

FREE

A feminist newspaper distributed nationally

The Womanist

December '88/January '89

Ottawa

40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

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What will it take to save our earth?
Women in prison in Canada - A special report
from the inmates of the Prison for Women.

Post Election:

The issues the politicians forgot to
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privatization, farm women, lesbianism,
violence against women, housing,
prostitution, the nuclear subs and more...



And more... The fetal rights case, the abortion pill, poverty in B.C.,
Employment Equity, the United Church debate on gays and lesbians, book
reviews of Revelations, Herstory and Gallerie, letters, a Wellness column
and much more...

Women who worked on this issue: Lynne Tyler, Joan Riggs, Beth Ryan, Michelle Albert, Ravida Din, Susan De Rosa, Gloria Shalay and many other women who gave us their time and energy.

Designed by Joan Riggs, Catalyst Research and Communications.

Special thanks to Catherine O'Neill who created the graphics for the front cover and has generously allowed us to use her graphics throughout the newspaper. We would also like to thank the many women artists whose work are on the pages of the paper but we could not find their name to credit.

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The Womanist was created to empower and enable women. We want to get back to the basics, the common ground that has built the women's movement, while celebrating our differences.

What can we agree upon? That we as women are important and that we have a right to be heard, to be respected, to be trusted.

As a movement we have a responsibility to enable all voices to be heard, equally. That is our commitment in this newspaper - to empower with ideas, information and inspiration.

The Womanist appears 6 times a year. Welcome to the second issue.

Womenspeak



Believing in Ourselves

Dear Womanist:

I read with interest the various perspectives of intelligent, believable women on the 'in fighting' of women's groups. I thank them for their insights. However, at the risk of appearing naive, I can't help but think this conflict is a good sign.

Consider women for a moment as individuals who have spent our lives on the outskirts, fundamentally oppressed. There are no models to go by in this reclaiming of stolen ground. There is so much to learn - about creating visions, about sharing those visions and about our perceptions of power.

Many of us are children with these discoveries - some continuing to repair the damage we've incurred in this crazy oppressive system - and we must forgive ourselves when we make mistakes.

The dismal, urgent message I get from some feminists is this: "OK, we only have one shot at this before they finish us off forever, We've got to get it right."

Yes. However, I think we could take the bite out by offering women the same great faith as we have had (often misguided) in religion, in our children and in men.

Faith is an understandably difficult issue for many women. We learn to have faith in ourselves by planning and organizing events in our lives that bring us success. Because patriarchy has stolen from us most of the system's opportunities for success, we are now creating time and space for a new kind of success, one that is defined and measured by ourselves. To make this radical shift, we disengage from our roles as

followers and become leaders.

So far, all we really know is that we want something systematically different from colonization, some grand unification way of life. I'd like to take a moment to appreciate the magnitude of this unprecedented task.

I encourage us to try whatever feels right in heralding the new age of harmony with a resolution to forgive mistakes. If something doesn't work, I have every faith in us that we will not continue doing it for long.

We are not identified by anyone else's mistakes. We are not limited to the confines of patriarchy to effect a better life, nor are we bound to the consensus of a women's collective for individual answers.

None of us is represented by anyone but ourselves. We come together in feminism because it is the only philosophy that embraces women unconditionally in addition to the planet's other life forms.

We belong to certain groups and share certain ideas and opinions with members, but we are still responsible for realizing our own dreams.

There are many excellent resources available to encourage us to spark our own visions. Waiting and wishing for another political party, another group, another woman to think, feel and act for us is just another set-up. No one has the right to expect that, and it is misogyny to blame women for failing at such an impossible task.

Yours truly
Louise Murray
Ottawa

Transportation for Disabled People is a Feminist Issue

On October 3, 1988 the spouses of APTA, the American Public Transit Association, held a luncheon and fashion show in the Chalet atop Mount Royal in Montreal. The majority of these spouses were wives of upper class, white, able-bodied males.

A fashion show, one of the symbols of women's oppression, was taking place inside the Chalet, while outside, about 50 disabled women and men, Black, White, Hispanic, Native, mostly unemployed were requesting a meeting with the vice president of APTA. Shortly after lunch, 10 of the 50 individuals demonstrating on the Camilien Houde Parkway, near the Chalet, were arrested.

Why? Because we want a basic civil right; we want lifts installed on all new buses purchased by every city in North America. This would permit all persons with disabilities and mobility difficulties to have freedom of movement.

The Canadian Charter of Rights guarantees safety. How safe are disabled women who are isolated in minibuses and taxis, where drivers are "free" to rape them? (eg, the case of the four West Island taxi drivers who were transferred to other territories after sexually assaulting some of their disabled women passengers).

In Montreal, the STCUM has a priority list of whom it accepts onto adapted transport. Then there are priority lists to decide if and when someone will be transported. For example, if you are going to work, school or a medical appointment, you will be prioritized. Facts show, however, that less disabled women than disabled men work or attend school. Thus, if you're a mother wanting to go see your child's school play or meet her/his teacher, you are not prioritized. If you're a mother wanting to go out with your family, often you must go alone in the minibus because it will not take your children and husband - only one passenger is permitted. What about the times that you must wait for the adapted bus outside late at night in an isolated area and that bus doesn't show up? Rule Number 1 in self-defense is prevention. One excellent form of prevention is to travel on public transit.

While I sat on the Camilien Houde Parkway, I was wondering about my sister in the feminist movement. Where were they while oppression of women's bodies was taking place inside and oppression of disabled persons was taking place outside?

As that male police officer wheeled me to the paddy wagon, I still wondered how it is possible for women to protest against a fashion show at one time, and remain silent about this same type of event at another time, when it is amusing the oppressors of another powerless group.

In solidarity,
Maria Barile
Montreal

Oops

We made a mistake on our first issue. Actually we made a few mistakes but this one is bigger than the others. On the subscription form we put our address as 251 Sussex Drive. Our address is really 541 Sussex Drive, Suite 201, Ottawa, K1N 6Z6.



Accepting Differences

Dear Editors:

It was with great interest that I discovered your new newspaper in the public library. I have often thought that if different types - militant feminists, homemakers, and those seemingly indifferent to either - would only come together, women, in general would be much further ahead than they are. I was therefore surprised to read of a meeting where this had occurred. Thus, the article most appealing to me is **Families and Feminism** by Maureen Kellerman.

Without a shadow of doubt the 1960's feminist movement downgraded women's work in the home by failing to recognize that homemaking is a career unto itself. The Me Generation of the 1970's was so packed with self-gratification that it caused havoc for both sexes. And this decade is proving to be one for clearing the debris, caused by a changed society. But justice for all women will not come if the various women's parties fail to unite in western society.

In 1984 a lecture given by Louise Dulude, concerning

Homemakers Pension, left a good impression on me. Also I felt that Germaine Greer's book **Sex and Destiny** was a far cry from her earlier work. After living through change, many women have mellowed and are looking at life from a different slant than they did twenty-odd years ago. As a result, we are now willing to examine the economics of choice. And we no longer heap scorn on the minority of women who are not career-oriented.

While we may have failed our earlier goal of a female Utopia, I have faith that a realistic update feminist movement will enhance all women's work, inside and outside of the home. Enclosed is copy of my latest effort towards justice for some women. (eds. note: Olive enclosed a letter she had published in the **Toronto Star** on pensions for women)

May I wish your paper, **The Womanist** much success. I look forward to future issues.

Best wishes,
Olive Thiesenhausen
Toronto

Definition of Womanist

1. From womanist. (Opp. of "girlish", ie, frivolous, irresponsible, not serious.) A black feminist or feminist of colour. From the black folk expression of mothers to female children, "you acting womanish," ie, like a woman. Usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or willful behaviour. Wanting to know more and in great depth than is considered "good" for one. Interested in grown-up doings. Acting grown up. Being grown up. Interchangeable with another black folk expression: "You trying to be grown." Responsible. In charge. Serious.

2. Also. A woman who loves other women, sexually and/or nonsexually. Appreciates and prefers women's culture, women's emotional flexibility (values tears as natural counterbalance of laughter), and women's strength. Sometimes loves individual men, sexually and/or nonsexually. Committed to

survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female. Not a separatist, except periodically, for health. Traditionally universalist, as in: "Mama, why are we brown, pink and yellow, and our cousins are white, beige and black?" Ans.: "Well, you know the colored race is just like a flower garden, with every color flower represented. Traditionally capable as in "Mama, I'm walking to Canada and I'm taking you and a bunch of other slaves with me." Reply: "It wouldn't be the first time."

3. Loves music. Loves dance. Loves the moon. Loves the Spirit. Loves love and food and roundness. Loves struggle. Love the folks. Loves herself. Regardless.

4. Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender.

From **In Search of Our Mother's Gardens**, Womanist Prose by Alice Walker.

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Womenspeak

Dear Womanist:

Well, how do you feel after the debate with its segments on what politicians are pleased to consider "women's issues"?

In 1984 when Chaviva Hosek, then President of NAC, organized the women's debate, we were enormously enthusiastic, putting aside our awareness that, for the politicians, this was simply a vote-getting ploy. The debate itself was as expected: many guarantees were given, promises hinted at, and tributes paid to current female stars of the political firmament.

In this election, the leaders chose to bury their discussions of social priorities within the rubric "women's issues". The first question concerned abortion. Since the NDP are avowedly pro-choice, the discussion took place between Turner and Mulroney. Both lowered their voices reverentially (God forbid they should appear insensitive),

spoke often of the sympathy needed for women faced with this dilemma, both favour a free vote, both spoke of waiting for the Supreme Court decision on the Borowski case (human rights for the fetus) before drafting legislation.

Child care legislation proved to be an extremely contentious issue. In 1984, Mulroney's assurances of government money and the establishing of national standards gave child-care advocates, women's groups and families the hope that one of our most pressing needs was to be alleviated. Almost exactly four years later, the PC's Child Care Bill was introduced too late for passage before the calling of the election. Condemned by almost all those who made submissions to government, the Bill would give \$6.4 billion over seven years, 43% of which would go in tax breaks to

middle class voters, not to the establishment of new spaces.

Mulroney, repeating again and again the names McDougall, MacDonald and Carney, admitted they were the true begetters of the Bill, that he listened to no experts because these women knew what was needed. In all other issues, health care, economics, education ... experts are consulted. In child care legislation, any woman can represent all women and will doubtless know what 'women' need. This is indefensible.

Pamela Wallin's question on the need for mandatory legislation on pay equity got agreement from both Turner and Broadbent; on the Constitutional Accord, both were again in agreement, that women's rights would not be affected. The conspiracy of silence in the election campaign on Meech Lake was

upheld.

Challenged on his promises in the 1984 debate to give pension to homemakers and more financial support to services for battered women, the Prime Minister reminded us that he had increased such funding (described as miserly by advocacy groups), called wife battering a cowardly crime and segued neatly into the subjects of multi-cultural women, and the criminal law.

These extraneous remarks, designed to show sensitivity to the plight of all women, typified his rhetorical attempts to evade the presentation of real solution to real problems. His continued reference to the number of women in the Cabinet, the repetition of the names McDougall, MacDonald and Carney and his dismissal of concerns over the loss of women's jobs through Free Trade reinforced the

impression of image without substance.

So, how do we feel? Certainly not energized, and since depression has been for too long women's response to disillusionment and rejection and must be avoided like the plague, what is left?

For me, it's anger I feel. As a member of a majority, 51% of the population, I am forced to beg for a public discussion of issues which vitally concern all of us. I don't want a separate debate on women's issues (although the 1984 debate was a true breakthrough) I want an awareness of the myriad of ramifications of those issues, and how they permeate every aspect of our society and, to use a little rhetoric of my own, of our uniquely Canadian perspective. And I don't want to wait until 1992, I want it now.

Jane Evans
 Armstrong, BC

What did you think of the election debate?

more letters on page 36

Womenspeak



A special thank you

We would like to thank all of the wonderful women who have helped us get started on the newspaper and are giving us the energy and vision to carry on each day.

We would like to thank the distributors of the first issue of the newspaper.

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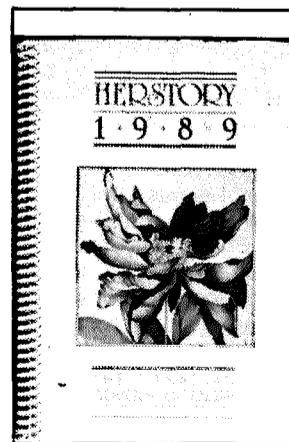
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Fetuses first, women later

Borowski at the Supreme Court

by Beth Ryan

While the image of Joe Borowski clutching two jars of fetuses outside the Supreme Court House may be fading from the popular mind, it is a fairly certain fact of life that Borowski's dream will not be so easily relegated to oblivion.

One only has to look at the determined glint in Borowski's eyes to see that this is a man with a cause: he is crusading for the fetus's right to life from the moment of conception.

The newspapers and television gave us glimpses of Borowski and his entourage during a two-day hearing before the nation's highest court early in October this year. The court heard Borowski's appeal that the fetus is like every other Canadian and deserves legal protection under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Borowski was appealing a ruling by the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal.

His original case centred on the premise that Section 251 of the Criminal Code was unconstitutional because it threatened the life and security of the fetus. Section 251 was Canada's law on abortion since 1969 until it was struck down by the Supreme Court in January of this year. Under this law, a woman could have an abortion only if approved by a hospital therapeutic abortion committee. After Section 251 was deemed unconstitutional in the historic 1988 decision, Borowski and his lawyer, Morris Schumiatcher, were forced to proceed in a new direction.

There was some uncertainty when the hearings began as to whether or not the five-man, two-woman court should even be hearing the appeal in the absence of legislation governing abortion, and the inaction on the part of the federal government.

After two days of hearing arguments from lawyers for Borowski, the federal government, REAL Women, Interfaith Coalition, and the Women's Legal Education Action Fund (LEAF), the judges decided in the end to reserve their decision. While some of the arguments droned on in legalese (particularly those of Ed Sojony, the federal Justice Department lawyer), the hearing allowed at times for some high drama.

Morris Schumiatcher professed that he considered himself to be "on the side of the angels" in this case. Much of his argument consisted of evidence that the unborn child (he never used the term fetus) was the essence of human perfection and deserved to be accorded the rights that all human beings enjoy.

Schumiatcher claimed no desire to attack abortion; he simply wanted the fetus to have the protection of Sections 7 and 15 of the Charter. (Sections 7 and 15 guarantee everyone the right to life, liberty, and security of the person, and to equal protection under the law. Borowski thinks this protection should include the fetus). Schumiatcher said the balancing of the rights of the mother and fetus could be left to a later date.

During the two days of the hearings, Borowski sat in a front row with his hands clasped and a serene smile on his bland face. At his side were Frank Foley, Executive Director of Campaign Life Coalition, and gray- and black-frocked nuns. On the other side of the courtroom, Norma Scarborough, President of the Canadian Abortion Rights

fetal viability, which varies in every case and depends on the state and availability of medical knowledge and technology, the time of birth can be readily ascertained, remains constant and marks the beginning of social interaction between human beings."

If a fetus were declared to have the same rights as born persons, a whole new set of

brush these concerns aside as he argued passionately for the rights of the unborn. He said that we as a civilized society should be able to afford protection to the unborn, unlike a primitive society which has little knowledge of pre-natal life. His presentation was emotion-based; and when asked by a judge whether or not he had an intermediate

reflect nature accurately, you're not going to reveal nature. Nature will have something to say to those who do not obey its laws. And this is a fact of nature, a fact of life."

Angela Costigan, representing REAL Women, an intervenor in the case, made an interesting analogy when she compared abortion to the use of steroids (this was at the height of the Ben Johnson Olympic scandal).

She asked: "When will our shame surface? Whether you use steroids or whether you use abortion to manipulate and exploit people for your use, in either case the victim is stripped of his or her dignity. We talk about our children as if they were property, just other items which our Kleenex generation can throw away. And yet we know that no amount of time and no act, not even an act like birth, can transform property into a human person. We are either always human persons, or we never are....And one has to be very careful as a litigation lawyer not to ask a question to which you don't already know the answer. And therefore we must be very careful when we ask the question for whom the bell tolls. Because indeed as you answer these two constitutional questions, you will be stating whether or not when we are old and dependent in our second childhood, whether or not our children will be able to kill us for their convenience because we were so prepared to kill them for ours."

Schumiatcher presented videotapes with names like "Jumping for Joy" that showed what he called the "tiny, perfect world" of the fetus developing inside the womb. The ultrasound photos supposedly showed the fetus involved in a great deal of activity inside the womb, such as sucking its thumb, but it was difficult to distinguish exactly what the pictures represented.

Later, outside the courtroom, Norma Scarborough said she found it quite appalling that Schumiatcher portrayed fetuses in adversarial roles with women.

Mary Eberts wasted no time in taking Schumiatcher to task on the videotapes he had shown. She noted that the fetus was shown surrounded by a grainy blur, which represented the woman. As the fetus rolled happily in its bath, the amniotic sac, the

cont'd on page 5



Action League, sat with her group of supporters behind Mary Eberts, lawyer for LEAF.

Eberts provided a straightforward tone to the hearing, as she calmly argued that the court should not be deciding this constitutional issue. She felt that it was the politicians who should address the constitutional matter of whether or not the unborn have rights. Both she and Sojony tried to convince the court that the starting point of legal rights should not be changed; it must continue to be the moment of birth. If not, the implications are profound.

As Eberts said:

"Unlike the moment of conception, which is unknowable, and the point of

restrictions could legally be placed on pregnant women. Any restrictions could be justified in the name of protecting the fetus. Therefore, as Eberts and Sojony argued, a woman could be held liable for any behaviour during pregnancy which could have adverse effects on her fetus. These behaviours might include failing to eat properly, using prescription, non-prescription and illegal drugs; smoking, drinking alcohol; exposing herself to infectious disease or to workplace hazards; engaging in immoderate exercise or sexual intercourse, etc. The list looms large in many women's minds.

Schumiatcher seemed to

position regarding the stages of human life, he replied with feeling:

"I would have if nature had. But nature has none. And law must hold the mirror up to nature. If the law does not

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Take Back the Night

by Ravida Din

Our struggle to end violence against women and children takes us to the streets once a year.

Traditionally held every third Friday in September, thousands of women across Canada march to "reclaim the night," a symbolic protest which allows women to express their anger and outrage. This year was no exception. From silent vigils for the survivors of sexual assault to loud hooting, hollering, and singing, approximately 35 cities across Canada held marches.

The first Take Back the Night march was held in Germany in 1978. Three thousand women marched to protest rape and violence against women. Soon thereafter, marches started in France, Canada and the United States.

Most of the marches in Canada began in 1979-80. Up to 43 major cities and many small towns have been participating ever since.

According to Pauline Duffet of the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, the number of women participating in the marches has been increasing or decreasing depending on the publicity.

"Take Back the Night requires a lot of publicity and where the publicity has been consistent the number of women marching has been increasing," said Duffet.

"The marches are our answer to men's attacks on women," according to organizers in Vancouver. Despite heavy rain and lightning, 150 women, "wet and rarin' to go" took five lanes of East Hastings (a main street in Vancouver).

In Alberta, approximately 250 women marched in Edmonton, Lethbridge, and Calgary. By examining racism and classism as forms of

violence against women and children, the Calgary Status of Women Action Committee brought attention to the fact that the women's movement must, out of necessity, incorporate a race and class analysis in all areas of violence against women and children.

One of the largest turnouts was in Winnipeg, where 400 women marched, focusing on the theme of domestic violence.

Monique Raimbault, of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women, attributed the huge success to increased publicity in the suburbs.

Approximately 500 women marched throughout the Atlantic Provinces. In Halifax, the Sexual Assault Centre, prompted by an increase in reports of sexual assault, sponsored the march for the first time. 150 women marched to what Verona Singer of the Sexual Assault Centre was the "most powerful and energetic march ever held in Halifax."

cultural mix in Canada that secures the rights of equality and freedom of religion and protects from discrimination both believers and non-believers alike."

When Madame Justice Bertha Wilson asked him if this meant that the right to life is an absolute one because of underlying religious values, he replied negatively, saying that the rights of the mother and child must be balanced. Neither he nor the others arguing for Borowski, however, would say how those rights would be balanced. For all of them, the foremost goal was to have the fetus declared a person. Worry about the consequences of such a declaration later, was the message they gave the court.

At this time, no one is really sure when the Supreme Court will come back with a ruling on this significant case. It has already been more than two months since the hearing. The Court's decision, as in the Morgentaler case, will have a profound impact on women's lives and ability to choose.

Beth Ryan is a Newfoundland feminist living in Ottawa with a special interest in social justice.



200 women marched in St. John's, protesting the low sentences given to convicted rapists. In Fredericton, 100 women marched carrying placards expressing their theme... "I told you not to tell...it's time to break the silence." In Charlottetown, approximately 45 women marched, drawing attention to the fact that one of every eight women in Canada is abused by the man she lives with.

Participants throughout the country have primarily been white, middle-class women. This is indicative of the women's movement but also as

Pauline Duffet says, "it's an angry march and it has generally been safer for them (white, middle-class women) to be visible."

Other considerations organizers are now taking into account are providing child care and making sure the march is accessible to women with disabilities.

In an effort to make the annual marches accessible to Jewish women, several cities in Ontario held their march on Thursday night this year. Friday is the beginning of the Sabbath.

"Historically, we weren't

aware of the differences amongst women as we are now," said Pauline Duffet. A national meeting of the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Support Centres hopes to officially change the march to Thursday across the country.

Eleanor Appleby, Executive Director of the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, believes this will make a difference.

"As an organization, we wouldn't even publicize the march when held on Friday," she said.

With the march being held on Thursday, the Council will play a role by publicizing the march and alerting its membership.

Over 1,000 women marched in approximately 12 cities in Ontario.

In Montreal, about 400 women marched to a familiar theme: "La rue, la nuit - les femmes sans peur."

Groups throughout the country were also concerned that although the government has allocated \$40 million to deal with family violence, it's not enough and will not be spent in the right areas. Women's groups are demanding secure operational funding for shelters and other support programs.

"The marches will go on," said Pauline Duffet. "Women's anger will not dissipate if violence does not dissipate."

Ravida Din is a feminist activist living in Ottawa.

A Christmas Message

It is that time of year again. Some of us rejoice at the time to be with our families and friends, to give and receive gifts of love and to just generally take a break and celebrate for some a religious occasion, for others a holiday.

Whatever you are doing this season, please consider giving in the most generous of ways. Give of your time and your money to those who are in need this season.

Before Christmas:

- Call the Salvation Army, or any of the church groups that provide toys for children for Christmas.

- Call the Food Banks. They especially need donations at this time of year.

- Give to the Christmas Exchange or Christmas Hamper Funds to ensure that low income families can have a Christmas dinner and gifts for their children without incurring the extra costs that they can't afford.

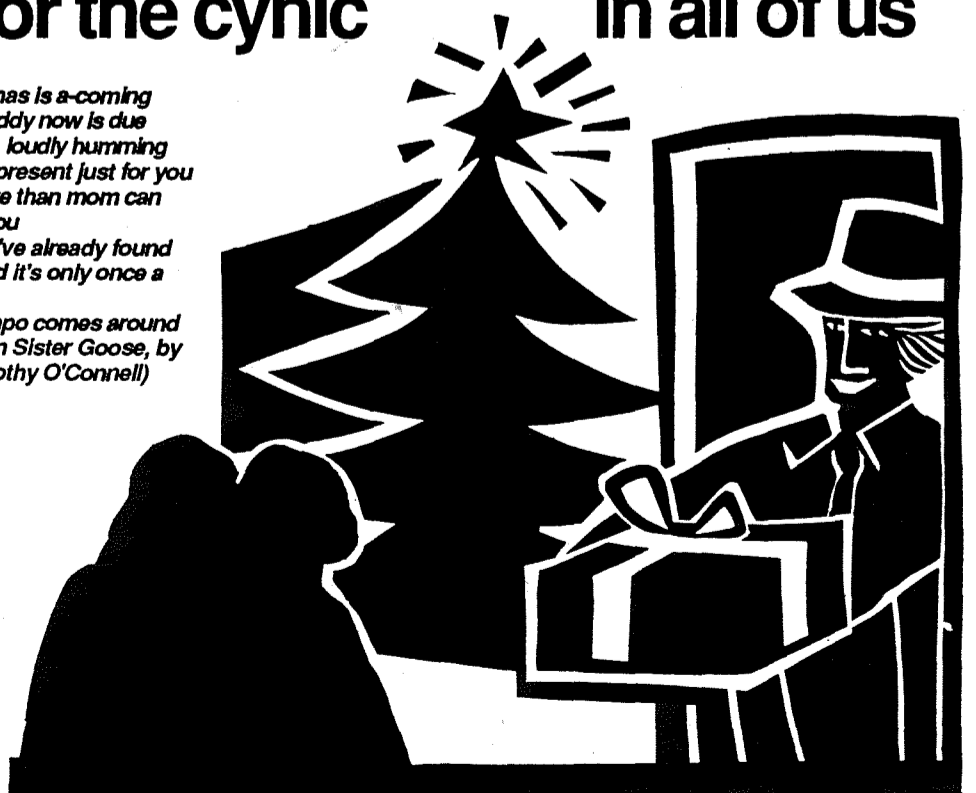
- Consider giving donations to groups that you support as gifts this year - for the person who has everything.

If you want something to do Christmas day:

- Contact your local church or community center and find out if they have any special needs or projects that they will be organizing for Christmas day (such as a dinner.) Offer to help!

For the cynic in all of us

*Christmas is a-coming
And daddy now is due
All jolly, loudly humming
With a present just for you
It's more than mom can
buy you
As you've already found
Too bad it's only once a
year
El Cheapo comes around
(from Sister Goose, by
Dorothy O'Connell)*



Fetuses first, women later cont'd

basic message was that "the woman isn't there, she doesn't feel anything," said Eberts. The fetus took pre-eminence in Schumiatcher's argument, while the mother was given the status of a blur on the ultrasound photos.

"Widen your lens," pleaded Eberts to the court. "Go beyond the grainy blur. No other entity is in the same position."

She expressed outrage at Schumiatcher's contention that if Borowski's case isn't accepted, there will be no one to care for the fetus.

"Women have always looked after the fetus, sometimes with no personal and social wherewithal to do it," averred Eberts.

Ed Sojonyk asserted through much detailed evidence that there were no legal grounds to call a fetus a person.

Claude Thomson, of Interfaith Coalition, made predictable comments about religious values being the cornerstone of our society.

"The preamble to our constitution challenges us to interpret the charter in a context that is influenced by generally understood religious values while recognizing the interdenominational, multi-

Is Employment Equity Working?

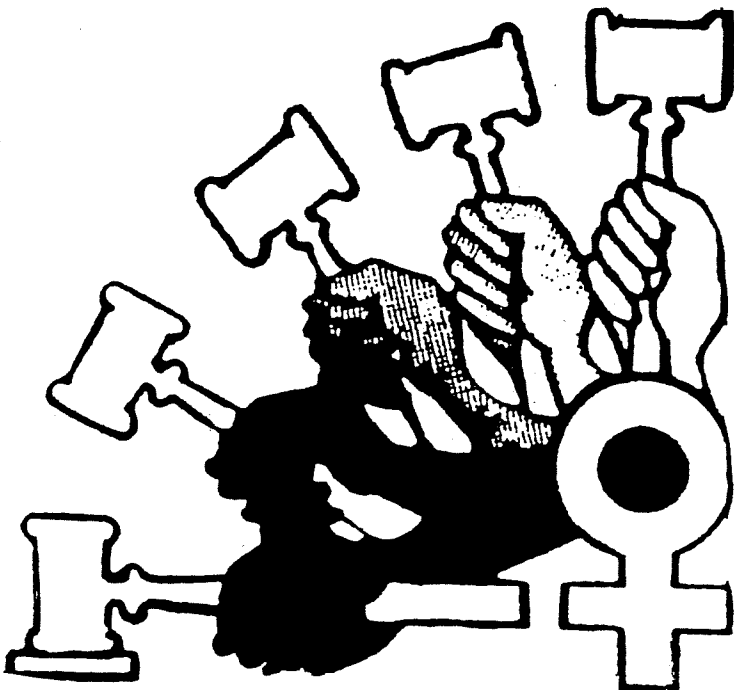
The Employment Equity Act (Bill C-62), when first introduced in 1985 was hailed by the government as a "landmark piece of legislation and a catalyst to change." Women's groups throughout the country called it "weak, ineffective and a betrayal of commitments and promises."

Not surprisingly, the first employers' reports*, available October 1988, have proven the latter to be true. A survey of the reports shows that the legislation has had little impact on the hiring and promotion of the four target groups who make up more than half a million of Canadian workers: women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minority groups.

Proclaimed in August 1986, the Employment Equity Act monitors the hiring and promotion of the four target groups in crown corporations, federally regulated companies employing more than 100 people and companies doing or wanting to do business with the federal government.

The purpose of the legislation is to "achieve equity in the workplace, so that no person is denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability, and to correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment opportunities experienced by women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, and people who are members of visible minorities."

The Act provides for only one enforcement mechanism: mandatory employers' reports. If employers fail to report they are liable to a fine "not exceeding fifty thousand dollars." The reports are also



provided to the Canadian Human Rights Commission who may "choose to use" the information provided to initiate an investigation.

Every three years, starting in 1991, the Parliamentary Committee will review the effectiveness of the legislation.

In the first reporting year, 371 companies or 97% of the employers covered by the Act have filed reports. According to Monique Vezina, Minister of State for Employment and Immigration, prosecution dossiers are being prepared for those employers who have not complied. A report on the first year's progress is expected by end of this year.

An examination of the employers' reports shows that hiring and promotion practices

in some of the country's largest employers continue to favour white, able-bodied men. Women, who comprise the largest category of the four target groups continue to lag behind.

