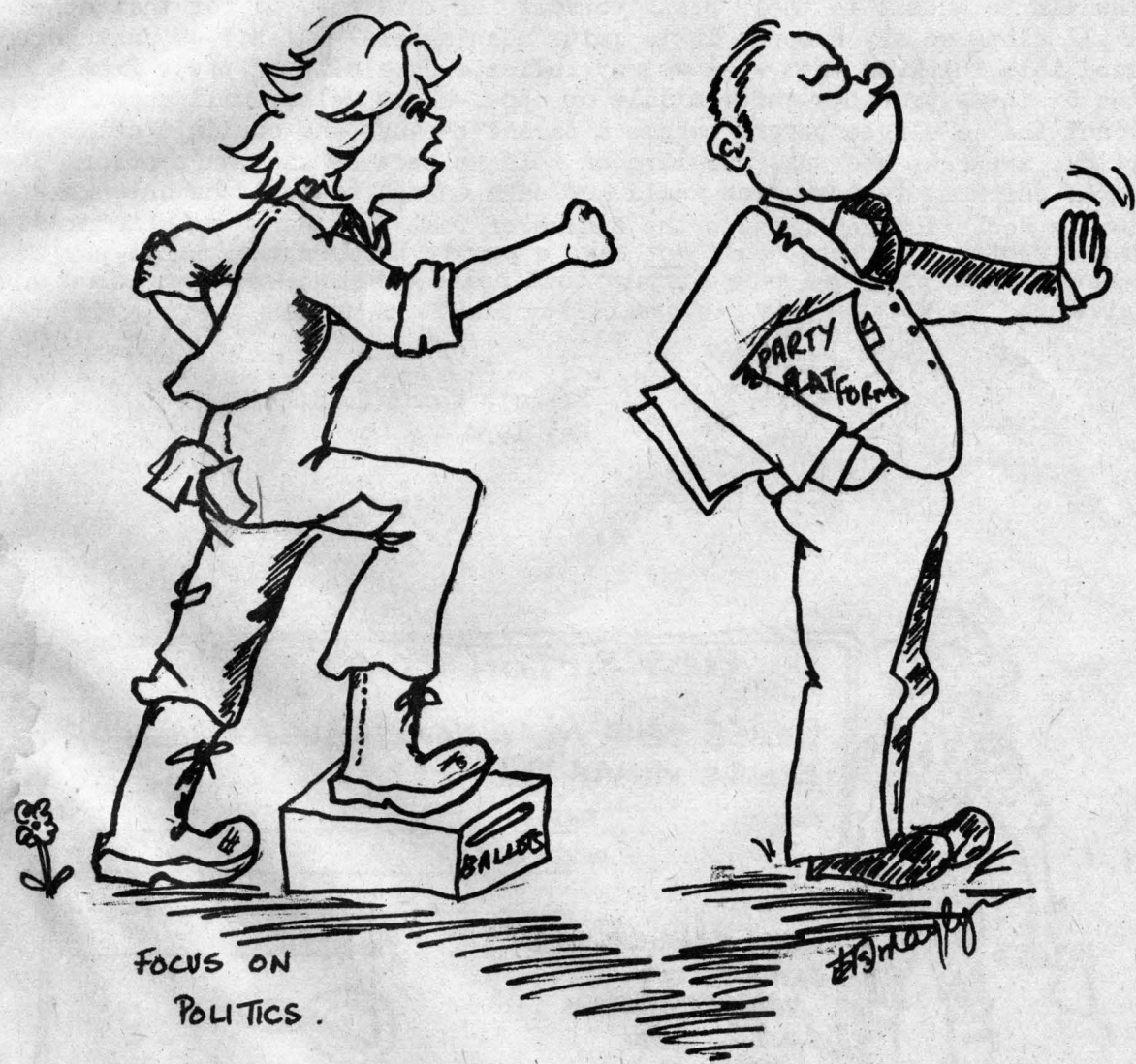


PRAIRIE WOMAN

VOL. II NO 5



FOCUS ON
POLITICS.

A NEWSLETTER OF SASKATOON WOMEN'S LIBERATION

EDITORIAL

A federal election looms near. A provincial election will likely be called within a year. And for us, SWL as a group, and feminists as individuals, the perennial questions again arise: what to do? Should we support the NDP because it's the best there is? Should we refuse to support them in light of their growing arrogance to women, natives, gay people and labor?

Or are all political parties the same; one narrow sliver of representation from the status quo that changes in slogans from party to party and from election to election, but does not change in its common mandate to control? Is it even worthwhile to submit to their pleas to vote for this one, or for that other one, when all along we may suspect it is quite meaningless? Aren't we just being deluded into thinking that what we may indicate on a slip of paper from a choice of two or three probably white middle or upper-class males, will actually change the fact that a single parent became a parent because she couldn't obtain an abortion, a parent who must now live on welfare because she can't afford daycare since if she went to work, she would not earn enough because the only work available to her is not unionized because the owners of that business are so interested in making a profit that they can't not make a profit because they would perish in a dog-eat-dog society, the same society that holds election-contests which allege to give us, the voters, the responsibility for perpetuating their world?

