has skills shortages and many of the immigrants that have come to Canada are skilled to work in many kinds of jobs.

Immigrants need to improve their level of income and to be able to make enough money to cover their basic living and social needs. They don't want to stay on social assistance and be a burden to society. They need to learn English to qualify for professions, to have the opportunity to finish their studies or to have specific training in order to get skilled jobs.

If immigrants will have these opportunities, it will be easy for society to fill its skills shortage and together Canadians and newcomers can work for the development of Canada.

Maria Albizurez

PAY EQUITY

by LYNN BEAK

Pay Equity? What is it anyway? We've all heard the term and associated it with an increase in women's wages. But how and why? It seems that so much is still unclear.

EQUAL PAY FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE

Part of the confusion comes from the fact that pay equity is a recent term for an old concept - equal pay for work of equal value - an idea that has been debated and fought for by women throughout the world since the turn of the century. In the USA another term is used - comparable worth - for the same concept.

So what does it mean? In its simplest form it is the idea that men and women should be paid the same level of wages for doing the work that they do in the paid labour force, even though men and women traditionally, and even now, have done different kinds of work. It is the idea that waitresses and truck drivers should have the same starting wage and should progress on the same kind of wage scale.

Although trade unions and governments (including Canada) had endorsed the concept of equal pay for work of equal value since the early 1950's, little practical change occurred in Canada until the mid 1970's.

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK DISTINGUISHED

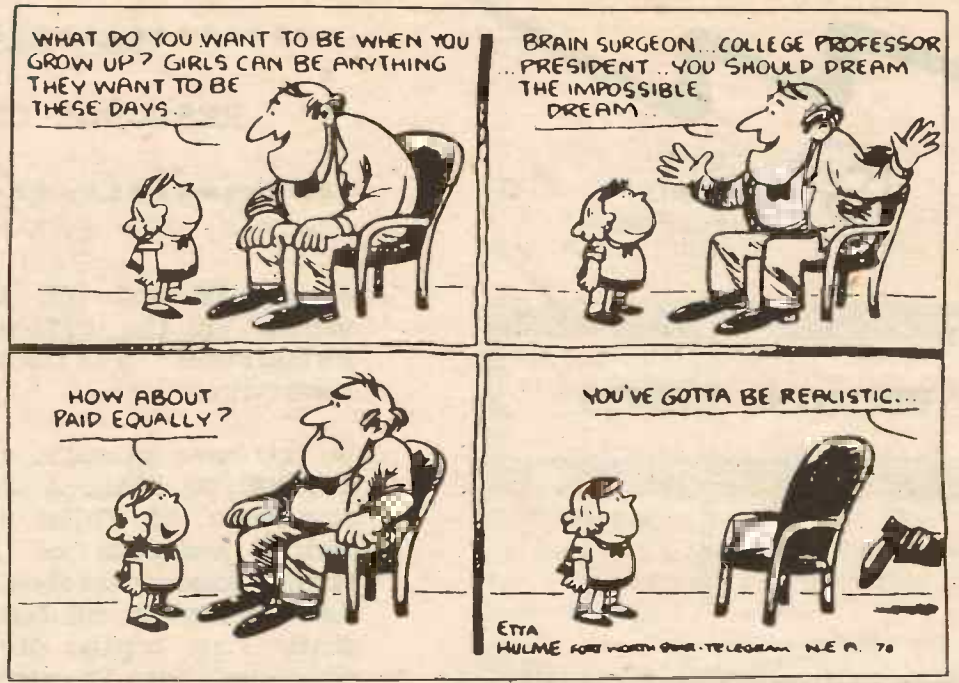
During this same period of time, women were also fighting for equal pay for equal work, so that when men and women did the same job they would receive the same pay. Until the 1950s it was very common for male and female account clerks (for example) to do the same job in the same company and be paid different wages. Teaching salaries were also significantly different for men and women. By 1951 Ontario and then other provinces had passed laws that required employers to pay men and women doing the same work the same wage. There were a few exceptions, seniority being one of them.

Why were laws like this necessary? The reasons are complex, for an excellent discussion, see the early chapters of Just Give Us The Money: A Discussion of Wage Discrimination and Pay Equity, and its thorough bibliography. (Just Give Us the Money - Women's Research Centre, Ste. 101, 2245 Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V6K 2E4, (604) 734-0485)

In summary, some reasons are women's limited participation in trade unions; the belief that men should be paid a "family wage" high enough to cover the needs of the family unit and that women therefore only needed enough to cover supplementary expenses (pin money); the fact that many women did the same work that was done, unpaid, in the home - cleaning, cooking, services, child care, etc.; and ultimately, the difference in wages was caused because employers could get away with it since not enough people objected strenuously.

EQUAL PAY FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE: THE CONCEPT

Although women's groups have supported and fought for implementation of equal pay for work of equal value (E.P.F.E.V.) systems, it is



not without its flaws. Men's wages have not traditionally been based on a logical, rational assessment of their value to an employer. Men fought for an average industrial wage based on the cost of living and raising a family, not on the intrinsic "worth" of the work being performed.

Many people also disagree with comparing the "value" of work... why should a garbage collector be paid less than an accountant? What notion of value should be used - value to an employer, value to society as a whole?

Also, at this time, neither employers or employees have experience "valuing" jobs. It requires an expert, a "job evaluation" consultant to train employers and perhaps also employees and union members to speak this new language.

There are fears that there is sex bias built into the theory and language of job evaluation in the same way that sex bias is built into so many facets of our society already and that women will therefore be fighting the same battles after learning the rules of this new industry.

Nevertheless, job evaluation within the parameters of the EPFEV concept has been endorsed and is now being implemented in Canada and many other countries. It will be a task for women to monitor this concept and determine if it has led to the achievement we fought for - namely, reducing the wage gap between men and women.

At present women earn 64¢ for every dollar that men earn when they both work full time. It has been calculated, in the Ontario Green Paper on Pay Equity, that wage discrimination accounts for approximately 10¢ to 12¢ of that wage gap and that in theory pay equity would therefore raise the wages of women overall by that amount.

However, since some employers are excluded (private sector employers with less than 10 employees) and since many workplaces will not have male groups against which to compare their female employees (ie hospitals, day care centres), it is unlikely that the wage gap based on wage discrimination will be closed.

THE CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

By the 1970s women's organizations had done the research to show how little women were paid for their full time work compared to men working full time. As the women's movement developed, a key component was

increasing women's economic power increasing our wages.

In 1977 the federal government added an equal pay for work of equal value provision to the Canadian Human Rights Code. Over the years since, it has been infrequently used. A major factor has been that it is a complaint-based system which requires an individual woman to make a complaint against her employer and follow through for a period of years while the complaint is investigated and decided. Most successful complaints were made by unions since they had the resources to do the research and the onus was not put on an individual woman to expose herself to the possible harassment, lack of promotion and a great demand on her that an individual complaint would bring.

By the 1980's several American states had implemented what they called "pay equity" which was the same concept implemented in a different form. An individual complaint system assumes that violations are the rarity and that most employers are complying with the law. Since we know that this is not the case and that most employers are not paying women equally, a different approach is necessary.

Minnesota devised a system for their state employees which assumed that all women's jobs needed to be looked at for pay discrimination. This system was adopted by Manitoba for their provincial employees and some other sectors (hospitals, etc.) and then by Ontario for all three sectors: all provincial employees, all broader public sector (hospitals, municipalities, school boards, colleges and agencies fully funded by the government); and private sector employers who have more than 10 employees.

Ontario's decision to implement pay equity came following years of active lobbying by the Equal Pay Coalition, women's groups and trade unions.

This is the first part of a 2 part article on pay equity. The second page, to be published next issue, will focus on the Ontario legislation and the impact that it is having on women's wages in the workplace.

Lynn Beak is a former member of the NORTHERN WOMAN JOURNAL collective, and has long been active in the women's movement.

Long Distance Delivery:

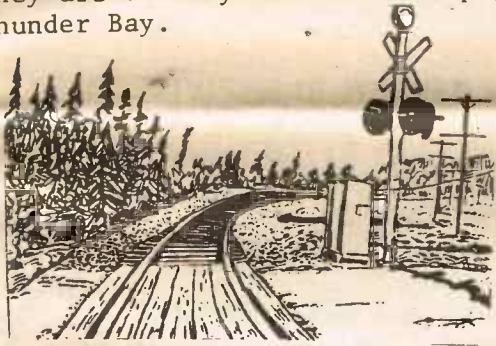
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regional model believe it ensures higher quality care and fewer baby deaths.