Reports from the five major banks, for example, showed that 71% of women employees make less than \$27,499 while an average of 53% of men make more than \$35,000.

At Bell Canada, women are still favoured for clerical work. In 1987, 165 men and only three women were hired for skilled and semi-skilled jobs.

The CN, which was ordered by the Human Rights Commission in 1984 to hire more women, hired 136 women in 1987 compared to 1,023 men in the same category.

The CBC also shows a poor record. A majority of the women make less than \$35,000 while most of the men make more and are more likely to be promoted. Only 2.1% of employees are members of visible minorities, 0.6% are aboriginal and 1.9% are disabled.

by Ravida Din

This pattern holds true for most of the companies who have reported. Members of visible minorities, aboriginal peoples and the disabled continue to be under-represented as employees. In upper and middle management positions they are virtually absent.

Cultural institutions such as Canada Council and Canadian Film Development Corporation have no native people as employees.

Compilation and analysis of the data itself is laden with problems. Immigrant women's groups, for example, point out that visible minorities cannot be viewed as a homogeneous group and that visible minority women must be treated as a separate group.

The category or target group "women" can also be misleading. For example, on March 9, 1988, the Treasury Board announced that women promoted to the management category in the Federal Public Service had exceeded their desired goal of 475. In 1983, women filled 217 of the senior management positions and in 1988 they comprised 509 positions.

Women, therefore, might be entering the "boardrooms of the nation", but chances are high that the majority of them are white, able-bodied women.

Public disclosure has been touted as a "unique aspect" of the Employment Equity Act. Although available in public libraries, the reports are not as accessible as they claim to be. For those wishing to obtain a set, the cost is \$2,000.

In January 1986, the Minister of Employment and Immigration, Flora MacDonald

said, "These companies will have to answer to the people of Canada if they fail to achieve employment equity." According to the government then, public disclosure allows us, the general public, to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Act.

By making employment practices of federally regulated businesses available to the public, the government thinks humiliation or shame are sufficient enforcement tools. Let's face it - public outrage cannot confront and tackle the widespread discrimination that exists. Ultimately, the burden of trying to do something falls, once again, on the backs of the disadvantaged.

There are other concerns. If the employers' reports show systemic discrimination year after year or if the reports get worse, there are no provisions for penalties. Some companies, on the other hand, might even find it cheaper to pay the penalty rather than file reports or try and implement employment equity. Leaving it up to the Human Rights Commission to initiate an investigation is simply not enough.

The four target groups have been calling for drastic alteration since the Bill was first introduced. The demands include: mandatory affirmative action programs, a central enforcement agency, goals and timetables, community and target group input into the planning, data collection, analysis and implementation of the Act.

As it stands now, the legislation does nothing more than let the government claim it has done something for disadvantaged workers when, in fact, nothing has changed as a result of its passage.

*Copies of employers' reports are available in libraries across Canada. The list of libraries is available at all Employment Centres.

Ravida Din is a feminist activist living in Ottawa.

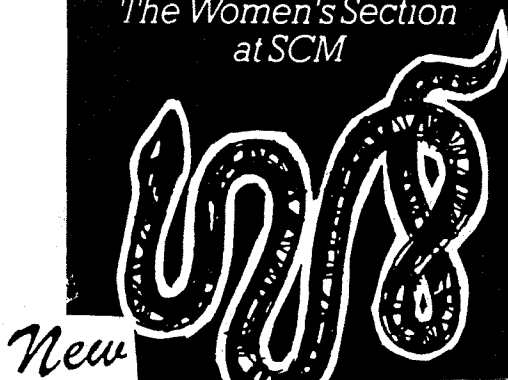


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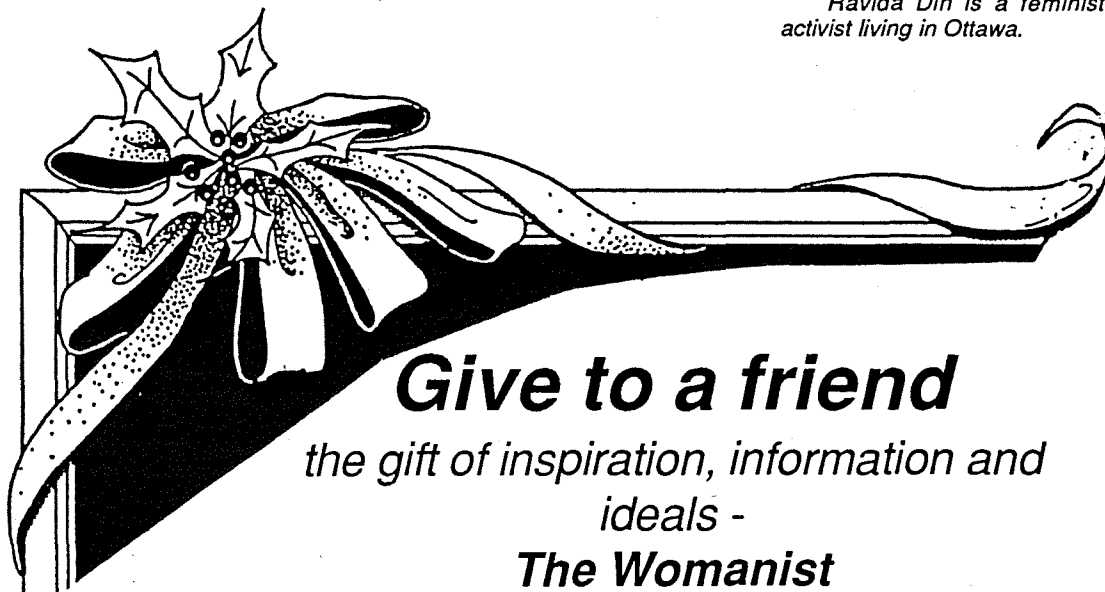
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The debate in the United Church - Should lesbians and gays be ordained?

From the lurid press headlines, you may think that the debate in the United Church is only about homosexuality and homophobia. This is just the tip of the iceberg, underlying which is a struggle of more fundamental importance to all women, whether members or not.

In the United Church, as in society, there has been a growing clash between world views as patriarchal power structures are increasingly challenged by alternate ways. Anna Wilson Schaef, in her book **Women's Reality**, critiques what she calls the "white male system" where power to decide and define reality and experience is with white males. She suggests that this world view is currently under siege from many places—women, blacks, gays, differently-abled, natives, ecologists, artists, and increasing numbers of white males who experience themselves as violated and dehumanized by the current system. They are taking their own experience seriously, claiming their reality, demanding that it be valued as part of the puzzle of the whole human condition.

I believe this clash of alternate realities to be at the heart of the current crisis in the United Church. It goes to the core of how we experience, name, and live out the gospel of Jesus Christ, to the core of our understanding of ministry, scripture, sexuality, and what it means to be church.

On the conservative side of this issue, leadership is almost exclusively males, most of whom, in my experience operate with a hierarchical understanding of leadership; one where the minister at the "top" determines the direction and leads the "flock." In our church, this style of leadership has been passing in favour of a more facilitative, nurturing role which helps people uncover and use their gifts, and encourages community empowerment and a holistic sense of God's mission. To those locked in the hierarchical model, this is "non-leadership" and threatens "the role." Recently, a woman was not elected to chair an area church

council partly because some male clergy circulated the rumour that she favoured "the report" and did not "look like" a Chief Executive Officer.

At stake in the controversy also is how we interpret and understand the authority of scripture. Despite the tragic hurling of scripture passages as weapons in the discussions on this issue, the United Church has always had a liberal view of scripture. This means all scripture must be taken seriously, and studied in its own context to discern what it may, or may not, offer us today.

I wish Leviticus quoters would read that book in its entirety. Homosexuals, adulterers, and delinquent children are to be stoned! Yet I have heard little of Jesus' ethic of love and inclusive acceptance of those whom others condemn. In the gospel are many passages condemning those who exclude others from the ministry and making it clear that Christ calls "unusual" people. He admonishes severely the Pharisee who rejects the ministry of the women who pours ointment on Jesus' feet. He also calls an unlikely lot as disciples and in John, the first person to be called to proclaim Jesus as Messiah is the Samaritan (i.e. outcast) woman at the well—five times married, presently living "in sin."

This controversy also goes to the heart of how we will be church. Will we continue to be an open, welcoming community, or will we become a rigid, limiting organization, demanding adherence to an unexamined code of beliefs as a condition of membership?

The United Church is a conciliar church with four councils, congregation, conference, General Council. Each oversees the other and is made up of both lay and clergy. This means women have always had more voice in the United Church than in more hierarchical churches where they are often excluded from decision-making. We believe God's spirit is present as we gather in Council, and I certainly experienced that in Victoria. This conciliar system is currently under attack.

by the Reverend Sharon Moon



Lesbian History Archives

Finally, the area most covered in newspapers is the issue of sexuality, particularly homosexuality and ministry. This has been the lightning rod to unlock all of the underlying tensions and has played into the homophobia and heterosexism just below the surface in our culture. Our church has been studying sexuality, sexual morality, sexism and sexual orientation since before 1980, e.g., *Gift, Dilemma, and Promise*. (1984)

We have been daring to deal with what for many was unspeakable in the context of our faith and scripture (always, incidentally arising out of requests from the grassroots). As some of my colleagues in other churches have remarked: "We are watching the United Church very closely. We know we will face it down the road. The United Church is doing the dirty work for the rest of us."

Perhaps that is the particularly "charism" or gift of the United Church. Because of its conciliar makeup, because linking faith and justice go to its roots, we often seem to deal with hard issues first.

model surfaced. Many ordained women, familiar with that story, are committed to work for inclusion of others who presently are deemed "unacceptable."

I was at Victoria. I experienced the pain and struggle of the decision. We produced a common ground document which welcomes gays and lesbians as church members, and affirms the present that "all members are eligible to be considered for Ordered Ministry." We confessed that we do not understand homosexuality, that "we have participated in a history of injustice and persecution against gays and lesbians in violation of Jesus' gospel." We called on church councils and various governments to address human rights violations. A pretty timid step, one may say. One cannot begin to understand the fury raised unless one understands the power struggle underlying it.

I am proud to be part of a church community which has the courage and the faith to ask questions before it has answers; which is prepared even to face suffering in the struggle for justice, and faithfulness. We follow One who paid a high price for his openness to people who were outcasts. Perhaps we are now learning, through our own experience, what that was all about.

Reverend Sharon Moon's church is the First United Church in Ottawa.

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Poverty in B.C.

It only gets worse

"Never discourage people on (social) assistance but give lots of encouragement and support."

That was the plea of a welfare recipient responding to a survey of low-income single parents conducted in March 1988 by the Federated Anti-Poverty Groups (FAPG) of British Columbia. In September 1988, Claude Richmond, Minister of Social Services and Housing, responded with new policies designed, so he said, "to ensure that recipients have maximum help in becoming independent..."

Effective November 1, 20,000 individuals and family heads - including recipients aged 60 to 64 and single parents with children between the ages of six and twelve - were reclassified as employable, and their already inadequate welfare cheques were slashed by \$50. In addition, all except single parents lost their medical/dental benefits. Despite prior assurances that each case would be reviewed individually, the reclassifications were made across the board, without any such individual review, and the Ministry ruled that there was no appeal of the decisions.*

For an individual, that \$50 means a 22 per cent reduction in her/his support allowance; more than seven days' benefits. For a family of two, it means the loss of four days' benefits; for a family of three, three and a half days' benefits. Since the only optional form in a welfare recipient's budget is food, recipients must now eat even less well - or even less often.

The Minister stated that since employable recipients are eligible for the enhanced earnings exemption, which allows them to keep 25 per cent of any earnings over the basic exemptions of \$50 for individuals and \$100 for families, reclassified recipients will easily be able to make up the \$50. Sounds reasonable.

However, single recipients must earn five times as much as before (\$250), and families **three times as much** (\$300), to recoup that \$50. B.C.'s welfare system has become a looking-glass-land, where recipients must run ever faster just to stay in the same place.

Further, because the enhanced earnings exemption is only available for twelve months out of each three-year period, many recipients will not be able to make up the loss.

Since the completion of FAPG's survey, the Minister has announced other "incentives" to assist recipients get off the welfare rolls.

1. The Employment Opportunities Program will provide six-month subsidies for employers who hire and train welfare recipients. The Environment Youth Program will provide work experience in "park enhancement projects" for young recipients aged 17 to 24. Sounds reasonable.

Unfortunately, B.C. has an official overall unemployment rate of 9.1 per cent (compared to a national rate of 7.2 per cent); an official unemployment rate for women of 10.2 per cent (7.8 per cent nationally); and an official unemployment rate for youth of 12.8 per cent (11.8 per cent nationally). (Statistics Canada, October 1988) Jobs



by Gus Long

And all of these spaces are filled.

The Minister proposed an interesting solution to the child care dilemma: he suggested that single parents on welfare should go into the business of caring for each other's children!

"Incentives" like these are based on political expediency, on what **sounds reasonable**, on what plays to the essentially negative perception of welfare recipients.

It seems that everyone knows, or knows of, someone who is abusing the welfare system. And yes, there are abusers. Why not? Welfare recipients are no better or worse - no more or less industrious, responsible and honest - than the rest of the population, some of whom drink too much, party too often, cheat on their income taxes, lie to their spouses, steal from their employers, exploit their employees, defraud their customers, rob their neighbours, vandalize their community, or otherwise abuse society collectively or individually.

However, welfare abusers are a very small minority. Most welfare recipients are ordinary people who have fallen on hard times because of age, illness, disability, unemployment, marriage breakdown, or other circumstances beyond their control. They do not want to be on welfare or to stay on welfare. They simply have no choice.

They don't need "incentives": they need help. They need "encouragement and support." They need opportunity. They need an adequate income. They need respect.

What they're getting is, as one recipient aptly described it, "the shitty end of a damned short stick."

*Two determined women have launched court challenges to these new policies. Anita Archimbault and the Legal Services Society are challenging the Ministry's ruling that reclassifications and deductions not appealable. Debbie Pelletier and the Community Legal Services Association in Vancouver are challenging the legislation itself, contending that since the employability status of a single parent is based on the ages of his or her children, the legislation contravenes Sections 7 and 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Further challenges to Ministry policies are under consideration.

(Copies of FAPG's survey are available for \$4 each, from Gus Long, 8084-11th Avenue, Burnaby, B.C. V3N 2N7).

Gus Long is a member of the Federated Anti-poverty Groups of British Columbia, and the national chairperson of PLURA, an Interchurch Association to Promote Social Justice in Canada.

effective parenting." Sounds reasonable.

Unfortunately, the policy doesn't allow for **more** training: the object is still to provide minimum training for recipients at minimum cost to the Ministry.

3. During the first year of employment, in addition to full medical and dental benefits, a single parent will receive a transportation allowance of up to \$90 per month and actual child care costs. Sounds reasonable.

However, the cost of child care ranges from \$300 to \$625 per month, depending on the age of the child and the type of care, while corresponding Ministry subsidies range from \$210 to \$400. So, when her benefits are terminated at the end of the year, a single parent with two children, working full time (and still expected to provide "effective parenting"), must **net** \$5.08 per hour to equal her basic welfare benefits; **plus** 66 cents per hour to replace her medical and dental benefits (MSSH average expenditures); **plus** from 29 to 52 cents per hour to replace the transportation allowance; **plus** from 42 cents to \$1.30 per hour for each child in day care: just to stay in place.

B.C.'s minimum wage is \$4.50 per hour, and the average wage for women in B.C. is less than \$6 per hour **gross** (52.6 per cent of the average male wage).

Further, if the single parent's income rises above the welfare level, her day care subsidy decreases by fifty cents on the dollar.

That's assuming, of course, that day care is available. For a single parent whose only child reaches the age of six months (at which time the parent is reclassified as employable), the projects are particularly poor. There are fewer than 1,000 **possible** licensed infant spaces in B.C., and fewer than half that number of **actual** spaces: fewer than 75 in the City of Vancouver.

are scarce, and competition is keen. However, under these programs many recipients will leave the welfare rolls for unemployment insurance: a step forward from the provincial government's point of view.

2. Welfare recipients may now extend over three years up to two years of "educational and vocational job training that will lead to employment." The Minister claims that this extension will particularly benefit single parents who "found it difficult to handle a full course load, complete homework assignments, and provide

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Across Canada



CarolAnn Wright

Ontario

An amazing thing happened in Toronto. A young, black, single mother of three living in Regent Park, a public housing project in downtown Toronto, ran for Mayor. The surprise is that CarolAnn Wright gave Art Eggleton (the developer's dream) a run for his money.

She received support from a wide range of community based groups including Women Plan Toronto, BASIC Poverty Action Group, the gay/lesbian community, Downtown New Democrats, Reform Toronto and the Black Women's Collective.

She ran as the Poverty Action Candidate stating "In this election, we have the opportunity to put Toronto back into the hands of all its citizens - an opportunity to improve the quality of life by attacking the roots of poverty - an opportunity to free all Torontonians from the manipulation of developers."

In Toronto each year up to

2,000 housing units are lost in Toronto - adding to the more than 10,000 homeless. More than 40,000 Metro households are "at a substantial risk of becoming homeless." At least 78,000 people are forced to use food banks monthly. A minimum wage job won't cover the rent for a one-bedroom apartment. At least 60,000 Metro tenant households are paying more than half their income to rent. This is the real Toronto - a city with growing poverty!

Yet, Eggleton continues to call Toronto a world-class city. He has routinely given hundreds of millions of dollars in bonuses to developers. Eggleton has secured only 750 units of truly affordable housing.

We congratulate CarolAnn Wright for putting together an honest campaign that represented the interests of the many citizens of Toronto and wish her luck on any future endeavors.

Manitoba

Mary-Lynne Dick, a waitress in Winnipeg has complained to the Manitoba Human Rights Commission after being suspended for a week without pay because she didn't wear a bra to work.

After working two months at a Mexican restaurant her female supervisor asked her if she was wearing a bra. Dick replied that she had never worn one in her time working there.

At the restaurant employees wear conservatively designed uniforms made of heavy cotton. When Dick was told she had to wear the bra she put it on for a week and then forgot to wear it one day. She was suspended for a week losing \$400 in tips and wages.

The Manitoba Advisory Council for the Status of Women is supporting her fight. Michele Pujol said, "It's ridiculous. What would people say if male employees had to wear a jockstrap?"

Quebec

The Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, Monique Gagnon-Tremblay, announced that \$500 million will be spent on daycare in Quebec over the next five years. The money will go to create 60,000 new daycare spaces. Presently there are 65,000 daycare spaces in Quebec.

Larry DePoe, president of the Association of Early Childhood Educators said low-income families still won't be able to afford daycare. The subsidies proposed represent a 6% increase, barely the rate of inflation.

"A family making less than \$10,000 a year would still have to pay around \$1,200 a year for two children. It's beyond their belief that they can't get it through their heads that a family like that simply can't afford child care," he said.

Nova Scotia

A mentally disabled Halifax woman, too poor to pay a \$500 fine for shoplifting a pack of cigarettes, is fighting the constitutionality of having to spend a month in jail. A warrant for the arrest of Judy Heb, 35, was issued after repeated extensions of the fine repayment period had lapsed. Her lawyers say it is discriminatory to jail anyone too poor to pay a fine. Canada shouldn't have one law for the poor and one law for the rich.

Alberta

Two groups in Alberta have started a campaign to have midwifery made legal.

The Alberta Midwifery Task Force and the Alberta Association of Midwives are asking everyone to write a letter to the Alberta legislature telling of their support for midwifery.

"We want to see registered midwives with proper qualifications integrated into the health-care system and hospitals."

Canada is the only industrialized country not to have some provision for midwives in its health-care system, says Sheila Harvey, president of the Alberta Association of Midwives.

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Canadian women wait for revolutionary drug :RU486 - the abortion pill

by Beth Ryan

It will be at least two years before Canadian women will have the opportunity to avail of RU486, the new abortion pill which has received so much international attention in the last couple of months.

That's the informed opinion of Dr. Marion Powell, Medical Director of the Bay Centre for Birth Control in Toronto. Powell has high hopes for RU486 in Canada, and would like to see her clinic become involved in research on the drug.

RU486, also known as Mifepristone, is an anti-progesterone steroid which can end a pregnancy up to 56 days after a woman's last period. According to Powell, if taken with a prostaglandin, RU486 has been shown in many studies to be effective about 95 per cent of the time.

A prostaglandin is a hormone which acts on the smooth muscles, causing the intrauterine muscles to contract, and the cervix to soften. It is usually given, either intramuscularly or as a vaginal suppository, about 48 hours after RU486 is given orally, and greatly increases the effectiveness of RU486. Possible side effects of prostaglandins are nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

As one worker at the Bay Centre eloquently put it, RU486 has the potential to stop "all the moral herniating" around the abortion issue. Although RU486 is being called an abortion pill, some suggest that it might be more accurately called a period pill since it works so soon after fertilization. Taken orally and under a doctor's supervision, the drug blocks the hormone progesterone from reaching

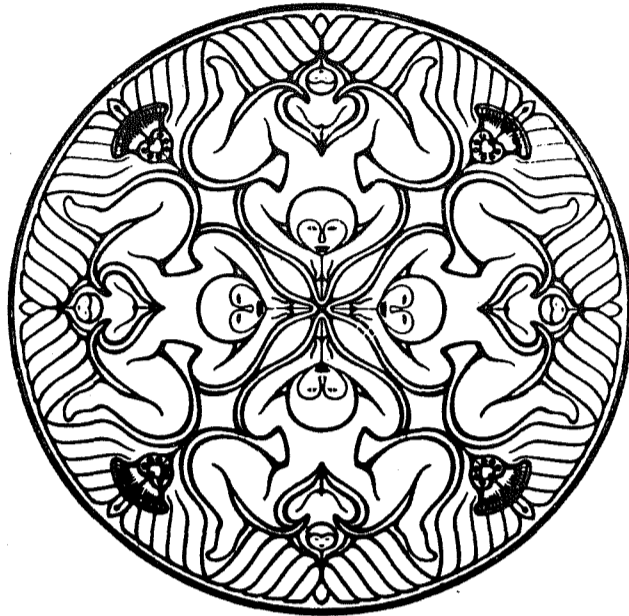
uterine cell receptors; without progesterone, the uterine lining breaks down, the fertilized egg is expelled, and menstruation occurs.

Up until about two months ago, the pill was only available through participation in studies that were assessing its effectiveness. Then the French government approved

Her eagerness over the drug has some urgency when one considers the sobering statistics on how illegal abortions affect women all over the world. Powell says about 500,000 women in the world die from pregnancy-related causes each year. About half of these deaths, she says, are the result of illegal abortions done under unsafe conditions.

the drug for general use, and Roussel-Uclaf, the French pharmaceutical company which developed RU486, decided to distribute it. Today, RU486 has been approved for use in France, China, the Netherlands, and Britain.

The drug suffered a setback when anti-choice groups both in France and abroad threatened to boycott all Roussel products; the company backed down and announced it would stop distribution. Marion Powell said she understood the greatest



pressure was coming from right-wing groups in the U.S.

Powell was in Rio de Janeiro attending a meeting of the International Association of Gynecologists and Obstetricians when Roussel's decision to withdraw the drug from the market was announced on October 26. Delegates were very upset and immediately sent a petition to the company protesting the action, and asking that the company consider at least making the drug patent available to a non-profit organization.

Fortunately, disaster was avoided when the French government put women's health concerns above the hysterics of pro-life groups and the profits of a pharmaceutical company. The government, which owns 36 per cent of Roussel, ordered the company to resume distribution of RU486 in the interest of public health.

The French Minister of Health, Claude Evin, called RU486 an advance because it does not require the use of an anesthetic. He said the precautionary measures to be taken in administering this drug, exclusively in approved health clinics, "provide indispensable safeguards in women's health."

Although RU486 is now back on the market, who is to say when the next blow will be struck against women's reproductive freedom? RU486 has revolutionary potential, which is precisely why the opposition has been so vociferous. Women can use RU486 and never know whether or not they were actually pregnant. RU486 eliminates the necessity of walking past anti-choice protestors on the way to a clinic; and it gives a personal, private dimension to an issue which has been made too public for too long.

drug so far have shown that the drug is safe. However, some side effects that have been documented include heavy bleeding, nausea, fatigue, and, rarely, hemorrhaging.

Her eagerness over the drug has some urgency when one considers the sobering statistics on how illegal abortions affect women all over the world. Powell says about 500,000 women in the world die from pregnancy-related causes each year. About half of these deaths, she says, are the result of illegal abortions done under unsafe conditions.

Powell says while she appreciates the world-wide concern about the ravages of AIDS, she still wonders why there is no similar panic over the deaths of so many women each year. If perfected and widely distributed, RU486 would likely go a long way towards preventing such tragedies.

According to a recent news report, the president of Roussel Canada, Inc. believes that up to 80 per cent of Canadians would likely support the introduction of an abortion pill in Canada.

Roussel is not expected to make a decision until the government comes up with a new abortion policy.

Introduction of a new drug in Canada requires federal approval to perform clinical trials and to sell the drug. Buxton said the company has done research on the potential Canadian demand for RU486 but "that could radically change depending on the outcome of the debate on the legal status of abortion."

Beth Ryan is a feminist writer who hails originally from Newfoundland.

CARAL/ACDA



Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL)
Association canadienne pour le droit à l'avortement

Freedom of Choice

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Around the World



Benazir Bhutto A victory for Muslim women

Benazir Bhutto became the first woman to lead a Muslim country by becoming the Prime Minister of Pakistan in the first free election in that country in over 10 years.

In her 40 minute address during her swearing in she promised to "repeal all laws that discriminate against women," adding that her government would give women equal wages for equal work and paid maternity leave.

It is important for women to ponder why women in countries that have strict religions with oppressive restrictions on women have led their countries; yet we, in North

America, cannot even consider a woman as a contender for the leader of any of the major political parties.

Consider that the first elected woman leader of a modern government was former prime minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike in Sri Lanka in 1960. And then there is Indira Gandhi who became prime minister of India in 1966.

The present political opposition in Bangladesh is led by two women of Islamic faith, Hasina Wajed and Begum Kaleda Zia.

It sure makes you wonder - are women really making any progress in North America?

The Civil Rights Act In trouble in the United States

A most unusual case is happening in the United States, and we aren't hearing very much about it.

The Supreme Court is looking at the case of a black woman from North Carolina who, in 1982, sued her work supervisor for damages caused by racial harassment.

In 1972, when she was twenty-five, Brenda Patterson began work as a file clerk for the McLean Credit Union in Winston-Salem. For the next ten years, she was regularly

humiliated by a white supervisor who assigned her more work than any of her white colleagues, refused to promote her or tell her about company job openings, and often slurred her race with such remarks as "blacks are known to work slower than whites by nature." When she was laid off in 1982, Patterson decided to sue, citing racial harassment.

Her grounds for suit were based on the Civil Rights Act of 1866 which gave everyone in the United States the same right "to make and enforce contracts" as "is enjoyed by white citizens." After the law went on the books, there was disagreement in the courts. Did Congress mean it was just for "public" conduct, or did they mean to outlaw discrimination by "private" parties as well? In

1968, the Supreme Court ruled that it meant the latter, broadly interpreting it as part of the campaign for racial equality.

The justices reaffirmed the 1968 reading in 1976, making it illegal for private schools to exclude blacks on racial grounds with the *Runyon vs McCrary* case. Nine decisions since then have maintained the decision.



However, despite these clear legal precedents, a trial court in North Carolina and the U.S. Court of Appeals made unexpected decisions in the Patterson case. These two courts held that while the ban on private discrimination applies to hiring, promoting, and firing, it does not apply to job terms and conditions or anything influencing them - like racial harassment. In other cases, five of the other eleven circuit courts have ruled on this

issue, saying the law does protect against unequal treatment in job terms and conditions.

When Patterson's Case reached the Supreme Court last year, the expectation was that her claim would be vindicated. Instead, five justices shocked the legal world by asking the parties to re-argue the case and say

whether the long-settled precedent on which the Patterson suit rests should be overturned. It was an extraordinary order: the court was giving notice that the understanding of the Civil Rights Act as it related to Blacks could be challenged.

It is felt that the order from the Supreme Court could not have been made without Ronald Reagan's appointees: Justices Sandra Day O'Connor, Antonin Scalia and Anthony Kennedy.

What is astonishing about this case is that the Judges themselves have called into question the validity of a court interpretation that was not being challenged by either side of the case.

This case could shake the very foundations of the civil rights movement in the United States and again allow racial discrimination to occur without interference.


In South Africa

Prime Minister Botha has granted reprieve to the Sharpville 6, a group whose membership included Theresa Ramashamola. The six were jailed for being part of a crowd who murdered a black man who had collaborated with Botha's apartheid government.


Over the last two years, a great deal of international attention has been focused on the release of the Sharpville 6. South African Women's Day activities, held on August 9th, have focused on Ramashamola's release over the last two years.

The release of the Sharpville 6 is seen as a victory of international outrage over their imprisonment.






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In these articles, the women in prison have altered the spelling of some words. We have respected their spelling as we feel they are creating a language based on their experience in prison and with a little work it will be accessible to you.



Women imprisoned in Canada: Handcuffs, shackles and mace

by Jo-Ann Mayhew

The primary intention of this article is to inform women of the current status of women incarcerated by Corrections Services Canada (CSC) under the direction of the office of the Solicitor General. Throughout this Fall a certain amount of the media attention has been directed towards the Prison for Women in Kingston following a new flurry of recommendations that this prison be closed. These recommendations have been issued with regularity since 1938 when a Royal Commission stated that this prison was totally unsuited to meet the needs of the women.

The appalling danger in these recommendations is that women will be returned to provincial situations where they face a manner of incarceration so intensely tedious and barren that the antiquated, hostile Prison for Women in Kingston is an unhesitating first choice of many. I implore readers to keep this fact of "experienced choice" in mind as they read this article.