Prairie Woman Collective
May 1978



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NDP NOT NDP

Interviews by Rosemary Rupp

Prairie Woman spoke to several socialists about their thoughts on electoral politics and the N.D.P. The views presented are their own; however they are likely an accurate reflection of the opinions of many other feminists.

Nancy Allan, health worker:

"I think we should vote N.D.P. because they represent the least of the evils, but on the other hand we shouldn't expect too much from them. The revolution is not going to be made by any sort of electoral politics. The N.D.P. is the easiest party to influence--the most accessible to ordinary people. But this support for the N.D.P. should not be unconditional. I have refused to vote for a particular candidate, Rolfe for example, because I feel he's just not worth my vote.

The participation of Saskatoon Women's Liberation in elections? I like the all-candidate meetings we've had in the past. They were useful in allowing women to make up their mind, but they probably didn't make much difference in the policies of the candidates. I definitely don't think S.W.L. should go on record as supporting the N.D.P. We could say that we cannot support the N.D.P. because of this, this and this. We could support them if they would do this and this."

Anonymous, student

"You just have to remember not to expect too much from electoral politics. I can't get too excited about federal elections because the Liberals always win. Even if they didn't, it wouldn't make any difference. If the N.D.P. got in, they wouldn't do anything more or go any further. But provincial politics seem much closer to home--it has more immediate influence on my life. Provincially I'd vote N.D.P.--I'm scared about the Conservatives. It's silly to think that any good at all would come from electing a P.C. government. It would only get the N.D.P.

..... that is the question

in again. Provincially, I always vote N.D.P., but in a federal election, I'd probably support an alternate socialist candidate,"

Frances Mundy, letter carrier

"I vote N.D.P. but it's all shit anyway--there's not much difference. The N.D.P. is better than the rest for the practical benefits of their more liberal policies, but not because they're going to bring us any closer to the revolution. They're just the lesser of three evils. I'd just as soon fight the N.D.P. as anyone else--they're easier to fight. The N.D.P. at least claims to be responsible to labour, while the other parties are definitely responsible to business"

Anonymous, construction worker

"I don't have too many thoughts on the N.D.P. I don't know and I don't care about political parties and electoral politics. I don't like to see some people claim they can use the N.D.P. as a step towards socialism--it isn't. But even having said all that, in the event of an election, I would support the N.D.P. before any of the others."

Audrey Hall, Nurse

"The reality of the situation is that there is a serious risk of the Tories getting in. But the N.D.P. is obviously becoming more right-wing. So we've got two alternatives--do we withhold support from the N.D.P.? or do we work against the Tories and therefore support the N.D.P.?"

The arguments against the N.D.P. (and therefore allowing a P.C. government), are that a Tory government will show its true colours, while the N.D.P. in opposition would move to the left. The period of repression under the Tories would be seen as justifiable because it would radicalize people.

The arguments to support the N.D.P. are that the working class has won so few gains, as have women; in fact we're losing ground. To do anything to make it worse would be politically immoral. The N.D.P. is the best of a bad lot. cont'd p.5

WOMEN in TRADES

by Pam Hanna

Seventeen Saskatoon women are developing work skills in an effort to break through into the trades. A three month program sponsored by the department of manpower* provides trade shop experience, classroom background and aids in job placements, for women interested in learning a trade.

"This program has been set up to compensate for women's socialization," according to the instructor, Jean Dudley. "Many women have no experience with handling tools, the jargon of the trade nor the confidence to break into a male-orientated field", she said.

The program is designed to orientate women to the possibilities of working as a skilled tradesperson. "It doesn't provide the experience a year of construction might, but it gives a better idea than most women have of a whole spectrum of job possibilities", Dudley said.

Students are enthusiastic about exploring a job in a trade. Most are looking at work outside of traditional female jobs because of economic factors.

The women, from 18 to 29 years old, have been referred by manpower to this pre-trades training program after expressing a desire to learn a trade. Half are single parents, who state economic reasons as their primary motivation in seeking a trade. "Changing a woman's economic position opens a whole spectrum of possibilities. It changes her power in this society and is a basic step in a woman having more control over her life", Dudley said.

*The Department of Manpower and Immigration no longer exists. It is now Canada Employment and Immigration. However throughout this article, manpower will refer to the above department.

Why has the government established this program? According to Cher Anderson, Women's Employment Coordinator for Manpower, it's a result of looking at the economy. "more and more women are entering the labor force. And more are staying there because they need to work to pay mortgages and keep their families. This program recognizes the potential of women to work in non-traditional jobs", said Anderson.

This program, the first of its kind in Saskatchewan, has been modelled after a series of similar projects in Manitoba that have met with great success. The classroom familiarizes students with terminology and labor standards, while providing speakers and films on nontraditional jobs and a discussion of attitudes facing women doing "men's work" in our society. Exposure to each trade is provided in the shops at Kelsey Technical Institute in Saskatoon. On hand experience with tools and equipment consumes two weeks of the course.