The unfortunate effect of the regional model is that it tends to centralize services in large urban hospitals. The result is that more women have to travel away from their home community to give birth, and that, as we learned from the women affected, is often a stressful experience. It means that women lose access to the more intimate, family-centred care offered in smaller hospitals.

Groups such as the Advisory Committee on Reproductive Care appointed by the Ontario Ministry of Health, caution in their 1988 report "Reproductive Care: Towards the 1990s", that routinely sending women to large regional hospitals is creating an unrealistic load for specialists. The committee suggests that if appropriate supports are put in place -- such as opportunities for doctors and nurses to strengthen their birthing skills-- quality care can be provided in smaller hospitals.

Not all community hospitals have withdrawn birthing services. In Red Lake for example, the doctors have a strong commitment to birth with as little intervention as possible. Women are able to labour and deliver in the local hospital. They are transferred only if there are medical reasons that would make it safer for them to be cared for in a larger hospital. They are usually sent to Winnipeg or Thunder Bay.



In the booklet we discuss some of the common medical reasons for a transfer. We hope this will give women the information they need to be better prepared and to know what questions to ask if they face this situation.

Before some obstetrical procedures can be done, there must be an operating room and adequate staff available for surgery if it is needed. This is true, for instance, if a woman chooses to have a VBAC -- vaginal birth after Cesarean -- where the possibility of a Cesarean is considered higher. It's also true if a woman has high blood pressure which cannot be controlled, leading to a condition called pre-eclampsia. Her labour may be induced. In both situations, safe obstetrical practice requires that a Cesarean section is planned for, just in case. If a small hospital cannot provide this surgical back-up, a woman would have to be sent to another hospital.

A woman from Sioux Lookout told us, "Never in our wildest dreams did we think that after doing so well I would run into problems 24 hours into labour. It was arranged for me to be transferred to Thunder Bay. I remember feeling panic at first, but I quickly relaxed. I was to fly on Bandage Five (the Ministry of Health air ambulance). This was reassuring because I am familiar with how well equipped it is."

Such things as diabetes, a history of premature delivery, or the fact that she is carrying twins can put mother and baby at risk. In these cases, both would benefit from careful monitoring in a hospital where specialists can act quickly if problems arise. More than likely a woman in this situation would travel to the large hospital well before her due date. Whether or not she made the trip by ambulance would depend on her condition.

Sometimes women choose to have an out-of-town birth. They may prefer to have access to pain medication, like an epidural, which may not be available in small hospitals. Others feel more confident knowing they will give birth in a large hospital.

This was the case for one woman from Red Lake. She had her second baby in Winnipeg because her first child needed an emergency transfer shortly after birth. "The doctors here are good, but they just don't have the equipment like they do in the city. My doctor and I agreed I would go to Winnipeg. If we ran into problems, the intensive care unit would be there. I was a lot more relaxed knowing that."

Can an out-of-town birth be a positive experience? Many women say they are glad they chose to travel away, especially if they or their baby needed specialized care. But most admit it was by planning ahead that they were able to make their birth a positive event.

For instance, it's not always necessary to go to the closest hospital to give birth. Going "home" to the community where family and friends can offer support before and after the baby arrives may be a better choice. A Sioux Lookout woman planned a VBAC with her second baby this way. She went to Hamilton, where she had family.

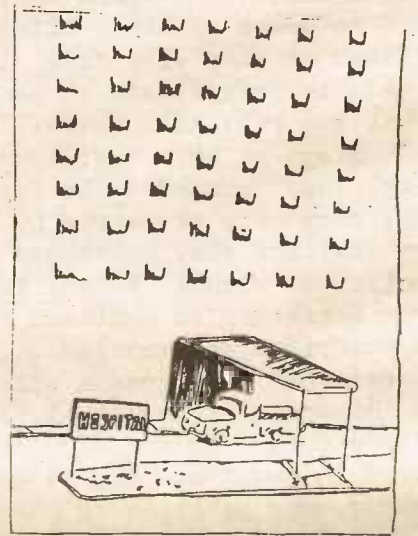
"I wanted to try a vaginal birth and they wouldn't give me a trial of labour here. I contacted a friend in Thunder Bay who is a midwife and she gave me the names of a couple of midwives in Hamilton. I went down when I was four or five months pregnant and found a midwife I really liked... It was worth it to me to go that far to have a vaginal birth. I didn't think VBACs were being done in Thunder Bay and didn't know anyone I could stay with. The birth was just wonderful. Cameron was born and we went home three hours later."

In planning an out-of-town birth, it's important for women to consider their needs. If others will be involved-- a partner or relative and older children -- what do they need? The plans a woman can make for



the care of older children may affect where the birth takes place and how long she may stay in hospital. And an out-of-town birth can be expensive. There are costs for travel, accommodation, and long-distance telephone calls.

"The doctor said make sure you take your Visa. Then we were on our own," recalled another Red Lake woman who was transferred for the premature birth of her first son. "My husband stayed at a hotel across from the hospital and he had to get meals. We had to pay for our own air fare home. If you don't want to sit in a car for five hours with a newborn, flying is the fastest way to get back. We figure it cost us between \$600 and \$800."



In Northern Ontario, if medical care is not available locally, the cost of travel to obtain that care is partially covered by the Northern Health Travel Grant. The program is administered by the Ministry of Health and applies to prenatal care and out-of-town birth. However, there are restrictions. The person claiming the grant must be a minimum of 250 kilometres away from the needed services. The grant doesn't cover a companion's travel costs, unless the patient is under 18 years of age. And the grant only applies if a patient sees a certified specialist. Some women have found they did not receive the grant if they went for prenatal visits with a general practitioner rather than an obstetrician.

Through all the conversations we've had with regional women, we know that having an out-of-town birth places extra demands on a woman at a time when she needs things to be less stressful. It's more difficult to find a doctor and investigate choices for the birth when it will take place far from home. It's harder to find out about hospital policy for labour and delivery. Even planning where to stay before the delivery is an added worry.

We've tried to address these concerns in the booklet with practical advice. We hope this will help to reduce the isolation women in out-lying areas feel as they plan for their birth.

Women have told us how important it is to ask questions and be firm about what you want. They feel it can make a difference of a woman tells those caring for her that she's from out-

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The Women's Movement and Struggles in the Philippines

The following article is taken from an address given by Nelia Sancho to the second Women's International Solidarity Affair in the Philippines (WISAP) held in 1987. Nelia Sancho is National Secretary General of GABRIELA.

Whenever historians discuss the status of women in the Philippines prior to the arrival of the Spanish colonizers, they usually paint a more egalitarian picture. Pre-colonial Filipino women, it is said, occupied a high social position. They enjoyed a large measure of freedom which was unknown to women of other Oriental countries. As they were free, they were able to participate in social, economic and political activities to the advantage of both individual and society. They commanded the respect of men; they were protected by the native laws and they possessed civil and political rights. Except in the Islamic societies in southern Philippines, marriage was monogamous, and women retained their names after marriage. Divorce was by mutual consent. Women could inherit and dispose of property in their own right. In some instances, the position of chieftain could be passed on to the eldest daughter. Also, many of the religious leaders of that day were women.

Colonization by Spain and the subsequent imposition of Catholic Spanish culture, which was very patriarchal and oppressive to women changed all this. If indeed, women's oppression was not the norm in pre-colonial Philippines, it became a socially held ideal during the 300 years of Spanish rule. Under the Spanish Civil Code, the rights of married women became severely restricted. Divorce was not allowed; women had no right of disposal over property brought into their marriages, could not engage in any outside economic activity without the formal consent of their husbands, and could hold no public office except that of teacher.

The almost wholehearted acceptance of the religion and culture of the Spanish moulded the values and attitudes of Filipino women, making it possible for them to internalize these values. Catholicism inculcated in them the notion of male superiority and endowed it with the strength of religious dogma. Relationships between males and females were regulated by an elaborate set of conventions, which effectively made the female the passive object of male. Women were segregated into the domestic sphere; although women of the peasantry still laboured by the side of males in the field, the dominant ethos was one in which they were economically non-active and socially non-initiating.



KINESIS

It is not surprising therefore, to find that an organized women's movement in the Philippines first stirred to life only towards the end of the 19th century. Conceived in the womb of the anti-colonial struggle against Spain and the U.S., one of the first women's groups to emerge was composed of enlightened women of the intelligentsia and other women of the upper classes. One of its leading members, Trinidad Tecson, was later to join the revolutionary war as a woman general.

