

International Women's Day Committee newsletter

October 1983

Dear Sisters:

March 8th, International Women's Day, might seem like a long way away. But every year in the March 8th Coalition, which usually begins in January, women lament the strains of not enough time. We in the International Women's Day Committee have, for the past five years, got the Coalition rolling by sending out a letter to women's groups across the city, inviting them to join in a coalition to plan and carry out IWD celebrations. This year, in an attempt to reach more women earlier, we are publishing this letter in Broadside and in this newsletter.

Although the numbers attending the IWD rally, march and fair have grown each year, we are also aware that there are improvements to be made in the coalition process, outreach and in the events themselves. Making changes takes time. That is why we are calling on you now to discuss this proposal in your groups, with your friends, and come with your ideas to help begin the 1984 March 8th Coalition in early December.

This year we've decided to propose some changes in the coalition process in order to improve the effectiveness of our outreach. We suggest that we dispense with the long, arduous discussions which have in the past six years produced longer and longer leaflets (to the point where they could more accurately be called pamphlets!) Since most women find them unreadable and boring, it is a most ineffective way to reach women. The discussions of the leaflet have had one function, however. They have enabled us to figure out what we can all agree on--what March 8th will be trying to get across that year--as our basis of unity.

So what we are proposing is a shorter discussion on the specific themes and demands out of which a short, snappy outreach leaflet would be written. We could also use the time gained to organize women to speak in schools, clubs, union locals, etc. about March 8th and the themes we are highlighting.

Our proposal is this:

That we have an overriding slogan like that one we used in 1980 (Bread and Roses in the 80's). "Rising Up Strong" and "Rise Up!" have been suggested as possibilities. We propose three themes: Choice, Jobs and Peace; and that the demands be: Legalize Abortion Clinics and Stop Violence Against Women, for the Choice theme; No to Wage Controls and Unemployment, Yes to Affirmative Action and the Right to Unionize, for the Jobs theme; Refuse the Cruise and US Out of Central America, for the Peace theme.

We propose a week of events which will culminate in the rally, march and fair on Saturday, March 10. For the evening events during the week, we propose that workshops and/or public forums highlight the major themes.

We are hoping that at the first coalition meeting, on December 7, we could reach a decision about themes and demands, as well as set in motion workgroups for the leaflet, publicity/outreach, and planning for future coalition meetings.

We emphasize that the proposals in this letter are just that, and will be discussed and decided upon at the December 7 meeting and other coalition meetings. We encourage all women who want to join the coalition, either as individuals or as representatives of a group, to attend the December 7 meeting.

The first coalition meeting, December 7, will be held at the Metro Library, 789 Yonge Street, just north of Bloor, at 7:30 pm. If you have any questions, or would like to give us feedback, call Mariana Valverde at 532-8989, or write us at Box 70, Station F, Toronto, M4Y 2L4

In sisterhood,

International Women's Day
Committee



IWDC AND THE PEACE MOVEMENT

At our June Conference, an ad hoc IWDC Peace Group (a.k.a. the "Peace Gang") was formally created. The formation of the ad hoc grouping of women active in the peace and disarmament movement was, for the most part, a recognition of the involvement of six IWDC women in the October 22 Campaign.

IWDC has always been in support of, and to some degree maintained involvement in the disarmament movement. In the Fall of 1982, Mariana Valverde and Judy Rebick presented an educational on the peace issue which outlined many of the political debates occurring within the movement.

The work of the ad hoc Peace Group reflects the increasing recognition of the peace and disarmament issue as a priority for socialist feminists. IWDC supported the adoption of the Peace theme for International Women's Day 1983, as well as the well-attended forum on "Women's Liberation, Disarmament and Anti-Imperialism" --both of which came out of the growing concern and awareness within the women's movement.

The IWDC Peace Gang has been constituted to work on the specific task of organizing for October 22. We will be evaluating our involvement in the Campaign sometime early in November, which will to a great degree determine what work we take on next. Some of us have indicated a desire to maintain our involvement in the peace and disarmament movement. Our preliminary discussions have centred on the need to find a structure within which to base our work. The final decision about where to go, and the degree of IWDC formal involvement, can be made only after an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the involvement of IWDC women in the October 22 Campaign.