In 1898, prompted by his own experiences in the Reading Gaol, Irish poet and novelist, Oscar Wilde wrote, "Every prison that men built is built with bricks of shame and bound with bars lest Christ should see how men their brothers maim."

In 1988, prompted by my own experiences and the shame and pain of this prison, I write to say that over 50 years ago, men built this Prison for Women with cold, gray stones of vengeance. And, that the forbidding barred cages, the tiers of hard, concrete cells have been maintained, AGAINST ALL REASON, to humiliate, degrade and debase women.



Fr. Ed de la Torre

I write from what I have witnessed during the three years I have been at this prison in Kingston, Ontario. Prior to coming to this prison, I idealistically believed that, my country, Canada, stood for and supported humanitarian principles. This Kingston prison experience has radically changed my misplaced idealism. My belief in Canada as either principled or

humanitarian has been fractured.

In these last three years, in the custody of what is the politically sanctioned Canadian Correctional System, I have lived in, under and through, an unending series of violations of all that is decent in any human being. These violations trod a relentless continuum that begins with monotonous trivialities and march on to outright horror.

The Prison for Women is small by prison standards. I once thought this was the main reason this prison has been ignored and treated as inconsequential by Corrections; I now think I was simplistic and naive. Corrections Canada is a sophisticated and complex organization not given to casual oversight. I now think a more sinister design can be attached to the wall of silence that has encompassed the stories of incarcerated women.

In my opinion, this small, tightly contained prison clearly highlights abuse, even barbarity, that is easily defused or masked in the larger male institutions. Here, at P4W, our prisoner population, the "count", is usually about 100 to 120 women. We are not nameless or faceless to each other. We live close, intense lives, lives that contain previous identities, our roles as mothers, daughters, sisters and wives. We are alarmed and respond in a personal way to those around us.

The System tells us to "do our own time," to ignore those around us. We chose not to ignore our sisters. We will not ignore or overlook the fact that in the first six months of 1988, in this small prison population, there have been twenty (20) incidents of women slashing

their own bodies. I have been deeply disturbed by the sight of these women, their mutilated arms, throats and torsos. In answer to my concern, EXPERTS have told me that such slashings ARE NOT medical or psychiatric problems. If this expert opinion is correct, then in my own judgement, what I see is most similar to the action of animals being caught in the metal jaws



of a hunter's trap and chewing off a paw or leg to be free.

Publicly, Corrections presents itself as a humane enterprise but behind these concrete walls there is a different name for an enterprise which brings out such acts of human desperation. The ugly, plain name for such unrelenting pain and oppression is torture.

There are volumes of studies and reports that cover these deeds, the very charge sheets have been blotted with the blood of desperate women and yet our cries are not heard and these experiences denied.

An example of the bizarre sort of denial that confronts prisoners' lives occurred this past winter when we saw a distressed native woman barricade herself in a room and slash her own throat. Security matrons forced entry into the room, but then, proceeded to put the woman in both handcuffs and shackles. They attempted to make her walk to the punishment cells in the distant segregation area. She collapsed. In a semi-conscious state, she was carried, still in chains to the hold; not to the medical unit. Several hours passed before she received treatment and then over 40 stitches were required to close the gash.

When the procedure of our Security Staff was questioned, they answered by saying that they had responded to the fact that the woman had barricaded her door; they just ignored and overlooked her slashing, her blood and her pain?!

This is one very short illustration of the on-going, unnerving, gut-wrenching incidents that are commonplace in this high security prison. It is very clear that not only are prisoners' needs not met, but also that our Correctional staff is being systematically trained to deny human suffering. As guards, our matrons have been conditioned and coerced by the economic bludgeon of a paycheck into accepting the norms of militaristic standards. They must conform to a macho-male image and surrender caring and compassion. Truthfully, all women inside the prison, both the keepers and the kept, are victimized by the inhuman standards of

Canada's Corrections Service.

I no longer know which I fear more; the cold indifference of bureaucratic government officials or the escalating use of condoned violence by robot women operating on commands for the Good Order of the Institution. Weekly, even daily, I have reeled from the contradictions in values presented by the Correctional System and the Canadian Society I once thought I knew. I ask, "How can anyone placed in this system learn or show respect for human dignity when their own dignity is constantly denied?"

The tragic answer is that it will not happen. What does happen is that I, and other women inside, are painfully, carefully taught that social values are expedient and designed to fit a dollar sign. I have learned that lies can build a public appearance or morality based on cold, pragmatic policy if it denies the human experience, the anguished cries or bloodied wounds or mangled minds around me. When hidden from view, as we are behind the million dollar concrete walls of the Prison for Women, our reality as women is also denied.

Today, CSC officials are hastily mounting program after program to upgrade the level of services being offered to the women incarcerated in Kingston. These programs, including anger management and self-awareness, work at cross-purposes with the concrete walls, the tiers of cells and bars and too distant location of our families and friends in other parts of this country. The political solution is to build more of these traditionally modeled PRISONS FOR WOMEN across the entire breadth of Canada. None of the pain existing in the current situation is being acknowledged as the plans for these new prisons are being designed.

On the contrary, more modern and intensive oppression will be built into the \$40 million prison the Burnaby (B.C.) "Correction Facility" for Women not planned to expand and replace the poor facilities of Lakeside at Oakalla. The "new design" is one which incorporates the high security provisions, lack of privacy,

tightly controlled movement and restrictive living conditions similar to the facilities at the "new" Toronto Metro West Detention Centre. The Metro West horrified prison watchers, such as the Quaker Committee on Jails and Justice, when it opened in the early 1980's. They were strongly opposed to its opening stating it was unsuitable even for short term detention.

Yet this model will be used to incarcerate women serving innumerable years.

Many times I have read stories of the atrocities of Nazi Germany and wondered how ordinary "good" citizens could have allowed, permitted even condoned these atrocities on their very doorsteps. Now I am witnessing the same sort of atrocity being perpetrated on Canadian soil with the co-operation of a willing blind public. Communities are consenting to the construction of prisons because they will provide secure, long-term, high paying jobs (guards) and infuse local economies with government contracts for a variety of services. I am certain the neighborhoods around the Nazi Concentration Camps were cozily plumped out with extra cash...the anguish and ashes of victims (outcasts and Jews = criminals) filled the invisible air until grounded in bloodied pages of history.

Prisoners' Rights Groups are forming across Canada. These demonstrate a growing wave of concern not just for present prison circumstances, but for fear of the grim future unfolding. Canada has more than enough prisons now. Legal analyst to the Daubney Commission, Renata Mohr, in preparing a position paper for the Canadian Elizabeth Fry Association, has recommended that there be an immediate capping on prison populations and that alternatives to prisons be sought. The small number of women incarcerated in this country make them an ideal sample group with which to implement and test such an alternative. There is no reason or need to duplicate the mistakes of the past by the destructive construction of more prisons. If Corrections Canada is not challenged, in its nameless, blameless bureaucratic form it will blunder on until this country is filled with a vile network spreading from Sea unto Sea. YOUR SILENCE COUNTS!!

Jo-Ann Mayhew is presently serving a life sentence at the Prison for Women in Kingston for killing her husband. She is the editor of the inmates newspaper called *Tightwire*.

Joanne: A woman dies in prison

by Bonnie Diamond

On September 29, 1988, Joanne Dupuis, aged 38 years, mother of two children aged 15 and 9, died in the Calgary remand centre. She died alone and no one knows why. She is the third person, and second woman, to die at the Calgary centre this year. Joanne killed nobody, she raped nobody, she assaulted nobody. She died alone in a jail where she was being held for suspected fraud.

Joanne shared many characteristics with other women who are in conflict with the law. Her lawyer described her as a woman with no means of support who came to Calgary with her two children to avoid "physical abuse." She was accused of writing bad cheques on several occasions and was awaiting trial when she died.

The Calgary Elizabeth Fry Society pressed for a public inquiry and made a very large public issue of Joanne's death. They knew that conditions for women at the remand centre were totally inadequate and needed to know if those conditions directly contributed to the loss of this young woman. The Attorney General's Department in Alberta saw no need for a public inquiry until they were legally forced to call for one when the autopsy, including a full toxicological study, proved inconclusive. A public inquiry will be held but the timing is in the hands of the Alberta government and it has not been established as yet. Unfortunately, Joanne's body has been cremated so there is no possibility of pursuing further medical factors.

For Joanne

A woman died alone
alone in a cell
alone in our rejection
of her
Who will cry for her?
Who will speak for her now?
Her life made little mark
and her death two lines of
prose
her life did not touch
mine
or others whose lives
are lived behind their own walls
but her death
belongs to many
I never knew her
I never will forget her

(Author: Anonymous Prisoner)
Poem reprinted with the
permission to the Calgary
Elizabeth Fry Society

Joanne's death is a cruel reminder of the other women who sit in the remand centres in communities across Canada. Canadian women, who have not been found guilty of a criminal offence, in a country which claims to operate on the presumption of innocence, are spending days, weeks, even up to a year in jail awaiting trial. They are perhaps the most neglected group in our justice system.

Remand centres across Canada are hopelessly inadequate. The Calgary centre where Joanne died was described as a "hell hole." The area allotted for women is small, crowded, windowless, and without space for exercise.

Inadequate staffing is also a problem. Prisoners at the Calgary centre reported to the Elizabeth Fry Society incidents of banging on cell doors for long periods before guards attend. A sister prisoner said

Joanne had been banging on her cell door for 20 minutes the night before she died until a guard finally let her out to use the bathroom.

Women in remand centres are in limbo and suffer great mental stress. These centres are often referred to as holding tanks and with good reason. While in remand your life is completely out of your own control. You do not know how long the trial will take or how many times you will be remanded. You do not know what your sentence will be if you are convicted or where you will serve sentence. You can make no plans for yourself or for the care of your children. People's nerves are strung tightly as they play a waiting game that in Canada is increasing in duration due to mounting court backlogs.

Women in remand often lose their children. Joanne's children were made wards of the state which added to the agony of her last living days. Her sister is shocked that officials would make her nephews wards without first notifying other relatives.

Clearly, women held in remand are women at risk. This is all of us, for anyone may be accused of a crime. Few die as Joanne did, but many are damaged severely. The Calgary remand centre is dismal but not atypical. Even modern remand centres were built with men in mind and use any available closet space for holding women.

The 19 Canadian commu-

nities which have Elizabeth Fry Societies are lucky. At least in these locations a community agency is aware and watching when a woman is incarcerated. In most cases, E. Fry workers or volunteers will visit regularly and do whatever they can to assist. But there are countless communities in Canada that hold women who are charged and are awaiting trial or sentencing, and no one outside of the system is watching. Even the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies does not have the resources to monitor where all women are being held in Canada and under what conditions. In light of Joanne's death, this is very frightening.

All incarcerated women need our help. None more than those held in remand centres. Do you know the circumstances under which you would be held in your own community should you be accused of a crime? Where are the women held on remand in your hometown? In memory of Joanne Dupuis and for the safety of all women, we must commit to finding out immediately. If you don't like the answers, feel free to contact the closest Elizabeth Fry Society or the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies for support and assistance in making changes.

Bonnie Diamond is the Executive Director of the Canadian Elizabeth Fry Society.



Portsmouth Harbour Marina Park, Kingston

Canadian
Advisory Council
on the Status of Women



Conseil
consultatif canadien
sur la situation de la femme

Update on Women's Issues

The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW) is an independent organization funded by the federal government to advise the government and the public on issues affecting women. The CACSW produces original research exploring social, economic, and legal issues pertinent to women, such as wife battering, child-care, pornography, and women and pensions.

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Entrenched social catastrophe

by Fran Sugar

Native people lead the KKKountry in statistical categories such as unemployment, alcoholism, early death rates from infant mortality, violence and criminally-related activities. According to a recent study by Trent University of the Dangerous Offenders Act (Bills C-67 and C-68), native people in the Criminal Justice System are more likely to be gated under this Bill, and therefore are deemed the most dangerous and most violent offenders in Canada.

Native women face double, triple and quadruple standards when entering the prison system. Number 1: we are women; number 2: we are native; Number 3: we are poor; Number 4: we do not usually possess the education necessarily equivalent to the status quo.

Profile:

Ms. Cree is eighteen years old, a single parent with two children. She lives in the city of --- where the offence took place. She was convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to 4 years. Her parents are deceased. She has two sisters and two brothers. Ms. Cree was a housewife whose sole income was social assistance.

Ms. Cree entered the institution with a Grade 4 level of education. She quit school due to problems in her foster home. Ms. Cree has not been involved in an education upgrading program. She has been offered a job cleaning yet has refused this placement because she feels the school supervisor does not treat her or other native students properly. As a result she will not work anywhere in the institution.

Ms. Cree was first arrested at age 16 for uttering and forging documents. She was put on one year's probation which she completed successfully. The subject displays no responsibility for her criminal involvement. The subject clearly has a drug and alcohol problem. Her institutional participation is limited to Native Sisterhood.

The writer strongly suggests that Ms. Cree remain a maximum security inmate. The writer is not in support of community release at this time. Day Parole is denied. Full Parole is denied. Escorted temporary absence denied for one year. Ms. Cree was involved with a would-be serious incident with a number of her friends on May 1, 19-- when security staff were proceeding to dispel an incident in another part of the building. As a result of Ms. Cree not being able to remain charge free for any length of

time, her cavalier attitude, her activities and friendships with many known drug dealers in the institution, it is the writer's opinion that Ms. Cree meets #2 and #3 criteria under Bills C-67 and 68.

Ms. Cree is a danger to society, to herself and the staff members of the institution. Ms. Cree is being referred under Bills C-67-68. Ms. Cree's sentence expires January, 199-. Next Case Management Review scheduled December, 198-.

This is a fictional profile, but it closely resembles the perceived reality on the part of the bureaucracy which assess the Native Woman as she enters prison. Those who assess us come from an opposite life-experience. The average case management person is caucasian, married, has 1-2 children, a university degree, is from an upper-middle-class background with no comparable experiences to a Native woman.

Obviously there are going to be some very profound difficulties that the Native woman will have in making adjustments within the institution in serving out her sentence. Almost every Sister I have talked to has told me they were raised in foster homes, sent to juvenile detention centres, were victims of sexual abuse, were victims of rape. And finally entering prison for women, we have all become victims of bureaucracy because we do not have the right colour of skin, the right kind of education, the right kind of social skills and the right kind of principles to get out of here.

Most often criminal defence lawyers in conjunction with crown prosecutors and judges agree that a guilty plea with a lengthy sentence will correct past lifestyles, our way of thinking, and make us into law-abiding "cityzens". It is an absurd joke to think that the criminal Just-Us System with its residential care, treatment, programming, counselling and mental health programs are specifically designed programs to meet the needs of Native women when we have never had an equal footing in the case management strategic planning sessions that take place. The bureaucracy and paper pushing outweigh the importance of listening to what the Native woman says she needs.

Usually the woman in the cage is too busy surviving the new rules, new regulations of daily life in La-la land to even consider what the future holds after she is finished her sentence.

When we come to prison, we need to adjust to greater and greater violence in our lives. We adjust to increasingly deadly conditions, and come to accept them as "natural." We adjust to having freedoms stolen away from us, to having fewer and fewer choices, less and less voice in the decisions that affect our lives. We come to believe that making \$4.20 a day and the things we can buy with it are the most important life goals.

We have adjusted to deafening silence because it is now mandatory to wear headphones. We have adjusted to the deafening noises and screams coming



from segregation when our Sister has just been stripped of her clothes and maced in the face. We have adjusted to the deadening entertainment of bingo games that give out prized bags of Taco chips and we hear glees of happiness at this score because some pathetic individual hasn't tasted Taco chips since 1979. We have adjusted to dreaming of our futures.

We have adjusted to the lack of conversation because some days there is absolutely nothing of significance or meaning to a few cheap words.

We have adjusted to dreaming of our futures. We have adjusted to divorcing ourselves from relationships with our husbands. We keep adapting to new and ever more dangerous conditions and ideas in the name of survival.

We forget how life once was, how blue the sky is, how good food tasted. We forget because the changes are gradual and unannounced. No one can forewarn us of what lies ahead. If we could imagine ourselves taking pleasure in a slave job like cleaning floors over and over again, day after day, year after year, and see ourselves as fanatical psychos when our freshly waxed floor gets a scratch on it and ruins our entire day, we would recoil

with horror and shame because our minds and values become as twisted and irrational as the ones that impose these conditions upon our lives.

We become so numb from the incredible b/sh we are exposed to: trying to see a case management officer to get a call to our children is a major, major event. It is no wonder that so many of us cut our throats, lacerate our bodies, hang ourselves. It is no wonder that we need to identify our pain onto our physical bodies because our whole lives have been filled with incredible pain and traumatizing experiences -

psychic pain, physical pain, spiritual pain.

When you ask a Native Woman why she was placed in a foster home she'll likely tell you it was because Childrens' "Aid" arrested her because her parents didn't send her to school regularly. When you ask a Native woman where she was sexually abused, she'll likely respond it took place in the foster homes. When you ask a Native woman why she finally killed somebody she'll tell you she was a battered wife and she lost control of her senses when she was taking another beating. She didn't mean to kill her husband, her lover, her friend, she was just so spun out after each licking she lived through - she just was so spun out.

I am your typical native woman and one who has survived the Criminal Just-us System. When I think about the time in prisons, I often wonder how I maintained my sanity. I never conformed in my heart or in my mind but my body danced. I learned how to cope with lies. I believe justice does not exist for Native people. The battle of will is to see through the walls, to see through the screws and their power plays - their bureaucratic games of power and pleasure.

I learned there is a certain degree of hypocrisy in the groups that represent women in prison. The money and efforts that go into "services" is a mere band-aid effort in conspiracy with the criminal Just-us System. The money and efforts would be better directed at commuting the families of the incarcerated women to the prisons. The time that is spent on conducting study upon study is wasted time because statistics stay the same, the pain stays the same, the faces of the women change -- but the stories are identical.

I entered Prison for Women as a young, poorly educated, native woman and ...I will soon be released with similar characteristics - but you can add another deficiency - after 7 years - I am now an ANGRY, young, poor, uneducated Native Woman!!!

Signed in the Blood of my sisters,
Ms. Cree XO

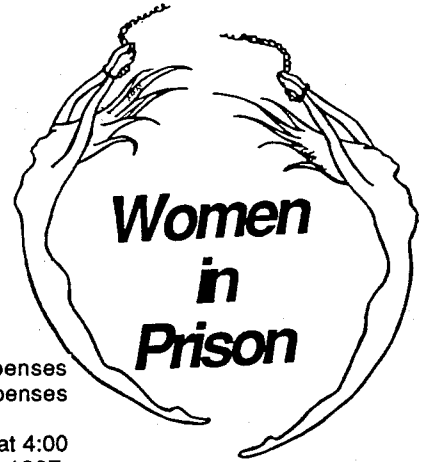
Fran Sugar is an inmate in the Prison for Women.

Fran Sugar is an inmate in the Prison for Women.



Akwesashie Notes

A letter from the Prison for Women



Dear editors:

I have just read the first issue of *The Womanist*... and I am very happy to finally see a woman's publication aimed at national coverage. Though the government is bent on decentralization for originally fairly good reasons, the results now are not national commitment to leadership.

I feel strongly that this is one reason why equality for women has wound up often going in circles as the decision-making capacities seem to be regionalized...leaving the entire movement with little priority focus. I believe your paper will be a huge contributor to perhaps finally unifying women across Canada on those issues important to us all.

I have struggled for 2 1/2 years to obtain a semblance of equality in treatment for women in prison. I have been denied a transfer to my home province of British Columbia seven times for reasons of overcrowding. The pat answer is wait for the new prison to be constructed in BC by the province with the help of \$10 million from the federal Correctional Services of Canada.

\$10 MILLION will be wasted. I imagine you can think of many humanistic ways this money could be spent. Why will it be wasted, you may

ask, and why do I not wish to "take advantage of this offer"?

1. If I accept a transfer to the province I must waive my federal rights. Men do not need to. My federal rights include medical, dental, educational expenses...and private family visiting privileges, among other things such as programs, facilities, etc.

2. If I was a man and convicted of second degree murder and sentenced to life imprisonment I would be in the province of BC incarcerated in Matsqui or Mission Medium Security Institution in Mission, BC; 40 miles from my home, Vancouver, rather than 3,000 miles from home. Both facilities were constructed to be co-correctional, but in both facilities there are NO women...and there are 40 and 20 beds available respectively.

3. In addition to this there are two 40-bed fully-outfitted trailers in the Abbotsford compound, owned by the federal government which could be placed on the existing trailer pads on Mission grounds or outside the fence with another constructed around, as the government owns an adjoining 5 acres.

4. Instead, the federal government is giving the province of BC \$10 million towards construction of a "new" prison for women which will house provincial women (those doing 1 day to 2 years)

alongside 40 federal women who may be doing up to life. The federal government is dumping us with no assurance of programs or rights equal to those of male prisoners doing the same sentences for similar crimes.



Not only is the \$\$\$ being wasted...the women incarcerated to federal time will not obtain EQUALITY to male prisoners.

My family has suffered greatly over this incarceration and I wish I had been successful in my suicide attempt. My husband suffered 4 heart attacks last year at the age of 42 years. He has only 20% of his heart functioning at this point. I may never see him alive again. My two sisters and my two sons have paid the nearly \$1,000 per trip to come to visit me.

Men incarcerated in LaVale Penitentiary in Quebec have now been assured that

their families' travel expenses and accommodation expenses will be paid for.

I was forcibly taken at 4:00 a.m. on December 31, 1987, from Mission and carried on board an RCMP Lear Jet... and flown 3,000 miles back to Prison for Women in Kingston. You will be saying, well, I must be a dangerous person...No, I am not. This is my first time in prison. For 41 years I was a contributing member to society before a dear friend died of leukemia and my father died 6 months later. The ensuing depression aggravated by a high stress job as a stockbroker became a psychotic rage and I killed my step-mother. I know I did do this vile act, but I still find it difficult to believe. It has been a nightmare of horrific proportion...and one which I would not wish on my worst enemy.

I am angry and near the brink of insanity, yet still fight it all, the injustices...and the deprivations...with all left in me...I see the biggest mistakes I made in my life were being a workaholic...and paying my taxes when due...and raising my sons to respect law and order...for this is a big lie...there is no law and order...only for some...mostly wealthy...and mostly men.

I have researched and read...and am a walking

encyclopedia about women and prison...I have files and files of material, of letters and grievances...and have contacted many people in government and in the media. I am asking you to consider the question only of the waste of the \$\$\$\$. The \$56,000 a year it is costing the Canadian taxpayer to keep me here in Kingston versus the \$30,000 to keep me in my home province of BC with equal rights! Is this insane or have the 2 1/2 years of imprisonment been too much for my brain?

A show I saw which featured Iona Campagnolo struck a very large chord. She said "women are prisoners of gradualism...They say to us...wait...it is coming...be patient, and so we wait...and then when a woman does go into a position of power she is told not to rock the boat or it will spoil other women's chances."

Here's to rocking the boat!

In sisterhood,
Gayle K. Horri
Prison for Women

Canadian Assoc. of Elizabeth Fry

Who really is the "typical" woman convicted of committing a crime in Canada today? Is she the tough, cruel, calculating, morally deficient misfit she has historically been portrayed as?

Or is she more likely to be: young; poor; undereducated; unskilled; Native; addicted to drugs, alcohol, or both; a victim of physical and sexual abuse; emotionally/financially dependent on abusive male partners; charged with property (non-violent) offences?

If you chose the second description, you're right! Statistics show that the issues for women in conflict with the law are essentially status of women issues. That is to say, many of the reasons women commit crimes, many of the problems they face in pursuit of justice, in prison and upon release from prison are often related to the way women in general are treated in our society.

The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies

(CAEFS) was incorporated in Ottawa in 1978 in order to address the conditions which contribute to women's involvement in crime, as well as to attempt to alleviate the unequal treatment women receive within the justice system.

CAEFS is a federation of Elizabeth Fry Societies - community-based agencies which work with, and on behalf of, women involved with the justice system, in particular women in conflict with the law. One strength of our federation is the freedom to meet the needs of our communities in unique and effective ways. CAEFS advocates for reforms and offers a forum within which the public may be informed about, and participate in, all aspects of the justice system as it affects women.

The principles of the Association include a commitment to:

- equality rights of every individual;
- encourage community involvement in all aspects of the criminal justice system;
- ensuring quality programs, services and facilities for women in conflict with the law, based on individual needs;
- encouraging the active participation of volunteers in all aspects of the organization;

- pursuing excellence and efficiency by always seeking to improve standards and programs;
- identifying and addressing the gaps and unmet needs;
- seeking changes through reforms of the law and penal and correctional regulations, practices and conditions.

As the national voice of the 19 Elizabeth Fry Societies across Canada, CAEFS's goals include:

- encouraging suitable reforms for women at all levels of the justice system;
- assisting member societies in developing high standards of programs and services for the purpose of aiding women and girls who have come into, or appear to have come into, conflict with the law;
- developing public awareness and understanding of programs, problems and the needs for change in the criminal justice system, particularly as it affects women.

In pursuit of these goals, this past year has been an active one for CAEFS, particularly in the area of legislative reform related to sentencing, parole and other correctional issues. CAEFS obtained funding from the Department of Justice to organize two consultations on the issue of women and sentencing.

The first national consultation sought the expertise of community representatives, front-line workers and clients in our member societies. The results are published in a paper, "Sentencing in Context: Revealing the Realities of Women in Conflict with the Law," which addresses the need to understand and consider the context and differing reality of women's lives if disparity in the impact of sentences is to be minimized.

A second consultation, organized by CAEFS, took place this October in Mont Ste. Marie, Quebec. Representatives of 16 national women's groups and resource women concluded that the criminal justice system fails to meet the needs of women for equal benefit and protection of the law. Also, current reform efforts of government miss the mark in redressing this discrimination. This failure has a more adverse impact on native women, black women, visible minority women, differently-abled women, poor women, and lesbians.

The assembly insisted that meeting the needs of women in crisis, whether they are considered victims or offenders, must be central to

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**Human Rights
Declaration
40th Anniversary**

Angola: an interview with Ruth Neto

by Susan O'Leary

More than 500 years ago, Angola became the first target for European attempts to establish an African colony. The people answered with some of the most tenacious resistance in African history; and after a century of uninterrupted warfare, the Portuguese colonizers had to give up the idea of settling inland.

War and slavery, however, took its toll; and by the beginning of the 20th century, Angola had become one of Portugal's prize colonies - fertile and rich in oil and numerous minerals.

Angola won its independence from 450 years of Portuguese rule in 1975. It took a 14-year armed struggle led by the Popular Liberation Movement of Angola (MPLA).

Some 300,000 Portuguese colonizers fled en masse and sabotaged factories, machinery, and transport as they left. Meanwhile, South Africa had invaded from neighbouring occupied Namibia and the CIA launched its largest ever African intervention on the side of Pretoria, prompting independent Angola to request Cuban internationalist aid.

Now, almost 13 years later, the country is yet to know a day of peace. The South African apartheid regime has launched at least six major invasions and, along with the United States, supports and arms the terrorist UNITA counterrevolutionaries.

The result is a valiant country, practically laid to waste. Half of Angola's urban inhabitants and the estimated 700,000 displaced people face "acute shortages of staple foods, a situation which may deteriorate into near famine", according to a recent joint report by the government and the U.N. Land mines placed by UNITA in the fields and along paths leading to streams and wells have left Angola with 35,000 amputees, most of them women and children.

The war of terror has halted ambitious literacy and health programs in large parts of the south where, today, some 9,000 apartheid troops are entrenched. Though ravaged by this racist aggression, Angola stands at the forefront of the fight against apartheid. It is host to not only tens of thousands of Namibian and South African refugees but also to military bases of the African National Congress (ANC), and the South West African Peoples Organization (SWAPO).

When the MPLA was founded in 1956, it proclaimed the equality of all Angolans, regardless of ethnic or regional origin, sex or any other factor. Consequently, the role of women and the need for

them to mobilize around specific concerns was recognized from the start.

In December 1962, a year after the MPLA launched its armed struggle, the Organization of Angolan Women (OMA) was set up. Its formation stemmed from this recognition of the need for the emancipation of women. From the outset, OMA's philosophy was reflected in these watchwords:

"One Objective, Free Angola!
One Path, United Work!
One Certainty, Victory!
United We Shall Win!"

During the liberation struggle, OMA performed many essential tasks. Women undertook military training and fought as combatants. They were responsible for agricultural production (along with the National Union of Angolan Workers). They implemented literacy programs. As well they wrote and produced radio programs and publications to mobilize support for the Angolan struggle.

In the first years after independence, OMA's main activities were in support of government programs, and it played a major role in vaccination and literacy campaigns. Wherever women and children required a solution, OMA was present. By 1983, the organization had grown rapidly, with more than one million members in all parts of the country - a remarkable achievement in a country as large as Angola with a dispersed population estimated at 8 million.

Ruth Neto is the National Secretary of the Organization of Angolan Women (OMA) and the Secretary-General of the Pan-African Women's Organization. Susan O'Leary spoke with her when she recently visited Canada for the launching of the first Canadian Task Force on Angola.

O'Leary: Could you give us some impression of the problems that Angolan women are facing right now, especially those most affected by the war?

Neto: The women of Angola suffer a great deal of pain and humiliation when they see that their own sons are being killed, that their daughters are being raped and assaulted, that their homes are being destroyed, and their possessions are being lost. How many tears have the women shed when we have seen all of these bullets that kill our youth, when we have seen the families broken apart, children abandoned and schools, hospitals, and businesses all destroyed.

