

Free

The Womanist

Fall 1989

A feminist newspaper distributed nationally

Vol 2, #1



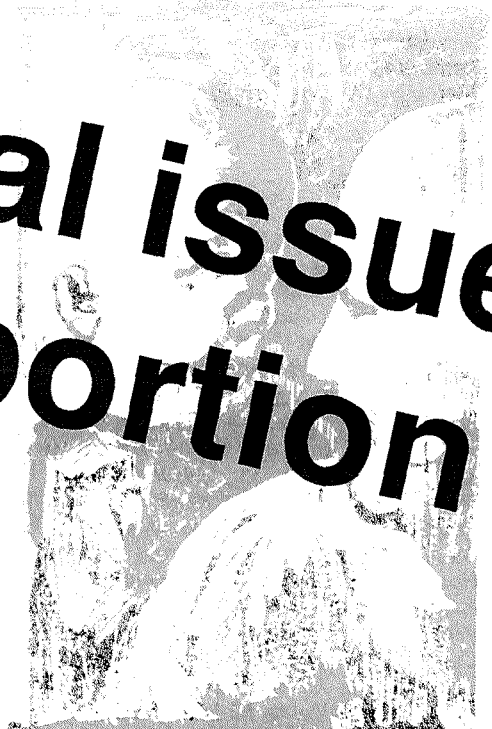
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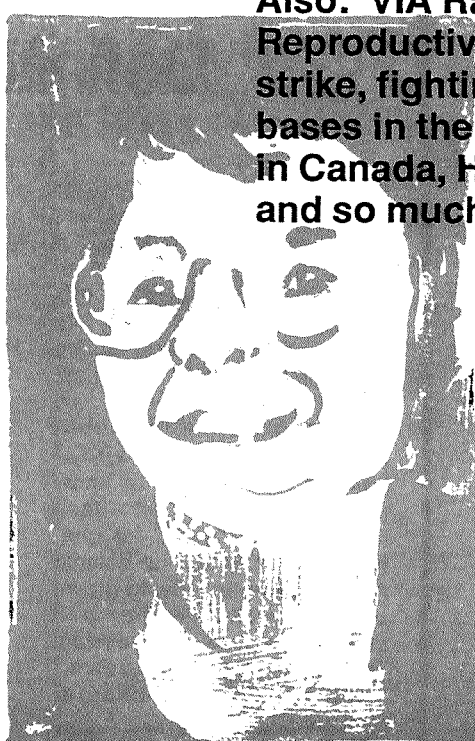
Special issue on Abortion

Also: VIA Rail, GST, Royal Commission on Reproductive Technologies, Quebec nurses' strike, fighting racism at home, American bases in the Philippines, Domestic workers in Canada, Herstory celebrates fifteen years and so much more



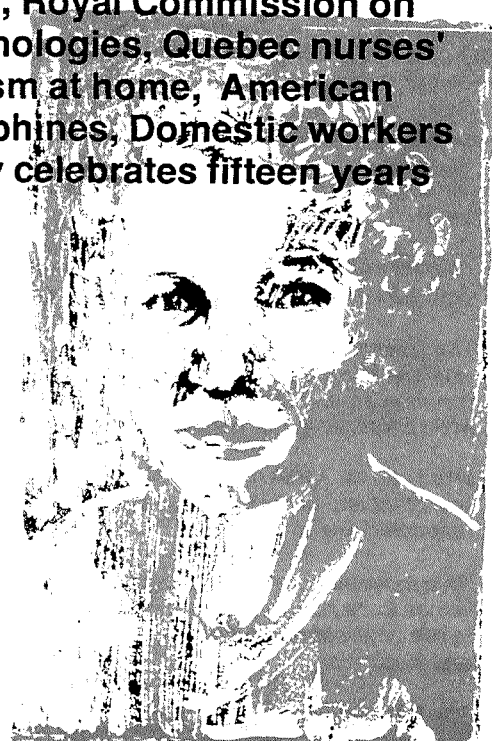
MY CHOICE

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For a partial list of where we distribute, see inside the paper.

To subscribe: To have the paper delivered, the price is \$8-\$25 a year. Institutions \$25, \$15 for non-profits.

The Womanist was created to empower and enable women. We want to get back to the basics, the common ground that 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 and to be trusted.

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

The Womanist appears 4 times a year.



Womenspeak

A child-centered feminist

Thank-you

Sisters,

Writing doesn't come easy to me and often I am unable to find the words most needed to say what's on my mind.

I thank all the wonderful women for their creative talents, time and energy that goes into your publication *The Womanist*.

Some day I will be able to share my story, joy and pain with the world, but right now I'm struggling to get through college on to a better healthier life.

My thoughts are with all of you.

Thank you,

Joyce Searlove



Dear Editor:

What a joy to hear from a "child-centred feminist!" Maureen Kellerman's article, "Feminism and women at home" is the best item I've seen. It faces up to the realities of 1989. Congratulations to *The Womanist* (May/June) for publishing such an article that brought a refreshing change.

The fact, according to Kellerman, that being a homemaker can "leave her (women) destitute in old age or in the event of marriage breakdown "should never be". This is the very reason why independent pension, such as the Homemakers Pensions, or its equivalent, is needed.

Alimony should also be a must for women 50 plus, in today's highly competitive labour market. The updating of our education, for enrichment, would enlighten mature women and thus enhance civilization in our western society. There's a lot of work to be done so that women don't suffer the main brunt of an aging population. And the feminist movement is in need of serious updating.

