

International women's Day committee newsletter

MAY
1986



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The National Action Committee on The Status of Women (NAC) is made up of over 400 member groups across Canada and Quebec. It's membership totals between 2-3 million women. The aims and objectives are to initiate and work for improvements with the status of women by actions that are designed to change legislation, attitudes, customs and practices. Historically it has done this by taking a lobbying role, monitoring legislation and government actions as they affect women. Recently it has taken a more activist stance by involving itself in strike support, abortion demonstrations, and broad based coalitions involving other sectors such as the trade union movement.

As socialist feminists we support the goal of working together for changes in our lives and in society and we have been active in NAC for a number of years. The International Women's Day Committee (IWDC) recognizes the need to draw as many women as possible into the women's movement. Grassroots involvement will always be our life line - the strength and centre of our inspiration and actions. We also understand that sexism, racism, heterosexism and class oppression are very much integrated, and maintained, by the economic and political structures under which we live. The lives of working class women, women of colour, immigrant women and lesbians are affected by all of these oppressions, and our analysis and methods of work must reflect this.

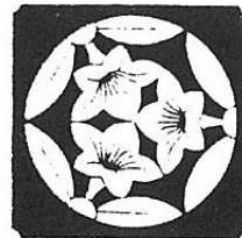
A commitment to working towards more grassroots involvement means putting forward issues as they affect all women. It means enabling and empowering women to act on their own behalf politically, rather than being the pawns of powerful leaders. It means being a subject in the world around you, not an object of the decisions that are made on your behalf. We all must have a role in setting the direction of our future.

If NAC is going to be truly representative of all women, we need the leadership and participation of women of colour, indigenous women of this country, lesbians, disabled women, Quebecois, and women in the labour movement. NAC must look to itself and question why different groupings of women have been inhibited from

joining. Perhaps the present structure, political approach to issues, methods of work, discourages the building of a more representative participatory movement. We must be open to change.

The state, as it exists in our society, has been constructed in such a way, that people of colour, the poor, the working class, and women have limited access to it. An implementation of our demands will disturb the structure and privileges on which our systems operates. NAC must operate as part of a movement to create the changes that are necessary and it must continue to broaden its parameters beyond governmental lobbying, so that women can be active and empowered through the process of change.

It is this broadening of political outlook and mandate and the opening of our structures which will lead us to the fuller participation and leadership of those groupings who have had very limited involvement. Lobbying can be an useful tool, but alone it lacks an integrated approach. It limits and restricts the participation of rank and file women. Our approach to issues must include an analysis of the economic and political structures of our society which maintain sexism, racism, heterosexism and class oppression. As Christine Pankhurst said in 1920, "The great social injustices are the subjection of labour, and the subjection of women. (we would add the subjection of people of colour, lesbians and gays) They are co-equal manifestations of the spirit of tyranny...It is the characteristic of sex rule as much as of class rule that those in power dictate the activities as well as withhold the rights of the rest."



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In organizing for power, we need alternative strategies to ensure the full participation of women in the decision making process, locally and nationally, and in the actual implementation of policies. How can we make ourselves more accessible to grassroots women? A first step toward a greater democratization could be the formation of local chapters that will ensure the greater involvement of individuals on a year round basis. We also feel that it is important to have regional structures to allow networking and dialogue on a local level. This would recognize the specific experiences of women within geographic areas, and also develop a strong organizational base which could respond to local issues and needs, and provide regular input to the executive. We are looking forward to discussions on these and other issues at the AGM and hope that strategies will be developed to strengthen and broaden NAC so that it will be a stronger voice for the needs of all women.

WOZA! WOMEN and IWDC held a small fund-raising event on Sunday, May 11. We thank everyone who helped us make a \$500.00 contribution to NOW. If you wish to help please make cheques payable to WOZA! WOMEN.

Natal Women

The Natal Organization of Women (NOW) was formed in 1983, in recognition of the need for a progressive women's organization to mobilize women for the political struggle. NOW is a member of the United Democratic Front (UDF), and has been an active member of united actions with other progressive groups in Natal. NOW's broader aims include:

- to struggle against all racial, economic and sexual exploitation;
- to unite women to solve problems that affect us in the community and at our places of work;
- to strengthen women so that we are more confident of our decisions and our actions, so that we can play a greater

part in other organizations to which we belong (e.g. civics and youth organizations, trade-unions).

NOW is a regional body with branches in the townships around Durban, such as Lamontville, Kwamashu, Hambanathi and, over the last 2 years, branches have been established in Pietemmaritzburg, Chesterville, Clermont, Umlazi, Wentworth, Chatsworth, etc. Each branch defines its work autonomously with regards to its local work as well as organizing on regional and national campaigns.

Some of the projects of NOW include: vegetable bulk-buying projects, raising funds to help evicted families, working with township popular organizations to fight rent increases, staging plays on forced removals, developing ways for maintenance of children of single and divorced women, literacy classes in English and Zulu, research on contraceptives, and defense of detainees.

In their newsletter, NOW states, "1985 has been a hard year. Some of our members were detained, some killed and others have had their homes burnt. The cost of living has increased dramatically and many workers have lost their jobs."



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Taking Up Racism

by Carolyn Egan



In recent weeks both the Ontario Federation of Labour and the Ontario New Democratic Party Women's Committee held conferences dealing with racism. This speaks to a growing recognition of the need to deal with racism in a concrete way, and stems from the activities and demands of people of colour within both organizations. The first dealt with broadening the participation of workers of colour in the unions, and the second with women, racism, and the political process. IWDC was represented at both, and the labour conference could be judged the more successful.

The OFL conference was well attended with over two hundred delegates registered. Many of those attending were Black or SouthAsian, with men outnumbering women. The work of women such as June Veecook of CUPE who is temporarily with the OFL and responsible for organizing the conference, and Ann Newman of the Communication Workers (co-chair of the Human Rights Committee) must be applauded. It was through their efforts that the conference attracted as many rank and file workers as it did. But as the conference delegates stated in a unanimous resolution, a full time coordinator must be hired in order to make anti-racism a real priority of the labour movement. Workshops were held dealing with topics such as labour and the community, the immigrant worker, racism and the labour movement. Facilitators were chosen from both trade unions and community groups, and report-backs were made to a plenary session. Most participants felt that the conference was very worthwhile but it is clearly just one step toward the development of an anti-racist perspective within the union movement. Much work remains to be done. For example, the Ottawa-Carlton Labour Council recently scheduled an anti-racist workshop, and not one person registered.

The NDP conference attracted only about fifty participants. This was very disappointing, particularly since a previous

conference on pornography and prostitution drew hundreds of women. Those who did attend heard an opening panel on "Systemic Racism: Addressing the Global Context".

This was followed by a number of workshops dealing with racism in the workplace, pay and employment equity, and contracting out. There were then two panel discussions on "Accessibility Issues" and "Organizing for Political Change". There were many excellent facilitators, active in the unions and the community, but because of the lack of participants the conference didn't gel. It was quite unfortunate and points to the need for the NDP to do more work in this area. It also shows once again the low priority many white women place on the need to learn about and become active around anti-racist issues. The women's committee should analyze the reasons for the low attendance, and work both within the party and with outside groups on an ongoing basis to raise the members' consciousness on this crucial question. The Equal Opportunity Office of the Toronto Board of Education is sponsoring a Youth Conference Against Racism and Sexism for secondary school students from all the Metro area and Peel region boards of education. Two hundred and sixty students are expected to attend. Bairu Sium, the conference coordinator, has lined up an impressive array of workshops, and it promises to be a very exciting day. IWDC has been asked to present one of the keynote speeches. Lenox Farrell, an anti-racist activist and teacher, is presenting the other. The concept of integrating racist and sexist oppressions at the conference is very important, and we are looking forward to participating.