And, in these very difficult times, it has meant that men and women have come together to fight against South Africa and its puppets, UNITA. And, of course, the cause of this destabilization, the economic and political destabilization, is the war - which causes so many social problems, which causes so much suffering to the women and to the whole population. People outside the country do not know the reality - they speak about "civil war" when, in fact, we suffer aggression and an invasion by a foreign

country.

O'Leary: What types of programs has the OMA launched to deal with the types of problems war creates for women?

Neto: We develop assistance programs to help the displaced people, the widows, the orphans, we also organize campaigns to raise funds to obtain clothes, and food, and school material so that life in those areas does not come to a complete halt. We also mobilize teachers to continue the work in schools even if the conditions are very poor. We sometimes have to construct small buildings or shelters so that they can continue to give lectures to the people who live in those areas.

O'Leary: Does OMA rely on the government of Angola to coordinate and carry out these programs, or do you bring a program to them and say "We need resources but we will carry out the program"?

Neto: Some programs are done together with the government -- for instance, with respect to schools, we have to deal with the Ministry of Education. But in the programs that are specific to our organization, we can do the work ourselves. For instance, if you talk about the situation of supplying material, or of training women, even in simple tasks like sewing, or cooking -- these are things we do ourselves.

O'Leary: How does the OMA describe its mandate, its objectives?

Neto: Our main objective

concerns decision-making because we participated in the struggle for liberation, and we are still fighting. So, our main task is to affirm our rights and assert ourselves. In our constitution it says we have equal rights with men, but what we must do is attain the necessary levels (of empowerment) to make those rights a reality. Of course, to obtain this level in decision-making we have to go a long way; we have to mobilize women and elevate their educational level; we have to carry out literacy campaigns so that they can participate in all levels of our society.

OMA has done a lot of work in legal matters, for instance, by providing information to women. It has tried to get rid of some of the discriminatory clauses that were in the previous legislation that are somewhat out of date; and it has tried to make sure that these new pieces of legislation are applied. The family code also has ensured equality between men and women and has ensured reciprocity between men and women. In fact, this family code required a good deal of consultation before it was applied.

OMA also holds conferences and delivers talks to women to make them aware of the legislation and what it means to them. The areas of legislation that have been dealt with in this context are constitutional, family, and labor law. Women are becoming far more involved in the

continued on page 17

Ines Murillo:



On the 40th Anniversary of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights the human rights situation in the world is appalling. Many of the world's peoples are still fighting for basic rights: the right to live without fear of violence, the right to have enough food to eat, and the right to have a roof over their heads.

Violence and repression are common throughout many countries and take on many different forms. People suffer from outright physical violence - beatings, torture, rape, and death as well as the violence of slow death due to hunger, ill-health and poverty. The practice of the "disappearance" of individuals is widespread in some countries. In Latin America, more than 100,000 people have "disappeared" in the past 20 years.

In Canada we hear in the news about repressive regimes in South Africa and Chile and sometimes about those in Guatemala and El Salvador. Occasionally, we hear about the varied efforts to bring attention to these crimes and the struggles of the people in those countries to free themselves from oppression.

But there are many countries that are not covered in the news, countries whose human rights abuses never reach our attention. One such country is Honduras. Honduras is the poorest of the Central American countries and next to Haiti, the poorest in the Western Hemisphere. Located centrally, it shares borders with Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

During October and November many Canadians had a chance to learn more about the human rights situation in Honduras. This was due to the presence of Ines

Murillo, a young Honduran woman who has been touring Canada. Ines Murillo is the International Representative of the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights in Honduras, (CODEH). In dozens of meetings with various organizations, government officials and the public, Ines Murillo has given Canadians informative talks on the history of Honduras and its transformation into a militarized state.

From these discussions we have learned that the history of Honduras has been a very different one than that of the other Central American countries. Until the 1980's Honduras was not as socially polarized nor did there exist the same all-powerful oligarchies as in the other countries. As well, the military did not use outright violence to quell any sign of discontent. Also, very importantly, in the 1970's the government created agrarian reform laws but did not implement them. This meant that when campesinos (peasants) were fighting for land, they were actually only fighting for their country's own laws to be implemented. Honduras also has a long history of a strong organized peasant and worker movement.

In the 1980's however, the situation in Honduras changed dramatically. The military rule ended and a civilian government began. Ironically it was under a civilian government that Honduras developed into the militarized state it is today, and that human rights abuses rose dramatically.

There is ample documentation to prove that this militarization is a direct result of the U.S. presence in Honduras. Fearful after the Nicaraguan revolution and the

a Honduran woman speaks

by Michelle Albert

possibility of mass revolt in El Salvador, the U.S. started to flood arms, money and military into Honduras to create a base for its activities, specifically the creation and support of the contra forces.

It was at this time that human rights abuses began. Between 1981 and 1984 there were 218 political assassinations, 1,947 illegal detentions and 111 disappearances.

Ines Murillo is one of very few people who "disappeared" and survived. She was a 24-year-old legal advisor to union and peasant organizations, when she was abducted in 1983 and imprisoned and tortured in a secret jail for 80 days. Mainly through the efforts of her family, she was then transferred to a regular jail where she was held for another 13 months. She was then expelled from the country and now lives in exile in Mexico.

In October 1987 she was a key witness before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (the judicial arm of the Organization of American States) which, in a landmark case, found the Honduran government guilty of human rights abuse in the "disappearance" of one of its citizens. It was the first time a country had been tried and convicted of carrying out kidnapping and "disappearances."

Honduras is the main recipient of Canadian aid to Central America. The July/August edition of Central American Update quotes one of seven judges hearing the case in the Inter-American Court: 'If the countries we find in violation receive economic aid from places where value is placed on human rights, then our verdict should be of some significance'.

As Canada does claim to place value on human rights and prizes itself on contributing to peacekeeping in the world, we therefore need to seriously assess our aid programme to Honduras and examine our present criteria for giving aid.

Canadian development assistance to Honduras began in 1971 with a grant valued at \$35,000. The current 5-year

programme (1987-1991) gives nearly \$60 million. CIDA, the official development organ of the Canadian government, currently has bilateral aid programmes (government to government) with all of the Central American countries, regardless of the human rights situation in the various countries.

The decision of the Inter-American Court should be a decisive factor in the planning of Canada's aid programmes. Should our money continue to support a government accused of human rights violations? As Stephen Dale points out in his Oct. 20, 1988 article in NOW, "Mourning Human Rights in Militarized Honduras:"

"As in other Central American countries, most aid that comes to Honduras has strings attached - that the

government must reduce its social programs, privatize the economy, raise taxes for working people and lower those for multinational corporations."

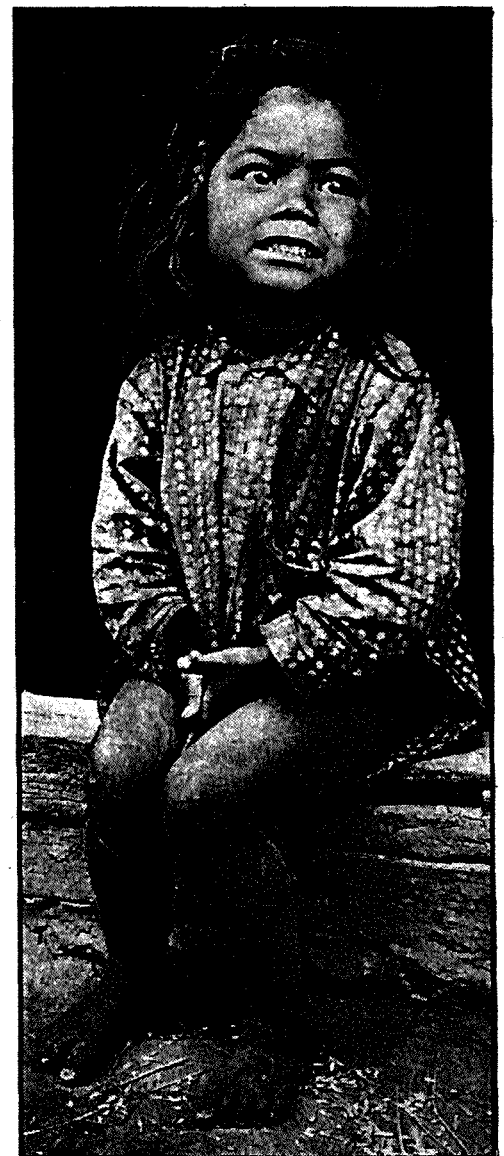
Should our aid interfere in this way?

In the past few years a debate has sprung up around the true effect of foreign aid on the people of the countries that receive our aid. It is obviously an issue that requires further debate. We must assess Canada's role in perpetuating repressive situations in the countries that receive our aid, especially now on the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Michelle Albert is a feminist from Toronto who has recently returned from a year in Central America.



**Human Rights Declaration
40th Anniversary**



from the New Internationalist

Angola (cont'd)

reconstruction of their country and they are participating a great deal more. Women are becoming far more aware of the value of their work, not only for themselves and for their family, but for their country as a whole.

O'Leary: What successes can you point to that the OMA in general have achieved?

Neto: We can say with pride that we have obtained some positive results. In terms of our organization, in March OMA held its second

convention, and there were 600 delegates who came from all of the provinces of Angola. This was an exceedingly successful meeting.

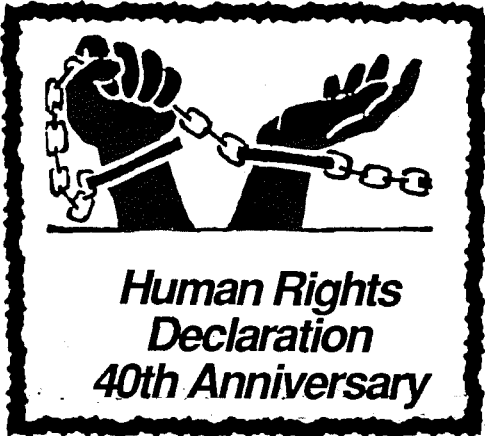
In spite of the fact that we are a country that achieved independence a short time ago, we can say that more women are educated now, some have entered the structures of the party (MPLA), some are in the government, in the National Assembly, and in other fields.

Since this interview in April, new developments have been reported from Angola. A provisional peace agreement was reached in Geneva by negotiators from Angola, Cuba, South Africa, and the United States. Since then, a joint military monitoring committee has been set up by Angola and South Africa to supervise the ceasefire, and to ensure the gradual withdrawal of South African and Cuban troops.



Up-to date information on Latin America: human rights, women, Canadian policy. Write for subscription information, free bookstore catalogue available early 1989.

P.O. Box 2207, Stn. P Toronto, Ont. M5S 2T2



Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people.

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations.

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social

progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, Therefore,
The General Assembly
proclaims

This Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1
All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2
Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 3
Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4
No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5
No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6
Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7
All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8
Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9
No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10
Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11
(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.
(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal

offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12
No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13
(1) Everyone has the right

to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.
(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14
(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purpose and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15
(1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.
(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16
(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17
(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18
Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community

with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

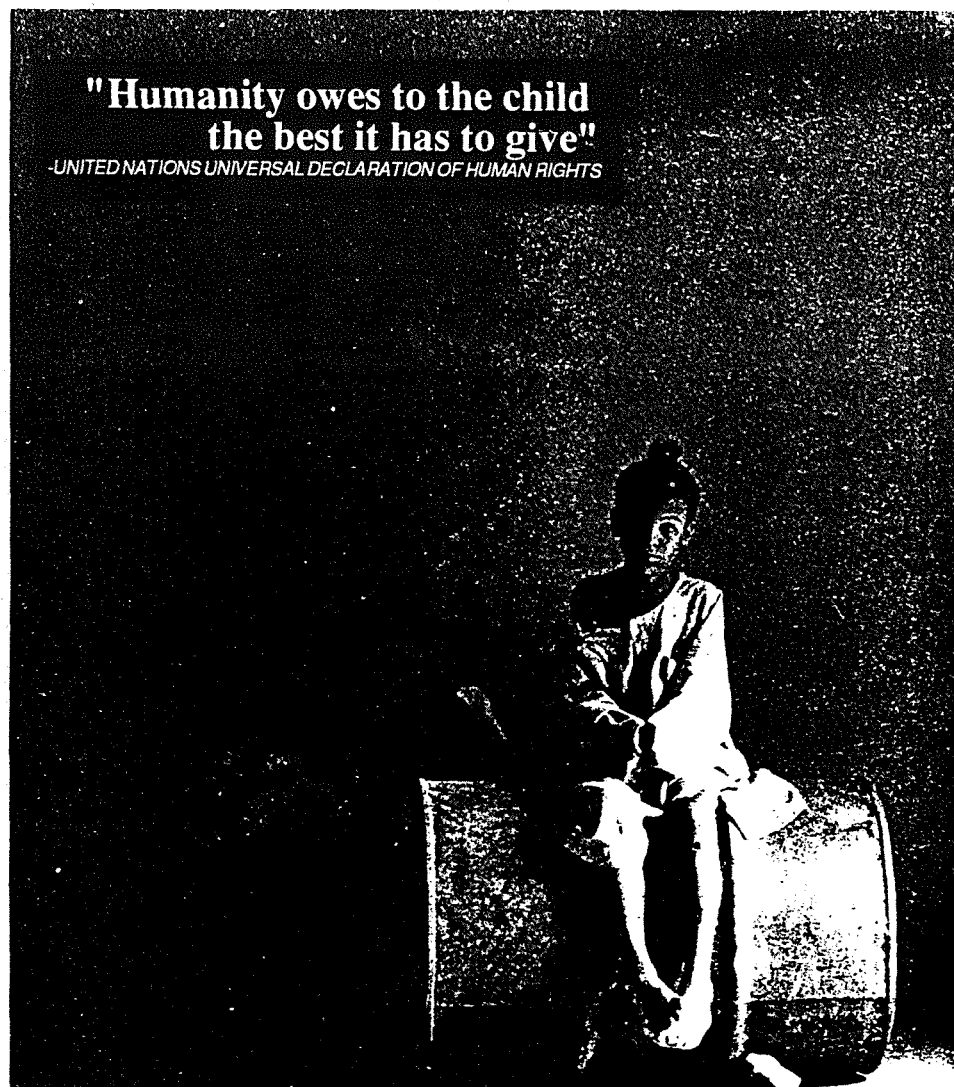
Article 19
Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20
(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21
(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of this country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.
(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22
Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23
(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and protection against unemployment



from the New Internationalist

continued on page 19

Women in prison around the World

"When they couldn't find my husband, they said they just wanted to take me for a couple of hours to ask me a few questions ... I remained in prison for 14 months ..." (Iranian woman imprisoned in 1983)

The fundamental human rights of women are violated by governments all over the world. Women are intimidated, illegally detained, and tortured by governments and their agents. Women of all ages, from all

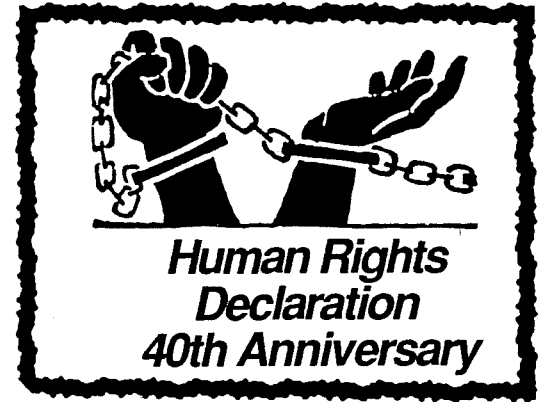
walks of life, are affected: trade unionists, agricultural workers, office workers, housewives, journalists, physicians, and lawyers. Some are victims of human rights abuses simply because they are wives, mothers, daughters, or friends of those deemed "dangerous". They are held hostage until suspects are found or are used to apply pressure to those already detained.

Women are vulnerable to special exploitation and abuse.

Mothers see their children threatened or tortured in front of them. Women who are pregnant when arrested give birth while in prison and then have their babies taken from them, to an unknown fate. Women are sexually assaulted as a form of torture.

Many thousands of women around the world are unjustly imprisoned or tortured. Your letters can help free them.

(from information supplied by Amnesty International)



Prisoner of conscience released!

Letter-writing does work sometimes. Ntombazana Gertrude Botha, a South African woman active in the anti-apartheid movement, was recently released shortly after a major campaign by the Amnesty International Letter Writing Network.

Please take time to support human rights actions, by writing letters or in other ways. You can make a difference.

Ntombazana Gertrude Botha, a 44-year-old mother of two children, was an Administrative Secretary with the Border Council of Churches in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. The Council provides financial assistance and legal advice to families of people being held by the South African government.

She was arrested on March 18, 1987 at her work, and detained without charge under the "state of emergency" legislation. No official reason was ever given for her arrest.

Botha was also an executive member of the local chapter of the United Democratic Front (UDF). The UDF is a broad-based coalition of community, trade union, student and other groups of all races opposed to the South African government's apartheid policies.

She was also active in the local Detainees Parent Support

Committee.

She was first held in the Detainees Section of Fort Glamorgan Prison, along with 1,168 other people held under the state of emergency legislation. After a five-day hunger strike by detainees, the National Medical and Dental Association of South Africa called for an urgent investigation into prison conditions. Botha was temporarily moved to another prison and then returned to Fort Glamorgan in early June, 1987.

On June 11, 1987, the South African President reimposed the state of emergency, one day before the end of the previous state of emergency, declared on June 12, 1986. Botha was formally released but immediately rearrested under the new state of emergency. She was then put in solitary confinement.

Finally, after appeals from around the world, and more than a year and a half after she was arrested, Botha was released on November 11, 1988. No further details are available but it is believed that her release is unconditional.

Between 20,000 and 30,000 people have been detained without trial since the state of emergency was imposed in South Africa in June, 1986.

(from information supplied by Amnesty International)



Amnesty International



There are hundreds of thousands of men and women around the world who are in prison because of their race, religion or political beliefs.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL works for all of them — the sick, the tortured, the forgotten. You can help.

Contact:

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
Canadian Section
(English Speaking)
130 Slater St, Ste. 900
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6E2

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (cont'd)

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the

same social protection.

Article 26

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance of religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27

(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or

artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

What are we doing to the earth?

Trees: the lungs of the earth

Trees give us:

- Water - trees bind the earth with their roots, protecting the soil from erosion and reducing the evaporation of water;
- Soil - when trees are cut down and the earth is left naked, soil is flushed away by rain or attacked by sun and wind;
- Oxygen - healthy forests trap rainfall; they use and release it slowly throughout the year. It is estimated that deforestation releases the same amount of carbon dioxide emitted by industry worldwide.
- Medicine - the rainforests alone have given us cortisone, rubber, chocolate, dyes and potential cancer cures;
- Homes - trees house 50% to 80% of all species on the earth.

The Death Toll

- An area of tropical forest the size of Britain is deforested every year. That is 1 million acres a week or 100 acres a minute
- In 1950, 30% of the earth was covered by tropical forest. By 1975 only 12% was left.
- Today more than 40% of the world's original tropical forests have gone. Latin America has lost 37% of its tropical forests, Asia 42% and Africa 52%.
- The world is now losing its tropical forest at the rate of 7% a year. The end of the tropical rainforest is in sight.

Why are the Rainforests so important?

- They cover only 7% of the world's surface and yet they contain between 50%-80% of all existing species.



• Already 1 million indigenous people have been left homeless since their land has been requisitioned for cattle ranching, development projects and for logging.

Where are they going?

- The average citizen of the West consumes more than 150 kilogrammes of paper a year compared to the Third World citizen who uses just 5 kilogrammes.
- Each U.S. citizen throws away the equivalent of three coniferous trees a year.
- Development projects such as mining and hydro-electric dams destroy huge areas of rainforest through flooding and excavation. These projects are frequently funded by international aid agencies like the World Bank.
- Rich and poor countries consume the world's trees in roughly equal proportions: the poor countries for basic needs, the rich countries for luxuries.



- Half of the wood is used as fuel - 80% of it by poor countries.
- 40% is used for construction - 75% of it by rich countries
- 10% is used as paper - 87.5% of it by rich countries.

Why are they being cut down?

Greed. Here are some examples:

- To relieve political pressure for land reform in the settled southern region of Brazil - a country in which less than five per cent of landowners own over 80 per cent of the country's farmland - the government is giving its landless poor plots in the frontier Amazon region.
- They are being forced to clear rain forests to grow crops because they have been forced off their agricultural land. Tropical soils only last 2 or 3 years as agricultural land and then more land needs to be cleared. This plan, financed by the World Bank and the InterAmerican Development bank, is leading to the destruction of an area of tropical rainforest larger than Great Britain.
- In what's said to be a bid to reinforce its hold on its remote island colonies - several of which have independence movements - Indonesia's government is moving millions of people from Java and other islands to dilute the indigenous populations. To make way for the settlers, \$3.3 million hectares of primary tropical forest are slated to be destroyed before the end of the decade in this plan financed by the World Bank.
- Corruption also plays a large role, as in Malaysia where the forests of Sarawak are being destroyed to provide the Japanese with exotic logs. Sarawak's native people, who claim the land as their own are fighting the logging but have been unable to convince the environmental minister - who has personally been granted



from the New Internationalist

700,000 acres of timber - to suspend logging operations.

- 5 million hectares of rainforest are cut by logging companies every year and exported to developed countries for windows, doors, bowls, coffins.
- Logging destroys 12.5 million acres of tropical rainforests a year, yet many of these logging ventures are not economically viable. Subsidies by Third World governments are the driving force behind forest exploitation.

Water

Water

Water pollution sources

- Domestic sewage is being dumped into lagoons, onto land, into rivers and into the sea. In Canada, 270 chemical pollutants pass through Ontario sewage treatment plants into Lake Ontario.
- Toxic chemicals are sprayed on farms, fields and in forests and run off into streams, lakes and seep

through the soil into groundwater.

- Industrial wastes, including synthetic chemicals and heavy metals, are poured into rivers and lakes and dumped into land fill sites such as Love Canal near Niagara Falls.
- Oil and chemical spills such as the highly publicized spill of the PCB's in Quebec and the toxic chemicals in the Rhine River in 1986 are just the tip of the iceberg. Spills are constantly happening, especially in the ocean and they go

unreported and untreated.

- Radioactive particles are part of the wastestream of reactors and are from some hospitals and is a contributing factor to human cancers.

Toxins in the drinking water

- A worldwide survey of drinking water found among the 1,600 chemicals detected:
 - 22 caused cancer;
 - 42 were suspected of causing



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Peace on Earth



Death of the earth

- About 11 billion acres around the world - 35% of the Earth's land surface - are becoming unusable. These areas are home to more than 850 million people. Where are they going to go?
- The hardest hit area is the developing world where farmers are forced to abandon their cropland.
- Until recently 70% of Sudan was covered by forest or savannah woodland. Many trees were cut down so the land could be used for agricultural use. Today, most of the country is desert.
- Every year about 15 million acres of land becomes desert, and a further 53 million acres are so degraded that crop production becomes too expensive.

- In the 1960's drought struck 18.5 million people worldwide every year. By the 1970's that figure had climbed to 24.4 million people annually. Between 1984-85, drought afflicted some 30 million people in Africa alone. In India in 1987, 300 million people suffered because of the drought.
- A third of the world's people live in countries where cropland is shrinking. Topsoil is being lost due to overcultivation, improper irrigation, ploughed grassland, and deforestation.
- In Africa the Sahara desert gobbles up 30 miles a year in its relentless march southwards. For each acre lost, the world loses eight tons of food.



What are we doing?

- The environmental effect of development aid mega-projects is increasingly becoming an issue. Yet, few of us realize that the Canadian government contributes money to support these programs.
- **In China:** CIDA is financing a study to determine whether the largest dam in the world - the mammoth Three Gorges hydro-electric dam on the Yangtze River in China - should be built. The study has cost CIDA over \$14 million. The dam would flood up to 10 cities and over 100,000 acres of precious farmland and would force between 300,000 to 1 million people off their land. An estimated 80 species of fish will be wiped out as a result of the dam's reservoir and it is unknown how many animals will be wiped out by the flooding. The weight and size of the reservoir could trigger earthquakes and landslides

- that could cause disasterous flooding.
- The dam is being proposed to provide power for China's energy hungry industrial regions. The price tag for the dam is between \$10-\$20 billion U.S., and will take 17 years to be completed. It is viewed as a lucrative job for many industries.
- **In Brazil:** Canada, along with the World Bank is in the process of deciding on a loan to Brazil for a hydroelectric power plan. The construction would force the relocation of up to 500,000 people and destroy 25 million hectares of Amazon tropical forest (an area the size of Great Britain).
- **In Thailand -** CIDA and Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd recently provided technology to sterilize and preserve food by exposing it to high doses of radiation. Children eating irradiated food have developed chromosomal abnormalities. Animals have developed kidney disease, abnormal blood cells, reduced fertility and premature death.
- **In Ethiopia:** CIDA recently gave \$1.7 million to one of the world's largest experiment in social and environmental engineering - Ethiopia's scheme to resettle 1.5 million of its highland citizen to sweltering lowlands. The project which Ethiopia tries to justify on environmental grounds is already having devastating environmental effects: 800,000 people have already been moved, and 700,000 are still to come. As part of the resettlement, most of Ethiopia's remaining forests are being cleared, robbing that country of scarce fuel, fodder and a barrier to the encroaching desert.



• **In Brazil:** Federal foreign aid continues to fund the Grand Zarajas mining operation which is destroying 58,000 square miles of tropical rainforest that has been the lifeblood of the 10,000 Amazonian Indians.



A climate in crisis

- The waste products of industrial society are threatening the climate of the world.

The Greenhouse Effect

- The growing number of pollutants in the air - carbon dioxide, methane and chlorofluorocarbons - are blocking solar heat rays that normally travel back into space. This is causing the global temperature to rise. This will alter the growing season and cause the polar ice caps to melt raising sea levels and flooding low lying areas.

Ozone layer depletion

- Ozone protects life on earth from ultra-violet radiation given off by the sun.
- The ozone layer is gradually being broken down because of the chlorofluorocarbons released by industry every year.
- There is a hole in the ozone layer over the Antarctic.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that a 2.5% reduction in the ozone layer could cause 15,000 human cancers per year as well as extensive damage to crops.

Our Fouled Air

- The three main sources of air pollution are industry, energy production and the automobile.
- In Bhopal where gas was

- released, 3,000 lives were lost and another 200,000 are suffering permanent disabilities.
- The use of chemicals by agribusiness transnationals in the Third World has resulted in 40,000 pesticide poisoning deaths annually.

Acid Rain

- Acid rain is a by-product of the air pollution from exhaust and industrial processing, especially when using coal.
- In Canada 14,000 lakes are dead and 40,000 more are dying.
- Air pollution is threatening Quebec's entire hardwood forest and is likely to have damaged all the maple trees in the country within 6 or 7 years!!! In the province of Quebec 14% of sugar maple trees are dead.
- Acid rain had damaged half of the German forests by 1984, including the famed Black Forest.

Radiation damage

- Fallout continues from nuclear bomb tests that took place in the 1950's and 60's.
- There have been nuclear power reactor accidents at Three Mile Island and in Chernobyl where 29 people died from exposure to high levels of radiation.
- The Swedish Academy of Sciences estimates up to 8,000 European cancers will be caused by Chernobyl.

Sources consulted for this article : *The New Internationalist; Friends of the Earth; Probe International; Pollution Probe; and the Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG).*

- cancer;
- 27 promoted tumors and were pro-cancer;
- 50 caused birth defects;
- 15 caused some mutation.

Garbage in the Ocean

- More and more garbage is being dumped into our oceans, and is washing up on our seashores.
- One of the major sources of protein - the world's fish catch - is beginning to show signs of wear.
- Every year, 1 million seabirds and 100,000 marine animals are killed as a result of ingesting plastic wastes.



What you can do to

by Michelle Albert

Unusual temperatures, intense droughts, abnormal rainfalls and dangerously high levels of pollution have led women across Canada to become increasingly concerned with environmental issues.

All year long we've read accounts in the newspaper of the depletion of the rainforest, encroaching deserts, the contamination of the earth's water bodies - shocking examples are the discovery of syringes and vials washed up on the American east coast, and the destruction of our lakes from acid rain.

The greenhouse effect (the gradual warming effect on the earth because of the build up of carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere) is now being taken more seriously. With the discovery of a hole in the ozone layer over the Antarctic, these issues are reaching an urgent need to be addressed.

In the Toronto region, the quest for a new location for a dump has brought home to many people the consequences of our waste-oriented society. According to the Recycling Council of Ontario, each Ontario resident produces 2.2 lbs of garbage a day! And according to Pollution Probe, the average Canadian household produces one tonne of garbage per year!

The question we've all started to ask ourselves is "how can we stop the destruction of our planet?" It all seems beyond our control and our own efforts minimal, in the face of such a task. Without a doubt, what is really necessary is a global change in attitude towards the environment and a new economic system.

The point of this article, however, is that our own individual efforts do matter and do make a difference. There are many ways in which we, as individuals, on a daily basis, can contribute to stopping the destruction of our environment. The following is just a sample of the many actions that are within our control:

There are ninety-five municipalities across Ontario which have begun a system of recycling using blue boxes. You put the blue box out once a week, alongside your garbage. In it you put old newspapers, corrugated cardboard, glass, tin, 1 and 2 litre size soft drink containers and pop cans and a truck picks it up.

In areas that don't have this system you can usually find recycling depots for glass, tin, batteries and newspapers. The Municipal Department of Public Works can tell you where they're located. Lobby your municipality to use the pick-up recycling system.

Recycling in the Home What you can do...

Remember to:

- Return beer bottles and cans to the beer store.
- Return soft drink bottles that have a deposit.
- Reuse plastic bags instead of acquiring new ones. Take them when you go shopping; ask the store you frequent to use paper bags and always ask for a paper bag.
- Use plastic milk bags are sturdy and can be used for freezing goods or just storing food in the fridge. Better yet, cut down on these bags altogether and buy your milk at Beckers or Mac's Milk in returnable milk jugs.
- Take old egg cartons to a health food store or local grocery store.
- Reuse yogurt and dairy containers.