In our good old days of the 1960s, women were concerned about being baby-making-machines. By the 1980s women were worried about being money-making-machines. Women (collectively) need a strong new broom with which to sweep the 1990s clean!

Olive Thiesenhausen
Toronto, Ontario

Some Changes

You will notice that *The Womanist* looks a little different. We are making some changes in the design.

We have also made some other changes:

- 1- *The Womanist* will now come out four times a year, instead of 6. People who have already subscribed will still receive six issues in total. People who subscribe starting with this issue will be paying for four issues.
- 2- The paper will remain free but should you wish to subscribe the lowest price you can pay is \$8, which covers your basic costs for postal rates and printing.
- 3- The advertising rates will be increasing for the December issue so hurry and get a deal on advertising.



Definition of Womanist

1. From womanish (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 greater 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 coloured race is just like a flower garden,

with every colour 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. Loves 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.

Special section on abortion

pages 9 -25

Editorial

It is not often that we, at *The Womanist*, feel compelled to write an editorial. We often feel that other women, speaking from their experience, capture the diversity and essence of many of our experiences. Lately, however, we have felt that it is increasingly important that we add our voice to the growing underground debate over the future of our country.

It is a scary time in this country. Although we live in a democracy, we are repeatedly confronted with parliamentarians who are not representing the interests of Canadians. Worse, they seem to be pursuing some vision of Canada that is based on values fundamentally different from those we know today.

It is ironic that in a rich democracy such as Canada, our choices are diminishing.

Piece by piece, some of the basic structures and tenets of Canada are being removed or changed beyond recognition. The impact of these, as pointed out by many Canadians but few politicians or other national leaders, is to polarize our country into

isolated regions, isolated communities and isolated views.

The "Government of Reconciliation" has driven chasms between Canadians, dividing us according to region, language, race, income and gender.

Below are a few of these issues; many of them the subject of articles in this issue of *The Womanist*.

• **Our national transportation infrastructure:** after the new cuts are implemented, we will in effect no longer have a national railway system. Those who love it, and more practically, those who depend on it, will be forced to one extreme or another: expensive air travel for the rich, buses or nothing for the poor, and environmental degradation for all.

• **Postal system:** a fundamentally different concept is being introduced into public services - they must be profitable, and when they are, they should be sold to private, profit-seeking interests. To what other services will this apply? Prisons? Shelters for battered women? Education? Health? Some of this has

already begun to happen.

• **Free trade and the globalization of the Canadian economy:** the flood of mergers that followed on the heels of the Free Trade Agreement is but an indication of things to come, according to some observers. Despite the grandstanding of the Prime Minister during the election debate, the increasing corporate concentration that goes with free trade means fewer choices, not more. The real choice is not Skippy vs. Kraft peanut butter, but whether you have enough to eat at all. In a rich, capitalist democracy, all citizens should be enabled to contribute their best to the country. That means choices in education, jobs and lifestyles, not just peanut butter.

• **Goods and Services Tax:** simply the latest in a series of measures that hurt the poor. The quasi-religious obsession with the deficit is not only unnecessary in economic terms but disastrous in social terms. Economists from the C.D. Howe Institute now tell us it is unreasonable for Canadians to work a 40-hour week and expect to be able to

The Womanist is proud to present this special issue on abortion, and saddened that it is so necessary. We think abortion is an issue that is fundamental to women's lives. We invite you to read the words of women who have had abortions, of women who are fighting for that right

everywhere. But most of all, we invite you to take action. The bill can be stopped. Please act now. Your future depends on it.

Write your MP and the Prime Minister, postage-free, at: House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

As John Fraser, Speaker of the House, stated: "We are a parliamentary democracy, not a so-called executive democracy, nor a so-called administrative democracy. If the rule of Parliament is not respected, our freedoms are put at peril and our traditions become a mockery."

cont'd on page 4

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No abortion legislation

The Womanist does not support any new legislation on abortion.

Criminal legislation would not work. Women in all countries and during all periods of history have risked punishment to obtain abortions if they thought they were necessary. No law will ever change that.

Criminal legislation is unnecessary. Women make this very serious decision only after careful consideration. It is not a frivolous decision, and access to abortion services is not abused. Since the abortion law was struck down a year and a half ago by the Supreme Court, there has been no upsurge in abortions. Less than 1% of abortions occur in the last trimester.

Criminal legislation would not appease the vocal minority opposing women's right to choose. The government seems to think some kind of "compromise" legislation would let them off the hook. The

right-to-lifers will continue to harass, browbeat and threaten MP's (and anyone else) who do not take a hard-line anti-choice position. No compromise will slow them down. If anything, it will feed their obsession.

Canadians don't want criminal legislation. The recent poll conducted for CTV Quarterly Report showed that most Canadians believe abortion should be a decision between a woman and her doctor. Only 11% are opposed to abortion under any circumstances. According to the Macleans poll about Canada-US relations, that means that more Canadians want to become the 51st state than want to ban abortion. We're talking about a very small number of people here.

Abortion, like all medical procedures, is already highly regulated by the medical professions. For example, Chantal Daigle was not able to have an abortion in Québec after 22 weeks, because of

medical standards already in place. Criminalization is unnecessary.

Instead of criminal legislation, all that is needed is some calm leadership, and a reaffirmation of the systems that are already in place to provide access to medically safe abortion. It's time to move away from the anti-choice obsession with the Criminal Code and to focus on the need for access to abortion services. The principles of the Canada Health Act should be our guide.