Life skills such as communication and assertiveness training are also part of the program. "The course is very broad in its scope. Students get a chance to experience many possibilities before committing themselves to a career", said Anderson. "A major accomplishment of the classroom is the building of self-confidence among the students. Women have been socialized into having poor self-images and little faith in their mechanical ability", said Dudley, the instructor who is an apprentice plumber of eight months. "When a woman faces a shop of men alone and has to deal with sneers or condescending remarks, coming back to the group and talking it out becomes very important", she said. "To be prepared for the job is different for a woman, partly

because of her lack of exposure to those kinds of skills, and partly because she is dealing with attitudes that emphasize her differences", she said.

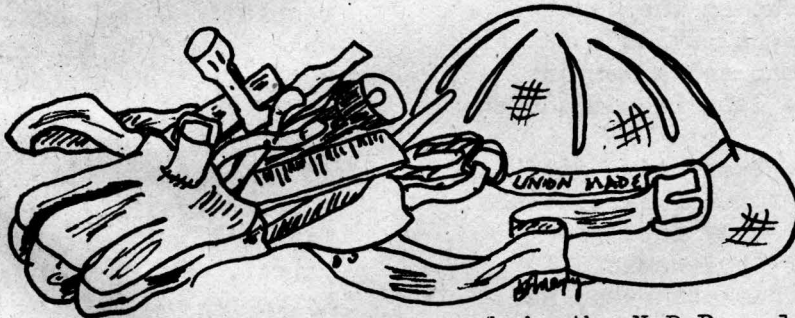
Experience gained in the trade shops at Kelsey is designed to help overcome fear of tools and give students a chance to develop their mechanical ability. "The skilled trades and blue collar work have been mystified to women, and actual hands on experience is one way of breaking down that barrier", according to Dudley.

Few women have gone through the regular trades apprenticeship courses at Kelsey. The women in this pre-trades course attend classes with men enrolled in the regular courses. According to the instructor, "Both sets of students are exposed to a unique learning experience. The women are exposed to the machoism associated with the trades and begin their struggle to be accepted in the traditionally male occupation. The men in the classes are being forced, some for the first time, to treat women seriously as co-workers".

The final stage of the program is job placement. After being exposed to a wide range of trades, women are encouraged to choose one and they are aided in finding work. Garages, welding shops, painting firms and other businesses hire the women. Minimum wage is paid by manpower. The employer is asked to supplement the wage and provide training and instruction in exchange for the labor of the woman learning the trade. It is hoped that permanent employment will be secured following the six month period where wages are supplemented by manpower.

Funding for the project is primarily federal monies through manpower. Whether this pilot program will be continued is still not certain. "It depends on money, whether we will be funded again," said Anderson, "but the comments have been fairly positive.

A proposal to have the program run in Moose Jaw at the Saskatchewan Technical Institute and in Regina out of Balfour Tech have been discussed.



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I think this position is the one I would agree with. I will probably support the N.D.P. But I don't want this support to be uncritical. I don't want to see us become a bunch of party hacks. If I were to work in the N.D.P., it would be very important to keep my perspective, strategy and goals in mind. Feminists and socialists must work together to define this strategy. Ideally I wouldn't

work in the N.D.P. unless there were a group of people from outside the party with a similar perspective to also work with me.

I must say I'm not impressed with Father Bob (Father Bob Ogle - N.D.P. candidate for Saskatoon-East in the federal election and Roman Catholic priest). His campaign, or what I've seen of it, is simplistic and sentimental. He's undoubtedly right-wing on feminist issues. We must see that he's aware of these issues - and not soft pedal our demands because he's a priest."



"STEP RIGHT
UP FOLKS! THIS WAY,
PLEASE, THIS WAY

we have for your entertainment and edification an event guaranteed to stir your blood and bring out all your hopes for a better future - we bring you - ELECTIONS! Hear the Liberals cry - National Unity. Hear the Conservatives cry - Unemployment. Hear the NDP cry - Power to the People. Eh? What's that? Women? Women? Sorry, that's just around the corner. Where was I, you distracted me. Oh yes, step right up and put your X here. Make sure you come back in four years, we'll have an even bigger and better election."

A bit facetious, but then, one grows tired of feminists being accused of having no sense of humour. Elections. Federally and provincially they draw near, and I find myself once again faced with the question of for whom or for what I should vote.

As a socialist-feminist, it should seem logical to choose the least of the three patriarchal evils - the NDP. However, as a woman and a lesbian, I have learned to look beyond the so-called "logical".

"The NDP - the best we've got!" On paper, in the form of resolutions and party policy, they seem pro-union, pro-worker, pro-woman. In reality, here in Saskatchewan, we see wage controls, back-to-work legislation, and a roster full of crimes against, and omissions concerning, women. Women as workers. Women as Natives. Women as lesbians. Women as housewives.

This NDP government refuses to acknowledge our right to control our bodies, our sexuality, indeed our lives, by their well-known policies and stands against abortion, Lesbian and gay rights, daycare, family planning, to name a few. What about their policy of cutbacks to essential social services - essential to women if they're to survive in this hostile

society? What credibility do they have to workers, especially women - in light of wage controls, ineffective and unenforceable equal pay legislation, back to work legislation? Even their famous potash mine routine leaves me cold - men work in those mines, men control those mines, and men reap the profits of those mines - not women.