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLES PAVED THE WAY FOR THE ARTICULATION OF WOMEN'S PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

Many other women participated in the anti-colonial revolutionary war in various capacities -- some as guerrillas directly engaging the enemy in battle, and others as members of auxiliary groups. Still others, like Melchora Aquino or Tandang Sora, quietly gave aid and succor to wounded revolutionaries, even at great risk to their lives. Today, we remember these courageous women and salute them for their invaluable contributions to the anti-colonial struggle.

Women's participation in these struggles also paved the way for the articulation of some women's problems and issues, such as their right to formal education. Later, but with the advent of the Fil-American War and the subsequent colonization of the Philippines by the U.S., free public education was extended to Filipino boys and girls as part of the general effort to quell the insurgency then being waged by Filipino revolutionary forces. While education succeeded in bringing women out of their homes, it did not lead women to question either their subordinate position within society and the family or the deeper roots of their and the people's oppression.

This method of captivating the minds of Filipinos through colonial education had its corresponding impact on the emergent women's groups at the turn of the century. On the one hand, it led to the creation in 1902 of the Liga Femenina de la Paz, which supported the U.S. forces "pacification drive" against Filipino insurgents. In reality, however, the "pacification drive" was a massive suppression campaign that led to the death and displacement of millions of Filipinos. The rise of such a woman's group signalled the beginning of a relatively long era of cooptation for the women's movement in the country.

Subsequent women's organizations advocated the right of women's suffrage. This latter development saw the formation of a women's movement whose main concern was to advance the women's right to vote and to achieve legal equality so that they could fully participate in the electoral processes as defined within the framework of U.S. sponsored elite democracy.



photo by Linda Ervin

KINESIS

The women's groups that followed, which engaged in socio-civic work and which were mainly led by elite women, tended to follow this general pattern of working within the existing social framework, with little or no effort to critically examine what lay at the root of women's oppression or of social ills. No genuine women's movement can be said to have existed during this period. What existed were aggregations of women whose efforts were not specifically directed toward the advancement of women's particular issues or problems. Except for the involvement of some women guerrillas and political activists in the Huk movement of the 50s, there were also no other systematic attempts to at least harness the participation of women on a massive scale for any significant social cause.

IN ADDITION TO RECEIVING LOW COMPENSATION FOR THEIR LABOR, WOMEN HAD TO CONTEND WITH SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

Meanwhile, women's oppression continued. As peasants, workers and poorly paid professionals, they frequently suffered even much more than the men of their own class. In addition to receiving low compensation for their labor, they had to contend with sexual harassment and discrimination. Since the vast majority of the unemployed and underemployed were women, this led to their economic and political marginalization and their treatment as second-class citizens. This situation in turn became fertile ground for the flourishing of dehumanizing and anti-women practices -- the commodification and sexual objectification of women in prostitution, pornography, mail-order brides and the trafficking of Filipinas. Within the family, women largely continued to be denied choices other than to perform the socially ascribed but limiting roles of wife, mother, or dutiful daughter. In many respects, elite Filipino women achieved, through education, the legal or social appearance of freedom. But in essence, they remained subservient beings, especially within the family and continued to suffer from the prevailing system of patriarchy.

It was in the late '60s and early '70s that a different kind of women's group emerged. The women's group, founded by political activist patriot and poet, Ma. Lorena Barros, was aptly named the Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA) or the New Women's Patriotic Movement.

The new groups' acronym, MAKIBAKA, which meant "struggle" was also an appropriate choice. For along with other national democratic organizations, this new group bannered the struggles of peasants, workers, the middle class intelligentsia and nationalist businessmen for a society free from the shackles of foreign domination, feudal oppression and state terrorism. MAKIBAKA sought to mobilize Filipino women in their millions to join the organized people's struggle for national sovereignty and genuine democracy. But more than this, MAKIBAKA also started to address the issue of women's distinct oppression and recognized that the Filipino people's liberation can never be accomplished without the liberation of women.

The imposition of martial rule in 1972 nipped in the bud MAKIBAKA's attempt to develop a revolutionary women's movement. MAKIBAKA's cause, however, stayed alive with the continued participation of thousands of women who undertook revolutionary work in various capacities. In both countryside and urban areas, women engaged in organizing and propaganda work in the underground and in the legal sphere. Not a few took the option to fight alongside their male comrades as guerillas of the New People's Army. Throughout the dark days of martial rule, women gave their share in suffering and struggle. Among the women who became victims of repressive martial rule was MAKIBAKA founder Ma. Lorena Barros, who was killed in 1976 while leading a squad of guerillas in the mountains.

In 1978, a number of courageous women, some of them involved in the suffrage movement in the 1930s, grouped themselves together in their collective disgust over the rampant frauds committed during the first parliamentary elections. The result is the Concerned Women of the Philippines.

But it was the Aquino assassination in 1983 and the heightened political and economic crisis that followed which spurred a massive political awakening among millions of Filipino men and women. Hitherto uninvolved members of the middle class joined those from grassroots organizations who had long been taking to the streets to demand basic changes. Among the first to protest the Aquino assassination were various women's groups, which held an all-women's march in October that mobilized 12000 women from all walks of life. This historical all-women's march demanded justice for Aquino and all victims of military repression and called for an end to the Marcos dictatorship.

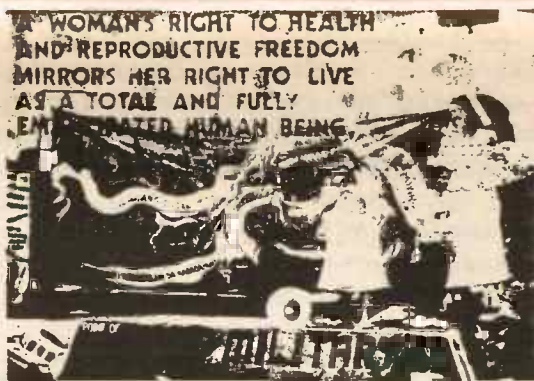
A few months later, in March 1984, politically active women from the ranks of workers, peasants, urban poor, professionals, and the business and religious sectors gave a new dimension to the celebration of International Women's Day by convening the General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership, and Action or GABRIELA. Again, the choice of GABRIELA as an acronym is a fitting tribute to the memory of a courageous woman, Gabriela Silang, who led one of the major uprisings against Spanish colonial rule in the 18th century.

GABRIELA REGISTERS A NAME IN THE MINDS OF THE PUBLIC THROUGH ITS CONSISTENTLY ACTIVE AND MILITANT PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL STRUGGLES FOR JUSTICE AND FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS ISSUES

GABRIELA has since grown, from an assembly that attracted mainly middle class women, into a national coalition of about 100 women's organizations, which span across the different regions and represent a cross-section of sectors and classes of Philippine society.

Ever since its birthing in 1984, GABRIELA has registered a name in the minds of the general public through its consistently active and militant participation in national struggles for justice and for women's rights issues. Immediately after its founding GABRIELA joined the forefront of the struggle of the Filipino people to topple the Marcos dictatorship.

Together with the revitalization in late 1986 of the underground women's group MAKIBAKA, the emergence of GABRIELA represents the highest point to date in the development of a Philippine women's movement. We now have a women's movement that, in the words of a sister in struggle, Maita Gomez "seeks to change a whole society, with a vision of the future where feudalism, imperialism, fascism and inequality for women will have been overcome".



Struggling to attain this vision has all the more become urgent for the progressive women's movement today. Like everyone else who actively supported the struggles against dictatorship, the Filipino woman was very hopeful that the new government installed to power in February 1986 would be able to effect the needed changes that would alleviate the oppressed conditions of Filipino women and men.

The new government did lift the restrictions on the press and on public assemblies, and freed the most prominent political prisoners from detention. It dissolved the rubber stamp parliament, formed a commission to draft a new constitution, repealed a number of decrees that were repressive to workers, and formally recognized the just causes of the armed struggle being waged by the New People's Army of the National Democratic Front.

The Aquino government then proposed the ceasefire policy with all armed groups engaged in insurgency. It went into peace talks and negotiations. The people's organizations, including GABRIELA and other women's groups, rejoiced then at what they thought to be a sincere desire of the government to solve the social causes of the insurgency. The women's groups showed their support for the peace process by forming a Women's Peace Committee. GABRIELA also joined other women in drawing up the "Women's Agenda for a Full and Lasting Peace" and presented this to the government and the NDF peace panels.