Moving Testimony on Choice

by Mary Gellatly

Toronto Tribunal

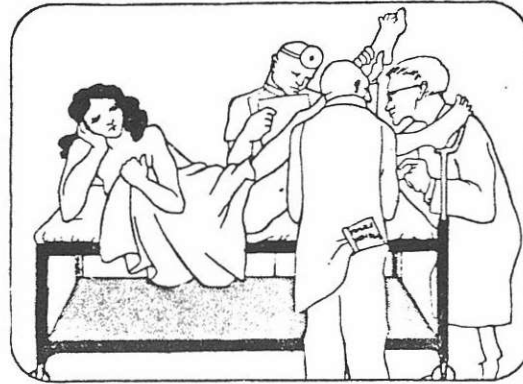
"All rise. This is the first session of the court of the people. The Women of Canada 'vs.' the Canadian Abortion Law"...and so it began. The Trinity St. Paul Centre provided the perfect setting as testimony after testimony was heard by women who bore witness to the injustice of the federal abortion law. This tribunal, held March 1 in Toronto, was one of many in the historic Pan-Canadian campaign, "Speak Out for Choice: the Abortion Law on Trial."

Women cited their experiences with misogynist gynecologists, impersonal Therapeutic Abortion Committees (TAC) and barriers to hospital abortion procedures. They spoke of the shocking results of the federal abortion law — unnecessary delays causing emotional trauma and often severe medical risks.

In the wake of Sarnia doctors' resignation from the only TAC in the region in protest against the bill to ban extra-billing, one woman's testimony was particularly relevant. She was ordered to pay \$300 in cash (which, as a student at the time, she did not have) to her opted-out physician fully 5 1/2 weeks before she would even be told if the TAC had approved her request for an abortion.

The testimonies powerfully demonstrated how the abortion law discriminates on the basis of wealth, race, language and geography. Clearly, the recent debate over extra-billing has illustrated how women fare under this system. In most areas, gynecologists have been given a virtual monopoly to perform abortions in Ontario. These same doctors also form the highest percentage of opted-out physicians (37%), and of this sector an alarmingly high percentage are those performing abortion procedures. Once again, it is women who must continue to pay and pay.

The tribunal drew to a close with the 6



jury's verdict. The jurors represented the broad base of support on which the choice movement depends and included labour, NDP, high school and university students, National Action Committee on the Status of Women, women's service groups and media. Along with the "12th juror", the audience, the verdict of guilty rang loud and clear.

This highly successful tribunal did draw a number of new people to the choice movement. For the majority of choice supporters in the audience, the wrenching testimonies powerfully underscored the need for all of us to redouble our efforts in working for the repeal of this unjust law and the legalization of free standing, medically insured abortion clinics.

Pan-Canadian Tribunal Campaign

The Toronto tribunal was by no means the first or the last. Similar tribunals are being held in major cities across English Canada and Quebec as people add their voices to the decisive verdict being sent to the federal government. As discussed in the last IWDC Newsletter (March, 1986), the Speak Out for Choice campaign was launched this January in Vancouver with a highly continued from page 25

Quebecois: En Lutte

by Mary Gellatly

The Pan-Canadian pro-choice movement has been strengthened considerably by the recent formation of the Quebec coalition for the right to free abortion on demand (coalition Quebecoise pour le droit à l'avortement libre et gratuit). On February 8 of this year over 100 groups came together from every part of Quebec to form the coalition under the following platform:

- to defend the inalienable right of women to control their own bodies;
- to demand the repeal of Sections 251 and 252 of the federal Criminal Code;
- to fight for complete and accessible family planning services;
- to fight for sex education for children starting at pre-school age;
- to fight for accessible information services on contraceptive methods;
- to fight for comprehensive, quality abortion services;
- to demand that these services be financed by the state.

After many years of struggle during the 1970's, Quebec appeared to enjoy an oasis of sanity surrounded by the enforcement of the draconian abortion law in English Canada. While the Quebec government continues to state it will maintain a "tolerant posture" toward existing abortion services provided in health centres and free standing clinics, there has been a severe undercurrent eroding these abortion services. Over the past ten years, "fiscal restraint" has deteriorated the critical services being provided by CLSC's and women's health centres. Rural and outlying regions have seen a steady decrease in access to abortions in their hospitals and many Therapeutic Abortion Committees (TAC) are toughening their criteria for approval of requests for abortion procedures. The right is increasing its pressure on CLSC's and succeeded last fall in stopping all abortions at the St. Therese CLSC just outside of Montreal. Recently, the infamous Joe Schreider (author of "99 Ways to Close an Abortion Clinic" and supporter of

bombings of abortion clinics in the U.S.) was present in Quebec to encourage greater militancy in the right's anti-choice tactics.

Not only is the Quebec Coalition critical to maintaining and building upon the gains made in Quebec, but their involvement in the Pan-Canadian choice movement is historic. Choice activists have long recognized that Quebec's participation in the movement is critical to our success in repealing the current abortion law. With the Quebec Coalition bringing their skills and involvement to building a visible pro-choice movement, a clear message will be sent to bureaucrats and politicians in Ottawa, one which they cannot ignore.

The Quebec Coalition is planning a tribunal in St. Therese as part of the Pan-Canadian "Speak Out for Choice" campaign. Moreover, representatives of the coalition have been instrumental in organizing meetings and discussions for a major action or demonstration in Ottawa (see article on Speak Out for Choice tribunals).



Workers Fight

by Nancy Farmer

On May 7th about 150 enthusiastic supporters left Toronto at 6:30 a.m. to join the picket line with striking Super Plastics workers in Mississauga. Most of the members of Communications and Electrical Workers of Canada (CWC) Local 535 are Punjabi speaking women and men. Some are immigrants and refugees on work permits. Despite tremendous obstacles, they have been on strike for 9 months, fighting for a first contract. The support rally was organized by the CWC, IWDC, South Asian Women's Group and Women Working with Immigrant Women.

Their demands are very basic - fairer wages, seniority rights, overtime pay and health and safety language in the contract. They make plastic garden hoses out of old running shoes. The plastics contain vinyl chloride, a cancer causing substance. The workers are not informed of proper methods of handling such chemicals.

Despite the odds, not one of the strikers has crossed the picket line and gone back to work. The plant is operating with scab labour. Except for two who have gone back to England and one on maternity leave, all strikers are on the line every day.

Their strike needs a lot of support. This is what you can do:

1. Attend future rallies.
2. Don't buy Super Plastics garden hoses and carpet runners sold under the names "Mastercraft", "Riviera" and "Everflex" at Canadian Tire, Home Hardware, Woolco and Towers.
3. Tell the government we need strong first contract legislation without the bad faith bargaining clause NOW!!