The commonsense, intelligence and compassion of women, along with the professional standards of medical practitioners, will ensure a reasonable and responsible approach to abortion. Criminal legislation would do the opposite.

Lynne Tyler
Joan Riggs

Editorial *cont'd*



The ironic part is that this government keeps basing their economic rationale on the deficit, yet they can come up with millions of tax payers' dollars to sell a restrictive economic policy that hasn't been passed by parliament.

We wonder whether the GST is a way to replace the tariffs lost due to the Free Trade Agreement.

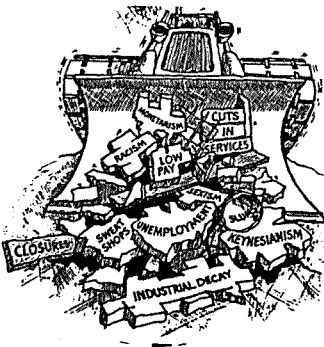
• **Regional subsidies:** the poorest Canadians have again been hardest hit by the cuts in our national systems to redress regional disparities. Between the regional cutbacks, the slashing of VIA and the depletion of fish stocks by giving excessive quotas to foreign trawlers, it almost seems as if the very existence of Atlantic Canada is in question. And what if all of Atlantic Canada moves to Toronto? Is there no cost in

people being homeless, being underpaid or undervalued, or being isolated from friends, family and community?

• **Meech Lake:** the PM and premiers have set up a game that is impossible to win - it has become so polarized that any decision will appear to choose between Québec on the one hand, and a range of other Canadians (some of whom are also Québécois) on the other hand. So, in order to prove we aren't anti-French, we have to support the Accord, whether we think it's good or not.

And, at the same time, Québec's legitimate claim to being a "distinct society" has become a political football. Québec's progress toward nationhood seems increasingly inevitable, and the Meech Lake Accord is simply one more step along the way.

• **Racist violence:** the rise of racially-motivated violence and police abuse (or is it simply that we are now hearing of these incidents?) has been met with a deathly silence at the federal level. A Prime Minister and Cabinet who so often tout multiculturalism have missed opportunities to provide genuine leadership towards a more tolerant Canada. By refusing to provide that leadership, they have implicitly condoned the disturbing tide of racism.



• **Abortion:** an example of a difficult issue that did not have to be as divisive as it was, but was mismanaged by the government. There is a consensus among the public, but the government backbenchers are out of step with the majority of Canadians - hence the perceived need for criminal legislation. One of the

hidden costs of the abortion debate is the poisoning of trust between men and women on a very personal level. The abuse of the legal system by disgruntled husbands / boyfriends trying to control or punish the women in their lives does nothing to further relations between men and women.

But why is this happening? What is the vision of Canada's future that all this is leading toward?

As women, we must not just attend to the immediate issues relating to our bodies, but also the issues that will affect all of our lives and the lives of our children. If the economic plan is to make us dependent on other nations, on the United States, and on international corporations, then women must lead with our analysis.

Women understand dependency. We understand its inherent weaknesses, and how it can so easily deny choice. We understand how easy it is to divide people, how hard it is to be isolated from one another. We understand how dependency erodes freedom and promotes abuse of human rights. We know it because we have lived it.

The government has chosen to not articulate their vision, but there are some chilling possibilities evident in the real-life examples of other

countries around us who have been forced into dependent relationships.

For example, the economic changes taking place in Canada are similar to actions taken by some other governments, usually under duress from external creditors, including Jamaica and Chile. Measures such as these in other countries have had a profoundly negative impact on economic prosperity, social harmony, and political stability.

A nation is a fragile thing. There is nothing absolute or guaranteed about the collection of institutions and traditions, founded on shared values, that makes a nation unique. It is possible for the basic fabric of Canada as we know it to be changed. It has happened to other countries. At a time when women are struggling to retain control over our own bodies, all Canadians are losing control over so many other aspects of our lives.

We cannot take for granted our democratic rights, our social fabric as a nation, our economic independence and standard of living. Any one of these, or all of them, can be eroded in a very short period of time. And from where we stand, that's exactly where this government is headed, intentionally or not.

Lynne Tyler
Joan Riggs



Open Letter to Latin American Women

(The following is a translation of a letter which was sent in August and September to approximately 100 Latin American women across Canada)

Dear companera,

This may be the first time you hear from some of us since the National Conference of Immigrant and Visible Minority women that was held in Ottawa in 1988 (remember going dancing?) For others, this letter will be the continuation of an ongoing dialogue around a variety of concerns that has served as an informal vehicle many different national, provincial and regional meetings, beginning with the Winnipeg conference in 1986. For others still, this may be the first time you hear from us - to you we especially extend our greetings and solidarity.

Now, let us tell you something about ourselves. We are a group of Latin American women who find ourselves living in these northern latitudes as a consequence of our past concerns, for reasons of work, or, as we would say in our countries, as a result of a twist of fate.

Some time ago, we became aware of the need for a space, a way of working, and a focus for our concerns that was our own: that is to say, an organization of women, by women, and for women, within which we could communicate in Spanish, and which incorporated the specific culture and social context of Latin Americans in Canada. This is why we write you this letter - and we reach out to you as an individual Latin American woman, independently of any of the tasks or functions that

you may be carrying out in other organizations, where we know that many of us have been very actively involved for many years.