Old cars, appliances, copper from car radios, lead from batteries, stainless steel from kitchen sinks, zinc from carburetors and gold and silver from computers can also be recycled but need special attention. Contact your city government and find out where scrap metal is recycled.

Separate hazardous wastes (anything corrosive, flammable, reactive or toxic)



Using folk songs and foot marches as tactics, the Chipko Tree movement has protected forested lands throughout India.

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY/CULTURAL SURVIVAL QUARTERLY

should be taken to household hazardous waste depots. These include paint, turpentine, and batteries. For the location in your area, contact the Public Works Department in your municipality.

Baby Diapers

A lot has been written lately about the invasion of disposable diapers in the garbage dumps across Canada. The average baby uses 3,500 disposable diapers a year. Every year these account for about 200,000 tonnes of Canada's garbage, not to mention that they can take as long as 500 years to decompose. They are hazardous because the human waste mixes with other harmful substances at landfill sites to create a dangerous mess and when burned, the plastic emits toxic gasses.

The answer? Cloth diapers. Although they are not as convenient one need only think of the long term implications to realize that its worth switching. You can either buy cloth diapers through baby stores or magazines or you can join a cloth diaper service. Cloth diaper services usually cost between \$14-\$15 as opposed to up to \$23 per week for disposables. They provide you with a clean diaper and pick up the dirty one. You don't even have to wash them!

Also, avoid plastic tampon applicators (such as Playtex) and use biodegradable ones instead (such as Tampax and o.b.). It is also important to use cotton sanitary pads, instead of plastic covered ones.

Two garbage cans in each household: a wet and a dry

Cut back on organic waste by making a compost - 30% of our residential waste stream is made up of organic waste (food, leaves, grass clippings and sewage). In your compost you can put: vegetable and fruit peelings, coffee grounds, tea leaves, egg shells, leaves and grass clippings. Use your compost for fertilizer for your garden.

At your Office

Your office can collect fine paper, (includes computer print out, tab cards, letterhead, reports, white envelopes, note paper, etc.) for recycling; and a waste paper dealer will pick it up. The Ministry of the Environment will provide assistance in setting up a system for your office. They also have a publication available called "Guide for Implementing an Office Waste Paper Recovery Project."

Recycling paper not only cuts down on garbage but saves trees, and in the process creates less pollution and new jobs in the labour intensive recycling industry.

Shopping in an environmentally responsible way

Not only do we need to recycle, but more importantly, we need to shop in an environmentally conscious way and avoid overpackaging. Here are some hints:

- Buy unpackaged or the least packaged goods.
- Don't buy food items unless they come in recycled or recyclable packaging.
- Avoid throwaways like lighters, razors and non-recyclable products like styro-foam cups, mixed material packaging and legs panty-hose containers.
- The bigger the package the better. Avoid single sized servings (see how you can use the package after).
- Buy food "loose" at the market, at bulk stores, and from bulk bins at health food stores.

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World Wildlife Fund thanks this newspaper for running this ad as a public service.

save the Earth



Getting off the topic of packaging, recycling, and garbage there are many other ways we can work towards preserving the earth.

Don't use aerosol spray cans - they contain CFC's (chlorofluorocarbons) which destroy the ozone layer (which protects us from ultraviolet radiation and skin cancer). In 1980 the federal government banned aerosol spray cans for hair sprays, anti-perspirants and deodorants but they're still used for car and home repair. CFC's are also used in the polystyrene meat trays many grocery stores pack meat, on styrofoam egg carton and some fast food containers, cushions, building insulation, refrigeration and air conditioning units as well as cleaning solvents and coolants.

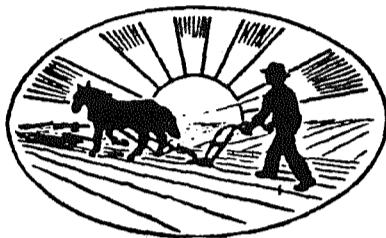
In general, solvents such as paint, spot and nail polish remover, drain, toilet and oven cleaners and disinfectants should all be avoided because they have water-polluting chemicals. As Vanessa Alexander of Pollution Probe said "Limit the stuff you use that you wouldn't want to drink, because that's what you do when you dump this stuff down the sewer. You essentially put it in the water that you will eventually drink."

The Body Shop, which has 50 stores across Canada, sells biodegradable soaps and cosmetics and all its containers are returnable. Last summer they had an Ozone Awareness Campaign whereby they sold t-shirts and the profits went to Friends of the Earth - an environmental organization based in Ottawa. They are now selling calendars for the new year made of 100% recycled paper and, again, the proceeds will go to Friends of the Earth.

Other things you can do

- Buy organically grown food or ask for it to be carried at the supermarket. This lets them know that you don't want to eat food grown with chemicals.
- Grow your own garden and use organic fertilizers.

- If you live in an apartment building contact your municipality who may provide community plots.
- Cut down on the use of fossil fuels - you will reduce air pollution and acid rain and help slow down the greenhouse effect. Walk, bike, or take public transit. If you must use a car use unleaded gas and start up a car pool. Cut down on fuel for heating your house by making your house energy



efficient, i.e., seal air passages by caulking and weather stripping windows.

- Repair broken toys, furniture and appliances instead of throwing them out.
- Take old clothes, books, furniture and appliances to Goodwill, Salvation Army, etc.
- If you live in an apartment building contact your municipality who may provide community garden plots.
- If you have property in the city plant a tree each year.
- If you live in the country and you are not using your farmland, contact the Department of Forestry and they will reforest your unused land.

Working Together for change

Turning the environmental crisis around is going to be a big job and we can't do it alone. Consider working with other groups or doing other actions:

- Write to companies and tell them that you want their products in returnable, recyclable packaging. Tell them you're not buying their items if it isn't in recyclable products.
- Write to the Minister of the Environment and ask for an immediate ban on aerosol cans and styrofoam food containers

which contain CFC's. Press for labelling of all CFC products, government regulations on manufacturing practices and restrictions on the import of CFC products.

- Telephone your Members of Parliament and tell them your position on environmental issues. Make sure they represent you in the House of Commons.

Michelle Albert is a Toronto based feminist who has recently returned from a year in Central America.

Home Remedies from Pollution Probe

All Purpose Cleaner

- 1/2 cup ammonia
- 1/2 cup white vinegar
- 1/4 cup baking soda
- 1/2 gallon water

Window and Glass Cleaner: Wash with soap and water, rinse with vinegar and water.

Furniture Polish: Mix one teaspoon lemon oil into one pint mineral oil. Apply with rag. For quick polishing jobs, use plain mineral oil on a damp cloth.

Chrome Appliance Polish: Use a soft cloth with rubbing alcohol, a little ammonia and hot water, or dry baking soda

and a dry cloth.

Air Fresheners: Odours from fish and cabbage can be displaced by putting a dish of hot vinegar on top of your stove. Use baking soda in the fridge and garbage can.

Starch: Mix cornstarch with water and sprinkle on clothes before ironing.

And remember, static buildup in your dryer is due to lack of humidity. Dry your clothes until they are just damp/dry. If you're too late, simply insert a wet towel for a few minutes, and remove your static-free clothes.

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The issues Election '88 forgot

Why should we trust you now?

by Susan De Rosa

With the recent election, the Mulroney government's U.S.-Canada trade deal is a reality and women in Canada are still asking why the government has provided so little information on an issue which will so profoundly affect us.

"The free trade issue was clearly a critical one for women in this election," said Toronto feminist Darlene Lawson, "but it was very difficult for voters to make informed decisions. I found it remarkable that for the million of dollars that the government spent to sell free trade we had so little information. The arguments of the politicians appealed to emotions, desire, pride, fear and guilt; they did not foster knowledge. Meanwhile other important issues affecting women were not effectively addressed."

Women Cabinet Ministers Betrayed

Lise Corbeil-Vincent of the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association agreed that while the candidates talked about the issues, very little actual information was provided. For instance, neither John Turner nor Brian Mulroney addressed the inconsistencies of their own positions on day care. Although John Turner called the need for over a million and a half day care spaces "the prominent social crisis of our time," and spoke of day care in terms of "opening up employment and income opportunities," his party suggested creating only 400,000 spaces over seven years. Contrast that to the reality of the need for daycare in Quebec alone: 60,000 additional spaces will soon be provided and still they will be 15% short of the need for spaces immediately. What is frightening is that the Liberals' 400,000 spaces are double the number the Conservatives propose.

"The leaders' debate," commented Corbeil-Vincent, "was a non-debate. The only interesting point was when the Prime Minister said that he hadn't listened to the advocacy groups but instead had consulted the female ministers in his cabinet. That was a slap in the face to those cabinet ministers, considering the day care plan that came. Barbara McDougall, for one, had fought for a more progressive programme.

"In 1984, the Conservatives promised to hold a parliamentary committee, and they did, as well as public hearings. But they didn't listen to what the people had to say, and we're angry because they didn't listen to the advocacy groups. The surprise was that Mulroney admitted it."

Too Many Rambos in the House

One of the greatest threats to women's rights in the past year has been the collaboration of the three party leaders in the call for a free vote on abortion by members of parliament.

Earlier this year, when MP Gus Mitges' anti-choice proposal was before the House, and after Minister Don Mazankowski and then Fitness Minister Otto Jelinek voted in favour of it, Jelinek decided to have some fun. Rumour is that he took a picture of Rambo, put a picture of Mazankowski's face on top of Rambo's body, placed the picture in a frame, which he deposited in a brown envelope, writing "Maz" on it (some witnesses say it said "way to go, Maz"). Jelinek then called a page to collect and deliver the envelope to "Maz." When Mazankowski received it, he put the envelope underneath his desk, looked at it, and grinned back to Jelinek.

During the leaders' debate, the Prime Minister, who had not been present for the abortion vote, defined abortion as "a sensitive, difficult, and moral issue that has a special connotation for women and for families," and that he sought "a compromise that respects the rights of women and the rights of the foetus."

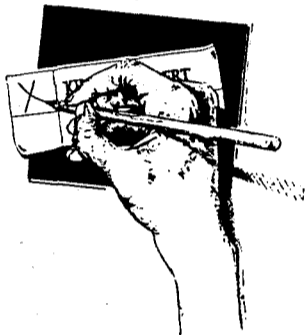
The Executive Director of the Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada, Sharon Coleman, responded with disbelief that the decision of abortion be placed in the hands of Canada's MP's.

"These are gentlemen in whom we are to have confidence, who the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition believe have the sole right of conscience in the matter of abortion. This was the Deputy Prime Minister and a cabinet minister voting on the

reproductive future of the women in this country.

Coleman, who was active in lobby work on choice this past spring and summer, was totally taken aback by the misinformation that some of the MP's had.

"And they think that they can convince the women of Canada that they should have the right to make decisions about women's bodies and women's health on women's behalf," said Coleman. Coleman pointed out, however, that the female MPs were "very well-informed about the Canada Health Act and the differences in access to services throughout the country."



During the leaders' debate, panellist Doug Small asked:

"This law, when it comes, will be decided by a free vote by the Members of Parliament. (most of them men), Why won't you let women follow the same set of rules and decide the issue of abortion by following their consciences?" The question went unanswered.

"Why," asked Coleman, "would the women of Canada trust anybody who cannot answer a straightforward question?"

Unfortunately, many of the journalists at the studio covering the leaders' debate did not hear Small's question because when the women's issues came up, political public relations men ("spin doctors") entered the studio, distracting

attention from our issues with the intent of influencing the media's treatment of the debate. The result was that the next day's coverage of women's issues was often relegated to a mere paragraph or two. Journalists focussed on performance rather than substance - understandable, though, when so little substance was offered.

One influential journalist wrote paragraph after paragraph about the party leaders' emotional outbursts, but claimed that the debate on women's issues failed to "ignite the sparks evident in the free trade and patronage exchanges."

At least the politicians have learned to contain their laughter about the battering of women. During the leaders' debate, Turner went so far as to recognize that women are the victims of male violence, something most social service agencies, as well as the courts, have yet failed to address.

Pat Marshall, with the Ad Hoc Committee of Women on the Constitution (Ontario), underlined the fact that women, including survivors of male violence, do not receive equal benefit and protection of the law.

"After the leaders' debate, I was feeling terribly disenfranchised," said Marshall. "Their priorities and their actions are so out of step with women's needs."

"The constitutional process is a political priority for any equality seeker. The equality provisions in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms," said Marshall, "were so hard fought for and are so necessary. Yet with the stroke of the pen of eleven able-bodied men, these provisions were put at risk. When we raise objections to the wording of the Meech Lake

Accord, we are dismissed as being anti-Québec."

Ed Broadbent's consultations with the Fédération des femmes du Québec and his reliance on their support for the Meech Lake Accord does not address the grave concerns most other women's and native peoples' groups have about the Accord. Because there is no opposition to Meech Lake in the House of Commons, women, immigrants, disabled and native people have been left without representation.

Credit to NAC

In 1984 the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) sponsored the first live broadcast leaders' debate on women's issues in the world. Media coverage of women's issues has not been the same since: the 1984 NAC debate deserves credit for making women's perspectives and women's issues an essential part of news coverage. In 1988, the networks and parties in their negotiations over the debate, have seen women's issues as an integral part of society.

The 1988 debate probably educated more people as to the nature of politics with its unpredictable performances and staged concerns for our welfare.

With free trade now becoming a reality, it is more than ever our responsibility to become informed on this issue and to continue to exert pressure on government to ensure that amendments are brought forth to the trade deal as well as to the Meech Lake Accord. The closing question of the 1984 leaders' debate is still relevant today: "Why should we trust you now?"

Susan De Rosa, is with the Canadian Feminist Periodicals.

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The issues Election '88 forgot

Farm women forgotten again

In 1982 the National Farmers Union produced a landmark study entitled **Employment Practices of Farm Women**, which documented the contributions made by farm women and their families to food production in Canada. They concluded that women's labour, largely unpaid, represented a huge subsidy to food consumed and exported.

It would seem that by now someone would have picked up on this injustice and at least have formulated a policy proposal for some form of remuneration or, at the very least, recognition of farm women.

Farm women haven't been able to organize a successful

lobby for a myriad of reasons, not the least of which is plain busy-ness. Most farm women have off-farm jobs, families to care for, farm chores to do and volunteer work which is essential to keeping their communities going.

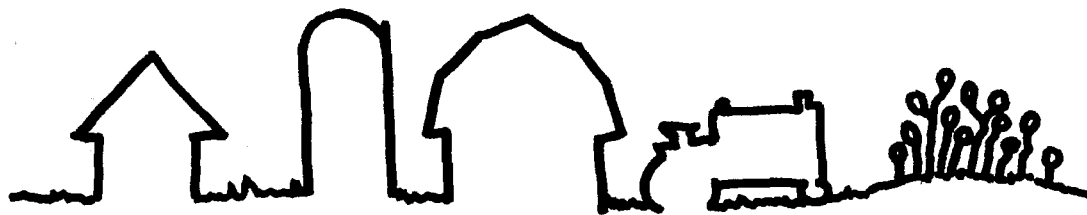
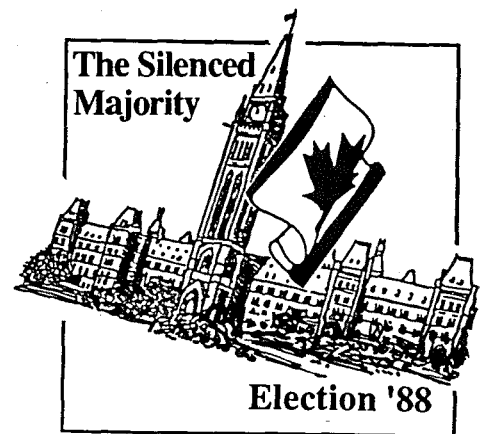
Not one of the mainstream parties has even attempted to address issues related directly to rural women. Her contribution to the Gross National Product should be measured and a plan drafted to pay her since in most cases her spouse isn't able or willing to pay her.

One of the main concerns of farm women is the loss of farm families...our neighbours and our community.

Communities are disappearing at an alarming rate. In our small community three families have left their farming operations since spring seeding and many more are under threat of being forced out. With no young farmers, no young daughters and sons, who will replace the farmers?

Farm women with young families are still waiting for affordable flexible child care. Before the election campaign a small group of young mothers in this community tried to access the federal fund which provides money to start a day care, but they were told they needed 50 full-time kids before anything could be done. This stipulation would be impossible

by Elaine Driver



List of Tory Promises: Lest they Forget

Now that the election is won (and some would say the country is lost), women should be vigilant of this Tory majority government and the promises Prime Minister Brian Mulroney has made to Canadians.

The following is a list of issues (besides free trade) that were discussed in the weeks leading up to the campaign. We've only listed the Conservative promises (or "spending commitments"). It is up to us, as the electorate to monitor how well Mulroney lives up to the issues, and to let him know when we are displeased with his government.

For those important issues which the Tory government has not taken a stand on, it is even more necessary to let Mulroney know that he and his Ministers must make decisions that will not harm women (particularly with regards to the abortion debate).

Abortion: No stand. The Prime Minister has promised that he will allow a free vote in the House of Commons.

Agriculture: \$400 million in new equity for Farm Credit Corporation; \$153 million for Prairie drought relief; \$88 million for B.C. and Ontario grape growers.

Child Care: Subsidy of \$4 billion to provinces to create 200,000 day care spaces over seven years. Another \$110 million for research.

Constitution: Believe the "notwithstanding" clause, which allows provinces to override Charter of Rights for specific purposes, is "essential to the balance of the Confederation." (Secretary of State Lucien Bouchard).

Culture: \$200 million for Canadian film industry over five years.

Environment: \$110 million to clean up St. Lawrence River; \$125 million for a Great Lakes cleanup. All federal projects to be subject to environmental impact assessments. Acid rain treaty with U.S. (as promised in 1984); \$10 million for community cleanup.

Energy: \$4.5 billion for OSLO oil sands in Alberta, natural gas pipeline to Vancouver Island, heavy oil upgrader plant at Lloydminster, and Hibernia oil field development.

External Affairs: Allow cruise missile testing. Encourage private industry to take part in "Star Wars." Break relations with South Africa if apartheid worsens.

Health: \$129 million over five years for AIDS research.

Housing: Help for prospective home buyers who would be hurt by a national sales tax on goods and services.

Regional Development: \$515 million for Quebec economic development over five years, including \$100 million for Montreal Port redevelopment. Extension of Quebec Autoroute 30 for \$250 million. \$93 million microbiology lab and \$52 million agricultural lab for Winnipeg. \$600 million in government contracts for Western Canada over four years. Compensation of \$800 million over 15 years to Newfoundland for railway closing.

Senior Citizens: Improve social benefits to elderly.

Taxation: Second stage of tax reform: replace current federal sales tax on limited number of manufactured goods and some services with national tax on virtually all goods and services except food on value-added at each stage of production.

for most prairie communities to meet.

The lack of numbers is affecting our schools, hospitals and libraries. Volunteers have to fundraise to support institutions formerly government funded, because our communities have become just too small.

Further moves are being made to rationalize and privatize the postal system in rural communities. For some of us the post office is pivotal to the functioning of our community.

80% of rural postmasters are women (those off-farm jobs) and many farm women carry on cottage industries that depend on a complete postal service to operate. There have been a few references to the rural postal service by the NDP and Liberal but not specifically focussed on the impact it will have on women.

It was a fascinating election completely focussed

on Free Trade which will have serious effects on agriculture commodities; yet does the public really understand the real consequences for farms in Canada? Rural women often carry on the hog, poultry and dairy operations and they will be out of business as the cheaper U.S. product is allowed to flood our market.

So again another campaign with little mention of the issues which will affect rural women.

Forgotten again.

The three main political parties continue to offer stop-gap bandaid measures but no vision for what Canadian agriculture could and should be.

Elaine Driver is the past Women's President of the National Farmer's Union. She is presently a farming partner in Fillmore, Saskatchewan.

Thank you, Ruth

Ruth Wildgen was one of the members of Ottawa City Council who lost her seat in this election. She was:

- a member of the SARC Board since 1986;
- was on the Ad Hoc Committee on Beach Pollution and the Green Creek Steering Committee;
- worked with residents around Britannia Park and will continue to do so;
- worked closely with public housing tenants, the legal clinics in the neighbourhood and the citizens.

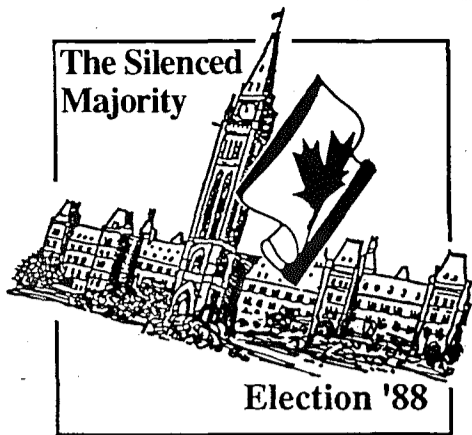
Ruth Wildgen was not only an alderperson but a friend to a lot of the people in this area.

She is well-respected by the people of Britannia and by her peers at City Hall.

She was a full-time alderperson - devoted to her job.

Thank you, Ruth

- Ottawa Council for Low Income Support Services
- Michelle Heights Tenants Association
- West End Chaplaincy
- The Womanist
- Pinecrest-Queensway Community Centre
- West End Legal Clinic



The issues Election '88 forgot

Refugee women at risk

by Lynne Tyler

The federal government has launched a new program called "Women at Risk". It is intended to help refugee women who are at special risk to move quickly through the refugee process.

Although still small, it is definitely a step forward, and something that organizations working in the field have wanted for a long time.

Refugee women may be in particular danger, simply because they are women, for many reasons:

- Her husband or father has been killed or kidnapped, or they have been separated for some reason (war, natural disaster, etc.).
- She is in an unfamiliar country and an unfamiliar culture.
- She probably has children with her, and is alone in caring for them.
- The refugee camp itself is an unknown environment, even if there are others from her own community or culture.
- A woman who has given up certain religious practices in order to survive in her refugee situation may suffer at the hands of her own male-dominated society within the refugee community.
- She may be subjected to sexual harassment or assault by border guards, camp officials, or others.
- She may even be assaulted by men within the refugee community because she has no adult male with her.

Refugee organizations, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and even officials within the federal government itself, have long felt that our refugee process was unfair towards women.

Many deserving female heads of family were not accepted into Canada, because our screening process did not take into account the specific situation of women. Women were rejected because their eligibility depended on a male head of household who was absent, or because officials doubted the women's ability to settle easily in Canada, hampered by children, poor English/French, or inadequate job skills.

The new program encourages officials to take into account the special dangers women refugees face, and to speed up the screening process for those women at risk. It also teaches officials that sometimes eligibility criteria are experienced differently by women and men.

A sliding scale has been introduced as part of the program. The greater the risk the woman faces, the lower the threshold which she should have to meet, in terms of her successful settlement in Canada, in order to be accepted.

Also, it has been pointed out that the fact that there are few women visa officers will hamper this new program. Men would be less likely to have the training or the insight to truly understand the risks women face.

The main countries from which women enter Canada as "heads of household" are Poland, Vietnam, El Salvador, Kampuchea, Ethiopia and Iran.

recommended adoption, and the law was passed.

What were the major concerns with these laws?

The new procedure provides for the exclusion of many people without even a hearing on their claim. Non-governmental organizations working in this field believe that all claimants should have

cooked up to prevent the person from getting refugee status.

• People would also be refused if they enter Canada from a country that our federal government considers a "safe country" that they can be returned to without putting them in danger. Unfortunately, this policy does not recognize the fact that several of these so-called "safe countries",

have the right pieces of paper. Fines and prison sentences range as high as \$500,000 and 10 years.

The critics emphasize they are not advocating an "open door" policy for everyone who arrives on our doorstep. They simply want a fair procedure that will protect genuine refugees and discourage abusers.

These groups have done



Court challenge

The members of the Canadian Council of Churches have decided to test the constitutionality of the new refugee laws in court. Bills C-55 and C-84 were given royal assent in July of this year, despite active opposition.

Women's groups, refugee organizations, churches, community groups and concerned citizens across the country have voiced their opposition to the unfair restrictions in the legislation.

The Senate Committee which held public hearings on the legislation heard many concerns. The Committee's report repeatedly stated concerns that "the security of the person" guaranteed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was probably violated by several sections of the Bills. However, the Senate

universal access to a hearing on the merits of their claim with no pre-screening.

• Under the new law, people would be refused if they fail to say "yes" the first time an official adjudicator asks them if they want to apply for refugee status. This is very likely to exclude genuine refugees, because they may not have adequate translation, they may be afraid of government officials, they may not understand the question, or may not realize it is their last chance to say "yes".

• People would also be excluded if they were considered "security risks". As unbelievable as it may seem, our Canadian government sometimes makes this decision using information from the very government which is persecuting the person in the first place. Frequently, the information provided by the persecuting government is completely false, and is

although they would not harm the refugee directly, would send her/him back to the country where her/his life would be in danger. Consequently, we would be helping return them to their death.

• Virtually every concerned group has insisted that meaningful appeal rights are essential where a wrong decision at the first level could result in loss of life. The new law does not allow this type of appeal.

• The law now says it is a criminal act to help someone into Canada who does not have a valid passport or travel documents. However, it is a well known and internationally recognized fact that many genuine refugees do not have the proper documents in their possession, often because of the way in which they had to flee their country. So, many refugee workers could become criminals under the law, simply by helping refugees who do not

more than criticize the new law. They have made practical suggestions for improvement. There are simple alternatives, well known, which would achieve fairness and efficiency without needlessly putting people's lives at risk.

The churches say they have decided to test the new law in court mostly because of their "social justice commitment to stand with the oppressed and persecuted." In addition, they wish to speak for those who have been summarily removed from this country and are unable to speak for themselves or use the due process of the legal system.

The case will concentrate on those areas of the law that have life-threatening implications for refugees. The churches believe they have a good chance of succeeding.

(Based on information from the Working Group on Refugee Women, and the Anglican Church of Canada.)

Anti-abortionists claim victories

The Campaign Life Coalition is claiming that they are partially responsible for the defeat of Maureen McTeer and Ray Hnatyshyn, two high profile Conservatives who did not win in their bid for Parliament.

"We targeted McTeer more than anybody else. She deserved it. As a result she went down to defeat. It was an act of God, a sign of God going after her," said Gerald Liston, a

worker for Campaign Life.

An interesting aftermath of the election stated by James Hughes, an anti-abortionist, "After the last federal election we had 50 pro-life candidates in Parliament. Today, we have at least 74."

This was the first election in which the coalition kept track of every speech or public comment MPs made on abortion.

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The issues Election '88 forgot

Violence against women

by Megan Ellis

Battered women got a mention in the English televised leaders' debate. The Prime Minister defended his failure to meet his promises of more transition house services, arguing that the Tories had recently earmarked \$22.2 million for increasing the number of beds available to battered women and their children. He neglected to mention that he had cut funding for the Clearinghouse on Family Violence or that his belated programme for battered women amounted to less than \$10 per battered woman per year.

Instead the Prime Minister did his best to feign empathy, saying that he had recently come to understand the trauma experienced by those women who took their batterers to court.

NDP leader Ed Broadbent failed to take the opportunity to respond with the thoughts that likely came to the minds of the thousands of women who work in women's services. He didn't give voice to our outrage that now, only now, after 10, 15, 20 years Mulroney says he has finally come to realize that women who are raped and battered often feel violated a second time by their experiences in court. He didn't ask Mulroney where he had been all these years.

Instead Broadbent pointed out that the funding was inadequate, that the Tory government's programmes for women were criticized by the very groups who had called for the programmes in the first place. On the question about the adequacy of the child care legislation: "Advocacy groups?" Mulroney replied, "Why should I listen to advocacy groups?" Exactly.

And it is clear that Mulroney does not listen to advocacy groups, at least not women's advocacy groups, and certainly not feminist advocacy groups. The day care issue provided the most high-profile example of that. Issues related to violence against women provided perhaps the lowest profile example.

The silence about rape, about child sexual abuse, about sexual harassment, and with the one exception, about wife-battering can at best be interpreted as indifference. At worst, it can be seen as a reaffirmation of political discourse as male territory, of political concerns as the concerns of men.

Given that there must be roughly as many batterers as there are battered women (and more of the former than the latter in the House of Commons), it would not take an expert political analyst to figure out that the issue is not going to net a lot of votes. And, of course, children, sexually abused or not, cannot vote.



However, their abusers can and, according to the Badgley report, they must represent a significant segment of the population of male voters. On the other hand, women who have been raped probably outnumber rapists.

Lest this be taken as an overly cynical view, it must be conceded that the Conservatives were responsible for

the belated revisions to the Criminal Code to protect children from sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. However, all these parties supported these measures; they were left over on the agenda from the Liberal regime. One could argue that they have been left over on legislative agendas for decades.

The government has also

been busy monitoring the 1983 amendments to the law of sexual assault. Preliminary reports suggest that these amendments, touted as a "great step forward for women" have not resulted in any significant improvements for victims of rape. We note that the final report, now overdue, was not released prior to the election. Funding for programmes to assist sexually abused children is almost non-existent, and adult survivors of child abuse continue to be ignored. The generic, gender-neutral victims' services programs, staffed primarily by volunteers, and usually annexed to police detachments, is the only beneficiary of significant financial support from the federal government.

The only initiatives of this government on issues connected to violence against women were the increased harassment of prostitutes resulting from the amendment to the law of soliciting, and the failed attempt to codify the problem of pornography. The porn bill (C-54), a crude effort to confound violence, sex and nudity, was denounced not only by civil libertarians, but also by most feminists; its bewildered proponents allowed it to die on the order paper.