Greedy Not Needy

by Nancy Farmer

Usually in IWDC news we cover strikes that have predominately female or minority membership, have been receiving little support or are negotiating issues of concern to women such as daycare or maternity leave. The strike against Inglis by Local 2900 USWA, in its 5th week, is none of the above. However, we decided to write about it since I work there and, more importantly, it typifies attacks against workers across the country.

Under the pretense of the threat of free trade, Inglis management has insisted that we tighten our belts to the point of choking. The company has demanded we swallow a wage freeze for three years, surrender our cost of living allowance, agree to watered down seniority rights and accept a substantial production speed-up. Also on the table is a two-tier system for new hires, less vacation time and changes to our health and drug plans. The company refuses to address our concerns of improved pensions and job security. All this in the name of remaining competitive! Inglis already has 51% of the Canadian market and made \$10.8 million profit last year. The truth is Inglis (owned by Whirlpool USA) is "greedy not needy!"

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A Dirty Law

by Wendy Iler

In January, 250 First Canadian Place cleaners faced the loss of their jobs and their collective agreement when Olympia and York, the billionaire owner of the office complex, tendered the cleaning contract.

It was expected that a new cleaning contractor would bring in new employees at minimum wage. The cleaners, members of the Food and Service Workers of Canada (FASWOC) mounted a public campaign. The same sort of support and media attention that won the Portuguese-born women their 1984 strike, resulted in the retention of their jobs and their union contract - for the time being.

The battle is far from over. The First Canadian Place cleaners - despite the new cleaning contract, despite their new collective agreement - have no job security. At a whim, Olympia and York could terminate the cleaning contract it holds with the cleaners' direct employer, and again the workers would be threatened with the loss of their jobs and union.

Most workers in Ontario already have the protection that cleaners so urgently need. Under Section 63 of the Labour Relations Act, there are "successor rights" which protect unionized workers when there is a sale of a business. The new employer must recognize the union, respect the collective agreement, and continue the employment of the workers. Cleaners fall through a loop-hole in the law. When a subcontractor-employer changes through the tendering of a cleaning contract, it's not the same as the sale of a business: cleaners (and other employees of subcontractors, such as cafeteria workers) lose their jobs and their collective agreement.

The Committee for Cleaners' Rights, a coalition of labour and community groups formed in the wake of the First Canadian Place crisis, is continuing its campaign to change the law.

In May, 45 cleaners at the Elizabeth Bruyere Health in Ottawa lost their jobs and their collective agreement when the cleaning contractor changed.

In Mississauga, the cleaners at the Gateway Postal Facility may lose their jobs. A new cleaning contractor takes over in July. The current cleaners were certified with the Canadian Union of Postal Workers last year.

...Unless the law is changed, there will be more victims. The Committee for Cleaners' Rights has 6,000 signatures on its petition to Premier Peterson. The deadline for petitions has been extended to mid-June.

Anyone who'd like a petition, leaflets, or more information, can call - Ilda Furtado at 533-8285 or Wendy Iler at 656-1657.

The Committee has also made a financial appeal. Donations can be made to the Committee for Cleaners' Rights, and sent to St. Christopher House, 761 Queen Street West, Toronto, M6J 1G1.



Lavender Labour Pains

by Cynthia Wright

Lavender Shorts is a dynamite new collective of Black and White Lesbians in theatre. This spring they put together a series of skits called "Labour Pains" on the theme of lesbians and work. The series was presented to a packed and appreciative audience at the Theatre Centre last March. Since that time, at least one of the component skits — Catherine Glen's "Maggie" — has appeared on other stages.

"Labour Pains" opened with an introduction by cultural artist Ahdri Zhina, author of *Speshal Rikwes* (Sister Vision Press) and of several plays. Six skits followed, among them "The Professor" by Diana Meredith, an amusing history of women-loving women from cave lesbians to Radclyffe Hall and Una Troubridge. Perhaps the most thought-provoking skit was Carol Thames' "(In)visible Minority" about a Black Lesbian teacher in a private girls' school who is fired at the urging of one of the student's mothers — a wealthy, racist white woman. The skit explored the contradictions experienced by Lesbians confronting both racism and homophobia.

Gay Bell's "Collective Agreement" is based on the story of Karen Andrews, a library worker in the Canadian Union of Public Employees. With the support of her union, Andrews successfully challenged both the library board and OHP's definition of "family" in order to win medical coverage for her lesbian household. Far and away the most moving piece was Catherine Glen's monologue, "Maggie", about a lesbian industrial worker and trade unionist who reconciles with a male co-worker after he accidentally stumbles into the lesbian contingent on International Women's Day.

After the performance, and at the request of Lavender Shorts, Sylmadel Coke made some observations about lesbians and racism to get the audience talking on these issues.



Unfortunately, her comments were not as helpful as they might have been in getting that much-needed discussion off the ground. It might have helped a lot if she had used the skits we had just seen, particularly "(In)visible Minority", as a place to begin. (For one Lesbian's contribution to this debate, see W. Cheung's letter in the April *Rites*.)

Popular and accessible materials dealing with lesbian issues, including workplace struggles, are rare indeed. "Labour Pains", with its well-done skits talking about work, racism and lesbian reality, is therefore an especially valuable production.

* * *

One goal of Lavender Shorts is to produce shows specifically for labour audiences, to bring lesbian theatre to workplaces and union events such as conferences and conventions. For more information about this, contact Gay Bell at 466-3801. Gay would also like to hear from you if you have ideas for skits about lesbians in different workplaces and work situations.

Censorship No Problem? Look What They Censor!

by Cynthia Wright

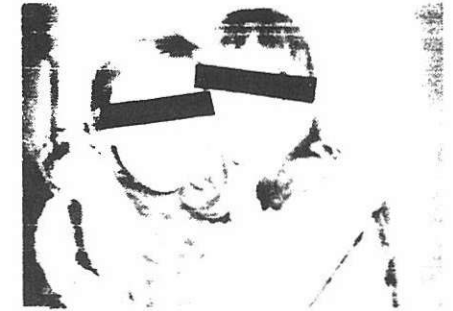
If you have a copy of JoAnn Loulan's *Lesbian Sex* on your bookshelf, you are the owner of a book which has been declared "obscene" by Canada Customs and prohibited entry into this country. Copies of *Lesbian Sex*, destined for Little Sister's bookshop in Vancouver, were seized on December 12, 1985. The books are still being held.

State censorship of lesbian-produced material about lesbianism is not new. Back in 1977, 25 copies of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon's *Lesbian Love and Liberation* were seized from the Glad Day Bookshop in Toronto. But the seizure of *Lesbian Sex* "represents only the second time...that depictions of lesbian sexuality have come under attack," according to the *Censorship Bulletin* (issue 4). The first time was the banning in May 1985 of the American lesbian sex magazine, *Bad Attitude*.

This spring, with the initial banning of *The Joy of Lesbian Sex*, we have seen the third and latest attack. Glad Day Bookshop was told by Canada Customs that both *The Joy of Lesbian Sex* and *The Joy of Gay Sex* were prohibited. But then, in a recent move, the ban on *The Joy of Lesbian Sex* was lifted while *The Joy of Gay Sex* remains on the restricted list.