In presenting this agenda the women's groups declared: "We believe that the roots of insurgency - the unequal distribution of our resources and foreign control of the country - are the very same conditions that block the economic and political progress of Filipino women. Putting forward the women's agenda, therefore, helps not only in attacking the roots of insurgency, but also in seeking the broadest participation and support of women for just and basic social reforms that could lead then to a full and lasting peace."

THE WOMEN'S AGENDA CALLS FOR A SOCIETY THAT GUARANTEES WOMEN EQUAL RIGHTS WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE FAMILY, AND ENSURES FREEDOM FROM ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ABUSE AND HARASSMENT

The Women's Agenda calls for a self-reliant economy that undertakes comprehensive land reform and a nationalist industrialization program, especially as these pertain to addressing the issue of women's lack of control of resources or access to land and jobs which have led to their further marginalization and sense of powerlessness. The agenda also called for the exercise of full sovereignty and freedom from foreign intervention and control and the convening of a genuinely representative people's government, which should include women's representation at all levels. The women's agenda, too, calls for a society that guarantees women equal rights within and outside the family, and ensures freedom from all forms of violence, sexual abuse and harassment. It demands the women's basic right to have control over their own bodies, especially in decisions related to the number of children and use of contraception.

Under the new government, women's groups first sought to include these demands in the constitution that was being drafted in 1986. But the predominantly elitist and male dominated constitutional commission succeeded in diluting or delimiting these demands, retaining only a vague passage that refers to "recognition of women's equality before the law".



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The same demands were presented during the peace negotiations. But the peace talks broke down. Despite the existence of a ceasefire agreement, the Armed Forces of the Philippines began to press the civilian government for a more thoroughgoing counterinsurgency program. During the ceasefire period, peasant marchers seeking land reform were shot, killing 19 rallyists. The AFP was allowed to continue with its military buildup. Military campaigns in the guise of keeping day to day peace and order, continued to be launched in the countryside.

While it is true that prominent political prisoners were freed, hundreds still languished in jail. Among them is Miriam Dugay, a church social worker and community organizer, who was arrested without warrant in mid 1986. She has been ordered freed by a civilian court, but the military authorities continue to hold her in defiance of the court order. Neither Mrs. Aquino nor any other high government official has intervened in her behalf, despite several appeals for her release..

MILITARIZATION IS VERY MUCH A WOMEN'S ISSUE

With these recent developments, it has become more and more evident to people's organizations and women's groups that the Aquino government lacks the political will to institute basic social reforms being demanded by the deprived sectors of the society. It was also becoming clear to the organized basic sectors that as the Aquino government moves to strengthen parliamentary processes in the country by having a new constitution ratified and calling for new legislative and local elections, it has veered more and more towards defining itself as a government for the elite with a plethora of unfulfilled promises for the Filipino people.

OUR VISION OF A TRULY JUST, FREE AND EGALITARIAN SOCIETY WILL BE DIFFICULT TO ATTAIN SOLELY WITHIN THE FORMAL PARLIAMENTARY FRAMEWORK

While women's groups have formed the Kababaihan para sa Inang Bayan or KAIBA, a women's political party, to enter electoral politics and maximize whatever advantages this has to offer, a pragmatic assessment of the situation reveals that the fulfillment of our vision of a truly just, free and egalitarian society will be difficult to attain solely within the formal parliamentary framework.

For the progressive women's movement, this means reconvening the parliament of the streets, building up our own organized strength, particularly among grassroots women, securing step-by-step our demands as put forth in the Women's Agenda. Thus, it has to address vigorously, the need for equal rights in the political, economic, cultural and family spheres, and the demand of women workers, peasants and urban poor women for land, jobs, homes to live in and health to enjoy. The women's movement in the Philippines today see the resolution of these problems and demands as the cornerstone to create substantially women's development and empowerment.

Despite the patina of liberalism and popularity possessed by Mrs. Aquino's form of rule, her government has been gradually showing itself open, ready and unhesitating to utilize as much brutal force as the past regime had done, to enforce its will on the people. On February 8, 1987, Mrs. Aquino has instructed "soldiers" to push through with its military offensives against the insurgents. Two days after, despite her admonition to the Armed Forces to conduct military operations with "respect for the human rights of civilians" the massacre of 17 civilians took place.

Today, the progressive women's movement's capability to respond to the continued oppressive conditions of the women has to be developed. The women's keenness and sensitivity to their problems will inevitably lead women to expose and condemn harassment, and other forms of military abuse such as bombings, strafings, hamletting, forced evacuations, summary executions and arbitrary arrest. Militarization is very much a women's issue, especially in the countryside because women feel its exacerbating effects to women's poor health and state of malnutrition, lack of control and decision over her life, low and marginalized position both within the family and the larger society.

THE PHILIPPINES WOMEN'S STRUGGLE IS TO CHALLENGE AS WELL AS CHANGE PREVAILING VALUE SYSTEMS THAT CONTINUE TO RELEGATE WOMEN AS PASSIVE, SUBORDINATE OR AS SEX OBJECTS AND COMMODITY

I have presented, in a nutshell, the historical development of our women's movement and the full dimension of women's struggles in the Philippines. It is a complex struggle against foreign domination, feudal exploitation, fascist repression, and the unequal, patriarchal social structures that are oppressive to women. It is a struggle to expose the betrayal of our people by a seemingly liberal government that is in essence repressive and unresponsive to the plight of the disadvantaged and marginalized sectors including women. It is a struggle to rise above these fetters and develop the necessary strength to achieve our goals. And it is a struggle to challenge as well as to change prevailing value systems that continue to relegate women as passive, subordinate or as sex objects and commodity.

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The Red Maiden's Tale

by JOSIE WALLENIS

Did that Harmonic Convergence really happen?

What are we drifting towards?

How much do our visions empower us, how much do they blind us to reality?

I am frightened!

There are things happening in the cosmos, I have no doubt of that, but at this critical moment of consciousness, I refuse to take my feet off the ground, and I crave an honest debate.

I crave a debate between women who see the Patriarchy as the main root of oppression, and women like myself who see capitalism as the root. We are called "rads" and "reds" by some, including the Trading God-fathers who must be very happy about this division. Do the "rads" know that Ronald Reagan sent his daughter Maureen Reagan to the Nairobi conference at the end of the U.N. decade of women with instructions to keep the debate ON women, and OFF Peace and justice. The men who control that old fool know what they are doing. The debate between "rads" and "reds" surfaces and sinks, surfaces and sinks, but never sinks too far below the surface. We never do enough holding of hands to sink to the bottom together, to explore the slime at the bottom, to examine the roots together, to ask of ourselves if we are half wrong about things, or both right.

I remember a "rad", a good friend, who laughed at me once saying "If you had your socialism, men would still beat their wives". I remember reading Atwood's "Handmaid's Tale", her prophetic vision of the Patriarchy gone berserk. My hair stood on end when I read that. "Red" feminists have prophetic fears too though, and I want to write about them. In a strange kind of way I would almost rather want Atwood's tale to come true than mine, if either does, because if mine does, the Western Women's Movement gave birth to nothing, and I don't want to believe that.

The scene takes place in a courtroom in the year 2050 in the capital of Canadafreemercia, Ottawa.

There is a woman on trial, on a charge of sedition against freedom, a treasonable offence. She is being questioned by a woman prosecutor, in front of a woman judge, in front of an all woman jury. The women have blond hair.

She is the last huwoman to stand trial. All of the others have been tried before her, and found guilty of sedition against freedom.

Prosecutor. "I want to take you back to 1989, when you made a second visit to our part of the world Oil area no.15 Africamerica."

Victim. "yes".

Prosecutor. "At that time, you remember, we were getting rid of that terrible phenomenon terrorism. Why did you go to that area?"

Victim. "Because I believed that the newspapers were lying."

GASPS FROM EVERYBODY.

Prosecutor. "You didn't believe the newspaper, I see. What did you believe?"

Victim. "I am a huwoman, and I believed that I was watching the beginning of the North American Indian experiment in Africa. In 'Oil area 15 Africafreemercia' it was going to be done under the camouflage of anti terrorism, and in the South of the continent by the silence strategy."

Prosecutor. I am not talking about the silence, I am talking about terrorism. You admit, I hope, that terrorism, once the greatest human crime has been eliminated by US.

SILENCE.

Prosecutor. Do you admit that?"