For us, the creation and development of a Latin American Women's Congress is a beautiful challenge - we want to demonstrate to this Canadian society the strength, culture, courage and skills of our own women - of ourselves, of the women from all of Latin America - and it is in this task that we are now engaged. We are already organized at the regional level - there are small groups working in several other locations across Canada - and now, with the help of each and every one of you, we are allowing ourselves to dream that we will be able to connect across this whole large nation.

This is why we are writing to you now. We are confident and hopeful that we will be able

to work together, presenting a democratic, wide and common front within which each one of us will be able to share her concerns and make her contribution. We invite you to participate in this Latin American women's dream. We need the cooperation, help and support of all Latin American women, in all locations and at all levels, to undertake this challenging task.

Please, send us your suggestions, your needs, and your ideas; write and describe the type of involvement, structure, and participation that you would like to see in a Congress of Latin American women at the national level. As you all know, due to the geography of this country, it is very difficult for us to get in touch with all Latin American women directly, which is what we need and want to do. We therefore ask you to contact

other companeras who might share our concerns, and pass this letter on to them

We wait to hear your reply and your comments. Many thanks for your time. A sisterly hug and warm greetings from the Latin American women of Ottawa.

From the coordinating committee,
Maria Eliena Alvarado-Muskatblit
Gina Salinas
Maria Eugenia Otarola
Jacqueline Bittencourt-Sztein
Alma Rosa Estable

Latin American Women's Congress / Congrès de femmes d'amerique latine
2660 Norberry Crescent
Suite 416
Ottawa, Ontario
K1V 6N2
Canada
Tel: (613) 523-6215



Across the country: Take Back the Night

Fort Smith NWT

by Gail Paquin

On September 15, 1989, the first "Take Back the Night" march in the Northwest Territories attracted between 125 and 150 people in Fort Smith, N.W.T.

The event was organized by staff and board members of the Tawow Society, which operates Sutherland House, a safe home for female victims of spousal assault.

The response from the community was overwhelming. Many people, organizations, and businesses assisted with the event, by contributing time, energy, and materials during the preparation stages. A strong publicity campaign was launched during the week of the event, and the community at large responded by coming out to protest violence against women.

After marching down the main street, carrying placards, glowing torches, candles and flashlights, people congregated at Conibear Park. Several speakers told the crowd about various aspects of violence against women. Sister Sutherland opened the evening, by speaking about spousal assault. She called for a minute of silence, in remembrance of the women who have lost their lives due to violent assaults, then led the crowd in the Lord's Prayer.



Lorraine Tordiff prepared a presentation from a research paper she had written on pornography. Bonnie Lynch gave Ms. Tordiff's presentation, which ended by calling for a restriction on the accessibility of pornographic materials.

The next speaker, Annette Dowling, addressed the issue of sexual assault. Her focus was on the rights of a woman over her own body. Annette ended her speech with an accounting of a woman who grew up thinking it was normal to have sexual intercourse with her older brother.

The final guest, Sonia Conway sang a song entitled "Another Battered Wife",

written by Dale Crocker, former Sutherland House employee. Gail Paquin, MC, closed the evening by encouraging the participants to become informed about the issues of violence against women. It was stated that one person can make a difference.

The organizers of the Take Back The Night March feel that awareness of the issue of violence against women was brought to the general public, and are encouraged by the community's concern and support.

Gail Paquin is Program Co-ordinator at Sutherland House, a women's shelter in Fort Smith, NWT.



photo by Barb Park

Take Back the Night Saskatoon. One hundred and fifty people marched through downtown Saskatoon to recognize TBTN. They heard speeches from Immigrant Women of Saskatoon, Saskatoon Wife-Battering Advocacy Network, Interval House, and the Saskatoon Sexual Assault Centre. After the rally and march people headed to the National Film Board for a social event.

Great turnout in Calgary

Approximately 250 women and children marched in Calgary's 8th Annual Women Take Back the Night on September 15, 1989. Organized by the Calgary Status of Women Action Committee, it was one of the most successful marches in recent years due to the excellent turnout and the good weather.

The air was filled with wonderful woman energy. We met at Memorial Park and took back the night with songs by Peggy Ward and Christina Willings, an emotional reading of June Jordan's "My Rights" by Sarah Bholia of the Women of Colour Collective and a

rousing speech by Jean Munn of the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee who talked about women uniting to break the silence.

We marched down Calgary's "Electric Avenue", a street filled with singles' bars where waitresses cheered us on and men gaped at us through the windows. We also marched the "17th Avenue strip", full of shops and restaurants and had people wave at us and cars honk in support.

As usual, there were a few men who leered and shouted obscenities. Unfortunately, this is what caught the media's attention rather than the

public's support and the spirit and energy of the march itself.

The weeks before, organizers had spent most of their time trying to obtain a permit to march on the road without having to obtain a two-million dollar liability insurance that was supposedly to 'protect' the city and the police from all harm. We won and the organizers are going to continue to lobby the City to ensure that this does not arise again.

Mutriba Din is a feminist living in Calgary and working with the Status of Women Action Committee and the Women of Colour Collective.

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Fredericton's fifth march

by Lorraine, Fredericton
Rape Crisis Centre

On Friday, September 15, 1989, the Fredericton Rape Crisis Centre sponsored this city's Fifth Annual Take Back the Night March. The March was one of thousands held annually across Canada and the U.S. to protest the fear and violence women endure on a daily basis. The event is also a celebration of sisterhood, unity and empowerment. It is an opportunity for women's voices to be heard as they work towards their common goal: a world in which violence, sexual harassment, rape, battery and incest are no longer tolerated.