Censorship of lesbian and gay material has increased dramatically in the past year. As an editorial in *Rites*, the lesbian/gay magazine, put it:

Canada Customs has declared war on lesbian and gay periodicals and literature entering Canada. Armed with a vague new law against the importation of 'obscene' (read sexually explicit) material and homophobic internal guidelines which include the prohibition of 'sodomy' and 'buggery', Customs has seized an alarming number of gay and lesbian books and magazines in the last few months. (Sept. 85)



According to the *Censorship Bulletin*, this definition of 'sodomy' as obscene is being applied in the prohibition of depictions of lesbian sex. It's very clear that the censorship of 'sodomy' is meant to target gay and lesbian literature specifically. *The Joy of Sex*, the heterosexual counterpart of *The Joy of Lesbian Sex* and *The Joy of Gay Sex*, "contains depictions of anal sex ('sodomy')", but "has never come under attack." (*Censorship Bulletin*)

If such attacks on lesbian and gay literature continue, Canadian bookstores may well find themselves in a situation frighteningly similar to that of Gay's the Word Bookshop in London England. British Customs authorities have seized from Gay's the Word a tremendous number of titles including the Canadian gay liberation anthology, *Flaunting It*; historical scholarship such as Lillian Fademans' *Surpassing the Love of Men* and *Scotch Verdict*; and Phyllis Chesler's *Women and Madness*. The information kit produced by the Gay's the Word defence campaign comments on the list of books seized:

How can they seize coming-out guides, textbooks on AIDS, work by Djuna Barnes, Edward Carpenter, Jean Genet, Robin Maugham, Marge Piercy, Jean Paul Sartre and Gore Vidal, interviews with William Burroughs, Christopher Isherwood and Tennessee Williams or, indeed, the *Divine Cut-Out Doll Book*?

Free Trade: Who Benefits?

by Shelly Gordon

Free trade is already affecting the Canadian labour force.

Nancy Farmer's article on the strike against Inglis describes the way in which one company is using the prospect of free trade to its advantage in bargaining with its workforce. Inglis would appear to be opposed to free trade. They have used various trade regulations to create a near-monopoly situation for themselves and deregulation threatens their market. They are using the "threat" of free trade to demand that their employees give up wages and benefits they have won over the years. Which long term result do you think they would favour? No free trade? Or lowering Canadian workers wages to the same rate as those in the "right-to-work" states?

Inglis won't confuse the question of ownership and profit with sovereignty and culture. I don't think that we should either.

I am not opposed to free trade because it threatens Canadian "identity", Canadian "culture", Canadian "sovereignty". I am quite alarmed when I hear people arguing against free trade in these ways. I think that those notions will disarm us in the fight against free trade.

I am opposed to it because it will cause extensive job loss, unemployment and financial hardship in Canada, particularly in the most disadvantaged sectors of the labour force. It is immigrant women who work in the sweat shops of the garment and leather industries in order to support their families. It is women who will be kept out or pushed out of most of the jobs that would be lost to free trade in the service sector.

The most vulnerable sectors of our society will be hurt the most by any reduction of our meagre social programs such as unemployment insurance and federal pension plans.



Jeanette Nelson/Jewels Graphics

At the Against Free Trade Rally some of the speakers seemed to say that these social programs exist because the "Canadian identity" is so generous and nice and free trade threatens these programs because our "identity" will be swallowed up and disappear in the "American identity". Their sense of history leaves something to be desired. Unions, socialists, suffragettes and others fought for and won those social programs from the Canadian bourgeoisie.

These are the same social forces who have to lead the fight against free trade. Free trade is ANOTHER Conservative economic policy that threatens ordinary people. These are home grown Conservatives who represent a certain class. They wouldn't be putting this policy forward if it didn't benefit (read profit) their Canadian constituency.

Nationalism, like sex and race, has always been used to divide and weaken oppressed peoples. Capital has never let national boundaries stand in its way. Free trade talks are a search for bigger profits on both sides of the border. We have to understand who will be adversely affected by free trade and how in order to understand how to fight effectively against it.

Lessons from March 8th

by Carolyn Egan

In our last newsletter we spoke of the need to fully integrate an anti-racist perspective into a feminist analysis. The organizing process for March 8th has made that need even clearer and hopefully taught us some lessons which will move the coalition and the women's movement closer to that goal. We have included "Some White Women's Response to March 8th" in this newsletter. We will not repeat its content here, but support its criticisms and recommendations.

The coalition criticized the way in which the concerns and issues of South Asian, Native, Black, Chinese and other women of colour had been addressed in the past. This year's leaflet, written with the leadership of women of colour, shows a much more integrated approach, not isolating issues, but looking at work place demands, reproductive rights and sexual violence from their experience.

The coalition learned that its structures and methods of organizing must be open and flexible, and that anti-racist education and political discussion must be built more prominently into the organizing process.

These lessons were learned through the efforts of women of colour who demanded and played a key leadership role which was crucial to the success of March 8th. This must continue to be an integral part of the women's movement if it is to be truly representative, and play a dynamic and forward looking role.

The development of a women of colour caucus and an anti-racist education committee were first steps in a long overdue process of organizational change. Accepting the need to educate themselves on racism, a number of white women initiated the first education committee in the coalition's history. Its goal was "to build a collectively owned understanding and analysis of racism and feminism, in order to better do anti-racist feminist work, and to use organizing for International Women's Day 1986 as an opportunity to educate white feminists about racism and anti-racism". Its objectives were:

A. To work towards building a more inclusive women's movement in Toronto, and towards building bridges between white women's movements and women of colour and black women's movements by recognizing and understanding shared and independent priorities.

B.- To examine racism as a socio-economic structure;

- To examine racism as a personal set of attitudes/beliefs/behaviours;

- To examine institutionalized racism in the women's movement; and

- To examine the multiple oppressions of women of colour and black women, and lesbians of colour.

The committee was composed of women of colour and white women. It planned two internal anti-racist workshops for white women, with the Anti-Racist Work Group, and a public forum during the week of March 8th. Although the committee's achievements were modest and more could have been done, it was an important political recognition of the need for anti-racist education.

The women of colour caucus made up of South Asian, Native, Black, Chinese and other women of colour met only once, although the Native Women's Resource Centre and the Black Women's Collective continued to bring directives to the rest of the coalition. Organizationally many in the coalition had never worked in a caucus situation before, and others of us who had experienced a variety of different models of how a caucus and a larger group interact.

The political development of caucuses is crucial if women of colour and white women are to work together in coalitions. A caucus is a vehicle through which a specific group of people, whether they be working class, lesbians, people of colour or women, come together as a unit to begin to overcome the effects of a shared oppression. A caucus won't always bring automatic unity because of different political perspectives within it. We've certainly seen these differences in women's caucuses. But it has the potential of empowering, giving support and equalizing an unbalanced power relationship within a larger group. The leadership which a caucus can bring is vital to the political development of a coalition such as March 8th.

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Pornography and Anti-Racism

by Mariana Valverde

While researching an article for the book No Safe Place: Violence Against Women and Children, I tried to find analyses of porn written by women of colour and/or from an anti-racist perspective. I found very little and concluded that feminists of colour in both the US and Canada did not consider pornography a priority.

Then I re-read some "standard" feminist sources on pornography, looking for an analysis of racism within the critique of the domination of women in porn. Andrea Dworkin's Pornography: Men Possessing Women does indeed consider many examples of porn which portray women of colour in ways that are not only pornographic but racist. Stereotypes such as "the black bitch" or "the oriental seductress" are an important part of the pornographer's shopworn misogynist imagery.