What can a feminist do if the candidate in her constituency is none other than the right honourable misogynist of the year himself - Wes Robbins? I am one of those lucky feminists, and I cannot bring myself to sanction the likes of him by voting for him.

Federally, we have the NDP from which, for now, we have only paper resolutions and empty words about what they'd do if they had power. My evaluation of how much further ahead I and my sisters would be if that should happen has led me to say: not a centimetre!

Once again, I look at the candidate. Father Bob Ogle, a Roman Catholic priest. He is bound by his vows to serve no-one but the Catholic Church. Voting for him would be like voting for the Pope; it would guarantee yet another "pro-lifer" more power. I totally reject supporting such a candidate on the mere basis of him belonging to the "right" party.

I strongly feel that as women, we must start to overlook party boundaries. Not one of them considers women to be part of their list of priorities; in this respect they are all the same. I also have an uneasy

Continued on page 10

Women's Rally for Action

We are reprinting below the leaflet Women's Action Collective on Health (WACH) from Regina, distributed at the March 20th "Women's Rally for Action" of the Action Committee of the Status of Women (see Prairie Woman, April 1978).

The Women's Action Collective on Health is a group of women who have come together to fight against the oppression of women. We view this discrimination against women as not simply the absence of this or that right, but as part of a general malaise in the structure of our society. Under a system where profits are considered more important than people, neither men nor women can realize their full potential. It is not the gender of the members of the corporate boards that is the problem, but the power those jobs hold. Clearly, society's ills and inequalities will be perpetuated if the structure is not changed. Thus, in WACH we see our role as two part: to fight women's oppression, linked with the struggle for socialism, a system which can provide the pre-conditions for true equality and freedom.

Our demands are many. No demand stands in isolation--all are united to work towards a single end. No area of concern can be ignored. We support and fight for issues such as: Free Quality 24 Hour Daycare, Equal Pay and Equal Work, End the Double Day, Socialize Housework, Support for Rape Crisis Centres, Universally Accessible Safe Birth Control. All women's groups believe in these demands to one degree or another.

However, we are concerned about the lack of emphasis on the right to Free Safe Abortion on Demand in the list of issues raised here today. It is a basic demand of the women's movement that women have control of our bodies--that we be freed from being slaves to our repro-

ductive systems and pawns of the medical profession. Gaining the right to control our bodies is the first step in gaining control of our lives. Such things as abortion committees, where decisions are cloaked in secrecy, hospitals that are being given the right to refuse abortions on the basis of the moralistic ravings of the administrations, and the growing number of women who must leave the province and even the country to obtain one, must not continue. The Badgely Commission, as did the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, recognized the inequities in the abortion policies throughout Canada and recommended that Abortion and Birth Control Clinics be set up and abortion be removed from the Criminal Code. Recently, the DeVlieger Health Commission stated its opposition to the unequal and discriminatory manner in which abortions are granted or refused in Saskatchewan. As it stands now, poor, rural and working class women have an incredibly difficult time obtaining an abortion.

The devastating reality of the present state of affairs in this country is illustrated by the current situation in Sudbury, Ontario, where the requests for abortions has doubled since the lay-offs at Inco. Abortion is not simply a question of individual freedom; it is more and more becoming an economic necessity.

Noticeably absent in the list of demands is the Right of Freedom of Sexual Orientation. For precisely the same reasons as we demand free abortion and birth control, we demand the freedom to choose our sexual orientation. It is no accident that a person like Anita Bryant has surfaced now. Her attacks on the rights and lives of gay people is an attack on the entire women's movement. The same laws which restrict gays also restrict women. Neither gays nor women are

FEMINISTS FACE LIFE AFTER JAILBREAK

- 7 - "and now for a message
from the sponsor..."

Two feminist prison activists in Vancouver are facing sentences of up to life imprisonment in the wake of a desperate break-out attempt in Jan. by five prisoners at the maximum-security British Columbia Penitentiary, the scene of more than a dozen mass insurrections and hostage-takings in the past decade.

The charges against Betsy Wood, 48, and Gay Hoon, 32, are the most serious and the most arbitrary to confront politically active people on Canada's West Coast in at least a generation. The authorities have made clear they intend to use the upcoming trial to incite public opinion against the growing Canadian prisoners' movement.

Wood and Hoon have been key figures in the campaign to focus attention on the Pen's solitary confinement unit, which penal experts have called one of the most inhuman in North America. The Federal Court of Canada ruled in 1975 that conditions of sensory deprivation and guards' brutality in the unit constituted "cruel and unusual punishment, in violation of the Canadian Bill of Rights," but no substantial changes have yet been made.

All five prisoners in the escape attempt had spent long periods in solitary, and all had records of attempted escape or other forms of resistance. Andy Bruce, who has spent most of the last seven years in solitary after helping engineer a strike of Native Indian prisoners in 1970, has been involved in four hostage-takings, including one which made him and two other prisoners national figures in 1975 when one of the hostages, prison social worker Mary Steinhäuser (known to be sympathetic to prisoners), was shot to death by the prison tactical squad during its assault on their stronghold.