This sorry record was not targetted by the opposition parties as a vulnerable point in the government's record. Presumably the male leaders realize they have much in common when it comes to vulnerable points. The slap-happy John Turner can hardly be expected to come out with a strong statement on sexual harassment. The NDP must be credited for its "fact sheet" on violence against women, though its promise to establish programs for victims of "family violence" contrasts with its repeated appeals to "average Canadian families."

But maybe Broadbent was wrong when he resisted dealing with the question of defence during the women's part of the English debate. If we were to take only 1/2 of the multi-billion dollar submarine budget, and allocate that to self-defence programmes for women and girls, we would perhaps succeed in dealing with the real threat of violence to the females of this country - and it doesn't come from the Russians.

Megan Ellis is a lawyer living in Vancouver and a long time feminist activist in the area of violence against women.



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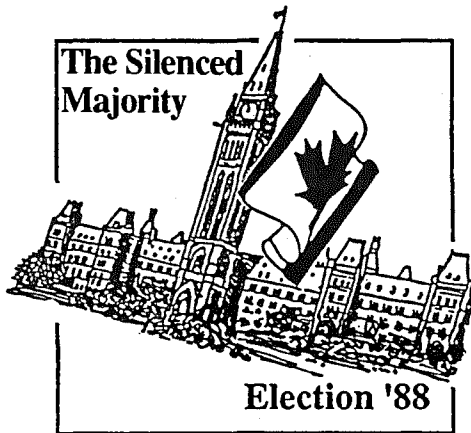
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by Leslie Stern

The issues Election '88 forgot

Is housing a right?

In 1987 the United Nations declared "International Year of Shelter for the Homeless." For women in British Columbia the housing situation has not improved. More and more evidence points to an overwhelming, unmet need among women for safe, secure, adequate and affordable housing. Social housing lags far behind need and affordable housing in the marketplace is rapidly diminishing, especially in the major Canadian cities like Vancouver and Toronto.

legal systems were originally set in place without considering the needs of women and still tend to favour the "traditional" family and/or men.

Women are unpaid or underpaid. The value of women's work both in and out of the home needs to be recognized. Having children forces women to take time out from their careers and often changes their priorities. The cost of raising children is not recognized in the funds women receive.



Illustration: Kimberley Whitchurch-Dal Gazer

What does this mean for women?

Women are disadvantaged in housing for many reasons, each of them compounded by the fact that poverty is a real part of women's lives. Women are 4 to 5 times more likely than men to be poor. The result is that they do not have access to decent affordable housing.

A woman's place in British Columbia

Today, 4 out of 10 marriages end in divorce. It is said that within one year of separation, a woman's household income drops by 70%, while a man's increases by 43%.

Between 1971 and 1981, the number of women living alone in B.C. doubled and by 1985, there were almost 200,000 women living alone. Close to half of the women live below the poverty line. In 1985 in B.C. there were over 65,000 single mother families (an increase of almost one-quarter since 1980). Over half of these are low income families. In March 1986, there were 35,000 single parents on welfare.

Women are 42% of the labour force and 72% of the part-time labour force. Average income for full-time employment is 64% of men's average. Part-time work is traditionally low paying with little opportunity for advancement.

According to the last census of Vancouver, men averaged \$25,440 per year in 1985. The average income for employed women was \$14,161. Part-time workers averaged \$754 per month, full time workers averaged \$1,795 per month. 71% of women in Vancouver earned less than \$20,000 and over half earned less than \$15,000.

Attitudes

Girls today still expect to be taken care of and are not taught to take responsibility for themselves. These expectations are promoted by the media and by the way our society raises children.

Although there has been progress, our financial and

Affordability

The cost of housing in Vancouver is soaring beyond women's ability to pay for it. CMHC Housing Statistics for April 1988 indicate these average rents:

1 Bedroom: B.C.	\$424
Vancouver	\$464
2 Bedroom: B.C.	\$517
Vancouver	\$611
3 Bedroom: B.C.	\$577
Vancouver	\$713

Contrast that to welfare payments:

For family of 2: Shelter	\$412
Total	\$732
For family of 3: Shelter	\$486
Total	\$871

care (\$150 to \$450 per child per month), the odds are more impossible. How do women pay for food? For many women the only recourse is social housing but the waiting lists are from 5 years.

Welfare rates in B.C. are as much as 50% below poverty level. While talking about strengthening the family, our provincial government has reclassified without review, many single women and mothers on welfare as "employable" and deducted \$50 from their monthly cheques as "incentive" to work. (Effective Nov. 1, 1988)

As well, welfare penalizes a person for trying to earn money beyond their rent. Additional earnings above \$100 per month are deductible from the monthly total, making it

The number of private rental units completed in Vancouver in 1987 was one-seventieth the number built in 1984. Co-op and non-profit housing starts were down by almost half. On the other hand, the loss of rental units that were converted to condominiums doubled.

According to Vancouver City Data, in January, 1988 there were 17,268 people on waiting lists for affordable housing. In May of 1988, there was a vacancy rate of 1.9% for any rental accommodation, affordable or not. Those who are single and over 55, those who are disabled, those who have children, can put their names on a waiting list with B.C. Housing Management corporation and wait 1 to 3 years to be offered housing. Those who do not fall into these categories cannot even get on the list. Where are people going?

The Downtown Eastside

According to Pam Cooly of the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, there are not a lot of places to go. Many seem to find their way to this highly condensed urban area which houses over 8,000 people within half a square mile, right in the middle of two new major high density city developments. Most live in seedy hotels and rooming houses where they have no tenants' rights and are subject to eviction at a moment's notice for no reason at all. The area has been trying for more than ten years to establish rights for these residents, so far, to no avail.

Rents tend to equal exactly the housing portion of welfare rates, so that any increases immediately find their way to the landlords' pockets. There are no women's emergency shelters that have no criteria, and one will often find women sleeping outside, in any weather, rather than face or conform to organizational bureaucracy. Outside this particular area, other options include so-called "illegal" suites which may be affordable, but could be subject to closure, pending city decisions on this issue.



According to the Vancouver Sun, the cost of buying a home in Vancouver has increased by 20% in the last year, with the average house now priced at \$160,000. Assuming a woman had access to the 25% downpayment of \$40,000 (!?), she would be hard pressed to come up with the monthly payment of \$1217 which the 11 3/4% mortgage would require. And the mortgage rates are going up!

Few women in Vancouver can afford the average rent or mortgage payments. Fewer still exist within the confines at less than 30% on income. When we add the cost of child

difficult to supplement income with part-time work. Singles on welfare receive a total of \$430 per month for both food and shelter.

Availability

Most women rent their homes, while most men are homeowners. While women form the largest group in rental, public, non-profit and cooperative housing, these forms of accommodation are rapidly disappearing. Zoning, increased property value, increased costs and the quick return on condominiums work against building affordable rental accommodation.

Actions

Women have been involved in the cooperative movement in B.C. throughout its history. In the 80's, we see an emergence of housing in the non-profit sector developed specifically by and from women. Examples in the Vancouver area are Sitka Housing Co-op, Entre Nous Femmes Housing Society and Mavis/McMullen Housing Society. Each of these groups has used government programs to address their particular needs. Each has different design, program and tenant considerations. Though these programs go a long way toward meeting women's needs, there are not enough units and there is no where else to go.

And where do you live, Mr. Minister?

"The homeless have shelter in Canada. They can always get off the street and find a warm place to sleep and be taken care of on a temporary basis."

John McDermid, Federal Housing Minister

In May 1988 a Woman and Housing forum was held in Vancouver which identified the housing needs of the following groups of women: single mothers, Native women, mature women, senior women and disabled women. It must be noted that mature women (aged 45 to 65) seem to fall through the gaps of our social safety nets and that the needs of immigrant and young women have yet to be addressed.

An outcome of the forum was the formation of the B.C. Women's Housing Coalition, including both women in need of housing and interested housing professionals. The coalition is committed to networking with women's groups, promoting women's concerns and exploring a range of housing needs from emergency shelter to home ownership for women.

The B.C. Women's Housing Coalition believes that safe, secure, adequate, affordable housing is a universal right and a public responsibility. We are working together to represent the particular needs of women in housing, to see that this housing is obtained and to see that women are involved in the process.

Leslie Stern is a member of the B.C. Women's Housing Coalition and is vice-president of the Entre Nous Femmes Housing Society in Vancouver.

The issues Election '88 forgot

Aboriginal People are forced to be social activists

by Elizabeth J. Thunder

Many people fail to realize that there is a significant number of aboriginal people in Canada, descendants from the original habitants and keepers of the land, which aboriginal people say was given to them by the Great Spirit.

As history has taught us, the number of tribes and nations that occupied this Canadian soil were entities within themselves, thus today, the common name for a band of Native people is First Nation.

Almost 600 First Nations exist in Canada and over half of that population is women and children. A culture that was rich and strong, after colonization, became literally non-existent.

A discovery of this vast land, of course led to the discovery of aboriginal people. From the first contact with foreigners the image of natives has followed a pattern of noble savages and warriors to uneducated peoples to drunken societies and back to social activists; a full circle. What is commonly left out of the history books is settlers tactics of assimilation and the continuous treaty-making and treaty-breaking processes.

Today, the First Nations in Canada struggle for recognition of their special status and insistence that the governments honour commitments to Native people. As a result of this today we have situations like the Lubicon Band in Alberta, the Awkwesasne fight in Ontario, the Innu struggle in Labrador

and other confrontational situations throughout this land.

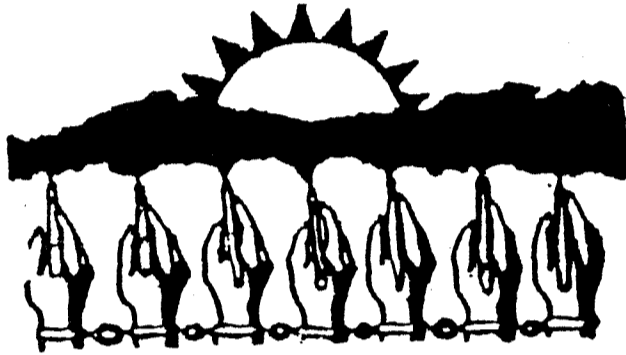
The Lubicon Band in Alberta is presently negotiating for land which was promised to the band in the early 1940's. They have undergone serious social problems within the Band due to neglect and the governments unwillingness to materialize the promises given to the people.

The community of Awkwesasne was raided by

all traffic from crossing.

The Innu in Labrador are protesting NATO activities over their traditional territory. Because of the low-level flight testing and other NATO practices, the Innu lifestyle is being threatened.

The Innu oppose these activities and were never consulted by the government before giving NATO permission to carry out these military activities. The results of the activities have been



over 250 officials this past fall in conjunction with border-crossing rights. The Awkwesasne community lies in Quebec, Ontario and the United States. The Awkwesasne leadership say that the Jay Treaty, which allowed Native people to trade freely across the Canadian/American border is being violated and unrecognized by the Canadian government. The American government has recognized the treaty.

To protest this violation of their rights women staged a peaceful protest on the Canadian/US border, blocking

horrendous.

Within the first year of the establishment of the base 13 single women, between the ages of 16 and 26, had babies to military men and were left alone to raise the child without support.

The low level flying of aircraft and the radiation from the radar tracking devices has resulted in a wide range of health problems in Innu women including: increased miscarriages, and chromosome breakdowns resulting in birth defects.

Generally, aboriginal people are a peaceful and

proud society whose ties lie deep within the beliefs they have carried through centuries. If it wasn't for these beliefs, the aboriginal people would have been beaten and terminated through assimilation with the general population.

All cultures have a distinct lifestyle and if the culture of the Indian people died in Canada, there is no other place in this universe where that culture could be revived. That alone, is the reason that we often hear of serious confrontations between First Nations and the Canadian governments.

Native women have become as much social activists as the men have. Although the number of women Chiefs is extremely low in comparison with the male population, women have been known to "burn the candle" when the going was rough. Native women are increasingly aware of the situations beyond their backdoor and are becoming concerned about the future of generations. This increased awareness has led to an increase in the number of Indian women who are employed in various management and administrative jobs within the First Nations sector.

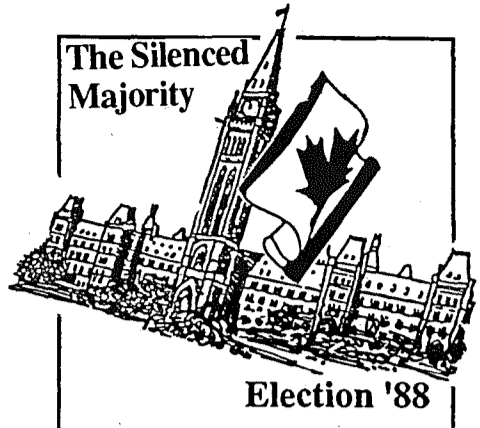
The native culture is a diverse spectrum in Canada and native women in different tribes are also very different in their beliefs and the methods that they use. The family values are quite different and often native families find themselves looking for reasons to encourage and explain to their children the importance of

being Indian and proud. Children are subjected to the pressures of their peers and resort to activities not commonly associated with their families strong cultural ties and beliefs. Native women must juggle these and weigh the benefits of cultural development for their children and at the same time consider the wants and needs of the children who are trying to fit into a society which will often discriminate against them.

However, as a Native woman, myself, employed in a Senior position with the Assembly of First Nations, I will never forget that I had minority status, a bleak future and little hope of ever contributing to the resurgence of my culture. Today, I am in the position to continue to fight for the future of my children and their children, until aboriginal people in this country are dealt justice by the Canadian government.

It is the hope of the First Nations in Canada that support will come from the general public to assist in the settling of these and many more outstanding issues. Through public support, the Canadian government will listen to the aboriginal peoples' concerns and therefore provide a better future for the generations of First Nations children yet unborn.

Elizabeth Thunder is from the Chippewa Pottawatomi Nation. She is Director of Parliamentary and First Nations Liaison for the Assembly of First Nations.



CBC refuses NAC public service announcement on women voting during the election

You may have noticed during the recent federal election campaign that some private TV and radio stations were airing a public service announcement produced by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC). You may also have noticed that this same PSA, which encouraged women to get out and vote, was not aired on CBC.

There's a good reason for this glaring omission: CBC blatantly refused to air the 30-second PSA, stating that "messages from groups or organizations which directly or indirectly advocate a point of view on an election issue are unacceptable. During the current federal general election campaign, only messages from registered political parties are accepted for broadcast on CBC facilities."

NAC President Lynn Kay responded: "The PSA from our

Charitable and Educational Trust did not advocate any point of view on the issues, nor did it endorse any political party."

NAC's Trust produced the PSA for radio and television in both official languages as part of NAC's public awareness campaign during the federal election. The campaign and the PSA were based on the theme WOMEN VOTE! The Telecasters Committee of Canada approved the PSA for private broadcasters.

Here is the English version of the PSA:

(Two women sit eating their lunch in a public place; woman #1 is white, and woman #2 is black).

Woman #1: I know women had to fight for the vote, but what's the point? My vote won't change anything.

Woman #2: The point is child care, free trade, reproductive rights, and

violence against women and children. Every vote counts.

Woman #1: Who should I vote for - they all seem the same to me.

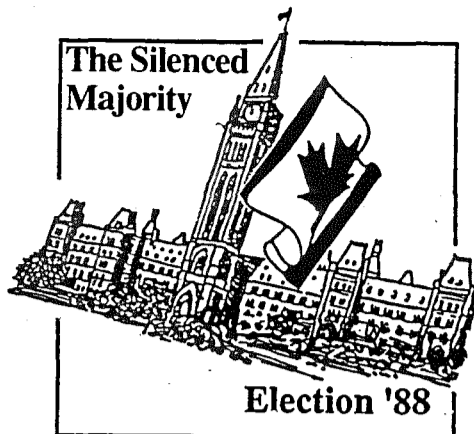
Woman #2: Go to their meetings, and check them out. They want the most important jobs in this country, and this time we're doing the hiring.

(Fade to Black)
Super: Women Vote
Audio: Women Vote
Audio: A Public Service Announcement from the National Action Committee on the Status of Women).

Do you think the CBC was justified in refusing this PSA? If not, you may want to let them know.

By the way, did anyone else notice the biased reporting of Peter Mansbridge on election night? We did. Perhaps Mansbridge's obvious Tory sympathies are another indication of the CBC's political leanings.





The issues Election '88 forgot

The Meech Lake Accord: Constitutional reform for all?

by Catherine Louli

"...a constitution is more than a simple legal document. A constitution is a political institution which mirrors an entire society; it is an outgrowth of that society at a given moment in its historical evolution." A. Dubuc, "The Decline of Confederation and the New Nationalism."

The questions women have raised with regard to the Meech Lake Accord are plentiful. Perhaps one of the main concerns about the new Accord is the fact that the protection of women's rights are not explicit.

The 1982 Constitutional Accord includes the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; the proposed Meech Lake Accord does not. The question many women's groups are asking is: why have certain rights of the Charter, such as Native and multicultural rights, been given special attention in the newly proposed Accord, yet other Rights guaranteed by the Charter are nowhere to be found in the text?

These Rights are fundamental, such as the right to vote, and the right to freedom of speech, as well as

equality rights, including non-discrimination and protection of affirmative action programs for minority groups, of which women are considered one.

Some constitutional experts have argued that the Rights covered under the Charter, yet not included in the Meech Lake Accord are at risk of not being applied. The rationale for this argument is simply that if the Charter is intended to apply, it is clearly stated in the Accord; therefore, those Rights which are not clearly stated in the Accord just might not be justified.

Other groups are equally concerned about the omissions, including people with disabilities, francophones outside Québec, immigrants and aboriginal people.

The crux of the issue is that the Constitution of Canada is not being interpreted in a manner consistent with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Both provincial and federal governments must note that women in Canada are not prepared to risk the constitutional grounds of our equality guarantees.

Any amendments to the constitution are of prime concern to women if they affect

equality rights. Also, federal spending powers, if they are to be amended, are of concern to women. Women are a large percentage of the poor who receive assistance through federal cost-shared programs.

Amendment 106A, regarding federal spending powers, states that the Government of Canada shall provide reasonable compensation to the government of a province that chooses not to participate in a national cost-shared programme that is established by the federal government, if the province carries on a programme or initiative that is compatible with national objectives.

The first question that comes to mind is: what is a national objective, as defined by whom? Secondly, this amendment essentially is an opting-out clause for provincial governments that find a cost-shared programme, the majority of which are social programs, too expensive or inefficient. A provincial government could decide to withdraw their participation in a programme by offering a similar one, and the federal government could disburse some of the financing out of tax

credits from that province.

Some of the programs they are talking about are childcare, health care services, and transition houses for battered women. There is a fundamental flaw in reasoning if the federal government is implementing legislation that is supposed to benefit all citizens of Canada, yet the provinces have the power to routinely check out of these programs and not adhere to these policy directions.

We have already seen evidence of the potential of Meech Lake in the case of Bill Vander Zant, premier of BC, who tried to use his provincial authority to outlaw abortions in hospitals. The Supreme Court had to direct him to follow national direction. Is this to happen with every province, on a wide range of services?

One of the problems lies in the ambiguity of the words "compatible with national objectives". The National Action Committee on the Status of Women states in its brief to the Submissions Group on the Meech Lake Accord of the Senate that "the lack of specific definitions will weaken further the ability of the federal government to initiate progressive and needed social

policies." Many women's groups are concerned that national social programs may suffer in terms of quality and universality.

There are many other concerns that women's groups in Canada have raised, not the least being the democratic process of public input on the proposed constitutional amendments found in the Meech Lake Accord. Manitoba and New Brunswick are the only two provinces that have still not ratified this Accord. Women in Canada must continue to express their dissatisfaction with the proposed amendments.

As all three political parties have endorsed the Meech Lake Accord, many women and others who oppose it are confronted with a somewhat unique problem in a democratic country: there is no representation for our viewpoint in the House of Commons. This is going to be a special challenge in lobbying for changes we want to see.

Catherine Louli is working with the Canadian Federation of Students, and active in the students' movement.



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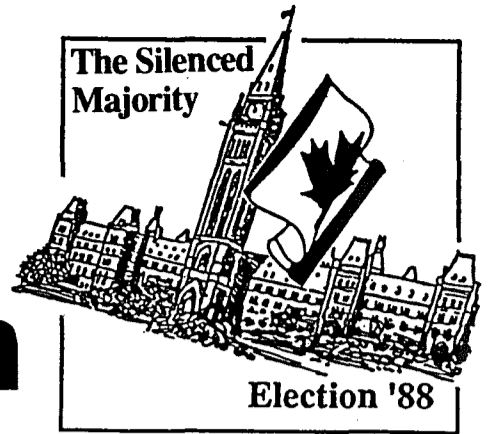
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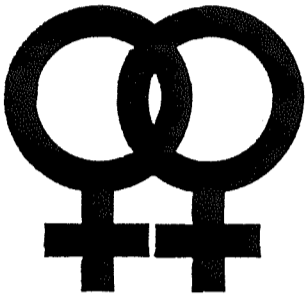
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The issues Election '88 forgot

Lesbian (in)visibility during the federal election



A discussion of lesbian issues was noticeably absent during the recent federal election. Carmen Pacquette, co-founder of the National Lesbian Forum voices her concerns about the invisibility of lesbians in an interview with *The Womanist*.



The Womanist: Was sexual orientation an issue during the federal elections?

Carmen: In a number of cases, the sexual orientation of male candidates was an issue that was raised by adversaries and publicized by the media. Is it a blessing in disguise that it wouldn't occur to anyone to try to diminish the chances of women candidates by rumour campaigns of lesbianism? Or is it an indication that women candidates are viewed either as married women with patient husbands or as workaholics with neither private lives nor a sexual orientation?

When Brian Mulroney "joked" about the kind of defence minister Sven Robinson would make if the NDP were elected, he was hinting at what many Canadians thought already: that a self-proclaimed gay man would not have the guts to be a war monger like "real" men, that he would be too much like a woman and avoid a good fight!

The recognition that there is a link between gay-bashing and women-hating is due in part to the influence of lesbian feminists. The gay rights movement in Canada is clearly feeling and acknowledging the impact of lesbian feminism. Lesbian feminists are getting more and more involved in gay organizations and are insisting that these organizations use "gay and lesbian" to name our community; fewer gays, men or women, are continuing to insist that lesbians "should" feel included in the word GAY.

Lesbian feminist influence is being felt in lobbying and research on the issue of sexual orientation.

But this influence is not yet felt in the media and in the official pronouncements of political parties where GAY still seems to mean male homosexuals and lesbians are rarely if ever mentioned.

The Womanist: What about the impact of gays and lesbians on the elections?

Carmen: According to EGALE, Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere, Gay and Lesbian voters had the potential to "determine federal election results in as many as 30 ridings across the country." Again, no clear impact by lesbians or no recognition of the influence of lesbians? It is difficult to say at this point.

The Womanist: What about discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation as a political issue?

Carmen: I raised the issue of including sexual orientation as prohibited grounds of discrimination in the Canadian Human Rights Act with a number of media representatives who attended the press conference where the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women launched their Shocking Pink Papers on women's issues in the federal elections. Most media people said the issue was not of interest to their listeners or readers. (Oh, yeah? That's why the debate within the United Church was ignored this summer, right?) But mostly, their reaction was one of surprise: that a feminist at a feminist gathering would raise the issue of sexual orientation as a women's issue. One interviewed me at length then concluded that, since both gay men and lesbians want to end discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, there is no "gender gap" and therefore no story!

In recent months, gay organizations organized all-candidates meetings, phone-in shows, polling of candidates on sexual orientation discrimination in a few cities such as Montreal, Regina, Saskatoon and Edmonton. I hope the same was the case in such activities organized by women's groups; I'd love to

hear of examples so we can build on them.

The Womanist: What can we do to keep the issue on the political agenda?

Carmen: It seems that we as feminists (lesbians or not) will need to ensure that sexual orientation is raised by women's groups in their lobbying efforts or the gay organizations will continue to be the only on-going visible spokespersons on this issue. As lesbian feminists, we may be active in these groups but we are usually primarily active in the women's movement. And this movement can and should raise our issues.

Some recent initiatives in the women's movement are supportive of lesbian rights. The NAC (National Action Committee on the Status of Women) Lesbian Issues Committee has been revived since the last AGM and has consulted the National Lesbian Forum on possible courses of action including releasing the paper on Lesbianism viewed from a feminist perspective produced two years ago.

CRIAW's (Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women) last conference in Quebec City had as its major theme "Women and Development" and as one of its sub-themes, the development of the lesbian community; four workshops were held on lesbian themes, a heady experience for those of us who have struggled sometimes to get one lesbian workshop on the agenda of a women's conference! NAWL (National Association of Women and the Law) has a Lesbian Issues Working Group striving for similar visibility at their next conference and in NAWL briefs as well as cooperating with EGALE so that research into sexual orientation issues recognizes lesbian experience.

The National Lesbian Forum is a year-old organization working to increase the visibility of lesbians and of lesbian issues in both the women's movement and the gay rights movements.

Lesbians are invited to join by sending their name and address and \$3.00 to NLF, Box 8973, Saskatoon, Sask. S7K 7E7. A periodic newsletter keeps members informed.

We can encourage women's organizations to publicize lesbian groups and activities as they would those of any other group within the movement. For example, having groups and individuals lobby their M.P. on the issue of discrimination on any other basis which is unfair to some women, i.e. race, marital status, economic level, education.

Next time around, we're going to hear about lesbians and lesbian issues because all feminists will make sure we're not ignored.

Carmen Pacquette is a Franco-Ontarian lesbian feminist and one of the co-founders of National Lesbian Forum.



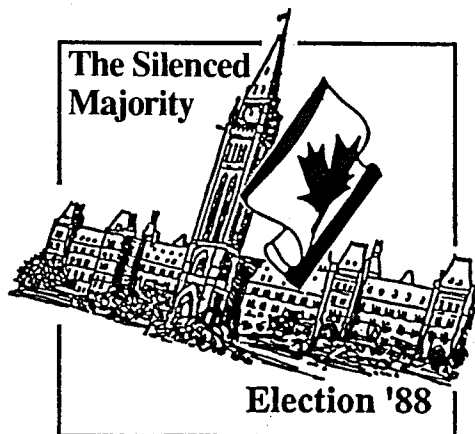
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Submarines: protecting women from what?

by Gloria Shalay

A year and a bit past, in June of 1987, the regular media presented us with a new superhero in the form of one young Perrin Beatty, Minister of Defence.

Armed with his government's economic schemes close to his heart, and brandishing a new Defence White Paper, he swooped — rather hawk-like — into a closed Friday afternoon press conference in Ottawa where he unveiled a program of defence spending unparalleled in Canadian history. For a while he stood in the warm glow of media curiosity — a nice young man, a crown prince among the Mulroney embarrassments, a new white knight for the Canadian realm.

We were supposed to like him. We were supposed to feel secure knowing this serious young man was there to defend

us. The minister before him was lecherous, we were told, but this one will do the job. Breathe easy, he'll be prepared for war.

Perrin Beatty is responsible for defence so his job is to argue for his proposals in those terms. Unfortunately, in terms of ensuring security, the White Paper describes what is probably one of the most dangerous ways too much money could be spent.

The locus of criticism has fallen on the purchase of about a dozen nuclear powered submarines. This is not surprising, given that the modern Canadian peace movement, which has focussed its opposition on weapons systems such as the cruise missile or SDI. There is no doubt, according to public opinion surveys, that the proposal is politically



unpopular, and the reasons are manifold.

The obvious criticism is, of course, the cost. The government first said \$12 billion would be spent on the subs, then \$8 billion, and now they can't tell us for sure for a couple of years. The Canadian Centre for Arms Control estimates they will cost about \$12.5 to \$14.8 billion and the popular peace movement has generally settled on the figure of \$12 billion. In a *Financial Post* article, Peter Worthington scoffs at these estimates and, on the basis of reviewing Canadian experience with military budgeting, estimates the cost could soar to as high as \$40 billion! We don't know how much, except it will be a lot of money. A hard pill to swallow when we are told we cannot afford a proper national daycare program, for example.

Then there are environmental concerns. The subs require highly enriched uranium fuel, and Canada would either have to build processing facilities or import the fuel in violation of international agreements. There is the unsolved problem of disposing of the used nuclear fuel rods, and ultimately the problem of disposing of the irradiated hulls of the submarines when they are decommissioned. (The British, for example, plan to sink their nuclear subs offshore when they are finished with them.) And perhaps most importantly, the subs are intended for use in the environmentally sensitive Arctic, where an accident could spell global disaster. This also means that they cannot be used to fire on other vessels in the Arctic, especially other nuclear powered vessels.

In terms of international affairs, even Department of National Defence officials have concerns that the subs purchase will damage the spirit of the important Non-proliferation Treaty. This U.N. treaty prohibits signatories from developing nuclear technology for "military

purposes" in exchange for a promise from the superpowers to reduce their nuclear arsenals. It is a cornerstone upon which current arms treaties are being built. Thus, instead of contributing to Canada's security, the subs would actually destabilize the fragile beginnings of the nuclear disarmament process.

According to Defence Minister Beatty, the subs are the only way we can defend and provide surveillance of our Arctic, thus protecting our sovereignty. However, to quote columnist Marjorie Nichols of *The Ottawa Citizen*, "What every schoolchild in the country now knows is that the best way to monitor traffic in the Arctic is to install undersea sonar at critical points." And with respect to "defending" the Arctic, we have to ask "who from?" According to Greenpeace research, DND has stated to parliamentarians twice that no Soviet sub has ever been found in the Canadian Arctic. What was found in the Canadian Arctic, much to Mr. Mulroney's chagrin, was the American icebreaker *Polar Seas*.

Given all this, what military function would the subs serve?