This year the March began with an opening rally behind the Student Union Building on the University of New Brunswick campus. About 80 women received many reports of sexual assault and harassment from the University. We hoped that, by beginning the March on campus, we would raise students' awareness of the incidence of sexual violence and also make our services known, particularly to the women and UNB and St. Thomas University.

The March was publicized around campus and the city by radio announcements and posters, and invitations were sent to the resident students via the Don of each house.

The only students who responded were a group of about 20 women from the Lady Dun house who walked over with their Don, Lynn Fraser, to attend the opening rally. In the midst of aparent indifference

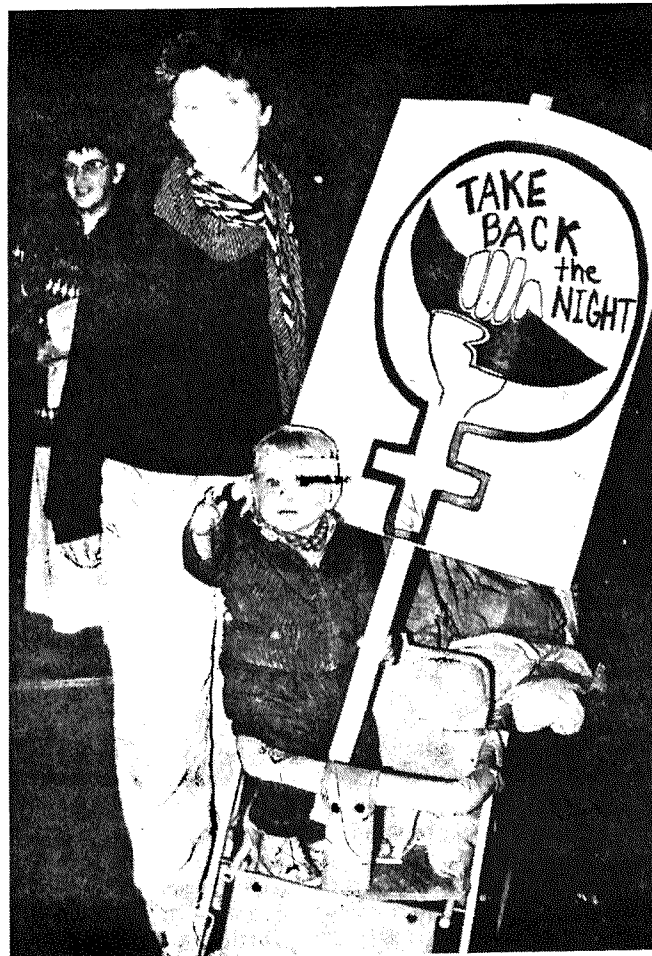
and apathy of the student population, it was encouraging that these women came out to show their support and concern.

More disturbing than the students' indifference were the cat calls and laughter that could be heard from some of the men's residences while two members of the Rape Crisis Centre were making the opening speeches.

Carrying placards bearing messages and chanting slogans such as "Women unite, take back the night", "Not the church, not the state, women must decide their fate", and "Yes means yes, no means no, however we dress, wherever we go", the marchers proceeded out of the University to downtown Fredericton. Many passers-by in cars and on foot, stopped to cheer or to join in the march. At Queen Street, the last stretch before reaching our destination, the marchers left the sidewalk, and, contrary to the conditions imposed by City Council - walked along the right-hand lane.

The March ended at City Hall with closing speeches by Kit Holmwood, the national president of the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League, and Marguerite Levesque, president of the local chapter of La Federation des Dames d'Acadie. Several other women were invited to speak on behalf of different ethnic and minority groups but most were unable to attend because of prior commitments.

The evening ended with a reception at the Rape Crisis Centre. The March was, once again, a success, helping to raise both society's awareness of sexual violence, and women's morale in the struggle against oppression.



TAKE BACK THE NIGHT - Allison Brewer and her one-year-old daughter Anna of Fredericton took part in the Take Back the Night march.

Sexual Assault Support Centre of Edmonton

- 24-hour crisis line
- walk-in crisis intervention
- crisis intervention counselling
- group therapy
- public education