But I didn't find what I was really looking for. Dworkin's framework presupposes that all women are oppressed by porn in basically the same ways, with women of colour further oppressed by the stereotyping of racist images. This is a start but it sees racism as a mere offshoot of patriarchy. For Dworkin, sexual oppression is the fundamental form of women's oppression (as opposed to the nuclear family or economic inequality), and racism is not only derived from patriarchy, but based on the sexual subordination of women. She explains racism among men as a result of jealous competition for women, and adds elsewhere that "racism also targets males as likely victims of sexual abuse" (by other males).

One problem with Dworkin's approach is that it never considers that women might also be racist, and not just because they aren't feminist enough. Dworkin starts off with the view that patriarchy is the main organizing principle of the world. The assumption is made that if patriarchy were overthrown, all other oppressions would vanish. The attempt to "reduce" one form of

oppression to another is only a sophisticated denial of the real existence of different forms of oppression. Just as orthodox Marxism twisted women's experience to argue that class was "really" at the root of women's gender oppression, so Dworkin and others with a similar perspective "explain" all oppression in terms of the Procrustean bed of patriarchy as sexual subordination.

Racism is not a patriarchal plot to divide women into separate and antagonistic groups, as most radical feminists believe. Racism has its own reality, dynamic, and history. Racism and sexism interact and support each other at many points. For instance, the ghettoization of women and men of colour in the labour force works to uphold the best occupations as bastions of white male privilege. At other points, however, the two systems are in contradiction: racism and ethnocentrism within the women's movement, on the part of white feminists who insist that we are all sisters because "we can all be battered and raped", is a good instance.



Several months after publishing my pornography article, I finally hit on what had been bothering me about Dworkin's analysis, and about my own failure to develop an alternative analysis of racism and pornography. Enlightenment came, strangely enough, as I was watching TV.

A newscast described some space mission as "just like Columbus discovering America". I shook my fist at the TV. How in the world can people still talk about Columbus "discovering" America, when they know damn well that there were all kinds of people already living in the continent when he descended on what is now the Dominican Republic? But it is not that people don't know that there were and are indigenous people on this continent. Rather, indigenous people are acknowledged as existing only as objects for the white imperialist gaze. The Carib Indians existed only in order to be seen, objectified, and conquered by the Spaniards.

The white imperialist gaze constructs subject peoples in a way that is strikingly similar to the construction of the feminine gender by pornography. Yes, women do exist in porn, with sexual desires: but their bodies exist to be possessed, and their desires are dark and evil, justifying the use of force against them. The male gaze constructs female desire as dangerous and evil in order to legitimize both outright hatred and benevolent male despotism; the white imperialist gaze constructs subject peoples as "savages" in order to legitimize both genocide and paternalism.

Women and men of colour are portrayed as "naturally" subordinate in just about every piece of mass-produced American-style culture that one can name. Westerns are as offensive to Native people as porn is to women, and Native women might well put a higher priority on fighting racist images than on fighting pornography. World War II movies depicting the Japanese as evil creatures in search of ever more refined tortures serve to legitimize the atomic bombs dropped by the U.S. on Japan, and are thus as bad as, or worse than, any "Snuff" movie. Such forms of mass culture not only legitimize past conquests and

destruction, they continue to justify and glorify American imperialism and racism. American images of Arabs portray them as "naturally" "fanatical", as born terrorists in the thrall of an irrational tyrannical religion; Reagan invokes the Christian God when dropping his preacher-blessed terrorist bombs on Libya, and nobody thinks this is even mildly ironic.

Hollywood mass culture glamorizes all the main relations of domination. Dallas and Dynasty eroticize class domination by focussing on the sex lives of oil magnates. Wealthy sex becomes the only culturally significant sex. The Hispanic population of Dallas exists only as a picturesque backdrop to Sue Ellen's escapades into the slums, and the workers who produce the Ewing millions are simply invisible. War and spy movies about evil "Orientals" might not at first sight seem related to sex; but there is often a clear sexual overtone to the stories, especially when they involve, as they often do, torture and violence. When the white American hero is captured by the Chinese or the Indians or the Japanese or the Arabs or the Africans, when he is tied

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up and threatened with being skinned alive or some such thing, there is a certain erotic charge in this situation.

The typical racist adventure movie is structurally similar to the porn scenario which begins with a group of evil bitches/witches who whip and chain males to gratify their twisted desires. In porn, however, the women are rarely killed in the end, and are rather returned to "normal" subjection by means of sex —probably because, for pragmatic reasons, the genocide of all women is not a real possibility for any society however misogynist.

Let me offer a couple of concluding thoughts, in the hope of generating useful debate. First, it seems to me ethnocentric to concentrate only on criticizing cultural products that exalt misogyny, without ever saying anything about cultural products that justify and even eroticize racism and imperialism. Surely women of colour are not oppressed just through being "stereotyped" in pornography: They are equally, if not more, oppressed by being portrayed (along with men of colour) as irrational, half-human creatures in white-male adventure stories and war movies.

Ethnocentrism in the anti-porn movement can serve to compound the racism of the mass media, insofar as it assumes that misogyny is the only or at least the main problem

with the media. Some women protest sexism in the media by saying "But they wouldn't allow blacks to be portrayed all tied up... They wouldn't allow Jews to be portrayed being raped by Nazis." To those women I say: watch a few adventure movies or Tarzan re-makes, or read a few paperback Westerns, before you so lightly assume that racism is no longer allowed in the North American mass media. In any case, misogyny does not exist separately from racism. Although pornography emphasizes one more than the other, most forms of mass culture use both at the same time.

At the theoretical level, I think we have to stop assuming that patriarchy is always, automatically, the most important structure of domination. For white North American feminists with interesting jobs, patriarchy is indeed the only significant form of oppression in their lives: but to conclude from that that patriarchy is the essential factor in all women's lives is arrogant, and smacks of feminist cultural imperialism. When Winnie Mandela says that racism is the most important factor in her life, I think it behooves us not only to take her at her word (which many white feminists do not do) but also to reflect on how her statement ought to move us to change our theoretical framework.

The notion of patriarchy developed by white American radical feminists in the seventies is far too absolutist, and it presupposes a universal "women's experience" that just does not exist. The socialist feminist approach is somewhat more flexible because it already posits two main forms of oppression, not just one Original Sin. However, some socialist feminists, whose minds are already boggled by the attempt to integrate patriarchy and capitalism at the theoretical level, have tried to minimize racism by reducing it to an offshoot of capitalism. It is true that racism only reached its genocidal heights as European capitalism and imperialism developed; however, racism, like sexism, is analytically distinct from class relations and must be granted the same degree of autonomy from both capitalism and patriarchy that these two systems have from each other

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Hermanas Quierendo Hermanas

by Mariana Valverde

CHILE

Al Margen is a hefty newsletter published by the Peruvian lesbian-feminist group GALF (Grupo de Autoconciencia de Lesbianas Feministas), a group known in some Toronto circles because they sent a representative to last year's International Gay Association meeting in Toronto. The latest number of the newsletter has information about their own group and about two other lesbian feminist groups in Latin America, one in Santiago, Chile, and another in Sao Paulo, Brazil. We publish here excerpts from the articles about the groups in Chile and Brazil, and encourage all our readers who are learning Spanish to subscribe to Al Margen and practice their language skills with politically fascinating material. (Also, any group in Latin America benefits enormously from earning a few dollars in hard currency, since any travel to other countries, even other Third World countries, requires hard currency.)