It is clear from any look at Canada-wide political activity that the two issues mobilizing the most people are the abortion and the peace questions. IWDC is playing an important role in the abortion issue, and is beginning to assume an important role in the peace and disarmament issue as well.

Currently, the Peace Gang is comprised of Linda Gardner, Cathy Laurier, Susan Prentice, Mariana Valverde, and Wendy Wright. We welcome participation, questions, and comments.

-- Susan Prentice
(536-0478)

THE ARMS RACE IS A WOMEN'S ISSUE

We are all frightened by the potential devastation of a nuclear war. But even today, we are suffering from the economic effects of militarism. Over the past 3 years, our government has cut social services in order to finance a military budget which has increased 60%. For every dollar cut from education and health, \$1.10 has been added to military spending.

Women have been laid off, and have had their wages controlled. Many of us have been forced back into the home for lack of childcare and other support services. We need to ensure that human needs are funded.

The same governments that are denying women our right to work and live as we choose are also arrogantly ignoring the wish of the majority of Canadians to live peacefully. While 80% voted in local referendums in favour of disarmament, the federal government is pushing ahead on testing the Cruise missile.

There are many links between peace activists and feminists activists, not the least of which is that when we fight for our rights we are subject to police surveillance, harassment, and arrests. Our movements will both be stronger if we actively support one another in our common struggle for peace, jobs and freedom.

Women around the world are struggling for their rights as women and in many cases also for their very lives. Over 10 million people have died in more than 150 wars since 1945. The struggles for national self-determination and for women's rights have been held in check by the military aggression of the superpowers. The peace movement in its struggle to end this kind of intervention offers hope to people everywhere struggling for self-determination.

The peace movement is a vital and growing force for social change. Our concerns as feminists are being heard: but to be fully integrated, the continuing presence and support of the women's movement is necessary.

On October 22, women in 26 Canadian cities and around the world will be marching to REFUSE THE CRUISE. In Toronto, we invite you to JOIN THE WOMEN'S CONTINGENT!

-- reprinted from an October 22
Campaign leaflet

WOMEN AND THE ARMS RACE

Over Our Dead Bodies is an interesting book which reflects the thinking of many women involved in the peace movement. Although published in Britain, much of it applies to Canada, both because of the dependence of the two countries on the U.S., and also because there are many similarities in our peace movements.

This anthology, published by the feminist press Virago, is aimed at the general woman reader. It does not claim to have a high level of political analysis, but inevitably, there are assumptions and theories. I will focus on the flaws I find in these, leaving aside the excellent factual presentations.

One of the main problems is that many of the articles tug at the old maternal heart-strings to make women upset about the arms race: women are the nurturers, men are the warriors, therefore it is up to women to save humankind. This is not done totally from a conservative perspective (as was often the case in the early women-for-peace movement of the turn of the century). There are good analyses of how the macho psychology affects not only the military but also all aspects of civilian life. Nevertheless, the maternalism is always there under the surface. It seems to me that our own lives are worth something, regardless of how many of the eggs in our wombs ever make it into children.

The other main problem is that the perspective of the book is generally middle-class and always ethnocentric. Dorothy Thompson--who, on the other hand, contributes a good piece on the links between militarism and the growing threats to civil liberties--begins an article by saying that she didn't think Britain was a militaristic nation, until the Falklands War gave her pause. Well! East Indians and Africans, not to mention the Irish, have a different interpretation of British history. This is more than just "forgetting" to include a token Third World piece: this is swallowing the Rule Britannia myth whole.

This glaring weakness is a reflection of the narrow focus of the current European disarmament movement: it is only concerned with nuclear arms. Napalm in Guatemala, or cluster bombs in Lebanon, are not its concern. Public attention is thus directed to nuclear missiles--and away from the less apocalyptic but more immediate dangers of non-nuclear American intervention.