The solution to that puzzle is to see "Defence of Canada" and read "Defence of North America". Although Canadian foreign policy clearly sets constructive internationalism as its goal, the Defence establishment is obviously more interested in the Fortress North America model. Canadian subs fit in quite well with the American Forward Maritime Strategy, a part of NATO's plans for a first strike nuclear war. Contrary to Mr. Beatty's flag waving, this plan is not about sovereignty.

And this brings us to Free Trade.

It is not surprising, given the Free Trade deal negotiated by this government, that its Defence Minister has been working very hard to develop Canadian military industry. Under the free trade deal subsidies to industry are

prohibited, as unfair competition, except military industry, which is the only exception. Where regional development programs would be challenged as unfair subsidization under Free Trade, we could invite Litton to produce weapons components.

The special status of military industry under Free Trade also means that the Americans do not have to provide free access to their defence budget — and protectionist trends in the United States coupled with pressures to reduce defence spending guarantee a more difficult access to that market. Analysts claim the Free Trade Deal will create an increasingly militarized Canadian economy dependent on arms sales to Third World countries.

But why should arms manufacturers go to depressed areas of Canada to produce for Third World arms markets when they can do that anywhere? To attract the military industry Canada will need under Free Trade, Mr. Beatty has to show that he can spend big Canadian dollars on defence purchases. It is only in this light that the submarines start to make sense. If he can spend while flying in the face of popular opinion, so much the better.

Meanwhile, we're getting in deeper.

It's a wonderful dream for Mr. Beatty and his boys, like a Second World War 'B' movie: men will fight men (or take high-paying jobs in the bureaucracy) and Rosie the Riveter will produce arms components out of a cultivated sense of patriotic duty, because they don't pay much to do that part. How easy to govern a society united against the enemy — and if the enemy doesn't exist, we simply invent one.

If you want war, prepare for war. Meanwhile, we're still waiting to hear the truth about the militarization of the Canadian economy and the militarization of our foreign policy.

Gloria Shalay runs a small business with a partner.

feminist perspectives

New Releases

No. 10, *The Work of Child-rearing* by Michelle Duval, explores this burden of mothers as the basis on which patriarchy's oppression of women has been built. The characteristics and institutionalization of «motherwork» and its effect on mothers is described, and a revolutionary strategy to transform it and ultimately society, is proposed.

No. 11, *Getting Older and Better: Women and Gender Assumptions in Canada's Aging Society*, by Susan McDaniel. In this article some assumptions about gender and gender differences which guide much thinking, including supposedly scientific thinking, are explored and questioned. Some of the challenges as well as opportunities for women in an aging Canada are highlighted.

No. 12, *Smooth Sailing or Storm Warning? Canadian and Québec Women's Groups on the Meech Lake Accord*, by Barbara Roberts. An attempt to clarify and heal some of the wounds suffered by the women's movement over the Accord, this article provides an overview and analysis of various groups' positions. Particular care is taken to explain the positions of women's groups in Québec to their sisters elsewhere in Canada. Includes a Constitutional chronology, text of the Accord and other background documents.

No. 13, *Some Advice for Overcoming Barriers to Women's Achievement in Non-Traditional Occupations* by Barbara Carroll and Frances Cherry. Provides women contemplating non-traditional careers with information about the types of barriers they may encounter and advice to overcome them. Based on interviews which tapped the experiences of women already involved in non-traditional careers.

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The issues Election '88 forgot

Privatization: What does it mean for women?

"Free" Trade, privatization and deregulation: these three terms have become household words since the Conservative government came to power in 1984.

This "three-headed monster" has been identified as one of the greatest challenges in our history by many -- in particular those of us in the labour movement and the women's movement. We can see that the results of these Conservative initiatives would be devastating to workers, particularly women workers.

Devastating in what way? The de-unionization of work, lowering of wages and benefits, deterioration of working conditions and a decrease in the quality of services are what's in store for us if the Conservatives are permitted to proceed with their plans.

We also know that women are more deeply affected because of our vulnerable position in the work force. Our jobs are lower paid, we are often single parents and we are less likely to belong to unions than men. It will also be more difficult for us to find new jobs as ours are eliminated by Brian Mulroney's anti-worker economic policies.

Although it is difficult to discuss the implications of one of these policies independently of the others, this article will focus on privatization, in particular, the privatization of Canada Post.

What is Privatization?

Privatization is an ugly beast with many faces. Deregulation is actually a form of privatization which involves the elimination of environmental, health, safety, price control and labour regulations in industries such as the transportation industry. Most of us are familiar with the deregulation of the airline industry in the United States and the disastrous results for workers and consumers in that country.

In addition to deregulation, privatization may take other forms such as commercialization, contracting out or the sale, in whole or in part, of a government-owned corporation.

Commercialization means the increased involvement of private firms in the provision of state-sponsored goods and services. Daycare centers and nursing homes, for example, have recently experienced a high level of commercialization.

Contracting out of public services is a form of privatization which we normally see in the area of municipal services, educational institutions and health care. Services such as garbage collection, building maintenance and security, hospital dietary and laundry facilities, airports and correctional facilities are often contracted out to the private sector. Private firms bid to provide all or part of these services, with the

contracts often being awarded to the lowest bidder. This often results in poor quality of service and in political patronage.

Privatization and Women

The trend towards privatization is largely concentrated in the service sector: transportation, municipal services, communications, health care and social services. Eighty-three per cent of all employed women in Canada work in this sector, and women outnumber men in most service occupations such as transportation and telecommunications. For this reason privatization has a dramatic impact on the wages, working conditions and job security of women workers.

Women are also adversely affected as consumers. Privatization usually leads to increased costs and tends to shift the financial burden from the taxpayer to the user. In areas such as health care, municipal services and child care, this means that those who can least afford it, such as women, the poor, the elderly and the disabled will be forced to bear the increased costs. These people will also feel the effects of reduced access to services and decreased quality of service.

Brian Mulroney's government is vigorously following the privatization lead of other conservative leaders like Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. Under the Tories, twelve Canadian crown corporations, including de Havilland, Canadair, and Teleglobe Canada were sold. Air Canada is now up for sale. Most of this privatization occurred while Barbara McDougall was the Minister Responsible for Privatization. Ironically, she was also the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women at that time.

Privatization Of Canada Post

Canadians became more familiar with the term privatization during the October 1987 postal strike. The privatization of postal services was a major issue in that strike and remained unresolved despite the government's back-to-work legislation and the imposed collective agreement. The privatization of Canada Post is a prime example of the negative implications of privatization for both workers and consumers, particularly women.

In November 1986, Canada Post Corporation tabled its five-year corporate plan in Parliament. Following the mandate imposed by the Conservative government, this plan promised financial self-sufficiency and even profit by the end of 1989.

One of the means chosen to achieve this was the elimination of thousands and thousands of jobs. The

elimination of the vast majority of these jobs will be accomplished by closing and privatizing urban and rural post offices and by contracting out retail services: 5,221 rural post offices will be closed or privatized, and 734 urban post offices will be closed and replaced by privately owned retail postal outlets (also known as sub post offices) or postal franchises.

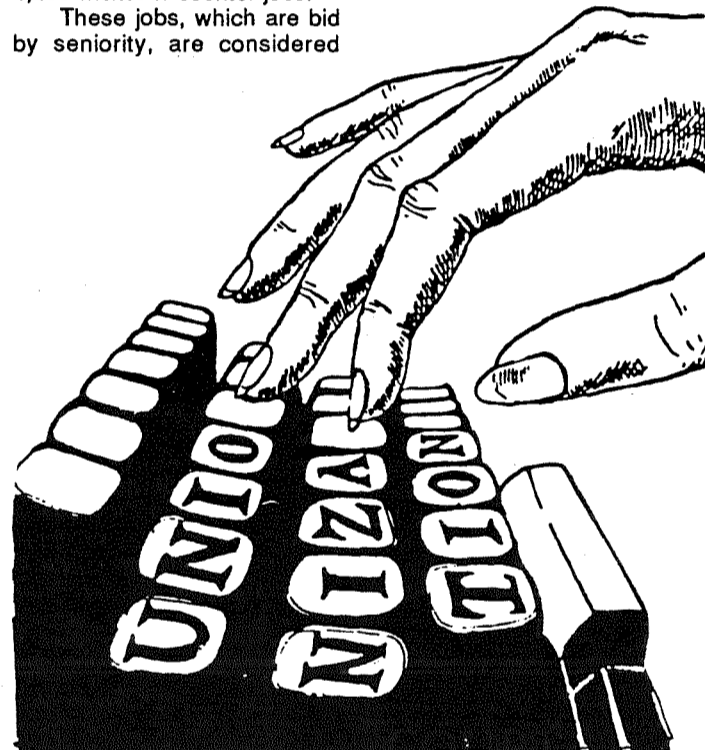
The Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) represents postal workers in urban centers and some rural offices. Women make up almost half of the membership of the CUPW. Privatization of postal services means the elimination of approximately 4,200 wicket or counter jobs.

These jobs, which are bid by seniority, are considered

by Deborah Bourque

replaced by minimum wage jobs in the retail sector.

Jobs in Canada Post are some of the better positions available to women in urban centers who are usually employed in low-wage, non-unionized "job ghettos." These jobs are decently paid and the CUPW collective agreement provides many important benefits for women workers such as equal pay, paid maternity leave, pensions, job security, health care plans, paid sick leave and vacation



the best positions available to CUPW members. Wicket jobs are on day shift, they are full time jobs and they are the only opportunity most inside workers have to escape the noisy, mind-numbing and hazardous working conditions in the sorting plants.

The majority of CUPW members, many of them women and single parents, work on evening shift or night shift. This creates numerous problems for women workers since affordable, quality child care is often unavailable during these hours.

It is not unusual for a postal worker to have to spend as many as fifteen years on night shift. The destruction of over 4,000 day jobs means many, many more years on night shift for these postal workers. The elimination of these full time jobs also condemns part-time postal workers, 75 per cent of whom are women, to many more years of underemployment.

While the privatization of postal services has a devastating impact on the working conditions of postal workers, the social impact for all Canadians is also great. The cheap labour strategy of privatization means that decent paying, unionized jobs in the post office are being

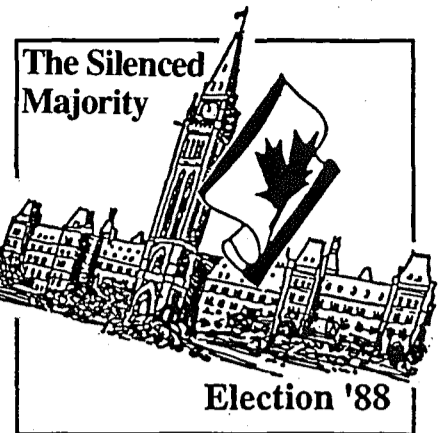
leave, special leave for illness in the family and protection against discrimination and sexual harassment.

Often new jobs are not even created. What happens instead is that the postal duties are simply added to the work of the already overworked employees in the drug store or corner store.

In rural post offices, 82 per cent of the workers are women. These workers are represented by the Canadian Postmasters and Assistants Association. Canada Post's plans will result in over 8,000 women in rural Canada losing their only source of income. In rural areas, the post office offers some of the only employment opportunities for women.

In instances where jobs in rural post offices are not actually lost, wages are cut by 70 to 80 per cent when the office is privatized. Often the former Canada Post employee, who is forced to become a private contractor, is required to provide more services and expanded hours of service for a commission that amounts to substantially less than the minimum wage.

Despite Canada Post's promises to improve postal services, privatization has instead resulted in a



deterioration of service for postal customers. Small, privately run post offices do not offer the same level of service as public post offices. There is usually a high turnover of staff, inadequate training and no security for valuable mail. There is often a failure to provide bilingual service and access for the disabled. Of particular concern is the recent trend to place private postal outlets in businesses such as video stores and magazine shops which sell pornographic materials alongside postal supplies.

Opposing Privatization

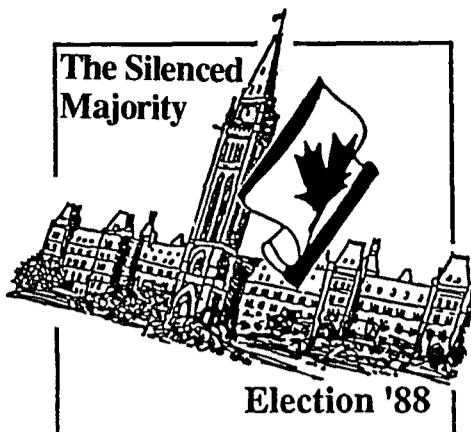
Privatization benefits only the corporations and the business friends and political allies of the government.

Their increased profits are achieved at the expense of workers, women, the poor, the disabled and the elderly. The Canadian public must not continue to bear the cost of these profits in decreased access to services, increased user fees, and decreased quality of service. Canadian workers must not continue to bear the cost in large-scale job loss and unemployment, reduced wages and benefits, deteriorating working conditions and loss of trade union rights. Privatization must be opposed and it must be stopped.

Opposition to the privatization of Canada Post has been overwhelming. Grass roots community organizations have been formed such as Rural Dignity, Residents Against Mailboxes and Citizens United for Equitable Postal Service. The postal unions, under the umbrella of the Canadian Labour Congress, have formed a joint committee to fight for improved postal service and against postal cutbacks and closures. The Canadian Union of Postal Workers has launched its own \$2 million campaign to fight privatization.

You can help save Canada's oldest national institution by boycotting all non-unionized private postal outlets and by telling your Member of Parliament that you will not support the dismantling of our public post office.

Deborah Bourque is a National Union Representative for the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and National Co-ordinator of Struggle '88, CUPW's campaign against privatization.



Prostitution in Halifax

by Carol Walbo

In Halifax during 1985, three young women were murdered. Each of these women worked as prostitutes on the streets of Halifax; all three had earlier attempted, and failed to exit from street life.

Since that time:

- the federal government in 1985 passed Bill C-49 which made it against the law for any person, male or female, worker or client, to communicate, or attempt to communicate, for the purposes of prostitution;
- the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia heard an appeal of Amendment C-49 and ruled it unconstitutional on the grounds that it interfered with the Charter of Rights provision which guarantees freedom of speech;
- an Advisory Group on Prostitution began in Halifax in 1986 to examine the social complexities of prostitution.

- The Elizabeth Fry Society sponsored a program for prostitutes in Halifax called Stepping Stone.

Stepping Stone is unique in its approach in dealing with prostitutes in Canada.

Stepping Stone attempts to meet the needs identified by the women and youth who are prostitutes rather than imposing services based on project identified needs.

Since its inception in 1987 the program has been a huge success, largely due to its philosophy of self-determination. The basic idea is to respect the people who work as prostitutes and remind them of their basic rights as citizens.

Stepping Stone provides four basic services:

Streetworker service - Streetworkers make frequent and regular contact with the women and youth in their working environment - the streets. Streetworkers provide a range of services including information, crisis intervention, advocacy, support and referral. This service also includes a link between street culture and mainstream culture and, in particular, between the street community and existing services.

Emergency Relocation Service - Secret, safe accommodation can be arranged for those who are in danger and would like to make use of this service.

Resource Centre/Drop-in: The resource centre is open 9 to 5, Monday to Friday. Women and youth may use the centre to get referrals, information, crisis intervention and advocacy, support, and coffee. They may also use the centre to obtain assistance in seeking long term alternatives to street prostitution. The drop in offers

the same services as the resource centre but is open at night.

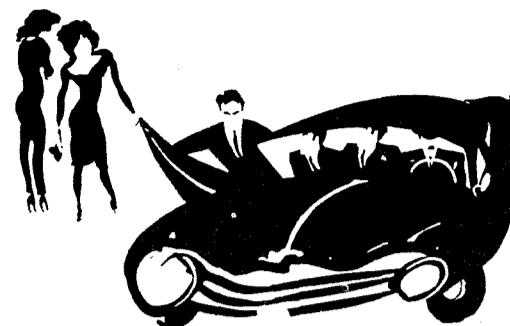
Streetproofing Service: Streetproofing is a preventative education program which is provided as part of the "Personal Safety Program for Adolescents."

Since the beginning of the program, one year ago, the staff of Stepping Stone have observed or made contact with 155 women. We have assisted three women in exiting from the street life and many others are now expressing a desire to leave as well. The majority (80%) of the women have been under 24 years of age.

As you can imagine, the acceptance of outsiders into the lives of these women, and the development of trust and rapport has been and continues to be a lengthy process. In less than a year, we have been able to achieve this. We certainly feel that a great disservice would be done if Stepping Stone is forced to close. We then become so much like the system that has repeatedly ignored, rejected and has otherwise "let down" this group of women. Ironically, we wonder why they don't trust us!

A recent survey that was conducted by an independent researcher confirms that the Stepping Stone Program has in

The issues Election '88 forgot



fact, had a very positive impact on the street. The responses from those interviewed indicate a continued need for and expansion of our services. Ninety-two per cent of the sample had used one or more of our services and as one woman remarked "...if they close, there'll be no one there for us."

This invaluable service is in financial trouble. Our doors will close as of December 31st if we do not get a guarantee of funding.

At a time when social service agencies are consistently saying that they are not successful in dealing with juvenile prostitution it is critical that a program as successful as Stepping Stone remain.

This innovative program needs our support and money. Contact Stepping Stone at:

The Stepping Stone Program
2224 Maitland Street
Halifax, N.S.
B3K 2Z9

Carol Walbo is the co-ordinator of Stepping Stone in Halifax.

Facts About Street Prostitution in Halifax

- The average annual income of women who work as prostitutes is \$7480.
- Pimps make an average of ten times the annual income of the women who work for them (most women who work as prostitutes work for pimps).
- The majority of women who work as prostitutes identify money as the reason for their entrance into the life.
- Some women who work as prostitutes are married, some are mothers.
- At least 66% of women who are prostitutes were physically or sexually abused as children.
- Most people who work as prostitutes are female (3 women: 1 man).
- Most women who work as prostitutes are between the ages of 18 and 24.
- Most women who work as prostitutes began when they were juveniles (average age 16).
- Most women who work as street prostitutes have not completed high school.
- Street life is extremely violent.

Street prostitution in Calgary, Winnipeg and Regina

by Lois Sparling

When the federal government brought in controversial legislation in 1985 to "get tough" with the street prostitution that was causing an uproar in several Canadian cities, it also arranged for a review of the effects of this law within three years. To that end, three University of Calgary professors, Gus Brannigan and Louis Knafla of the Social Sciences Department, and Chris Levy of the Faculty of Law, have prepared a study for the Department of Justice entitled "Evaluation of Bill C-49 in Calgary, Regina, and Winnipeg."

The intention of Bill C-49 appears to be to suppress street prostitution. The means, are viewed by lawyers, feminists, civil libertarians and the Elizabeth Fry Society as overkill. Prostitution is not, and never has been, a crime in Canada. In this context, the individual acts of soliciting which have been made crimes are trivial and inoffensive. The public nuisance arising from strolls developing in residential areas is not addressed.

Many experts believe that Bill C-49 infringes on our

Charter of Rights and Freedoms. That was the conclusion of a Halifax court who recognized that the Act infringed on a person's constitutional rights and has not recognized the law in Nova Scotia. The issue will conclusively be decided by the Supreme Court of Canada next year.

Those who would like to promote the rehabilitation of prostitutes oppose making criminals of them since this only further alienates them from society and a criminal record creates yet another obstacle to their finding other employment. Finally, as the study by Professors Brannigan, Knafla, and Levy demonstrates, Bill C-49 does not work. Street prostitution continues to flourish despite it.

The attitudes of the authorities in Calgary, Regina and Winnipeg are quite different. In Calgary, the police seldom lay charges and are content to manage the strolls. In Winnipeg, the police vigorously enforce the law. Their goal is to stamp out this sinful trade. In Regina, the police lay a lot of charges; but

their overall objective is also to manage rather than suppress street prostitution. The result of all three approaches is the same - little impact on the number of hookers walking the streets.

Winnipeg and Calgary are comparable in size and have about the same number of hookers working the streets. The authors of the study commented: "When we compare Calgary and Winnipeg, it is an open question what the Winnipeg police have to show for all their hard work (arresting prostitutes)."

Regina was found to have a much higher number (per capita) of street prostitutes than Calgary or Winnipeg. The stroll for Native women encroaches on a residential neighbourhood. The stroll for white and black hookers on the Western Canadian Circuit takes up a great deal of space in the downtown core. (Winnipeg also has many Native street prostitutes while Calgary has virtually none.) Both strolls are highly visible and create a great deal of public controversy.

This study and the others

which have been performed in other parts of Canada will provide factual ammunition for those involved in the debate over the legal status of prostitution. However, it is unclear whether they will assist in creating a consensus in Canada on what is to be done or give the government of the

day the political courage to take decisive action in the absence of such a consensus.

Lois Sparling is the President of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary.

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The issues Election '88 forgot

Development, Peace and the environment: women make the connections

Consider that almost a billion - 1/4 - of the world's people do not have even the basics of food, water and shelter.

- Over a trillion dollars (\$1,000,000,000,000) is spent every year on weapons.

- The prospect of nuclear war hangs menacingly over the planet every day.

- Our global environment is endangered by acid rain, deforestation, the destruction of the ozone layer, numerous toxic chemicals and wastes, the extinction of numerous species, and many other dangers.

The world economic structure is so unfair that it is a breeding ground for social conflict, and for military conflict.

In developing countries, more and more land is being used to produce cash crops which will be exported out of their country to pay the growing foreign debt of their country. This removes land from local food production and forces peasants off the land, creating more poverty and malnutrition. When peasants object to these vicious policies, government responds by building

large armies to stifle opposition.

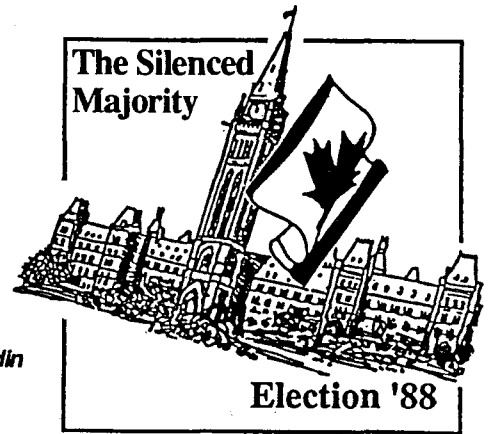
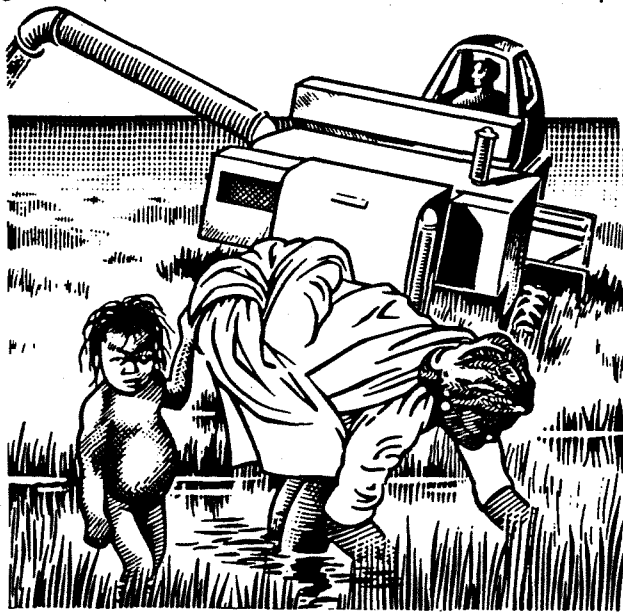
To pay for increasing arms imports to control their people and to service an ever-mounting debt, these countries push their land base to the limit. Environmental standards are ignored as hard-pressed peasants are forced to squeeze everything they can out of the land.

Pesticides, fertilizers and irrigation techniques are often

misused, or land is overused. The results? -- deforestation, soil erosion, agricultural land turns to desert.

This is an all too familiar scenario in the developing world. A scenario that we, are in part responsible for, by allowing our government to promote development projects that don't directly benefit the people of the developing country.

But what is development?



by Dorothy Goldin Rosenberg

It is the provision of food, water, shelter, jobs, basic human services to the people of a country and it is being stopped in its tracks by growing military expenditures that suck up scarce dollars.

We approach the 1990's in a world where global interdependence is the central reality. Sadly, shortsighted political and economic leadership clouds our vision of a common future, and saps the idealism of the young and the will to dream in all of us.

Most of today's decision-makers will be dead before the planet suffers the full consequences of acid rain, the "greenhouse effect", ozone depletion, and other effects of militarization and underdevelopment. What a legacy they will leave their children.

A landmark UN study tried to grapple with these issues. "Our Common Future: The Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development" was published in the spring of 1987 after 3 years of public hearings around the world. The

Commission was headed by Gro Harlem Brundtland, a woman who was Prime Minister and former Environment Minister of Norway. (Incidentally, her Labour Party requires that 50% of their cabinet ministers be women.)

The Canadian Minister of the Environment and Prime Minister Mulroney supported the Commission financially and praised its recommendations to the skies, yet their actions have often reflected the opposite:

- cutbacks in environmental spending;
- increased military spending;
- the production of nuclear submarines (over \$12 billion in the next 15 years);
- the Canada-US free trade deal which will encourage exploitation of non-renewable resources while reducing regulatory controls;
- a whole round of pre-election mega-projects, which are questionable both economically and environmentally;

Women: who won and lost?

Progress for women is being hailed as we enter the next Parliament with 38 women MP's, nine more than we had before the election.

As we all know, it's not just the numbers that count but the quality of leadership that these women will provide. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the women who served this country and who represented women in some of the critical debates in the last house.

Despite some political differences, we feel that all of these women played an important role in furthering the status of women in Canada.

Flora McDonald, PC, was a long standing Member of Parliament and the first woman to sit in a Conservative Cabinet. She was extremely supportive of the work to include women in the Charter of Rights in the Constitution of Canada.

Lynn MacDonald, NDP, gave women an historic victory by pushing her anti-tobacco Private Member's bill through Parliament and insuring that we all can move one step closer to a healthier life.

Marion Dewar, NDP, was a new member of the House, having won in a by-election. She has been a long time advocate for women's issues and was the NDP's Status of Women critic.

Lucie P  pin, Liberal, moved from being President of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women to being a Member of Parliament

and the Liberal's Status of Women critic.

Aideen Nicholson, Liberal, and long time member of the House, played a critical role in the formation of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

Other women decided not to run again; these included Conservative Pat Carney, Liberal Th  r  se Killens, and New Democrat Pauline Jewett.

It is frightening to realize that two out of the three MP's responsible for Status of Women lost their seats. Are we witnessing a backlash against those who speak out for women's equality?

We would like to give a special thanks to these women who gave the women of Canada their parting gift - a vote of confidence in women and our right to choose in the free vote on abortion in the House of Commons.

Following is as accurate a list as we could compile of the women MP's elected on November 21: a total of 38. Congratulations to all of them!

PEI
Catherine Callbeck (Lib)

Nova Scotia
Coline Campbell (Lib)
Mary Clancy (Lib)

Qu  bec
Gabrielle Bertrand (PC)
Lise Bourgault (PC)
Andr  e Champagne (PC)
Suzanne Duplessis (PC)

Sheila Finestone (Lib)
Marie Gibeau (PC)
Carole Jacques (PC)
Monique Landry (PC)
Shirley Maheu (Lib)
Nicole Roy-Arcelin (PC)
Monique Tardif (PC)
Pierrette Venne (PC)
Monique Vezina (PC)

Ontario

Edna Anderson (PC)
Pauline Browes (PC)
Marlene Catterall (Lib)
Sheila Copps (Lib)
Beryl Gaffney (Lib)
Barbara Green (PC)
Albina Guarnieri (Lib)
Diane Marleau (Lib)
Shirley Martin (PC)
Barbara McDougall (PC)
Beth Phinney (Lib)
Christine Stewart (Lib)

Manitoba

Dorothy Dobbie (PC)

Alberta

Louise Feltham (PC)
Bobbie Sparrow (PC)

BC

Dawn Black (NDP)
Kim Campbell (PC)
Mary Collins (PC)
Lynn Hunter (NDP)
Margaret Mitchell (NDP)

NWT

Ethel Blondin (Lib)

Yukon

Audrey McLaughlin (NDP)

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Development, Peace and the environment: women make the connections (cont'd)

Womenspeak

- the environmental impoverishment of the forests, water, agricultural land, and energy resources we have always taken for granted;

- the export to developing countries of technologies that do not promote development, such as nuclear reactors, food irradiation plants, megaprojects, etc.;

We need immediately:

- global economic reform, so there can be development for real needs;

- a reversal in military expenditures, and the elimination of the nuclear threat;

- protection of the global environment.

Who are the people making these decisions? What are their values?

Many women understand that poverty, pollution and militarism have roots in an outmoded and unjust view that benefits few at the expense of both the poor of today and the future of all. Women are working to change this outmoded and unjust view.

UN studies show that 70% of those working on environment, development and peace issues are women.

Yet where are the women when it comes to making the key decisions? Where are the women in national security debates and policy formulation? Who are still the high profile speakers at conferences? And who do the media go to when they need an "expert"?



Canadian women are actively engaged in these survival issues, in government, schools, churches, unions, community groups, and elsewhere. A new Directory of Canadian Women Specializing in Global Survival Issues will help decision-makers know who these women are and where to find them (see box).

These women must be part of the decision-making process. We must make our voices heard. We must ensure that women, with a new perspective, participate wherever decisions are made, including the highest levels.

Until enough women feel empowered to play a major role in determining our local and national priorities, they will continue to be determined by a white male elite at the top and we can expect only more of the same.

Dorothy Goldin Rosenberg is a Montreal feminist, peace activist and environmentalist co-ordinating the development of the Directory of Canadian Women Specializing in Global Survival Issues.

When was the last time you needed a woman to be a speaker, a consultant, a workshop leader, or other resource person, and had to rack your brain to think of one, only to contact her and find she wasn't available?