BRAZIL

The Lesbian Feminist Action Group (GALF) emerged in 1979 as a subgroup of SOMOS, one of the first organizations which dealt with the discrimination of homosexuals in Brazil (the group is now extinct) and included both men and women...Some lesbians in SOMOS began to see that their specific oppression could only be understood in relation to the situation of women in our society, and not as part of the repression against homosexuals. They began to meet separately from men....

Continuing in their feminist work, the lesbian-feminist subgroup approached the Women's Movement on the occasion of the III Congress of Women of Sao Paulo, in March of 1980. From the end of 1981, GALF carried out various activities both in the women's movement and in the gay movement.

The Sao Paulo group GALF publishes a Bulletin (in Portuguese), Chana con Chana.

AYUKELLEN is a feminist collective...of Latin American Lesbian Feminists. We are interested in publicizing our special problems in the women's movement and with respect to Chilean women at large. We want to realize our goals through dialogue...questioning a limited vision of feminism which would exclude minority realities such as our own. We want to open up a space as a specific group inside the various forms in which Chilean feminism is being expressed.

The path to achieve our goals will be difficult because there is in Chile no group like our own, and we will have to face not only the repression of the social system under which we live but also the incomprehension and suspicion of feminists themselves. Despite this, we think that it is high time to begin this process, which will help us and other women achieve our liberation.

The AYUKELLEN collective wants to create bonds with other lesbian sisters, exchanging experiences, projects, ideas and printed materials.

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If we are going to work toward a truly multiracial women's movement, we cannot just "add" the "particular" experiences of women of colour to the framework we have defined as the true "universal" theory. Women of colour are producing feminist theory, not just having "experiences" that can be recounted for our enlightenment. The notion that we will enrich "our" theory by the addition of "experiences" from other races and countries is what I call the "National Geographic approach to feminism". A thorough understanding of race and class changes the very foundations of the theory and practice of feminism. This article has attempted to think through some possible ways of transforming the feminist agenda for pornography and media sexism by a serious consideration of racism and ethnocentrism.

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NOTE: "AYUKELLEN" is a word in the language of the Mapuche Indians which means "joy".

LATIN AMERICAN FEMINIST CONFERENCE IN BRAZIL

The Third Feminist Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Bertioiga, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil, from July 31 to Aug. 4, 1985. Three women from the Peruvian GALT group (not to be confused with the Brazilian group of the same initials) attended it.

The GALT women report that the agenda for the conference included lesbianism, and we, with the help of the Sao Paulo GALT group, organized a workshop for lesbians only entitled "organizing ourselves as lesbians". A Brazilian video on the topic was also shown, and there was a presentation from Argentina. Non-lesbian feminists also had discussions with the (open) lesbians, and asked a lot of questions, such as: Is lesbianism only a sexual choice, or is it a political position? Does talking about lesbianism split the movement? and so on.

This is an excerpt from the answers given by GALT members:

"Lesbians do not reproduce the heterosexual model which places man at the centre and subordinates women's sexual desire, thus reinforcing the patriarchal family. Lesbians do not depend on men sexually, emotionally or economically, and do not act to serve men's interests. Therefore they transgress against and destabilize the order of the patriarchal system.

Lesbianism does not alienate us from other women. More to the point is how we (feminists) talk about lesbianism. It is not necessary to be a lesbian in order to address lesbian issues. There is a lack of reciprocity in this respect. Lesbians raise various feminist banners, but lesbian issues are not mentioned (in the wider movement). This lack of reciprocity reinforces the



tendency to create self-contained groups and can generate separatist attitudes."

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Pay Equity?

by Margot Trevelyan

Several public sector workers wearing large white collars tied their arms to private sector workers wearing large blue collars at the pay equity hearings in Toronto on March 27th.

The women walked into the hearings in pairs to make the point that women working in the private sector should have legislation which is equally as strong as that for the public sector.

The demonstration was organized by the Equal Pay Coalition which is worried by signals from the government and from the all-management Task Force conducting the hearings. They seem to suggest that the strong business lobby mounted against equal value legislation will result in a watered down bill for the private sector.

Large signs on some of the seats in the City Hall Council Chamber, where the hearings were held, read "Unorganized Worker, Not Represented." The unoccupied seats were to remind the Task Force that they were not hearing from the vast majority of working women in Ontario - approximately 80% - who are not in unions.

Unorganized women could not come to a pay equity hearing because they cannot get time off work. They also fear reprisals from their employer if they express dissatisfaction about their wages at a public hearing.

Attending the hearings today were a group of women from the Working Women Community Centre, an agency which provides counselling and employment training for immigrant women.

Immigrant women and women of colour are among those who are most in need of pay equity legislation. Too frequently they are forced into low-paid, female job ghettos, doing hard and tedious work, often at night.

Yet few, if any, immigrant women or women of colour have taken part in the pay equity

hearings. The Coalition has been led to believe that they have been discouraged by a lack of facility with the English language, by fear of intimidation from an all-management Task Force at a government hearing, and from fear of losing their jobs.

Unorganized and immigrant women and women of colour need strong pay equity legislation more than any other sector of the workforce. But the same reasons that have kept these women from the hearings will make it impossible for them to use any pay equity legislation, unless it is all-inclusive, free of loop-holes, and guarantees a complainant protection from reprisals.

If it does not, the private sector pay equity legislation will have little impact on the vast majority of working women in Ontario.

At an April meeting of the Equal Pay Coalition Maria Wallis of Women Working with Immigrant Women spoke to the members concerning the perception in the immigrant and women of colour community that the coalition had not been focusing enough attention on the issue of equal value. As a result, the coalition set up meetings with representatives from Women Working with Immigrant Women, the Coalition of Visible Minority Women, and the Chinese-Canadian National Council. These meetings concluded

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The coalition needs to have a fuller discussion next year of how political decisions are made, the role of caucuses, how different caucuses work together, the question of accountability of group to caucus and vice versa and how we contract to work together.

Organizing for March 8th has never been a smooth process. Attempting to have political discussions at the same time as building a massive event in eight weeks is not an easy task, and we can never assume unity. We can't overcome our differences by denying, or downplaying their effects on us. In the coalition there were tensions between groups of women of colour and white women, among women of colour, and among whites. Most of us had little experience of working together. There were structural and organizational problems which had political repercussions. There were also very real political differences, including differing analyses of the origins of racism, and the most effective strategies and tactics for fighting it. Women of colour and white women appeared on both sides of most discussions and debates. There was also the impact of racism on us as individuals, the different ways it structures our lives, and the role we play, often unconsciously, in each others oppressions.

In our daily lives, we have the responsibility to fight the effects racist ideology has on us, to educate ourselves and work positively against it. Socialist-feminists have long understood that in the fight for change we need allies, and have chosen to work with other progressive movements. We understand that it is only through alliances that oppressed people have the power to make the necessary changes in our conditions. We clearly want those movements to adopt and integrate an anti-sexist politic as we work together, and we confront sexism as we work side by side with our brothers. We expect men to change,

“Some White Women...”

There was a discussion on whether to make one statement for all of us. Because we come from many political outlooks, and have differences, there was concern that it would be impossible to write a unitary statement which would be truly reflective of all points of view. But because we felt it important to continue to develop a dialogue and complete the evaluation, most of us agreed on the following response.