The narrow focus on a humanist call to save Europe from nuclear blight also cuts off feminist contributions, or limits them to the "calling all mothers" approach. To understand the links between women's oppression and the current arms race we have to look not only at this evil object, The Bomb, but at the whole spectrum of social relations that underlie it. We have to look at the connection between the monopolies that dominate the arms industry and the current crisis of the manufacturing sector; we have to look at the relation between massive cuts in social services

and the rise of a bootstrap individualism that pushes armies of women into the home to do what the welfare state used to do.

A profound analysis of the ideological links between women's oppression and militarism has not yet been produced. Such an analysis would have to go beyond the abstractions about male violence as the cause of war; today's hot and cold wars are not exactly unplanned outbursts of individual aggressiveness. A critique of the male ego, such as radical feminists have contributed, helps us to understand why individual soldiers go along with the system, or why destruction is ideologically acceptable. But it does not explain just what caused the war in Lebanon, or the reasons for the current hysteria about the Korean airliner. In order to concretely understand the causes of war and the reasons why the arms race goes on, we have to understand the relationship between women's oppression and Cold War anti-communism--a topic I have yet to see discussed.

More headway has been made in examining the material and economic reasons for the arms race. The most interesting thing in this category is an article by Mel Watkins and Ernie Regehr in Canada and the Nuclear Arms Race. This is a thorough look at the *raison d'etre* of militarism as an economic fact, with some original insights on the role of American domination in Canada in fostering pro-Cruise attitudes and diverting resources into weapons. It also demolishes the myth that arms production creates jobs, in such a way as to open up a space for feminist analyses of government spending priorities.

In conclusion: a socialist-feminist analysis of both the arms race and the peace movement is sorely needed. And it could well be developed in Canada, since our movement is, with all its faults, less narrowly concerned with nuclear missiles and more open to radical critiques of social relations. (See the accompanying articles on October 22.) Unfortunately, the best socialist source on this question to date, the anthology Exterminism and Cold War, has no socialist-feminist content whatsoever. It should still be read because of its valuable debates on the relation between imperialism and nuclear arms, and on the question of the Soviet Union's role in the arms race. Its pre-feminism, however, flaws it seriously.

So we should acquaint ourselves with the arguments presented in these three essential books, but we'll have to write our own script. How about it, Women's Press?

-- Mariana Valverde

Dorothy Thompson, ed. Over Our Dead Bodies: Women Against the Bomb. London: Virago Press, 1983.

Edward Thompson et al. Exterminism and Cold War. London: New Left Review, 1982.

Ernie Regehr and Simon Rosenblum, eds. Canada and the Nuclear Arms Race. Toronto: James Lorimer, 1983.

ABORTION CLINIC UPDATE

On October 1, the Day of Action for Choice on Abortion, an exciting pro-choice rally and march, sponsored by the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics and the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League, took place with 2,000 in attendance. It was one of many taking place across the country.

Toronto was also the site of a major mobilization by Right-to-Life in alliance with the Catholic Church hierarchy. It was organized to support the government's refusal to legalize free-standing clinics, and was an angering and frightening manifestation of anti-choice sentiment. Although the press picked up that it was orchestrated through the churches and the separate school system, it was nonetheless disquieting to see 20,000 people bused in to Toronto to counter the pro-choice campaign that we have been building.

We have had a lot of success over the past year, and it is quite clear to us, through the opinion polls, the endorsements and support we have received that most people are in favor of our position. But our demands are a clear challenge to both the church and the state, and they aren't going to let us win easily. We've been subjected to police raids, court battles, arson, individual harassment, and now organized right-wing support for the government's refusal to legalize clinics. It is because we are closer to winning now than ever before that we are encountering such opposition.

We have developed a strong base of support, particularly in the labour movement, and this must be consolidated and extended. OCAC will most probably be broadening our outreach and educational work to involve groups and individuals who are supportive of the issue but have not yet played an active role.

The trial of the doctors arrested at the Morgantaler Clinic is scheduled for November 21, and it is crucial that we support and defend this clinic's right to exist. Our long-term goal is community and women's clinics providing full access to free abortion throughout the province, but this is the test case that will challenge the abortion law, making it unenforceable. If this challenge fails, it will be a tremendous setback in the struggle for reproductive rights. We really need your help now, and we urge you to do all you can financially and politically to support the campaign.

-- Carolyn Egan



SMALL
ONE VICTORY FOR CHOICE...