The Bristol-Myers Corporation has reached an out-of-court settlement with an order of nuns which sued the corporation for "irresponsibly" marketing infant formula in South America.

The Sisters of the Precious Blood claimed in the suit that the corporation was using high-powered advertising to persuade women to abandon breast-feeding and use its product instead. The nuns claimed Bristol-Myers knew that poor women had neither the money to afford the formula nor the facilities to properly sterilize it.

Filed in U.S. District Court in 1977, the suit charged the company with making false statements to its stockholders about the true nature of its marketing methods abroad.

Before that suit could come to trial however, Bristol-Myers agreed, in an out-of-court settlement, to mail all its stockholders a report on the company's foreign marketing practices. That statement will reportedly include both the nuns' allegations and the company's response to the charges.

The Nestle's Company, meanwhile, in response to a seven-month-long boycott of its products in America, has announced it is sending a company representative on a tour of the U.S. to explain that corporation's policies for marketing its baby formula in the third world.

Nestle's has reportedly been selling its baby milk formulas by sending out employees dressed as nurses, who persuade third world mothers of newborn children to use Nestle's formulas instead of breast milk to feed their children. In some countries, such as India, the cost of that formula amounts to more than half the weekly income of an entire family.

In a related matter, a plant partly operated by Nestle's in Medellin, Colombia, and a Nestle's plant at Tongala, in Australia, were reportedly recently found by health authorities in those countries to be marketing milk which was contaminated with bacteria before it even left the plant.

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--Her Say in
Big Mama Rag April 1978

n: What wasn't said

considered to be fully functioning human beings. Gays and lesbians are more often than not denied housing, job security and the right to keep and raise their children. Any discrimination on the basis of sex or sexual orientation must be stopped.

The areas of abortion and sexual orientation should not be considered divisive. It is divisive that they are not recognized by our law makers, colleagues, and even friends. We cannot be the ones to judge what is good or bad in another woman's life. This is precisely what the government and bosses do for us. What we must fight for as a movement is real freedom of choice on any question. We must realize that our only strength is gained through unity. We cannot afford

to allow any of our sisters to suffer and struggle alone. An attack on one is an attack on all! It is important that women's groups work together. Isolation, the seed of disunity, does not gain recognition nor achieve success.

We support the women's rally in that it brings to public attention the concerns of women. However, while lobbying is a form of voicing our discontent, it alone cannot pressure the government to act in our interest. Lobbying is a 'nice' way of expressing anger and is often referred to as 'going through the proper channels'. If we study the history of women's struggles we must consider the Suffragettes who saw no further than winning the vote. Nevertheless, they used militant means of gaining public attention and exerting political pressure.

Likewise, we must fight for our rights in every shape and form imaginable. Legal channels often serve to delay and disunite any Petitions for justice. Women should not worry about offending or appearing disruptive if we are to make our voices heard. A government which perpetuates the inequalities women experience daily does not deserve our respect and should not be treated delicately.

WACH wholeheartedly supports whatever gains are made through actions such as these. We have raised a few points that we consider to be very important to the unity and strength of our movement. We sincerely hope that they serve to broaden the scope of our movement. As we have stated before, we look forward to the broadest scope of issues and discussions.

IN SISTERHOOD AND SOLIDARITY,
WACH

March 20, 1978



Feminists Face Life...

Continued from page 7

Wood and Hoon are charged with attempted murder and several other offences relating to aiding an escape attempt. The attempted murder charge, which carries a maximum life sentence, was pinned on them on the grounds that they are equally responsible because one of the prisoners stabbed a guard during a scuffle.

The two were present in the Pen visiting area on January 28 when the five prisoners smashed through a reinforced glass partition with a sledgehammer. The five, armed with a gun and a knife, had apparently worked out a well-coordinated plan to overpower the guards there and to make their escape out of the visitors' entrance.

But the attempt aborted when the guards managed to get away, locking in 13 visitors - including Wood and Hoon - who were taken as hostages. In the longest such siege in Canadian prison history, the ensuing deadlock held firm for a week while negotiations were conducted between the prisoners and police, until finally the hostages were released unharmed and the prisoners returned to solitary.

Wood and Hoon were immediately arrested, with the authorities alleging that Wood had arranged for a car to be parked right outside the visitors' entrance and that Hoon had smuggled in the gun. At their arraignment, the prosecution tried to have them detained in custody until trial on the grounds they were a menace to society, but the court was obliged to spring them on bail after 65 letters of reference from friends and acquaintances were submitted testifying to their long-standing pacifist sentiments.

Both Wood and Hoon said later they came in to prison work because of their experiences in the women's movement. Said Wood: "I found the isolation of women at home and men in solitary to be strikingly similar. In many cases the women with the greatest need for day-care, abortions, jobs, welfare, what-have-you, were those whose husbands or companions were in prison."

The two face a preliminary hearing beginning June 12th to determine whether the State has a credible case. The trial will probably be scheduled for the Fall.

The five prisoners, who are all facing similar charges, will go to trial on May 29th. Meanwhile, most of them have already been transferred to solitary cells at the super-maximum "hostage-takers' unit" at Millhaven Penitentiary in Bath, Ontario.