(403) 423-4121 crisis
(403) 423-4102 business

Montréal

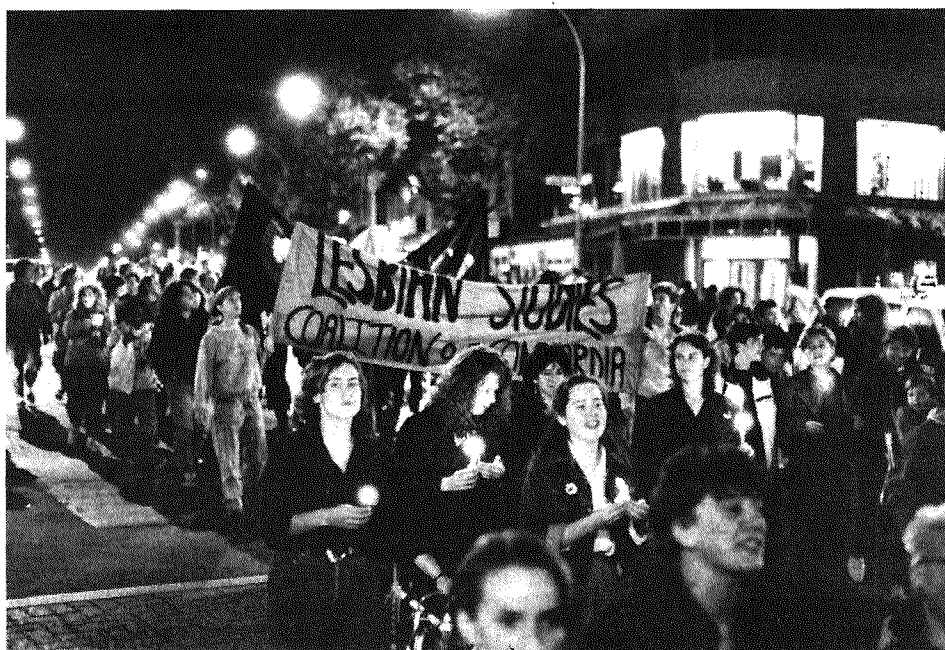


photo by Janet de Paiva

The Take Back the Night March in Montreal was sponsored by the Montreal Assault Prevention Centre. Approximately 500 women participated in a noisy, positive attention-getting march which lasted about 45 minutes. A link was made this year between our right as women to be safe from aggression of all kinds, and our rights to choose concerning our reproduction and bodies. This theme came out of the events surrounding Chantal Daigle's fight for her right to choose. (from Leona Heilig, Co-ordinator of Centre de prévention des agressions de Montreal Assault Prevention Centre.)

WAVAW

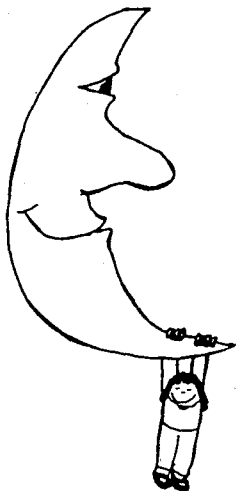
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Violence against women worldwide



- One in 10 Canadian women will be abused or battered by her husband (Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1982).
- More than 80 million African women and girls are victims of female circumcision or other forms of genital mutilation (World Health Organization report).
- 50 per cent of married women are regularly battered by their partners in Bangkok, Thailand (Worldwatch Institute report).
- An estimated 1,000 women are burned alive each year in dowry-related incidents in the state of Gujarat, India alone (Ahmedabad Women's Action Group report).
- 78,000 female fetuses were aborted after sex determination tests between 1978 and 1982 (a study of a Bombay clinic).
- Every 15 seconds a woman is beaten in the United States (U.S. Department of Justice).
- In Mexico, a woman is raped every nine minutes (Doble Jornada, Nov. 1987).

(From a fact sheet produced by MATCH International Centre, an Ottawa-based organization committed to improving the status of women globally through the exchange of resources between Canadian and Third World women.)

Toronto focus on child sexual abuse



Alix Dobkin at the Take Back the Night rally in Toronto (photo by MAVerick)

Each September, the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre invites women and children to join in our annual TAKE BACK THE NIGHT rally and march. Organized in communities across Canada and throughout the world, TAKE BACK THE NIGHT is a protest against the violence that women and children experience in their daily lives.

Our focus this year is the abuse of children. Telephone calls from incest survivors and reports of child sexual abuse

have increased dramatically over the past year. Our theme "Protect the Living", was chosen because of the lack of concern shown by the police, the courts and the government for the safety of children. The provincial government's proposed Bill 124 makes children's safety a low priority. At the same time, we hear people crying out for "protection of the fetus", while showing little concern for the safety of living children across Canada.

Saskatoon

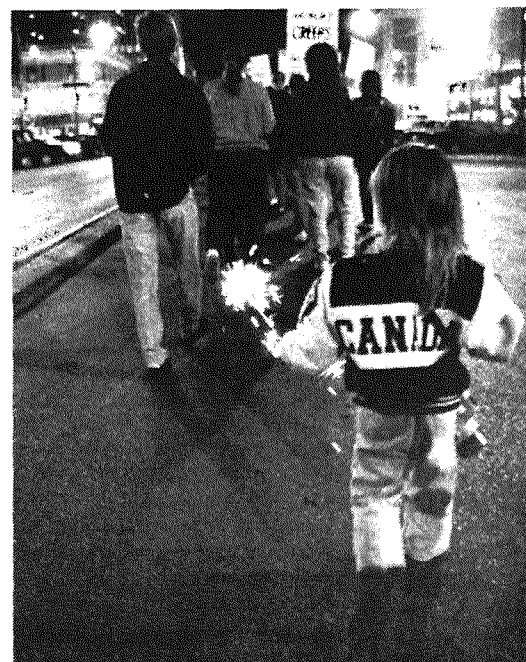
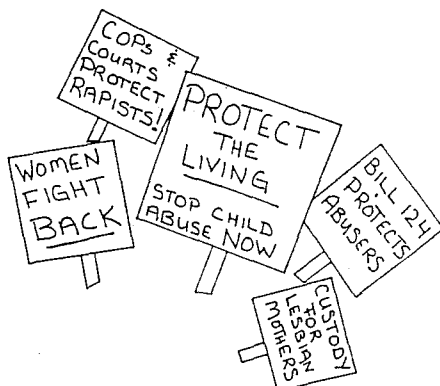


photo by Barb Park

In solidarity with all women fighting to end violence against women.