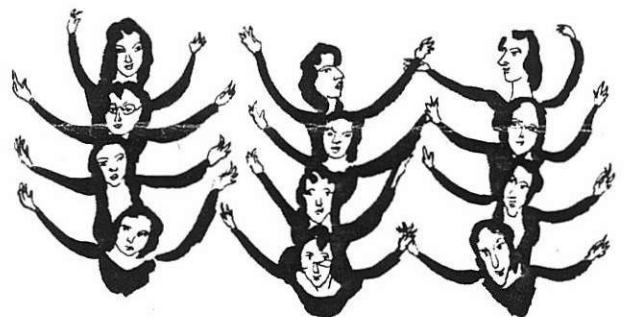
On October 14th, a Saskatchewan judge ruled that Canada's abortion law is valid, dismissing Joseph Borowski's claim that fetuses should be protected under the Charter of Rights.

The reasoning was purely legal: there is not current legal basis for considering a fetus a legal person. According to the judge, W. R. Matheson, it is up to Parliament, not the courts, to decide if the fetus is a person.

This means that right-to-lifers will probably redouble their lobbying activities, in an attempt to get Parliament to consider fetuses legal persons--which would then make abortion murder, and require a new abortion law (making abortion illegal).

Joe Borowski says he is going to appeal the Saskatchewan ruling.

So--gear up for more struggle.



IWDC Meeting Schedule

We have a new meeting place!

Meetings are now held at:

*Trinity United Church
427 Bloor Street West
in the Fireside Room*

Next Meetings:

*November 2 at 7:30 pm
November 16 at 7:30 pm
November 30 at 7:30 pm*

Poster & Button Contest

We are launching a poster and button contest for International Women's Day 1984 (for women only). Designs can be rough and don't need to be professional looking. All entries should be brought to the December 7 meeting, or sent prior to that meeting to IWDC, Box 70, Station F, Toronto, M4Y 2L4.

BOOK REVIEW

Rivington Street, Meredith Tax, Jove Books, 1982, \$4.50.

It is hard to review a novel that is so packed with life, love and intensity. Not being a Jew, one of the principal things Rivington Street did for me, was provide a hard-to-come-by glimpse of Jewish American history: the heritage of its politics, the warmth of its traditions, and, most of all, the strength and vitality of its women. And Rivington Street is definitely about the women. The legendary strength and character of the Jewish matriarch is set in its American context here in a way I had never encountered before. It is easier to understand the place where many Jewish women are at today.

Meredith Tax furthermore sheds a warm, wonderful light on one particular aspect of Jewish history, that of Russian socialist Jews who emigrated to America in the early 1900's, as well as on an aspect of women's history, and, I might add, an aspect of American working-class history. Yet the scope and depth of this historical novel is broader and fuller still than any of these might encompass. Tax's characters are many and well-rounded, she misses few contradictions, and her style is totally engrossing. It becomes difficult, if not impossible, to put the book down after the first few pages. Though it is ultimately a story full of joy and hope, it is really about struggle, and the struggles are hard --we are spared none of the realities these women had to contend with.

Hannah Levy takes her husband's revolutionary zeal in Czarist Russia with a grain of salt, meanwhile by sheer determination and willpower saving enough to transport her family to the only place that holds any real hope for a new life in her eyes: America. Her family lives in Kishinev, where the pogrom of 1905 had been the worst massacre to date. It is after this blood-bath that Hannah finally convinces Moyshe to escape to America, but only after their home has been destroyed, and their eldest daughter brutally raped and murdered.

Their remaining daughters, Sarah and Ruby, take on radically different paths in their new homeland. Sarah takes after her father becoming a staunch, if somewhat overzealous, defender of the working-class, only to discover later on that its organizations are all too willing to overlook her contributions in favor of her male counterparts. It is in Sarah's life more than anywhere else that the very real contradictions between socialists and feminists are played out. Ruby is less interested in class struggle and more into rising above it, specifically, to her sister's and father's shock, she harbors a secret ambition to own her own factory. Since she is an extremely talented designer, she quickly gets ahead, running full force into some rather rude shocks as a result of her innocence.