(More info from Solitary Confinement Abolition Project, Box 758, Station A, Vancouver, B.C.)

-Open Road, April, 1978



Step Right Up Folks...

Continued from page 6

feeling about socialist-feminist support of the NDP on the basis of their representing the only option for the working class. It reminds me too much of the mistake women have repeatedly made over the centuries - that of putting men's priorities and goals over their own. For far too long have we supported and worked for institutions, organizations and parties controlled by greedy men. Surely we've learned our lesson by now.

As a feminist, as a woman who cares about myself and my sisters, I refuse to follow or help in any way any male-dominated, male-controlled party or system, merely because they're better on "other" issues. No, my choice is to leave the patriarchal institution of capitalistic democracy to continue its slow and steady way to ruin. My energy meanwhile will be put into aiding and speeding its demise in any way I can.

ONION BOOKS

by Sheila Crampton

A few weeks ago my curiosity got the best of me, and I went to a meeting of the Onion Bookstore. I had been hearing bits and pieces about the project for some time, and what I learned really excites me.

Onion Books will be a non-profit co-operative type store, with books in stock that aren't easy to find in Saskatoon. Whether your interest is women's issues, gay and native peoples, third world or French language, you should be able to find a book that satisfies you. Non-sexist children's literature, politics, alternate technology and organic gardening and farming are a few other topics that will be available in book form, periodicals and records.

The idea originated with Oxfam last August, and a grant proposal was submitted to the Sask. Council for International Co-Operation for money to get it off the ground. In December Martha Dayton was hired by One Sky to do a feasibility study, and the response was enthusiastic. Since then, interested individuals have been meeting frequently, and it won't be long now before the store will be open for business.

Details of the co-operative have not yet been finalized, but application has been made to the Department of Co-Operation for a community services association status. So far, it looks like members will pay a \$5-10.00 membership fee, and receive a five per cent discount on books, but that's tentative. At any rate, you would have the

pleasure of working in the store on a volunteer basis, and first chance at the books!

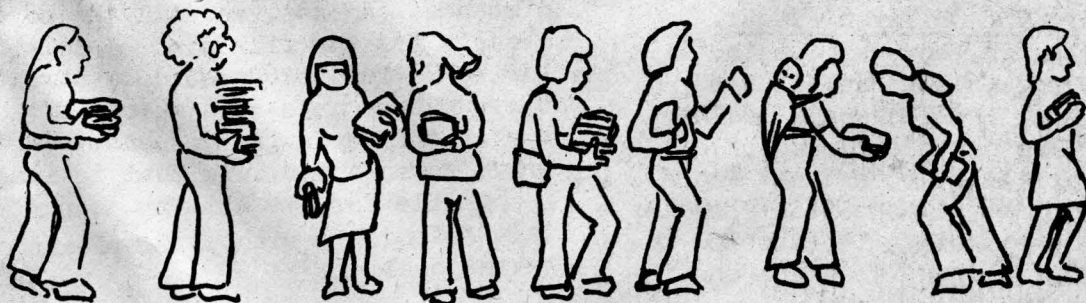
The \$6,000.00 grant will be enough to cover overhead such as shop rental, but Onion organizers are hoping that enough donations and loans will come in to keep the shelves stocked. A few one-year interest free loans have already been provided by interested people, and hopefully enough money will keep coming in to help the store to a more permanent footing.

Onion Books will be more than just a bookstore, according to Martha Dayton. She is hoping that small groups will take advantage of the space to hold meetings, and speakers will be invited.

About twenty people have been actively involved with the organizing, and at least as many more have contributed energy to work parties or expressed interest in working shifts. A work party is planned at the storefront Sunday afternoon, April 30th, from 12:30 to 4:30, so if you have spare elbow grease, bring it along!

Onion is hoping to open its doors for business May 8th, and will announce its grand opening soon. If you want more information, or are interested in attending organizational meetings, contact Martha at the bookstore, 665-7611.

Onion Books
650 Broadway Avenue
Saskatoon



JULIA

movie review of Julia

by Maggie Butcher

The film Julia is, as the movie blurb tells us, "based on a true story", the story in fact of American playwright Lillian Hellman's friendship with a woman she identifies only by the name "Julia" which she describes in her book Pentimento: A Book of Portraits.

The film, like the book, begins by telling us that pentimento refers to the process in art whereby "old paint on canvas, as it ages, sometimes becomes transparent", enabling one to see the original lines beneath the surface, when the painter "repented". "Perhaps," says Hellman, "it would be as well to say that the old conception, replaced by a later choice, is a way of seeing and then seeing again", a way of rediscovering "what then was for me once, what then is for me now."

What we have is a 1978 film of a 1973 account of events culminating in 1937 when Julia, who has rejected her rich American family to become a pupil-patient of Freud's in Vienna, is brutally killed for her part in assisting anti-Fascist sympathizers. A series of flashbacks plot the course of the friendship between the two women through girlhood and adolescence to the time when Julia begins medical studies in Oxford and Lillian, living with Dashiell Hammett on the New England coast, is struggling with her first play, The Children's Hour.