Victim. "But in El Salvador...."

Prosecutor. "Objection your honour, it is illegal to call the 'Coffee area no. 4 Freemercia' by its old name."

Judge. "Sustained."

Prosecutor. "Thank you my lady. Now (turning to victim) are you aware, do you admit, that we, Freemercia, eliminated the crimes of terrorism that sprung from 'Oil area 15'."

Victim. "To my knowledge, the first move towards the Native American Indian experiment in Africa started with the blaming of the bombing of the Berlin discotheque by a Western European group on Libya, they said it was Libya who...."

Prosecutor. "Objection, illegal language."

Judge. "Objection sustained."

Prosecutor. Thank you. (turns to victim) you said that 'Oil area no. 15 Africafreemercia' was not responsible?"

Victim. "yes."

GASPS FROM EVERYBODY.

Prosecutor... "I see. I want to ask you if you condone what the leader of 'Oil area no. 15 Africafreemercia' did in the seventies and eighties of the last century?"

Victim. "You mean land distribution, education, social services and chucking out U.S. military bases?"

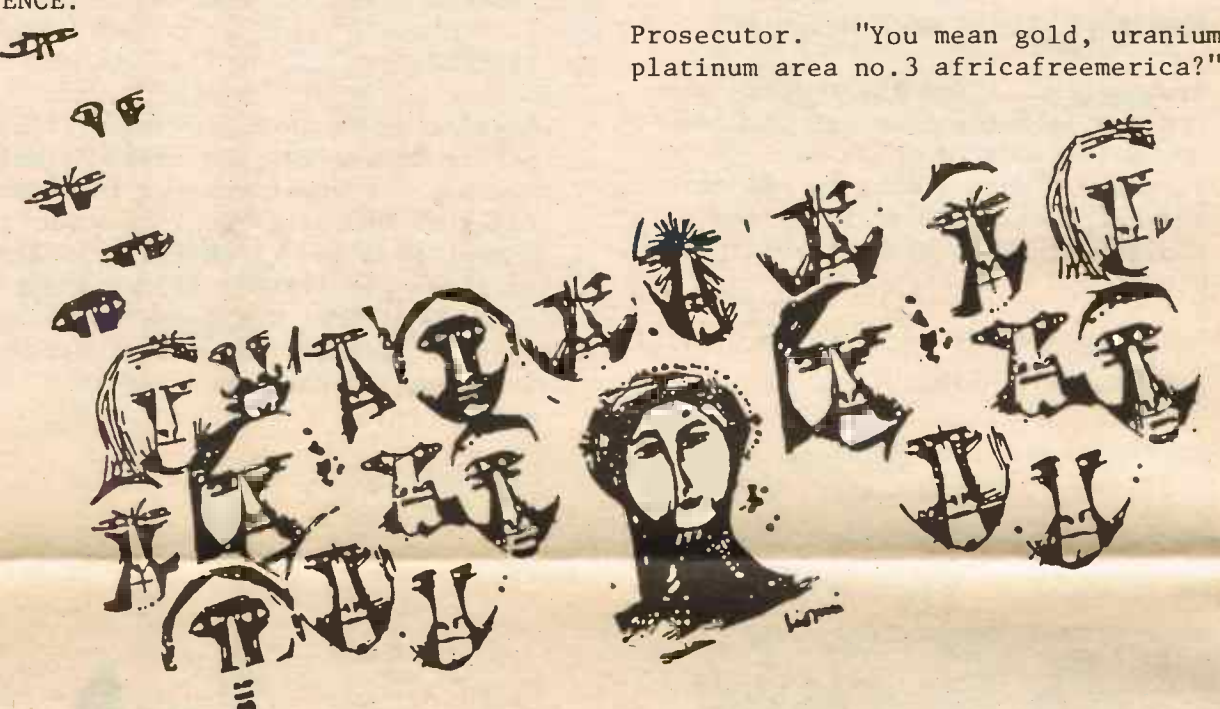
Prosecutor. "I mean terrorist acts."

SILENCE.

Prosecutor. "I would remind you that you are on trial for treason, and I am asking you if you condone the wanton acts of terrorism, the blowing up of civilian planes and the loss of white Freemercian blood?"

Victim. "And I am asking you about South Africa."

Prosecutor. "You mean gold, uranium, platinum area no.3 africafreemercia?"



Victim. "No, I mean South Africa before the silence."

Prosecutor. "Objection."

Judge. "Sustained."

Prosecutor. "I insist on an answer about your attitude to the crime of terrorism, the crime we have now eliminated."

Victim. "You know, I used to wonder what I would do if all my family was killed, and all my village bombed, and the only people who could stop it were the ones in America watching T.V. I mean to realize that you had to do something really terrible to get on T.V. I used to wonder in fact if there were a lot of potential huwomen watching T.V."

Prosecutor. "It is obvious that you condoned terrorism."

SILENCE. THE JUDGE NODS, THE JURY NODS.

Prosecutor. "Thank you, your silence speaks for you. Now I want you to explain to the jury why you visited 'Coffee Area n. 1 freemercia' in 1986?"

Victim. "You mean Nicaragua?"

Prosecutor. "Objection."

Judge. "Sustained."

continued pg 12



The Red Maiden's Tale

Prosecutor. "Thank you my Lady.
(Turns to victim) Why did you go to
that area?"

SILENCE. TEARS START TRICKLING DOWN
VICTIM'S FACE.

Prosecutor. "Why?"

Victim. "Because I believed in
dreams."

Prosecutor. "I am asking you if you
agree that it is better for all of us
that we now have free Plantation Areas
in Freemerica No. 1,2,3,4,5.

Victim. "No, I am a huwoman."

Prosecutor. "For the record, when
did you join the tribe of 'huwomen'.

Victim. "When I woke up one morning
and had a salty taste in my mouth, I
thought at first my mouth had been
bleeding."

GASPS OF DISGUST FROM ALL PRESENT
EXCEPT THE VICTIM.

Prosecutor. "Very well, we will
move onto the next question, your
attire. I see you have rags on?"

Victim. "I have always refused to
wear clothes from the Philippines."

Prosecutor. "Objection, illegal
language."

Judge. "Objection sustained."

Prosecutor. "You refuse to wear
clothes from 'Garment Area No. 6
Asiafreemerica?"

Victim. "Yes."

Prosecutor. "You know that that
area is the only source of clothing
for our women, that there were no
clothes made in Canadafreemerica af-
ter 1995. Do you deny our women the
freedom to be clothed?"

SILENCE.