Rachel Cohen, the fourth major character in the book, escapes from her tyrannical rabbi father to take refuge with the Levys, when he, and her mother in her fear, make it impossible for her to adopt the new, emerging

Jewish American identity she so wants. It is this desperate need for female freedom in a new life that leads Rachel to experiment with crossing class lines, but unlike Ruby, Rachel marries into the upper classes.

It is interesting to see Tax deal with the issue of class; though her bias is definitely toward the working class, her middle- and upper-class characters are often fleshed out and sympathetic. Probably the most notable example of this is Tish, Rachel's upper-class suffragist friend, whose brother Rachel later marries. Tish, it turns out, is a lesbian, so perhaps it is easier to make her sympathetic, since she has her own experience of oppression. Rachel, however, is totally oblivious to her friend's orientation, even after direct references from both Tish and her brother, and therefore, is totally insensitive to the fact that Tish has fallen in love with her. It is interesting to see Rachel's attempts to adopt upper-class manners and values, even in the face of Tish's own ambivalence about them, and of course, she fails miserably.

More interesting in terms of class dynamics is the alliances that were developed between upper- and middle-class women suffragists, notably the Women's Trade Union League, and women workers struggling within and without their unions. The alliance is fraught with difficulties, not the least of which was the sexism of unions disguised as disdain for the upper classes. What Tax does not take on is the other side of this coin, which is the betrayal of working-class women, particularly ethnic minorities, by many of the early suffragists.

Equally engaging is how Tax deals with the issue of the emerging new technology, part of the new world, in women's health, posed against Hannah Levy's experience as a daughter of a midwife and of a tradition where women kept their sexual and reproductive health within their own control. Why do you have to go into the hospital, she asks of Rachel when Rachel is to give birth, you're not sick? Hannah's own dark secret, a brief extramarital affair and an ensuing abortion, she keeps strictly between herself and her midwife, an understanding between them that makes us yearn for a space between the security of older ways and the safety of promising technologies.

A great read, just the thing to curl up with on a night when you don't feel like having to expend effort to read, just want to be swept away...and just think you can still be politically correct!

Marie Lorenzo



SUPPORT THE NICARAGUAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

In December, a boat filled with material aid for the people of Nicaragua will set sail from Vancouver. This is the third year in a row that the Canadian people have shown their support for Nicaragua in this way. This year in particular, our solidarity and aid are crucial as Nicaragua faces stepped-up aggression at her borders, aerial bombings, trade embargoes, and economic sabotage--engineered in part by the U.S. While the Canadian government gives lip service to an anti-interventionist position, the cold reality is that the majority of Canadian financial aid to Central America goes to Honduras, whose government and military support the aggression against Nicaragua.

The Boat Project, in collecting material aid for Nicaragua, intends to call attention to this inexcusable discrepancy, in the hope that the Canadian people will call on the Canadian government to increase aid to Nicaragua, and limit that to Honduras.

Materials sent can be earmarked for specific organizations in Nicaragua. This project is meant to be more than a simple fundraising drive--it is a way for Canadian people to make direct connections with their counterparts in Nicaragua. So, for example, nurses and doctors are sending medical supplies, unions are sending tools and equipment, teachers and school children are sending paper, etc.

AMNLAE, the association of Nicaraguan women, is both a mass organization and a movement leading the struggle for women's emancipation and fuller integration into the revolutionary process. Let's organize a show of sisterhood and solidarity from the Canadian women's movement to AMNLAE.

AMNLAE needs: office supplies and office furniture, typewriters, tape recorders, paper, sewing machines and cloth (for setting up sewing cooperatives), kitchen equipment and toys (for daycare centres), and medical equipment (for women's hospitals). In fact, anything you can think of to send, other than clothing, would probably be useful. If you can't gather any supplies, you can always send money to cover shipping costs.

To donate supplies to AMNLAE, call Liza McCoy at 961-8638 (days). Also call if you want more information about the project for your union local, community group, etc. Cheques should be made out and sent to: Coalition for Aid to Nicaragua, c/o Oxfam, 175 Carlton St., Toronto M5A 2K3.

Act quickly--the boat is leaving soon!