Toronto Rape Crisis Centre
PO Box 6597, Station A
Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X4



Vancouver marchers defy law

by Tracy McIntosh

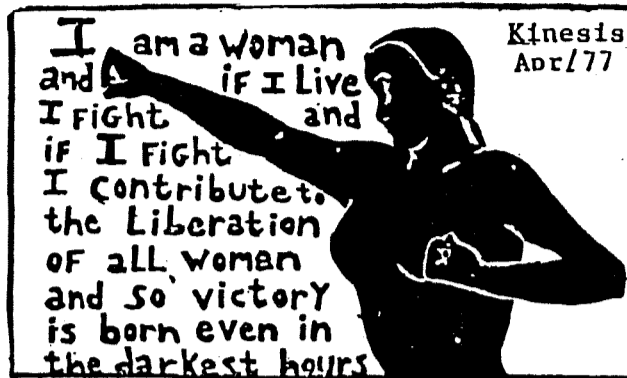
"Last night I heard the screaming
 Loud voices behind the wall
 Another sleepless night for me
 Won't do no good to call the police
 Always come late, if they come at all."

Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter delivered an empowering and defiant speech.

"I got a message for the men who attack us on the street. Look out. We'll do what ever we can to expose you. We'll poster your name and face all over this town. We'll tell each other about you...and if we want to...we'll make the

cops look for you...and we've got a message for the friends, husbands and lovers who rape and beat us up. We will not be kept in line. We will fight back!"

In this spirit, we marched into the streets, taking over the Georgia Street Viaduct, a main bridge heading into downtown Vancouver. Numerous women's groups from the Lower Mainland carried their banners



So began this year's annual Take Back the Night in Vancouver. Tracy Chapman's "Behind the Wall" rang out from the three hundred women and children rallied outside the CNR Station at Main and Terminal. But on this night we would break the wall of silence. We would fight back to end the violence against women. We would march together in safety, without shame but with rage and courage and strength, and with our dignity intact.

The march was declared to be illegal. "We believe it is a contradiction to ask male authorities for permission to walk safely in the streets." The women cheered in overwhelming agreement.

Telegrams of support and unity from women Taking Back the Night across Canada were read aloud. Regina, the keynote speaker, from




high and proud. Women chanted "What do we want...Freedom. When do we want it...Now" and "Women unite, take back the night."

Our message was clear. Men are responsible for the violence women experience and together we can and will fight back to demand they stop harassing, raping, beating, and sexually assaulting us.

When we reached our final destination, women refused to give up the streets. Another message was clear. We would continue to organize and fight to take back every night of the year. As Regina concluded, "Women's liberation is alive and kicking out."

Tracy McIntosh is a member of Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter.



Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan

BATTLEFORDS & AREA SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE
 P.O. Box 1041, North Battleford, Sask. S9A 3K2
 Tel.: (306) 445-0055 (24-hr. Line 464-4444)

LLOYDMINSTER SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE
 P.O. Box 2033, Lloydminster, Sask. T9V 0M3
 Tel.: (403) 875-4609 (24-hr. Line 875-1277)

NORTH EAST CRISIS INTERVENTION CENTRE
 P.O. Box 2066, Melfort, Sask. S0E 1A0
 Tel.: (306) 752-9464 (24-hr. Line 752-9455)

PRINCE ALBERT MOBILE CRISIS UNIT
 1100-1st Ave. East, Prince Albert, Sask. S6V 0C8
 Tel.: (306) 764-1039 (after 5 p.m. 764-1011)

REGINA SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE
 219-1808 Smith Street, Regina, Sask. S4P 2N3
 Tel.: (306) 352-0434 is a 24-hr. Line

SASKATOON SEXUAL ASSAULT /INFO. CENTRE
 302-115 2nd Ave. North, Saskatoon, Sask. S7K 2B1
 Tel.: (306) 244-2224 is a 24-hr. Line

SOUTHWEST CRISIS SERVICES
 Box 1102, Swift Current, Sask. S9H 3X3
 Tel.: (306) 778-3386 (24-hr. Line 778-3833)

WEST CENTRAL CRISIS CENTRE
 P.O. Box 2235, Kindersley, Sask.
 Tel.: (306) 463-6655 (24-hr. Line 463-HELP)

YORKTON FAMILY VIOLENCE PROGRAM
 c/o SIGN, 29 Livingstone Street, Yorkton, Sask. S3N 0R2
 Tel.: (306) 783-9409

Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan (306) 244-2224
 302-115 2nd. Ave. North, Saskatoon, Sask. S7K 2B1



STOP THE

.. teachers ... shrinks ..
 .. brothers ... professors ...
 .. landlords ... busdrivers ..
~~**RAPE**~~
 .. pornographers ... lawyers ..
 .. fathers ... grandfathers ...
 .. ministers ... boyfriends ...
 .. judges ... cops ... dates ...
 .. husbands ... strangers ..

MEN WHO RAPE

Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter 872-8212

- 24 hour crisis line
- emergency shelter for women & their children
- women's organizing centre

Abortion

Of silence and power

by Luanne Armstrong



Of all the issues the women's movement is facing, abortion is the one which seems to divide most easily into black and white, pro and con, choice, or lack of choice.

And of all the issues we deal with, it is perhaps the one where we talk least about our pain, our frustration, our sadness, our fear, our feelings about our bodies, and our lives.

There is nothing pretty, easy, tidy about abortion. It bears repeating that no matter that we are pro-choice, none of us are pro-abortion. It is a sad and grieving intervention into what should, in a better world, be a loving and joy-filled process. Abortion hurts...not in the way that the anti-choice people brand it as hurting; it hurts because it should never have to happen, because it leaves scars that heal but ache occasionally, because it leaves bitterness, not at the choice, but at the conditions that necessitate it, because those of us who are not involved must stand aside and say "it's your decision". It hurts us, not only directly but also as our daughter's mothers...as our mother's children...our sister's keepers.