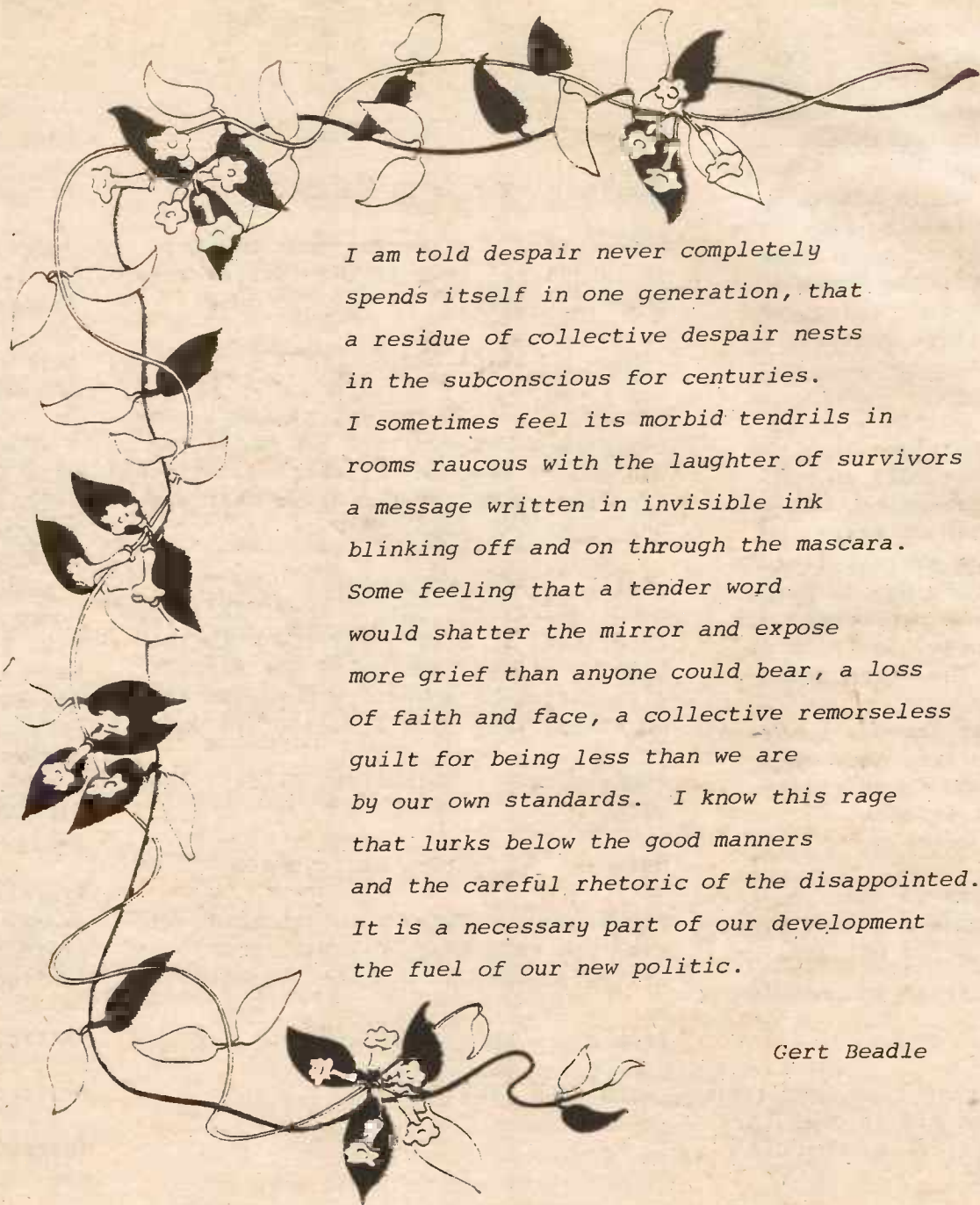
Prosecutor to jury. "Women, I have
before me a woman who calls herself a
huwoman who questions the fundamental
right of Canadafreemerican women to
decent food and clothing, a fundamen-
tal right and freedom gained after a
century of free struggle. She stands
accused of sedition against freedom,
I ask you to take your crystals out
and meditate."

THE JURY FILE OUT HOLDING THEIR CRY-
STALS, THE VICTIM TAKES OUT HER CRY-
STAL AND HER BODHRAN DRUM, AND SHE
STARTS TO STRUM AN OLD TUNE.

THE JURY FILES BACK, AND BRINGS IN
A VERDICT OF GUILTY OF SEDITION
AGAINST FREEDOM.

The National Anthem starts play-
ing, the National Anthem is a song
that became very popular in 1990. It
is called "Towards a Kinder and Gent-
ler Freemerica" and the victim is
led outside by two women jailers to-
wards the fire and towards the stake.
There are multitudes of people watch-
ing, fair families, gentle kind fam-
ilies, women, men, and children. The
air was pure as they had learnt to
sue for it, and they watched as the
victim flung her crystal away, clut-
ched tight her old Bodhran drum, and
walked into the flames to claim her
husisters, the others who had gone
before her.

*Josie Wallenius is an acoustic stor-
teller and a member of the G.G.W.W.
union (Global Guerrilla Women Worke-*



*I am told despair never completely
spends itself in one generation, that
a residue of collective despair nests
in the subconscious for centuries.
I sometimes feel its morbid tendrils in
rooms raucous with the laughter of survivors
a message written in invisible ink
blinking off and on through the mascara.
Some feeling that a tender word
would shatter the mirror and expose
more grief than anyone could bear, a loss
of faith and face, a collective remorseless
guilt for being less than we are
by our own standards. I know this rage
that lurks below the good manners
and the careful rhetoric of the disappointed.
It is a necessary part of our development
the fuel of our new politic.*

Gert Beadle

Long Distance Delivery:

continued from pg 7

of-town. The staff may not realize the effect the more impersonal atmosphere of a large hospital may have on people from small communities. And a woman may feel she has little support if family and friends aren't able to visit. In the booklet we stress the importance of asking for the care you need.

However, we see our booklet as a beginning. There's lots more work to do--work that women can do in their own communities. For example, sharing what you know about out-of-town birth with local women, perhaps during prenatal classes, can help women to be better prepared.

There is a need for more widely established support services for birthing women such as hostels for family members and coaches for women in labour. Write to your provincial member of parliament and the Minister of Health, stressing the need for these services. Letters, especially lots of letters, can make a difference.

Women need to join the current discussion about health care options in Ontario. The Advisory Committee on Reproductive Care recommends examining the role of midwife in providing birthing services in isolated areas. Working with other members of the Midwifery Task Force - Ontario is one way to strengthen the call for more birthing options.

Realistically, out-of-town birth is an issue that will stay with us. We know it shapes the birth experiences of many Northern women, indeed, women right across Canada. We are right to question its necessity. But we must also find positive ways to respond to its demands. We have taken as our motto a wise piece of advice from an Ignace woman. "Hope for the best, but plan for the worst." It's something every woman living in a small town might keep in mind as she plans for the birth of her child.

The booklet on out-of-town birth will be distributed free of charge during the summer of 1989 to public health units, nursing stations, hospitals and clinics throughout Northwestern Ontario. Individuals may obtain the booklet for the cost of postage.

The Midwifery Task Force-Ontario can be contacted at Postal Station 'T', Box 489, Toronto, Ontario M6B 5C2

Holly Rupert is the Red Lake coordinator of the Project on Out-of-Town Birth. She has worked on the project with the Thunder Bay coordinator, Dianne Lai. Both women have experienced out-of-town birth.

PATIENTS' RIGHTS GROUP

The founding meeting of the Thunder Bay Patients' Rights Group was held March 31, 1989. Anyone interested should contact Prue Morton, 344-2997 (evenings) or 345-4009 (days).

The group has received encouragement from the Patients' Rights Association and hopes to become a formal chapter soon. The Association acts as a patient advocate by assisting patients to get their grievance heard; to advocate easier, simpler and more equitable complaint procedures; and to promote among the public an awareness of their health rights and responsibilities.

The Thunder Bay Patients' Rights Group hopes to make information on patient rights widely known. Legal health care rights in Ontario include the right to treatment in an emergency, to refuse treatment, to voluntary informed consent, to an adequate standard of care, to choose one's own doctor, to treatment free from discrimination and to confidentiality. In addition, there are moral rights which are recognized by professional codes of ethics but which are not legally enforceable.

The Patients' Rights Association publishes a hand book "Patients' Rights in Ontario" and the Thunder Bay Group hopes to assist people to become aware of complaint procedures. Anyone interested should contact the group.

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RESOURCES

SEXUAL ASSAULT: NEW INFORMATION SERIES. 4 publications in a new series are now offered by the Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre. Titles include:

Sexual Assault: Information for Adult Survivors

Sexual Assault: Information for Families

Sexual Assault: Information for Partners and Friends

Child Sexual Assault: Information for Parents

These innovative and unique booklets are packed with information specific to each target group. Areas of discussion include: misconceptions about sexual assault and child sexual abuse; common reactions of the survivor and their supporters, and how survivors can get the help they need - including medical, legal, and emotional support concerns.

Written in a way that is non-threatening and easy to understand, each booklet is useful for anyone who has experienced sexual assault or wishes to support someone who has. Professional and non-professional helpers alike will find these booklets a valuable resource to enhance the service they already provide.

Individual copies are available at \$1.00 each plus postage and handling. Order from Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre, 1945 Linden Avenue, Victoria, B.C. V8V 4H3

WEN-DO CHALLENGED

Wen-Do Women's Self Defence Corporation is fighting a complaint of sexual discrimination before the Ontario Human Rights Commission. The complaint was brought by a male black belt in judo who is a representative of a men's groups called "In Search of Justice".

The Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) has agreed to assist Wen-Do in its response to this complaint. LEAF believes that Wen-Do's women-only policies are specifically designed to promote women's equality and therefore do not violate human rights legislation.

If Wen-Do wins, they will have successfully protected their right to remain a women-only organization and will have strengthened the interpretation of the Ontario Human Rights Code as a protection of traditionally disadvantaged groups, such as women.

If the Human Rights Commission rules against Wen-Do and allows woman-centred education and support groups to be forced to admit men, men may also gain access and rights to run women's shelters and rape crisis centres... where women go when they are most vulnerable and need the support of other women.