--That at the start of a coalition the groups and individuals involved contract with one another on the process of working together and our accountability to one another

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and in the same way white women must change. Men are not the enemy, and neither are white people, but both have privilege in this society. Our analysis must be clear on that. As we fight together against capitalism, we must at the same time fight the sexism, racism and heterosexism that is so intergrated within it.

White women can't allow South Asian, Native, Black, Chinese and other women of colour to raise these issues alone. It is the responsibility of all of us. Through the March 8th Coalition we have learned that there is a crucial difference between simply looking at anti-racism as one issue among many to be added to a long list of concerns, and on the other hand truly adopting an anti-racist analysis in all of our areas of work as we have with class and sexism. The first approach tends to isolate anti-racism at the bottom of a priority list, whereas the second opens up a way to a more fully developed understanding.

In our analysis and our practice, we have to take into account both the capitalist structures which maintain racism, as well as its more individual manifestations if we are to break down the barriers between women of colour and white women. Not doing this has been one of the biggest barriers to unity among people of different races. This unity is vital if we are ever to overcome racism, sexism, heterosexism and class oppression. As we have said before in this newsletter, although objective differences among us are crucial, they do not carry with them automatic and fixed conclusions about the possibility of shared political work. Such differences, if recognized, can be the focus of positive historical and political struggle. Hopefully the March 8th coalition, as difficult as it was, has been a step in that direction.

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—That the coalition clarify the role of caucuses and how political decisions are to be made

—That the coalition recognize the importance of political discussion and dialogue so that there is political learning and growth

—That the coalition put more emphasis on anti-racist education

—That the coalition familiarize new members with its history and process

—That the evaluation be well planned and a follow-up process for the next coalition be agreed on

—That representation on the coordinating committee be given a high priority

We recognize that this is a minimal response and that individuals and groups within us will have much more to say in terms of both criticisms and recommendations.



FOR SOME OF US...
STRUGGLE CONTINUES

The Black Women's Collective has published a newspaper "OUR LIVES" available at the Toronto Women's Bookstore which expresses its views on March 8th, 1986, and the experience of working in the coalition. The Disabled Women's Network, Lesbians of Colour and The Native Women's Resource Centre also issued statements at the evaluation meeting which we are not able to present because of a vote taken not to publish the contents of the meeting.

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In an effort to challenge the right of Canada Customs to define lesbian/gay sexuality and literature as 'obscene', the Canadian Committee against Customs Censorship has recently been formed. The Committee is working on a basis of unity statement and has contacted a number of groups for support, including IWDC. The CcACC's plans also include discussions with the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), the union representing customs inspectors and border guards.

Rites magazine has called on feminist and other popular groups to "take a strong stand in defence of lesbian and gay erotic literature." (editorial, Feb. 86) In keeping with our general anti-censorship position and our support for lesbian and gay rights, IWDC will be talking about this wave of homophobic attacks by Canada Customs at this year's Annual General Meeting of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC). It seems increasingly clear that existing state censorship legislation and practice is not working as the solution to the problem of violence against women and violent pornography. Instead, it is being used to stop the circulation of politically important work, including lesbian-positive and lesbian-produced work.

For updates on Canada Customs seizures, the Gay's the Word campaign, and the Canadian Committee against Customs Censorship, read Rites magazine, available at the Toronto Women's Bookstore. Or contact Glad Day Bookshop at 961-4161. IWDC will keep you posted on what happens at NAC.



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In this project of solidarity with women activists in Natal, we propose to raise some funds to assist women whose homes have been destroyed by Inkatha thugs. (Inkatha is the KwaZulu-based political vehicle of Chief Gasha Buthelezi and has been involved in a series of attacks against UDF members as well as unionists belonging to COSATU - The Congress of South African Trade Unions) Many of these vigilantes receive the direct support of the South African government.

We appreciate your support for this project, as a direct action in support of the continuing organization and resistance of women to apartheid and "homeland" stooges of the white supremacist state of South Africa.



Amandla Ngawetho!

Ten years ago on June 16 a series of events occurred that have had a tremendous impact on the struggle against apartheid. In the Black township of Soweto, outside of Johannesburg, twenty thousand students held demonstrations against the use of Afrikaans in the school system and demanded the right to be taught in the language of their choice. Afrikaans, a language related to Dutch, was seen as a symbol of the oppression from which the indigenous population of South Africa have suffered since the arrival of the first settlers to South Africa, three hundred years ago.

Within one week about 176 people were killed. The riots were not confined to Soweto. The actions of the students inspired communities throughout South Africa to express their anger and join together to organize school and work boycotts. On this, the tenth anniversary of the Soweto Uprising, we recognize the influence and the role of the youth in the struggle for a more just society.

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that further outreach must be done in those communities. As a result, the coalition is sending out a jointly signed letter to immigrant women and women of colour groups speaking of the issues involved. The coalition also gave over the Law Union's spot at the pay equity hearings to the three groups as they had not been able to obtain any space on the agenda. Each group has now joined the coalition.

A demonstration was held May 15 at Queen's Park celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Equal Pay Coalition, and maintaining the pressure on the Liberal government to enact the type of legislation that will be of benefit to all the women of Ontario.

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS OF CONCERN TO UNORGANIZED WOMEN

1. The legislation must cover all working women and men. In particular, small establishments must not be excluded. Over 40% of women in Ontario work in establishments with fewer than 20 employees.
2. There must be a minimum number of exceptions. Arguments such as labour market shortages or merit pay will be used by employers as loop-holes.
3. There must be an independent Pay Equity Commission, with sufficient resources and personnel to ...
 - monitor and review wage practices and remedy wage inequalities
 - seek out wage inequalities and file complaints on its own initiative
 - require and enforce the filing of job descriptions, wage rates, collective agreements, and other job data, within specific time periods, if a complaint is filed or the Commission so directs. This information to be retained on

public file with the Commission so that unorganized women don't have to ask their employer for relevant personnel information

- administer the assignment of pay equity determinations for managerial, temporary, part-time, contract, casual employees and other employees not covered by collective agreements.

4. A strong, easy to use complaints procedure with provision for prohibiting reprisals against a person who chooses to make a complaint.

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This scenario is common. Workers across North America have given up hundreds of thousands of dollars in wages and benefits in desperate attempts to hang onto their jobs. Their plants are usually shut down anyway. Companies' excitement about Japanese management techniques covers attacks against seniority rights and other contract language.

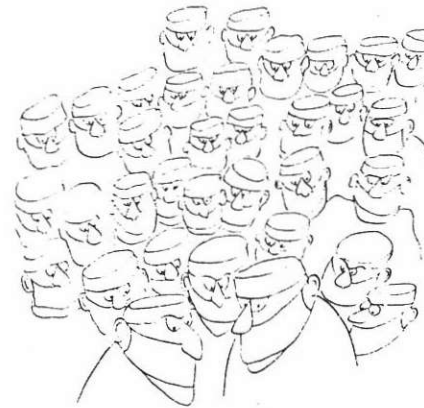
Local 2900 members wouldn't be blackmailed with the threats of plant closure and responded with a 98% strike vote. We have the reputation of being a strong militant local and the flag-ship for the other locals in the Inglis chain. If Inglis defeated us it would be difficult for other locals to win catch-up contracts. There is "method to their madness".