Margaret Randall



Margaret Randall

MARCH 6, 1982

*All last week you preened before the mirror
viewing emerging breasts, then covering them
with gauze-thin blouse
and grinning: getting bigger, huh?*

*The week before you wore army fatigues
leveling breasts and teenage freckles,
tawny fuzz along your legs.*

A woman. Beginning.

*Today you don fatigues again.
Today you pack knapsack and canteen,
lace boots over heavy socks
and answer the call Reagan and Haig have
slung at your 12 years.*

*Yours and so many others...
kids 14, 15, 18, so many others who will go
and some of them stay, their mothers
shouting before the Honduran embassy:
"Give us our sons' bodies back, give us
back their bodies!"
At least that.*

*All last week you preened before the mirror
moving loose to new rhythms
long weekend nights.
Junior High math. Sunday beach.*

*Today you go off to the staccato of
continuous news dispatches
and I, in my trench, carry your young breasts
in my proud and lonely eyes.*

MARGARET RANDALL

A new publication...

"We Have the Capacity, the Imagination, and the Will: Milú Vargas speaks about Nicaraguan women" is an English translation of an interview Margaret Randall did this past summer with Milú Vargas, who is head legal counsel of the Nicaraguan Council of State. Topics discussed include abortion, new legislation affecting women, and changing relations between men and women. This 12-page pamphlet is jointly produced by IWDC and the Participatory Research Group, and is available from PRG for \$1.50/copy (including postage). PRG, 386 Bloor St. West, Toronto M5S 1X4.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The I.W.D.C., along with other women's and community groups, has been participating in an OFL-initiated campaign to promote affirmative action. A series of forums are taking place across Ontario. The purpose is to raise awareness of the issue and to learn of the problems related to equality for women in specific workplaces. Follow-up activities will include a submission to the premier and the targeting of companies with particularly bad records of sex discrimination. In this campaign affirmative action has been defined as "action designed to remove barriers to equality, overcome past and present discrimination and improve the economic status of women."

The importance of the struggle for equality for women in the workplace cannot be stressed too strongly. The position of women in the last twenty years has not improved; if anything it has deteriorated. If we look at the situation for full-time workers in 1978, on average, for every dollar a man earned, a woman earned 58¢. Women continue to be confined to low-wage ghettos in the clerical, sales and service fields. In 1980, 63% of women in the labour force were in one of these three categories and one out of 3 women was a clerical worker. Certain jobs have become even more female-identified. In 1969, 69% of clerical workers were women, in 1980, 78% were. And there is still a mere 1.3% of construction workers who are women.

Women are particularly hard hit by the recession. As the last hired, they are the first fired. Women traditionally have had a higher unemployment rate than men; they will be even more severely hit by the technological changes that are being introduced in offices and stores, by social service cutbacks and public sector restraint measures. Women don't have the option of returning to the home. In 1980, 40% of working women in Ontario were single, divorced or widowed. In families where women are not the sole supporters, their income is equally critical in maintaining a decent standard of living.

Further, it is not only women who lose out through discriminatory practices. Discrimination divides workers and plays one group off against another. It is only to the employers' benefit to have a group of low-wage workers competing for jobs and who can be used as a threat to force concessions.

The question then is, how best do we struggle for equality in a time of economic recession? Achieving mandatory affirmative action legislation would be a big step forward and it is important for different women's and community groups to unite with the labour movement in this initiative to ensure that this happens. The proposed programme would involve analyzing the status of women in the workplace, identifying systematic discrimination; establishing targets or quotas

and timetables for employing women at all levels and a monitoring system to assess progress. It is important to combine, as the OFL has done, demands for affirmative action legislation with legislation for equal pay for work of equal value, so that women who, through choice or necessity, remain in traditional areas are paid according to the real worth of their skills and experience.

One problem with mandatory affirmative action, like equal pay laws, is that normally they can only be applied within the same establishment. This doesn't deal with the problem of the majority of women who are concentrated in low wage ghettos in the clerical and service sector. For instance, who would the daycare worker, working with six other women, compare herself to? If the legislation is going to make any step towards reducing the inequalities, it would have to allow for a comparison to be made between jobs in different sectors and different workplaces.