BOOK REVIEWS

Reviewed by ALICE RIIVES-SABOURIN

HONOUR THE SUN by Ruby Slipperjack,
Pemmican Publications, Winnipeg, 1987

The story begins with innocence, simple living and rich day to day experiences of a young Native girl in 1962. The descriptive and often humorous escapades of snuff chewing, legend telling and ritualistic blueberry picking would ring a warm light of familiarity to anyone from that special time and place of Northern Ontario.

As a reader I was touched and impressed with the portrayal of characters special in HONOUR THE SUN, people the author describes are very real and important figures to Native people. The delicate interplay of roles between herself, her sisters, cousins and aunt and especially her mother clearly articulates how and why 'The Owl' has a strong sense of who she is - unafraid, open and very much belonging to the world which she so animatedly enjoys.

And then it happens. The confusing disparity between the steadfast relationships between 'The Owl' and her immediate family and the almost benign hatred she comes to experience towards neighboring men who upon returning from work go on terrorizing night rampages during drunken stupors. The killing of 'Rocky' followed by an almost fatal entrapment by a town bully marked the end of innocence for 'The Owl' who now knows the meaning of fear and powerlessness.



RFR

The summer of '62 continues on despite the harsh exploits of the returned workers. As the chapters progress 'The Owl's' character is revealed as being very much in control over her reactions particularly in painfully antagonizing circumstances where she becomes embarrassed, threatened and challenged. I could feel myself getting angry at the 'jokes' played on her by her brother Wess. In each event 'The Owl's' mother does not attempt to intervene or reprimand her older son for his tricks. Survival and control are taught in ways that perhaps appear to be cruel and harsh. However, to protect and defend 'The Owl' would be unrealistic as in most communities such as this where children are often left to defend themselves, to run behind the skirt of her mother pleading victim would have been viewed as childish and weak. Respect is given to those capable of enduring, a prerequisite for surviving in the North.

The silent link between 'The Owl' and her mother is maintained giving the reader a pleasant feeling in realizing the power of ability 'The Owl's' mother had as teacher, leader, provider, particularly as it is done with very little conflict. The children know their place and their responsibilities, they have trust in their mother knowing any task asked of them will be within the bounds of their ability.

This confidence and conditioning for control is probably one of the most misunderstood and misinterpreted characteristics of Native people. The toughness of 'The Owl' coupled with the respect and kindness shown to her family is what will see her through the diversions in lifestyle in later years come the infiltration of alcohol dependency in her community and within her own family.

Ruby Slipperjack continually speaks of the advent of the 'Whiteman' including Christmas trees, skating, and linoleum flooring. Sometimes it hints of excitement and enthusiasm of these inventions. What was evident

throughout the journal was the economic disparity between the standard of living of that community as compared to modern day consumer oriented society that is very wealthy for some people. In living on a reserve and being familiar with the differences in culture I would venture to state that even with the coming of consumerism in our capitalistic society, Native communities remain separate from that realm of existence. The economic conditions of Native communities are not very good and Ruby Slipperjack notes very thoughtfully and without judgement these differences. What is lost in many Native families is the unity and leadership which was illustrated in 'The Owl's' life. Time passes with the seasons leaving her separated from her past security only to face the undefined future.

The quiet deterioration of collectivity is marked by her mother's involvement to excess with alcohol. With silent strength 'The Owl' becomes increasingly detached from her community and the once very loving bond between her and her mother. The determination not to follow is not unfamiliar among Native people. The courage to continue to move forward is the most powerfully pronounced characteristic in 'The Owl' and perhaps in Ruby Slipperjack herself. Reading this book reminds me and enlightens me of the strength of individuals who can foresee their vision despite circumstances beyond their control. The pain of her alcoholic community is softened by the love she has for her mother and the bitterness is perhaps prevailed by the nature of her surroundings. "Honour the Sun for shining on your face and pray it will acknowledge you and bless you each morning." (The Owl mother to The Owl.)

Alice Riives-Sabourin is a traditional contemporary Ojibway woman who enjoys people, music and writing.

reviewed by PRUE MORTON

CHILDBIRTH: What You Need To Know
And Your Doctor Won't Tell You

by Rosemarie Tugwood
Manitowadge, Ontario: Great Spirit
Writers, 1989

This book begins by telling of the positive birthing experiences Rosemarie Tugwood experienced herself, first in helping her mother to give birth to her fifth child in an air raid shelter in England, then in giving birth to her own first child with the help of a midwife, also in England, and lastly, in giving birth to her other three children with the

help of a small town doctor who agreed with her determination to have her babies at home.

The rest of the book is taken up with descriptions of the many medical practices, often unnecessary and counterproductive, to which doctors subject women and their babies during pregnancy and childbirth. The medical establishment, which isn't even well trained to assist what should be a normal natural process, have managed to transform it into an ordeal where the doctor is the only authority and the women's wishes are often considered unimportant.

The book presents very clearly the many faults of the "medical model" but it is outside its scope to document scientific evidence to back

up its arguments. It would be well worth reading by any pregnant woman who has a chance to influence the kind of care she will receive. But it won't convince the doctors, and if a woman wants to have a "natural" birth she had better find knowledgeable support people as well as good reading material, or she will probably be disappointed. If, as seems likely, midwives become officially licensed in the near future, this is more likely to be available, and women everywhere are becoming more knowledgeable. A very timely book.

Prue Morton is secretary of the Thunder Bay Health Coalition and a member of the Patient Rights Group

BOOK REVIEW

Reviewed by KIT MINOR

Many Tender Ties, Sylvia Van Kirk, Watson and Dwyer Publishing Co., 1986.

I had very much looked forward to reviewing this book which traces the role of women in the fur trade from 1670 to 1870. While I found the text informative, I was disappointed that the author did not attempt a clear feminist perspective, nor did she include the perspective of Native women. Van Kirk relies on the journals and writings of the men who were involved in the trading. I would suggest that she may have added a great deal to the perspective of women in the book if she had personally interviewed some of the elder Indian, Dene and Metis women residing in the Northern provinces, and the Northwest Territories. My own experience in these areas and personal contacts with elder women, whose grandmothers and great grandmothers had passed on detailed information about their role in the fur trade, leads me to believe that such information would have added a wealth of insight and understanding from the perspective of the women and their involvement in the fur trade.

Van Kirk does provide detailed analysis and information as to the activities of the early fur trade, and particularly focuses upon the Indian and Metis women. She emphasizes their role in aiding in the survival of the traders and trappers. The women possessed a wealth of information in the survival techniques of the land. A relationship between an Indian woman and a trader brought with it these knowledges and certain securities, for the trader, as it created a social bond between the trader and the kinship network of the Indian woman. This enhanced the traders security in securing furs from the group. Van Kirk states that initially the trader adapted to the customs and practices of the people. However, I don't believe that her analysis really reflects the patriarchal and capitalistic benefits which the trader enjoyed when he assumed these customs and practices and married à la façon du pays.

The role which the Indian women played in the fur trade is really quite incredible, but Van Kirk seems to glide over this. The women were the teachers of the language and customs of the Peoples. They had the skills of tanning, making moccasins, and lacing snowshoes, all arts which were essential to the survival of the trader; but that Van Kirk does not seem to give credit as to how detailed and fine these skills were. The women provided the essentials of nutrition, such as pemmican. And in times of starvation, it was the Indian women whose skills and knowledge of the land secured the food. The Indian women were strong and able to assist the trader during his journey. She was a trapper of small animals, such as the valuable marmot and thus increased the wealth of the trader. She was also often interpreter and peacemaker.

Van Kirk does provide some information about the Chipewyan woman Thanadelthur. This woman became very important as a guide, integrater and peacemaker between the Chipewyan, the Northern Cree and the Nor'Westers.

Van Kirk does emphasize the strength and gives us some clue as to the brilliance of this woman, but she also provides an undercurrent that Thanadelthur became arrogant and self-serving, which detracts from the wisdom and skills of Thanadelthur.

Van Kirk states that "There can be no doubt that, on a material level, life in a fur-trade post offered an Indian woman an easier existence" (pg.80). However, this statement is either from her own perspective or that of the traders, whose journals she quotes. Perhaps, it was just different, and perhaps the indignities that the Indian women had to suffer, particularly when they were abandoned for Metis women, who were later abandoned for the white women, were far more difficult than traditional Indian life. The Indian women were encouraged to take on a European life style while at the fur-trade post. They mothered from eight to twelve children, three to four times as many as the Indian women who remained with their tribes. With the birth of these children came the confusion of cultural upbringing, and often the children, particularly the sons were sent away to be "civilized" and educated.