There are numerous qualified women with expertise in the development/peace/environment fields, whose work is not familiar beyond their immediate circles.

After years of dwelling on these issues, some of us have decided to create a resource which will at last make the expertise of hundreds of women in Canada known to the world at large. At last we are creating the means to identify and locate these knowledgeable, articulate, experienced women in order to illustrate that there are no more excuses for not having women "experts" involved in these decisions.

A working group is preparing a Directory of Canadian Women Specializing in Global Survival Issues: Development, Environment and Peace, and related social justice and economic issues. Work is progressing, but funds are urgently needed. If you know women who should be in the Directory, or if you have dollars you can spare (no amount is too large or too small), contact the working group at: Directory of Canadian Women Specializing in Global Survival Issues, c/o CCIC, 1 Nicholas Street, Suite 300, Ottawa, Ont K1N 7B7.

To The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (cc to *The Womanist*):

In addition to being shocked, I am absolutely livid that the so-called "Shocking Pink Paper" that you put out and of which I have read excerpts in both *Broadside* (volume 10, October 1988) and *The Womanist* (Sept/Oct. 1988) makes absolutely no mention of lesbian rights.

You cannot possibly be unaware that lesbians are discriminated against in employment, housing, education, medical care, reproductive rights (yes!), immigration, I could go on and on. Wouldn't you agree that the issues I mention are "vital issues"? And that lesbians are voters, too? And that we might like to know where candidates stand on issues that affect our

lives?

This has been said so often but it seems to need repetition here. Maternity benefits, health issues, employment equity, and lesbian rights - all are women's issues affecting all women. Women should be able to decide with whom they want to share their lives and this decision must not be grounds for discrimination.

As I understand it, we are in a struggle to end sexist oppression, striving for a society that will respect women's decisions over their own lives.

I expect an answer as to why you feel lesbian rights have no place on your political agenda.

Sincerely,
Ina Rimpau
Montreal

Below is the response to Ina Rimpau's letter by the CACSW:

Dear Ina:

Thank you for raising an important issue regarding the *Shocking Pink Paper* put out by the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW).

Each of the issues addressed in the Council's *Shocking Pink Paper* is based on existing research and recommendations passed by the Council in the past few years. We could also have mentioned elderly women in need of housing and adequate pension, refugee women who cannot gain access to language training, and single women who face barriers in regard to job training and, as you correctly point out, the double discrimination faced by lesbians in our society with regard to employment, housing, education, medical care, reproductive rights and immigration, to name a few. To date, the Council has not passed recommendations on these issues and therefore did

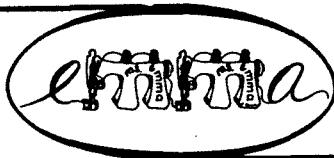
not explicitly address them in this edition of the *Shocking Pink Paper*.

The *Shocking Pink Paper* is intended to serve as a guide to bring issues of concern to women to the attention of candidates running for office. It was never meant to be exhaustive but rather encourage other women to raise their voices and build upon the issues we have raised. I hope you will take the opportunity to question all candidates running for office and monitor their commitments following the election.

I hope that my letter has helped to clarify your concerns. I know that there are more issues to be raised and problems to be addressed than was possible in the paper. I will certainly share your letter and concerns with other Council members so that we can take your comments into account when we do another version of the Paper.

Sincerely
Sylvia Gold
President

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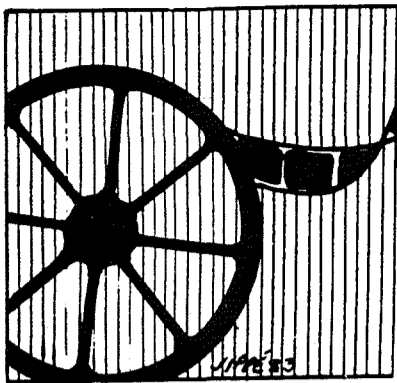
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The Accused: a harsh reality for rape victims

by Patsy Ryan

The Accused is a realistic, tension-filled, and emotion-laden movie. From the first scene, I was thoroughly involved in the action, particularly with the riveting part played by Jodie Foster.

Foster takes the lead dramatic role as a young, attractive woman who is gang-raped on a pinball machine in a local bar. While several men take their turn abusing her, others stand by, either ignoring the vile act, or else cheering on the rapists. One of the most frightening aspects of this movie is its basis in fact: a similar rape occurred in a New Bedford, Massachusetts bar in 1983.

The other lead female in **The Accused** is Kelly McGillis, who plays Foster's lawyer. McGillis, who in real life is a survivor of rape, in the movie first betrays Foster and later has a change of heart. Her actions are often the way women react to a rape: we want to deny the crime of rape (the fact that it exists and that it could happen to us) so we end up rejecting the rape victim, the woman. If we distance ourselves from rape, somehow we are able to convince ourselves that it could never happen to us.

The movie evolves around the rape and its consequences, yet we do not see the horrifying rape scene until the end of movie. Sadie, drunk and stoned, enters a bar alone, trying to block out a fight she'd had with her boyfriend. It occurred to me that she was not unlike women I know who, on occasion, like to indulge, have fun, and try to forget their problems.

Sadie, wearing provocative clothes, starts to dance erotically before the first man attacks her. The scene is very

disturbing, especially in the questions that it raises.

The reaction to the rape by myself and other women was predictable yet frightening. Our reaction throughout the movie was one of sympathy. Yet on seeing the rape scene, no doubt many people wondered, at least for a moment, if Sadie deserved what she got in the end.

The night my friend and I saw the movie, a teenage girl sitting behind us voiced the opinion that Sadie had "asked for it." A couple of her friends (also teenage girls) were quick to argue against this, stating no one deserved to be raped.

Yet, the same thought had crossed my mind. While I know she didn't deserve or ask for rape, I had to ask if she may have played a part in her own tragedy. Given that men are trained to view women as either good or bad, madonna or whore, then it is not surprising that too many men believe a scantily-clad, flirting woman wants to be raped. But then, how do we explain the fact that a 90-year-old woman is not immune to rape? This is the harsh reality that **The Accused** imparts: there is no defence against rape.

When Sadie's lawyer (Kelly McGillis) decides to prosecute the bystanders of the gang rape, another terrible reality is brought out and becomes the central focus of the movie: society's complacency about rape. The movie gives a chilling portrayal of the people in the bar. The men either ignore or encourage the rape; and Sadie's best girlfriend copes by leaving the bar, although she knows something terrible is happening. The young university student who anonymously reports the rape to the police doesn't want to

become any further involved. He is torn between loyalty to his friend, one of the rapists, and to seeing justice done. In the end, he follows his conscience and takes the stand to tell the truth about what he has witnessed.

Another shocking revelation in the movie is that the bystanders felt they had done nothing wrong. This attitude is exemplified in the sneering man who headed up the cheering section during the gang rape. When he runs into Sadie later, he taunts her mercilessly, to the point where she rams his truck with her car. The irony of this scene is striking. While he fumes about the damage to his vehicle, he has no conception of the physical and emotional damage that he (and others) have inflicted on Sadie.

The relationship between Sadie and her lawyer is another sub-plot throughout the film. At first, the lawyer completely invalidates Sadie's experience by allowing the rape charges to be lessened to "reckless endangerment" so the rapists won't have a sex crime on their records. Here one has to ask: What gives a lawyer the right to make such a decision without consulting the client? As Sadie pointedly reminds us, "You're not the one whose crotch was open to the world."

The role of the media depicted in the movie raises many questions. In covering such events as the rape trial why doesn't the media realize that the rape victim has been scrutinized enough? In one scene Sadie is at work when the story about the trial comes on the television. How do you get on with your life without being reminded by TV, radio, and newspapers of such an horrendous invasion of privacy? But then again, it's the media's responsibility to inform the public of what is happening in their community.

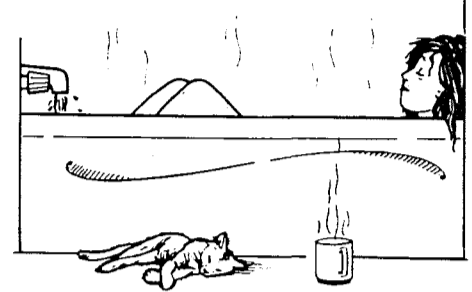
The Accused does indeed provoke thought and discussion. If any of the issues raised are given even a second thought by movie watchers, **The Accused** will have accomplished a great deal; it may even eventually help us change society's dangerous attitudes.

Patsy Ryan is an Ottawa-based feminist.

How the well are you?

In this issue we are kicking off the first of what we hope to be a long series of columns on wellness with Cathy Beaumont.

by Cathy Beaumont



Fitness is out; wellness is in. Forget about all those "lose 250 pounds in three days" diets. Forget about the "eat a truckload of pineapple a day" diets. Forget about the stationary bicycle you pedalled madly daily, for about two weeks (oh, you've forgotten about that already?) Forget about the Jane Fonda low impact, prime time, muscle-toning, fat-burning, beginner challenge workout. Forget about **The Joy of Stress** or **The Stress of Joy**, or whatever that book was that tried to make us feel better about the fact that our lives are insane.

Anyway, wellness is here, so we can all relax a bit. But what the heck is wellness anyway? Well, some people see life the way a child looks at a meal: each portion of food on the plate is kept separate (so the potatoes don't get contaminated by the green beans) and the food is eaten in a particular order: favourite first, yuckiest last. In other words, we compartmentalize the various aspects of our lives (home, work, family, stress management, values, nutrition, spirituality) and do the stuff we enjoy most first (the stuff that's "good for you" gets done last).

A wellness perspective sees life as a salad: all the flavours of the different parts of the salad mingle together to create a more interesting taste than if each part were eaten on its own. Wellness says that there's no point in trying to separate the body and mind, since what happens in one affects the other. Wellness understands that compartmentalization doesn't work, that spillover from one part of life to another is inevitable (ask anyone who's ever quit smoking if it didn't affect everything they did). And wellness believes that having the freedom to choose is often more important than the choice itself.

Let's look at it another way. If you were to view wellness as a continuum, with death (the only totally stress-free state there is) on the extreme left, and buoyant, self-actualized wellness nirvana on the extreme right, most of us would place ourselves somewhere in the middle. The mid-point of the continuum is actually "neutral", where there is no discernible illness or

wellness. In other words, you're technically healthy, but your usual response to "How are you?" is "Not bad, getting by, could be better, could be worse, see ya."

As you move to the left on the continuum, you find yourself "not feeling so good" and you usually place yourself in the hands of traditional medicine or other healing practices, whose goal is to get you back up to that neutral midpoint. Wellness is all about what's on the other side of neutral: the search for self-understanding, the creative balance among body, mind, and spirit, and the desire to feel better and better.

So why a column on wellness? For one, sickness is expensive, inconvenient, and dangerous. And the farther you can place yourself to the right of that continuum, the farther you have to go to the left in order to become sick. People who practise wellness lifestyles usually steer away from most of the stuff that gets us into trouble anyway: high fat, salt and sugar diets, smoking, and a couch-potato attitude.

Secondly, wellness is both attainable and worthy. You don't have to be hale and hearty already to practise wellness. And wellness is equally accessible to people with chronic conditions (e.g., diabetes, osteoporosis) or disabilities. Becoming well doesn't take a lot of money either.

And lastly (but not least), wellness is an issue for women that bridges the gulf between "health care" and "lifestyle" and accepts the value of both.

In the issues to come, we'll take a look at some of the components of wellness, analyze how we can make changes, and talk about some of the societal implications of the wellness movement. And we'll have a laugh or two while doing it. After all, as wellness advocate Don Ardell says: "Wellness is too important to be presented grimly."

See you next time. Stay well.

Cathy Beaumont is dedicated to fitness, well-being and chocolate. She pursues a wellness lifestyle in downtown Toronto, if that, in fact, can be done.



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Herstory: a spectrum of women's experience... a review

Review by Janet Wason

Herstory 1989: The Canadian Women's Calendar. Saskatchewan: Coteau Books, 1989, \$8.95

"I think the strongest thing women have is their stories and their hopes. These two things alone are enough to unite women across the country and around the world."

Fran Williams, 1987, p.107

My how time flies! It's the end of another year and time to choose a date-book which will help you reorganize your many breakfast meetings, set appointments, romantic interludes -- in short, record your life for the next year. For a book guaranteed to gladden your heart and brighten your days, here's *Herstory 1989*, a desk calendar which features biographies of Canadian women and discusses issues affecting women.

The Saskatoon Women's Calendar Collective have been compiling it for 14 years, and this year's effort successfully blends the elements of herstory and practicality in a volume that is attractive, easy-to-use, and informative.

Herstory is first and foremost a calendar, and as an item that will be used every day of the year, it is well-designed, from the beautiful cover

illustration in fuschia, white and green (by Saskatoon artist Sharlene Dee Stauffer), to the plastic ring binding the ensures that the book will stay flat once opened (and perhaps it won't catch on clothes like the metal ones do), to the uncluttered interior.

Each calendar page is devoted to a week-at-a-glance with the days and dates clearly presented. Lunar and solar phases are recorded as are religious and secular holidays. In addition, "firsts" in women's achievements are noted on the day they occurred, such as January 10th when Elizabeth Monk and Suzanne Filon were the first women admitted to the Québec Bar in 1942. With all this, there's still adequate space for recording your own appointments and achievements.

But there is a larger purpose to this date-book: opposite each calendar page is a short article which brings to our attention every week of the year the life of one of Canada's remarkable women. Some are well-known like nineteenth century journalist and feminist Robertine "Françoise" Barry, dub poet Lillian Allen, and neurologist and astronaut Roberta Lyn Bondar. *Herstory* also celebrates the lives of extraordinary 'ordinary' women like the women who with energy



the front steps of the Peterborough YWCA, circa 1919.

and dedication created a community out of the "instant" mining town of Tumbler Ridge.

My favorite stories are the ones about the unknown native woman who, after escaping from the Athapuscow in 1771, survived on her own in the bush for over seven months, snaring small game, decorating her garments, and twisting ropes from willow bark to make a fishing net, and Daurene Lewis, weaver, and Canada's first black woman mayor who encourages the citizens of Annapolis Royal to drop in to

her studio and chat.

The calendar includes informative articles about a Winnipeg health clinic, rural day care, women and poverty, and a woman's research institute. An excellent article on "Living in a Common-Law relationship" (p. 48) highlights the precedent-setting case of Becker vs. Pettkus, which awarded Becker one-half of a twenty year beekeeping business. That information is reinforced and personalized later on with the description of Rosa Becker's life.

"To write is powerful medicine, magic, weaponry and love. To write poetry is the ultimate in that power. It is sweet and yielding power, as well as being an incisive and bludgeoning one."

Maxine Tynes, 1986

With a 400-word limit each entry is necessarily brief. Much of the time I found myself wanting to know more. Luckily the collective has included an extensive system of reference with photo credits, notes for quotations, index and bibliography. A quibble — the quotation on page 99, while correctly attributed to Gloria Watkins, should really have been credited to bell hooks, for that is the name Watkins uses as an author and lecturer, and the name with which readers would be familiar.

What makes this calendar special are all the extras — the poems, artwork, and photographs that reflect the many experiences and accomplishments of women's lives in a different and often more profound way than a descriptive article. Imagine my pleasure when, after reading about Mary Riter Hamilton whose paintings of the devastation of World War I won international acclaim, I turned the page to find a reproduction of her "Market Among the Ruins of Ypres", 1920 (p. 92)

Herstory 1989 portrays a wide spectrum of Canadian women's experiences - through time, across the country and from many ethnic groups - Black, native, oriental, anglo and francophone. And it does so with a warmth and gentle quality that both pays tribute to their achievements and suggests that through our lives, we, too, can become part of herstory.

Janet Wason lives on a farm in Southern Ontario and is a dance choreographer.

SURVIVING PROCEDURES AFTER A SEXUAL ASSAULT

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An invaluable and up-to-date resource book for survivors of sexual assault, and those working with survivors.

This newly revised edition incorporates substantial changes to the Criminal Code, in effect since January 1, 1988, concerning sexual offences against children and young people.

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Canadian Elizabeth Fry (cont'd)

all criminal justice reforms. This group will continue to work together to achieve this goal.

Currently CAEFS is pressing for the design of an integrated national system of services for women in conflict with the law that will rely less on prison. Today, in Canada, women serving sentences of two or more years are warehoused in the antiquated Prison for Women in Kingston, Ontario. It locks up 130 to 150 women, in a maximum security fortress although these women are in no way dangerous.

Women prisoners, far from their homes, lose all contact with their children, other family and their community support. Repeated government reports have recommended closure of the prison but appropriate alternatives must be created if needs of women are to be met in corrections.

While the national Asso-

ciation has been kept busy representing the interests of women in conflict with the law to various federal government departments and committees, the 19 autonomous local societies (relying heavily on the participation of volunteers) have been running programs and services for women such as:

- court worker programs;
- prison visiting;
- counselling;
- public education;
- shoplifter counselling;
- half-way houses;
- parole supervision, etc.;
- street worker programs with prostitutes.

The size of local societies varies, but each is self-governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, recruited from the immediate community, on the basis of their knowledge, commitment and skills. The number of paid staff in each

society varies with its size. In larger urban agencies, as many as 100 staff may be employed, and they are subsequently able to offer a more diverse range of services to women in crisis.

Working together, the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and the 19 Elizabeth Fry Societies located across Canada will continue to effectively speak out for the reform of a criminal justice system which simply mirrors the unequal treatment of women in society generally. Perhaps someday we really will be able to visit the Prison for Women in Kingston and find nobody home!

Our national office, with a staff of three, is located in Ottawa. For more information, or if you'd like to help us in our work, write:

CAEFS
Suite 600 - 251 Bank Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 1X3

Revelations: essays on striptease and sexuality

reviewed by Amber Cooke

Women need a revolution concerning the ways we look at sexuality, sexual representation and sex work. We need a transformation of the views in which we hold ourselves to be sexual beings; within our relationships that are shaped by externally imposed concepts. We as women have the right to produce the multiplicity of visions of sexuality that represent us. In the book **Revelations**, by Margaret Dragu and Susan Harrison, they look specifically at stripping and attempt to defend our right to produce our sexuality but the book falls short.

Stripping includes a wide range of meanings and values. Being an unconventional business - "erotic illusions for sale" - attracts women with interests, abilities, skills and philosophy outside of the range of many of our deeply held traditional values. Strippers, indeed, are among the forerunners in the sexual revolution, threatening and challenging sexism. A woman's right to own her body, spirit, and creativity has been controlled by archaic and oppressive structures and is crying out for us to revitalize within us. Meeting the needs of those hurting most, which is we women.

I do not feel Dragu and Harrison have adequately dealt with the material available to them. Although Dragu's personal experience led to a particular kind of authenticity to this book, Harrison's did not. Her research, including newspaper articles and her interpretation of Dragu's experience, diluted the sincerity and depth of scope needed to accurately gain an

insight into the people's struggles and politics at work.

Riddled with misogyny we are all victims of this dictatorship. Women who own and celebrate their sexuality and personal power are beyond most familiar belief systems, beyond self-imposed behaviour codes. Because of this, strippers challenge us to listen to an inner voice and ask why. I believe asking why is the beginning of a process. Being nurtured to an ideal outcome would be our catalyst to a more joyous and liberated understanding of ourselves and ourselves in relationships to others.

The analysis and categorization of working women is frightening and shallow, and shows a great disregard for these women's struggles and consciousness. I feel Dragu herself needs to look at her own misogyny, anger, denial, and guilt before a true representation of this business will make itself known to her. Perhaps then she can share with us. This book is a practical handbook of the cast of characters involved, but only cosmetically so. Those interested in seeking insight or meaning in this material will be disappointed.

I found this review difficult to write in terms of assessing the material.

My gut reaction to this book is that Dragu and Harrison have found a hot issue to exploit and commercialize, and that Dragu has written the book in an attempt to find meaning for herself.

Amber Cooke is a single mother, political activist, and a new age conspirator and healer. She was a stripper for 20 years.

Would you like to do a Review for the Newspaper?

We continue to receive exciting books from publishers of women's work. If you would like to read and review a book please contact us.

Alone in the Boardroom, by Gladys Taylor, Deadwood Publishing Ltd.

Sans Souci and other Stories, by Dionne Brand, Williams-Wallace.

Angels of Flesh, Angels of Silence, by Lorna Crozier, McClelland and Stewart.

Science, Morality and Feminist Theory, edited by Marsha Hanen and Kai Nielsen, Supplementary Volume 13, Canadian Journal of

Philosophy.

Mona's Dance, by Ann Diamond, Quarry Press.

Getting the Housework Done for the Dance, by Libby Oughton, Williams-Wallace.

Found Goddesses: Asphalta to Viscera, as revealed to Morgan Grey and Julia Penelope, New Victoria Publishers.

Dark Forms Gliding by Mildred Tremblay, Oolichan Books.

Feminist Organizing for Change: The Contemporary Women's Movement in Canada by Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin and Margaret McPhail, Oxford University Press.



Ethiopia, 14 1/2" x 18 1/2", graphite

The 1988 Annual edition of **Gallerie** provides a fascinating insight into the minds of today's women artists. This is accomplished through a wealth of illustrations of the artists' work, and through notes which each artist has contributed to the annual musing on her work and the creative process.

Forty-four different artists from across Canada and the United States are represented in the volume. The overall impression of the collection is that women artists are each developing unique styles in a wide variety of media. Yet, there are recurring themes which pervade their work. Depictions of violence, anger, despair and power can be found again and again. In the words of the artists included in the Annual, Diane Collet-Laricheliere, "It seems to me that whether I want them to be or not, my paintings are about sexual politics."

This statement could be used to describe most of the work in this edition of **Gallerie**. Indeed, it describes the work of many of today's artists who are also women. Perhaps this explains why the work of such artists is often relegated to alternative galleries and special publications such as this one - not because the work lacks artistic merit, a myth which this publication should help put to rest, but because themes explored are in some way threatening to the status quo.

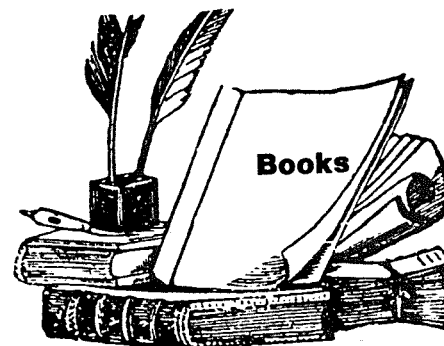
Nora Patrich, another of the artists presented in **Gallerie**, has expressed this concept in her poem "Mujer." The first verse reads:

*Woman if your ideas have grown
they are going to say ugly
things about you,
that you are no good,
that when you are silent
you are more beautiful.*

Gallerie introduces us to many women who have chosen not to remain silent. Some, such as Judy Chicago and Helen Lucas, have gained considerable stature as artists. Others are building their reputations slowly but surely. Few have work in major galleries in North America. Yet all of the artists included in the volume have something very special to communicate. This speaks well of the work accomplished by the editors.

As with any collection of art, there are some pieces which attract, some which repel, and some which puzzle, but each reader will find something which speaks to her or him.

It is unfortunate that **Gallerie** has been published in black and white as colour would add to the impact of the work illustrated. Given the reality of financial restraints, the quality of reproduction of the art works is reasonable; however, some of the detail is lost. It is also unfortunate that the editors did not heed the message of the "Guerrilla Girls," a group presented in the book. They are a self-professed activist group dedicated to combatting sexism and racism in the art world. The "Guerrilla Girls" would certainly point out that 80 per cent of the artists in



Gallerie: Women's Art

by Lynn McGuigan

Gallerie are white, and that this does not reflect the makeup of our society.

Gallerie, nevertheless, accomplishes three important goals.

First, it illustrates the wealth of talent harboured in our women artists and depicts the variety of styles and media which women have made their own.

Second, it exposes the work of these artists to a wider geographical audience than can be accomplished in a single exhibit at an alternative gallery.

Third, it explores the way in which women's art reflects our society, and the women's movement. In the words of artist Margot Johnson:

"I see art as a mirror of culture, and as a validation of that culture. With the women's community, there is a real need for that kind of validation. We need images that not only expose the oppression we face, but that express the great joy we can feel. We need to see a reflection of our strengths and our values."

Gallerie has succeeded in putting together a collection of work in its 1988 Annual which illustrates how art can provide us with just such a validation of our beliefs, our experiences, our aspirations and our way of living.

Gallerie, is available for \$12.00 in bookstores, or directly from **Gallerie Publications**, 2901 Panorama Drive, North Vancouver, BC V7G 2A4.


Lynn McGuigan operates her own business, McGuigan Art Ventures in Toronto. She has produced theatre, dance and music events, and has written for numerous performing arts periodicals.

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The Womanist



REVELATIONS
essays on striptease & sexuality
Margaret Dragu/A.S.A. Harrison
176 pp/paperback/\$15.95

Revelations challenges the traditional view of the stripper as 'object' or 'victim' and offers the alternative roles of artist, social critic and high priestess. Available Nov. 16 - distributed in Canada by University of Toronto Press & in the USA by Inland Book Co. Published by Nightwood Editions, Box 1426, Station A, London, Ont. N6A 5M2.



Motherpeace Tarot

Readings

Deborah Gordon 231-3863

The Amnesty Tour: now what?

by Lynne Tyler

Now that the dust has settled and the lights have dimmed, what was really the impact of Amnesty International's "Human Rights Now!" concert tour this fall?

The star-studded tour (Tracy Chapman, Bruce Springsteen, Sting, Peter Gabriel, Youssou N'Dour) played to crowds around the world: Europe (including behind the Iron Curtain), Latin America, Africa, India and North America.

Amnesty International is a worldwide movement that tries to ensure governments everywhere -- of all political stripes -- respect basic human rights.

It is founded on the belief that stopping human rights abuses is the responsibility of all of us, regardless of where we live or our political leanings.

The organization decided to launch the tour as a radically different way to reach out beyond their traditional membership. In the past, says Erika Rosenfeld, spokesperson for the group, Amnesty has tended to be "a group of pen-wielding serious types."

"We began to ask ourselves if we weren't in fact excluding a majority of the population," she went on, given

that more than half the world's population is under 25, and more than half is illiterate, making pamphlets and other traditional education forms almost useless.

So, they conceived the idea of a round-the-world pop music tour, to bring the message of the struggle for human rights in the form of music. The tour was never intended to make money, although they hope it will break even (ticket prices in developing countries were very low, subsidized by the North American and European tickets at regular prices).

By all indications, it was a huge success, both at the time and since. Requests for information have been pouring in to Amnesty and UN offices in countries where there was a tour. Interestingly, the tour seems to have made a much bigger splash in other countries than it did in Canada and the US.

In Costa Rica, 40,000 people braved Hurricane Gilbert for the concert, and were joined by their President Arias (author of the Central American peace plan) and two other Cabinet ministers, along with busloads of people from other Central American

countries.

The national radio station in Spain called the Barcelona concert "the most important political event in Spain since the death of Franco".

India's event was the first large scale concert the country had ever seen, and the enthusiastic audience stayed until 3:00am.

For the concert in Harare, Zimbabwe, an estimated 20,000 people streamed across the borders from South Africa to hear the message of freedom.

"We are celebrating the unity of memory and hope. We remember the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights forty years ago, but we are also hoping that the use and strength of this declaration picks up momentum -- on and on until every human being on earth is free." (Dr. Tafataona Mahoso, Director of the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe, concert host.)

At the Mendoza concert in Argentina, Sting sang "They Dance Alone", his tribute to the mothers of the "disappeared". He was joined on the stage by both Argentine and Chilean mothers (an estimated 12,000 Chileans crossed the Andes to attend the concert), carrying



placards of their missing loved ones and wearing white headscarves.

If audiences in North America are any indication, many of those attending went for the music, not because they were die-hard human rights activists. If this is the case, a powerful message reached thousands upon thousands of new ears during this tour.

Embedded in the music, and in the very presence of the artists on the stage (not to mention the tens of thousands of copies of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights distributed by Amnesty at the concerts), was a clear and unmistakable message. Tracy Chapman probably said it as well as anyone:

"I am a citizen of the United States, but I also consider myself a citizen of the

world community. As such, I feel a responsibility towards myself and to the other people with whom I share this planet to try to make it a better place, a more humane and safe place.

All people should be able to live their lives with dignity and respect. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is our guarantee of this. If it were put into practice by all the governments of the world, it would allow all people to have a true sense of the word freedom.

I believe that reading this document, signing this document, and daring to live by this document is the first step towards effecting positive change for all people. We as individuals are not free until we are all free."

Lynne Tyler is co-editor and publisher of *The Womanist*.

Distribution Information

The Womanist is free. But, like all other publications, we must rely on ads and subscriptions to cover our costs. We are free because we believe that all women, whatever their economic situation, should be able to get news about women.

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Rumour Has it...

The Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CLOW) in Quebec has recently produced a booklet in French and English entitled *From Victim to Survivor: Resources for Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse*. If you would like to receive a copy of the book write: c/o Greta Nemiroff, The New School, Dawson College, 3040 Sherbrooke West, Montreal, Quebec, H3Z 1A4 or call (514) 931-8731.

Women's Health Interaction of Ottawa has produced *Picture A Woman: 1989 Calendar*, a beautiful hand-drawn calendar that is 8 1/2 by 11. Perfect for putting on the wall and writing in everyone's birthday. They are \$7.95. To

order write to Women's Health Interaction, c/o Interpares, 58 Arthur St. Ottawa, K1R 7B9.

The National Organization for Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada recently had their Annual General Meeting and re-elected Betty Lee, from Fredericton, as the President for another year.

A directory of the *Canadian Feminist Periodicals* with an update is available for one dollar (to cover mailout) at: Canadian Feminist Periodicals P.O. Box 76, Stn. B Ottawa, Ont K1P 6C3

If you are part of a new periodical and would like to be put on the updated list please write.



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