The emphasis, however, in the film as in the book, is on Julia, her charisma, her independence, and her heroism. The question asked of one during the film, "Who's Dash? Who's Lilly?" was not without point because, while the perspective is directed towards Julia, the way in which she in-

spires a nervous, hesitant, but ultimately courageous Lillian, who has last seen her friend badly injured in a Vienna hospital, to risk her own life in carrying money from Paris to Berlin for the sake of the cause, tantalizes us with the suggestion of a context which the film alone does not supply. Lilly's adventures, her meeting a stranger in a hotel lobby who gives her cryptic instructions on what she is to do, her experiences on the train, and her final brief meeting with Julia, now with only one leg and on crutches, in a Berlin cafe, are presented like something out of a Hammett detective story; the selfless daring of Lilly herself suggest an early indication of the same courage that enabled her to testify against the McCarthy trials in the 1950s. But on these matters the film, like the book, is silent.

If we provide our own context, the film may be enriched but it is not necessary for our understanding of the theme of the film which is, after all, that of the friendship between two women, a love which resists analysis and categorization but simply is. Lillian responds to Julia's call as Julia knew she would--is afraid, and yet does what is demanded of her by that love, failing, in her own estimate, only in her inability to find Julia's daughter.

Julia is Lillian Hellman's tribute to her friend and a record of what she regarded as her failure to measure up to the task enjoined upon her. We, with the perspective afforded us by time and distance, can see, and all the more clearly for the film's so closely following Hellman's own subdued narrative, that what we have is a record of a remarkable friendship between two equally brave women and a film that is itself remarkable for its ability to portray that friendship without sentiment or sensationalism.

Book Review

Marx's Daughters by Ronald Florence
by Janet Nattress

Marx's Daughters is an historical analysis of the lives of Rosa Luxemburg, Eleanor Marx, and Angelica Balabanoff who lived during the tumultuous years of European social revolution, in the first half of the 20th century. These women personally influenced the practical application of Marxist ideology both nationally and internationally. Ronald Florence calls them "Marx's Daughters" because their ideology was true to his theory of the scientific discovery of political development at a time when many were misconstruing it.

Eleanor Marx worked to have her father's works translated, understood and put into practice. She drafted the goals of the socialist movement in Britain and lectured extensively in the U.S. Rosa Luxemburg read Marx's works as a young woman and quickly became a militant Marxist, arguing with the existing socialist International and Polish party over their interpretation of the means to achieve social revolution. Angelica Balabanoff, a refugee from bourgeois society, devoted her entire life to the Marxist revolutionary cause. All three women met on this common political ground.

The importance of these women to feminist issues was that they began where Marx left off. Eleanor Marx, who had grown up in her father's traditional household, was to reject marriage and convention and pursue a political career. Rosa Luxemburg left Poland to study and meet revolutionary exiles in Switzerland. She and Angelica Balabanoff recognized the importance of international feminist solidarity. Clara Zetkin, a lifelong friend, organized the International

Socialist Women.

Eleanor Marx was also a militant union organizer and drafted such clauses as equal pay for women. Unlike her father, Eleanor believed that women's freedom would not automatically occur in a non-capitalist society; women must work for it themselves.

Luxemburg's many years in prison testify to her commitment to the revolutionary cause and her total opposition to the nationalistic European war. In January, 1919, she was shot by the German Social Democratic Government for her role as a leader of the German Communist Party protesting the war.

Angelica Balabanoff worked in Italy and rallied Italian women against their oppressors through her magazine for women entitled, "Arise Comrades!". Until her death in 1965 Balabanoff worked for international socialist struggle through periods of fascism, Nazism, the Spanish Civil War and the Russian purges.

The lives of these women are extremely important to our understanding of socialism and its relation to women. The crux of their lives is that they rejected the sexist and incorrect socialist dogma of the time and fought it even while struggling for the basic goals of Marxist ideology.

Ronald Florence's book is neither hard reading nor boring. It is concise, personal and extremely clear on the ideology these women gave their lives for. Read it!



"When a government puts people in jail for their political opinions, we do not ask the nationality of that government. We are always on the side of the victim of state tyranny."

- Marie Louise Berneri
(1918 - 1949)

MUMMERS'

A review
by
Susan Woolway

On April 14, at the Western Development Museum, I attended a performance by Newfoundland Mummers of their much publicized cross-Canada touring show, "They Club Seals Don't They". Billed as a controversial look at the other side of the sealing industry, vis-a-vis Greenpeace, the show was slick, polished, and especially cutting to Greenpeace and associates Brian Davies and Bridget Bardot. The actual mechanics of the performance, and the enthusiasm and conviction of the Mummers cannot be faulted. However, "They Club Seals Don't They" did not live up to my expectations.

The Mummers are to be commended for the considerable research that obviously went into the show. The programme package consisted of a collation of facts on such aspects of the seal hunt as the question of brutality at the kill site; the ~~ambiguous~~ question of the size of the seal herd; the tactics used by Greenpeace and others to publicize their views on the hunt; and a break-down of the economics of the sealing industry.