The children of the union between Indian women and Euro-men became the mixed blood, or the Metis. Many of these Metis women were educated in the customs of the mother and the "civilized fashion" of their fathers. That is they know the traditional cultural ways of the Peoples, but they could dress in the fashion which the traders wanted i.e. European dress. Van Kirk writes "the European traders sought to outfit their women in civilized fashion and to inculcate in them the precepts of Christianity and proper womanly behaviour" (p.102). The authors fails to analyze, from either a feminist perspective or a Indian/Metis/Dene perspective, the blatant racism and sexism contained herein. Further she does not analyze, the tragic racism when these traders abandoned their Indian wives for the Metis women. She does however give some clue as to the patriarchal nature of the relationship between the traders and the Metis women. And then on the following page (p. 122), she states "with the emergence of the mixed blood wife, the trend was the formation of lasting and devoted marital relationships". Again I remind the reader that Van Kirk secured her information from the journals and writings of the men. I really wonder what the women would have said, or the grand-daughters of those women, whom Van Kirk could have interviewed. I don't mean to imply here that there were not healthy and "devoted marital relationships", I am sure some were. But I really do wonder what the women of the Peoples have to say here. Van Kirk seems to expend a great deal of energy, and pages, extolling the wonderful and caring aspects of these traders towards the Indian and Metis women. She seems to forget that the traders tremendously benefitted from these unions, nor does she adequately analyze what these benefits were, nor in what frame of reference these benefits were secured. The fact seems to be that the

lighter the skin colour, the more European the ways, the more attractive the women of the Peoples became to these men. Could the Metis women who grew up within their father's home, who were "educated" and "Christianized", return to the rich and wise customs of the Indian women who chose to remain within the Indian groups? I guess the questions here are could they return, would they be wanted, and would they know the ways?

Van Kirk cloaks the blatant racism and sexism, and seems to say it was okay because they really were nice men who really loved their wives, and gained nothing more from the union than a devoted family. It seems to me that the traders took a wealth of information, including the customs, and language of the Peoples from these women. In short they were educated by these women, who I have no doubt cared for these men, for the most part. If the traders felt so devoted to the Metis wives, why then, after they had been educated by the women, and with the arrival of white women, did they leave the Metis women for the European women? Granted this was not the case in all the relationships, nor perhaps the majority but, it happened significantly; so that many Metis women suffered an incredible displacement. Now they were neither Indian, nor white, and that confusion must have been an incredible, lonely burden to bear. Van Kirk again skims over this. Van Kirk does give evidence of numerous bondings which were wholesome and caring, but she just doesn't seem to represent the other side of the coin. And from my own contacts and experiences of living with Native groups, for most of my adult life, I know there is another critical part to this story, and basically that is the story of the Indian/Dene and Metis women.

In the final two chapters Van Kirk does begin to attend to the racism and sexism put upon the Indian and Metis women. But she also seems to indicate, particularly in the final chapter, the benefits to the Metis of acculturation, that is the benefits of the Metis taking on all the cultural traits of the Europeans, thus losing the richness of their Indian heritage.

Having read this book, I was extremely disappointed in Van Kirk's very Euro-Canadian attitude towards the traditional wisdoms, skills and abilities of the women of the Peoples. It just seems that she missed the point, and the strengths of these women. I would refer the reader to a more succinct version of some of the traumatic events which took place during the fur trade. This can be found in Ron Bourgeault: *The Development of Capitalism and the Subjugation of Native Women in Northern Canada* in *Alternate Routes* Vol. 6: 1983. Carleton University. Bourgeault, writing from a pro-feminist perspective, exposes the fur traders as capitalistic adventurers. He further provides an excellent critique of the struggles and trauma which confronted the women most affected by the fur trade: the Indian and Metis women.

Kit Minor is a member of the NORTHERN WOMAN JOURNAL collective.

Books for Summer Reading

by MARGARET PHILLIPS

Summer reading tastes frequently turn to fiction and this issue we wish to introduce lesser known Canadian novelists and short story writers whose words deserve to be heard.

JANICE KULYK KEEFER is receiving critical acclaim for her first novel, *Constellations*, which "demonstrates an abundant talent... bold, riveting and beautifully executed".

JANET TURNER HOSPITAL's most recent publication, a short story collection, is *Dislocations*. Winner of the Seal Books First Novel Award (1982) for *The Ivory Swing*, Hospital is also author of the excellent *Tiger in the Tiger Pit*, and *Borderline*, which is one of the most moving and amazing novels I have read.

Book titles intrigue me. The *Late Great Human Road Show* is Paul-ette Jiles most recent novel. Jiles, who is best known for her poetry, now resides in B.C. but at one time lived in *Sioux Lookout*.

Two novels by Alberta writer SUSAN HALEY have received fine reviews. *A Nest of Singing Birds* is said to be "a highly polished piece of fiction, the kind of debut that make publishers and critics share a sense of discovery", while in *Getting Married in Buffalo Jump* "her characters breathe and glow inside their excited talk and eccentricities."

DIONNE BRAND has a collection of short stories *Sans Souci*. Brand, born in the Caribbean and now living in Toronto has published a number of books of poetry and is presently working on an oral history of black working women in Ontario.

DONNA E. SMYTH, a Nova Scotia peace and environment activist, has combined her writing talents and activism in the innovative novel *Subversive Elements*. Smyth has also published *Quilt*.

CYNTHIA FLOOD of Vancouver has been active in the women's movement and left politics since 1970. Her story collection *The Animals in Their Elements* was published in 1987.

Mystery fans will be delighted with the work of EVE ZAREMBA. Her latest book *Beyond Hope*, follows the highly acclaimed *Work for a Million*.

Manitoba author CAROL SHIELDS (*Various Miracles*, *Happenstance*, *A Fairly Conventional Woman*) has also turned her talents to mystery with the publication of *Swann*.

Winner of the W.H. Smith Books in Canada first novel award is MARION QUEDNAU for *The Butterfly Chair*... "so imaginative and informed as to be exceedingly rare in a first novel".

Interest in women's writing has encouraged the reprinting of earlier works (e.g.) *In Due Season* by CHRISTINE VAN DER MARK ... "a classic and highly acclaimed 1947 novel about northern Alberta..." with a new introduction by DOROTHY LIVESAY, while *The Stairway* by ALICE A. CHOWN, first published in 1921 has been re-issued.

There are many exciting Quebec women writers whose work is beginning to be made available in English. JOVETTE MARCHESSAULT's *Lesbian Triptych* has been translated by YVONNE M. KLEIN.



Many Saskatchewan writers are emerging. BONNIE BURNARD's *Women of Influence* won the Saskatchewan Writers Guild major award for fiction in 1986, and SHARON BUTALA was a 1985 Governor General's Literary Award nominee for *Queen of the Head aches*.

Fantasy devotees will be delighted to discover BARBARA SMITH's *Renewal: The Prophecy of Manu and Renewal: Teonis Giveaway Book Two*.

Another Seal Books First Novel Award winner (1986) is JOANNE WILLIAM BENNETT for *Downfall People*.

Other short story collections to look for include: *Mohawk Trail* by BETH BRANT; *If Only We Could Drive Like This Forever*, by ELISABETH HARVOR; and *Stories by Canadian Women and More Stories by Canadian Women* edited by ROSEMARY SULLIVAN.

The growth of Canadian women's writing is so wonderful to experience. In case you have missed them, we will also mention a few of the works of some of our established writers.

JOAN BARFOOT: *Abra*, *Duet for Three*.

ANNE CAMERON: *Daughters of Copper Woman*, *Dzelarons*, *Child of Her People*, *The Journey*.

MARIAN ENGEL: *The Glassy Sea*, *Bear*, *The Honeyman Festival*.

MAVIS GALLANT: (newest work) *In Transit*.

KATHERINE GOVIER: *Fables of Brunswick Avenue*, *Random Descent*.

ALICE MUNRO: *Progress of Love*, *Dance of the Happy Shades*.

JANE RULE: *Desert of the Heart*, *Outlander*, *Theme for Diverse Instruments*, *Memory Board*.

AUDREY THOMAS: *Goodbye Harold*, *Goodluck*, *Real Mothers*, *Intertidal Life*.

ADELE WISEMAN: *Crackpot*.

Margaret Phillips is a member of the NORTHERN WOMAN JOURNAL collective and owner of the Northern Woman's Bookstore

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