If we are to achieve the goal of equality for women, it is important to broaden the concept of affirmative action beyond legislative measures. At a time of high unemployment and continuing layoffs of large numbers of workers, it is important to include in a campaign for equality the right of women to have jobs and jobs which allow for a decent standard of living. Unless affirmative action is combined with a campaign for job creation, it runs the risk of becoming a struggle between men and women for an ever diminishing number of jobs.

In Ontario, only 20% of women in the workforce are unionized. Implementing affirmative action measures would be very difficult in non-unionized places. What kind of clout would employees have if there was no union to back them up? How likely would management be to give up even a small bit of control that it has over hiring, promotion policies, and benefits? Further, studies have shown that one of the most effective ways of lessening the differential between men and women is through unionization. For instance, in looking at office occupations, it was found that the average differential between male and female wages was 10% for unionized workers and 17% for non-unionized workers. Organized women receive, on average, 14% more than unorganized. So if we're talking about how to improve the pay and working conditions for women workers; how to reduce the inequalities in the workforce, the women's movement has to get behind the trade union movement in the task of organizing the unorganized.

At the same time as pressing for legislation, it is important to bargain for equality through individual collective agreements. Many important advances, such as medical coverage, were first won through collective bargaining; it is also a way of exerting far greater pressure on the individual employer.

One of the greatest barriers to achieving

equality for women is wage controls. Percentage increases widen the existing gap between men's and women's wages. Under existing wage control legislation in Ontario, bargaining for equality for public sector workers is not possible. A campaign to reduce inequalities in the workplace has to include a fight against wage controls.

The introduction of technological change is placing women in a particularly vulnerable position. Many of the traditionally female jobs are being cut and there are attempts to send women back into the home to combine work on a computer terminal with looking after the kids. It seems of critical importance that women look at the exact nature of these changes and find ways to ensure that we will have equal access to the new jobs that are being created. Pushing for training for women in new job areas is essential. A recent survey, conducted for a federal task force on skill development leave, found that employers had organized upgrading courses for 30% of their full-time workers. However, they found that employers organized or sponsored courses for twice as many males as females. Males were four times as likely as females to have courses operate completely during work hours. Where tuition fees were more than \$100, employers paid the fee twice as frequently for male as for female employees. Clearly, affirmative action must also apply to retraining programs if women are not to remain ghettoized in low wage occupations.

The struggle for equality in the workplace is not easy in times of economic recession. If we are to be successful, the women's movement must unite with the trade union movement in a campaign that would include a fight against wage controls and for full employment, as well as for legislative changes.

-- Ann Porter, for the
Trade Union Committee

Women at work, Australia



Resources

The Lesbian Issue of RFR/DRF (Vol. XII, No. 1, March 1983) is out. Contents include articles on Lesbians and Teaching, Lesbian Culture, Personal Politics, Lesbian Theory, and book reviews. There's also an extensive resource section that lists organizations, archives, periodicals, audio-visual materials, and includes two annotated bibliographies. The issue costs \$5.00 and is available at various progressive bookstores. It can also be ordered from RFR, Department of Sociology, OISE, 252 Bloor St. West, Toronto M5S 1V6.

NOW AVAILABLE

"On the Line"--a 64 page songbook by Arlene Mantle containing words, music, graphics and descriptions of how the songs came to be. Many of the songs were written in collective song-writing sessions with labour and community groups. The book is pocket size so you can take it with you to rallies, demos, etc. Also available is an hour-long cassette tape of the 19 songs contained in the book. Ask for it at your favourite progressive bookstore. Or call 465-8673 to order.

NEW FROM WOMEN'S PRESS:

Union Sisters: Women in the Labour Movement, edited by Linda Briskin and Lynda Yanz, will be in your favourite bookstores by late October. Check it out.

About us...

IWDC is a socialist-feminist group. We operate on the principle that mass actions are our most effective instruments of change. We believe that the oppression of women touches every aspect of our lives and that the liberation of women will require fundamental changes in the structure of society.

We hold bi-weekly meetings where our policy and overall direction are determined. Smaller committees work on specific events or issues or in different areas.

We welcome new women.