The well-executed skits which comprised the show elaborated upon these issues, and the Mummers made no pretense of their heart-felt bias for the Newfoundland fishing families caught up in what has become, seemingly, an international animal welfare scandal. The facts certainly do seem to support the Mummers bias. There is now substantial doubt as to whether the harp seal is an endangered species, and groups such as the International Society for the Protection of Animals and the Canadian Council on Animal Care have attested to the fact that the slaughter of the seals by clubs and steel hooks is a humane killing method. The Mummers also publicized the little-known fact that meat from over 50% of total seal carcasses landed is utilized. (This figure was taken from a 1976

survey commissioned by the Federal Department of Fisheries and Environment.)

However, it was not the analysis of these concerns which dismayed me, but rather their lack of any meaningful economic analysis. The skits emphasized and re-emphasized the importance of the sealing industry to Nfld. fishing communities, and dramatically stated that money earned during the sealing season constitutes one-third of the annual income of the average fisherman. This sounds impressive, until one realizes that the average annual income they are talking about is only \$7,500. The Mummers argue that poverty has a regional relativity. Granted, but \$7,500 for a family of 5 spells out poor regardless of the region. It is also clear that the fashion fur industry which depends on the pelts is itself not eeking out a subsistence level existence. The question not raised then is one of profit and exploitation - it is the question the Mummers largely overlook or ignore.

"They Club Seals Don't They" contains one very telling skit which mentions exploitation. The big city reporter asks George, the Newfoundland fisherman, if he feels he is being exploited; his wife Maggie replies something to the effect, "Sure we do - we've been in Confederation since 1949." The conversation and skit end there. As a former Maritimer, this to me expresses in a nutshell the stoical Maritime attitude towards politics, government, and the way of life - a shrug of the shoulders and a "what else is new" expression. It is not a matter of caring, but one of resignation to the path their history has taken since the French and English colonized the area nearly 400 years ago. As a long-term resident I felt that it was overwhelmingly accepted that an inherent

- continued on page 15.

Mummers' review, continued

characteristic of Maritime governments is corruption and exploitation. While many of us would argue that this is an inherent characteristic of any capitalist government the difference between the situation here and that in the Maritimes is vast. There, there are no alternative political parties or protest groups, or frustration outlets of any kind. Family Planning Clinics are looked upon with great suspicion and the NDP is considered radical Socialist. Environmentalists and organic farmers are the only alternative lifestyle people.

The Mummers performance was enjoyable but not satisfying. Their attack was misdirected. Greenpeace is not responsible for the quality of life in the Maritimes, nor the 15% and rising unemployment rate in Newfoundland. Continuation of the sealing industry unhampered by Greenpeace persistence will not improve the situation, either. In the face of such conditions, I do not feel it is enough, or right, for the Mummers to argue "it's not much but it's all we have". It is not an angry sentiment, it is a resigned and imploring one. "They Club Seals Don't They" was just too traditionally Maritime for me.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We regretfully announce that this will be the last monthly issue of Prairie Woman. We will be publishing bi-monthly, at least for the summer (June-July, August-September). In September, the decision will be reconsidered and we may go Monthly again. Watch for your next Prairie Woman at the end of June.

Family Planning Birth Control Clinic is held every Thursday, 7-9 pm at City Hall in the Public Health Dept. No appointments are necessary and counsellors and a doctor will be on hand. For further information call 244-7989.

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General meetings of Saskatoon Women's Liberation are held every second Sunday, 7:00 pm 233-22nd St. East. The next meeting will be held May 14th.. All interested women welcome.

Rumour and speculation concerning A. Bryant's mystery jaunt into Saskatchewan continue to grow. As far as Prairie Woman has been able to discover, neither date nor place has been confirmed. Indeed, present rumour has it that Dale Evans will come in place of Bryant. It was not clear at press time whether or not Trigger will accompany her, but we will keep you informed.

Prairie Woman has an immediate need for workers--no specific qualifications required other than a feminist socialist perspective and an interest to work on our newsletter. You will be surprised how useful you can become. If you are interested, phone Janet Nattress 652-6580.

-May 6 Spring Benefit Dance for Next Year Country, Saskatchewan's News Magazine. Indian and Metis Friendship Centre, 8:30 p.m. Admission \$3.00. Jazz Workshop performing. Refreshments will be available and a good time assured.

-May 12 and May 26 Women's Dance. 9pm to 2am. Gay Community Centre, 310-20th Street East. Licensed, sound system, admission \$2.00. All women welcome!



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PRAIRIE WOMAN is a newsletter of Saskatoon Women's Liberation. Contributions in the form of articles, news items, poetry, graphics, cartoons, and photographs are welcomed from women. Interested men are invited to contribute letters or funds. Because the newsletter is put out by voluntary labour, financial donations are encouraged..

PRAIRIE WOMAN is run as a collective..Writers have had their efforts acknowledged with their articles. Others working on the paper are:

Vicki Barclay
Sheila Crampton
Wiesia Kolasinska
Janet Nattress

Gail Osachoff
Rosemarie Rupps
Maylynn Woo
Susan Woolway

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