One or two locals standing firm and fighting back, although heroic, isn't adequate. We need labour and the NDP to lead us in a major campaign against concessions. Similarly, we need to defend and improve social programs such as UIC and medicare whether the threat of free trade is real or not.

Meanwhile, we at Local 2900 are walking the picket line and your support is welcome. We're at 14 Strachan Ave., just east of the end of the Ossington Ave. Bus line. We'll be announcing rallies in the near future, so plan to attend.

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successful tribunal. The next tribunal held February 27 in Winnipeg was particularly important in light of the divisive move by the NDP Pawley Government in raiding the Morgentaler clinic. This move is in direct opposition to the NDP policy for choice on abortion. Following the Toronto tribunal, Edmonton organized a highly successful event on March 27 which included a broad range of supporters from labour, church groups, women's groups, universities and high schools. The most recent tribunal in Halifax on April 14 packed the hall. Organizers were pleasantly surprised by the compliments of the "informative tribunal" from a well known anti-choice individual. Due to the pressures brought to bear on choice activists and women who speak out in PEI, organizers are planning a showing of videos of tribunals from across Canada. The Quebec Coalition is also planning a tribunal to be held in St. Therese.



On to Ottawa...

Organizers of tribunals have felt, since original discussions at last year's bi-national strategy meeting which brought together activists from across English Canada and Quebec, that a major action in Ottawa should be organized to culminate the tribunal campaign. Through discussions with members of the Quebec Coalition, Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL), National Action Committee (NAC), and the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics (OCAC), the possibility of a major action in Ottawa was examined further. For such an action to be successful, however, it is felt that the proposal must be supported by choice activists across the country and full participation of the major unions will be necessary.

An historic meeting took place recently in which representatives from Quebec Federation of Labour, Montreal Labour Council of the QFL, Confederation of National Trade Unionists, Quebec Teachers Federation, Ontario Federation of Labour, Canadian Labour Congress, Metro Labour Council, NAC, OCAC, CARAL and the Quebec Coalition came together to discuss the possibilities of an Ottawa action. While the proposed action is still in the early stages of discussion, the idea has spawned much enthusiasm and excitement. The feeling is that the time is ripe to build a highly visible bi-national demonstration or action in Ottawa. More and more, people are seeing the attacks of the "anti-choice" as the cutting edge of the right's attack on the gains made by the women's movement. Such an action in Ottawa will clearly and decisively demonstrate to the right that the women of Quebec and English Canada will not allow them to attack or undermine our struggle. Moreover, such an action will show the government that it can no longer use the vociferous anti-choice minority as an excuse not to act quickly in repealing the abortion law.



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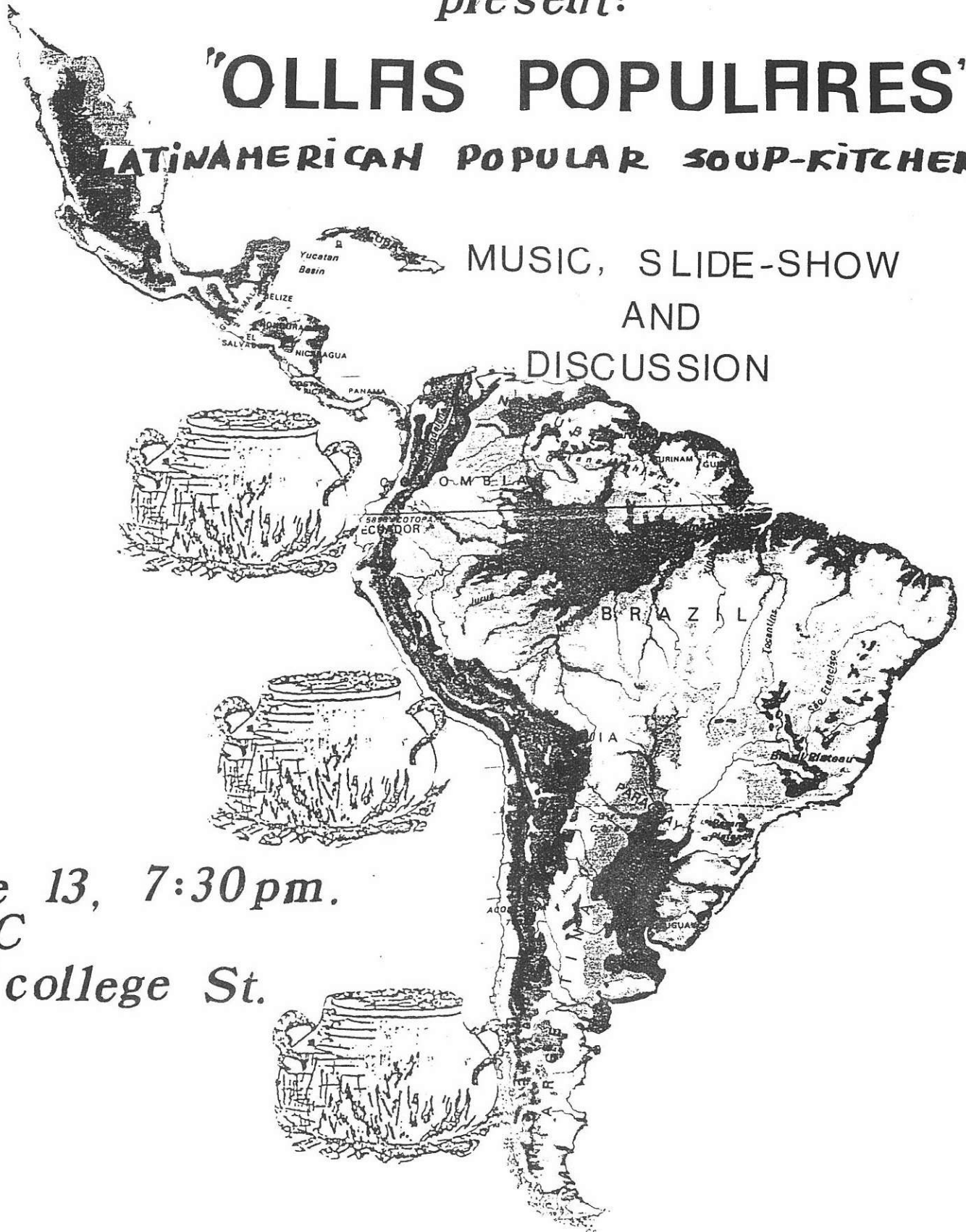
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Women's Brigade

A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

An afternoon of international feminist films and entertainment is being hosted by Canadian Action for Nicaragua (CAN) on Sunday, June 8, 1986, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at Cinema Lumiere, 290 College Street at Spadina. The programme will include three films: Small Happiness from China, Second Revolution from Nicaragua, and Burning Bridges, a Canadian film about the lives of

Indian women immigrants. Poet Himanyi Bannerji will be guest speaker. The afternoon will be a benefit for the Simone de Beauvoir Women's Tour, sponsored by CAN, which will be visiting Nicaragua this August. Tickets are \$7.00, or \$5.00 for students, seniors and unemployed, and are available at the Development Education Centre, the Toronto Women's Bookstore, or at the door.

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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 constituencies.

We welcome new members. For information call Nancy at 531-6608.



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