Abortion is an issue which I have thought about, worked on, talked about, organized on, ever since my own particular horror story happened years ago. It's one I have rarely talked about until a couple of years ago, when I told it to a TV interviewer and found myself unable to go home after work, knowing it would be on the six o'clock news. I didn't mind other people hearing it. It was myself I was afraid of.

It is a unique but somehow familiar story. I came home pregnant from kidnapping my own kids back from their battering alcoholic father. I was refused an abortion in my small rural town. I told the doctor it was rape. The doctor

(against whom I still have a grudge) told me that pregnancy was much safer than abortion, and why couldn't I give the kid up for adoption? I ended up, a month later, in Vancouver, forced to have a saline abortion. I was clear then, and I'm clear now, that my decision was "pro-life."

I had four small children who needed me. I was exhausted and on welfare. There was no room in my life for another child who needed to be mothered, loved and cared for, for the rest of her life. I am a fierce, protective, devoted mother, a grizzly bear Mom. The children I had needed/deserved all of me, and that's what I gave them.

Sometimes I fantasize about having another child. Sometimes I wonder who she would have been. But not often. I made my decision out of love and care. I knew then, I know now, that the most

In many respects, it would be extremely difficult for me to care for a child now. But I would no longer choose to interfere.

I have also considered, carefully, what I would do if I had a Down's syndrome child, a possibility at my age. I am also fairly sure I would still choose to carry through with the pregnancy. But I would choose. This is not necessarily logical on my part, it is simply how I feel. Nor does it mean that I regret or in any way condemn the decision my younger self made. But the decision, either way, would be mine and it would be for the sake of both mine and my child's life.

As another woman not long ago said to me, after telling me about the decision her sixteen-year-old daughter has made, to have a child and give it up for adoption. The important thing is she had a

this permeated by her anger at why we bothered to ask politicians for permission to make a choice when the choice is always, inevitably, historically, finally ours, and always will be.

In some sense, the struggle for choice on abortion is ludicrous. Women have always chosen or not chosen to be pregnant. In "primitive" people, herbal abortifacients were available to women.

Although abortion has been made difficult and painful and has often, until very recently, meant death... women still chose. Often the choice was and still is warped by the politics of state and government that have not funded research into women's health issues, won't provide birth control information, and in many countries, still make birth control difficult to get.

It is also seriously, painfully warped by social conditioning that blinds and numbs us to any real sense of our sexuality, to the idea that our sexuality is only ours, and we control it and are responsible for it.

If the Mulroney government passes a new law restricting abortion, some of us will probably obey it, where possible. And where not, we won't. Why should we? I believe that the government/ men/ patriarchy know this, just as we know that the bottom line, the hidden issue, the not-polite-stuff-to-talk-about, is that the whole struggle, including the struggle over a new abortion law, is about control...just as Chantal Daigle's battering ex-boyfriend's lawsuit was about control...**CONTROL OVER WHAT WE ALREADY HAVE**, ourselves, our lives, our bodies, our sexuality, our ability to get pregnant, or not get pregnant.

Power is a strange thing. In some sense, we can neither give it away nor acquire it. But we can recognize and assume it, when we have it. For

example, I'm presently working in an educational institution that is based on feminist, wholistic principles. It's taking me awhile to get used to the idea of being mainstream, and not having to hide, or fight for, my principles.

When then, as my friend said to me, are we asking "Daddy" to give us permission to control our lives and our sexuality? Sometimes I wonder if we have been struggling for so long that we have forgotten how not to struggle, forgotten how to assume the power we already have.

The world has changed. There are now feminist doctors and therapists and healers and midwives and teachers and lawyers and herbalists. We would not have to go back to coathangers and back alleys. We have not fought this far and this long without having learned a very great deal. Yes, there is a right wing minority backlash which has power and money and is dangerous. We also have power and money and they think we're very dangerous.

The women's movement is changing. We haven't caught up to ourselves yet. We repeat and repeat the same patterns, uncertain of where we are, what we have achieved, where to go next. We write letters and organize rallies, and the other side, cunning in their own weird way, watches and imitates us, and learns some of our lessons about solidarity and sister/brotherhood and uses our language against us.

But as yet another friend said to me on the phone the other day, after we had decided not to organize an abortion rally..."but what I really need to do is talk about it. I'm scared...maybe I'm paranoid. I don't know what to do anymore." Exactly, who does? Not that doing rallies and letters is wrong.

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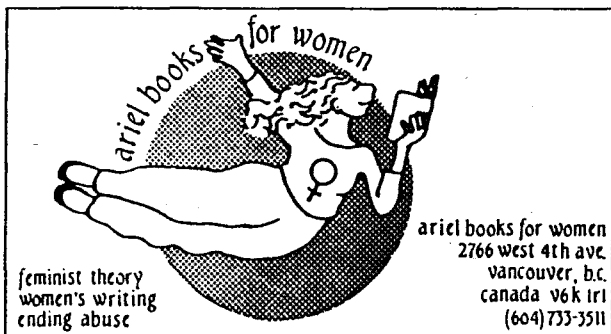
profoundly "pro-life" decision a woman can make is deciding whether or not she has the ability to care, her whole life long, for a child; to mother and help and nurture and fight for and love her kid/s.

The odd thing about all this conviction is that now, if I were to become pregnant, which admittedly, is unlikely, I would not choose to have an abortion...and not just because my life has changed.

choice. Yes.

Two or other things have happened to me recently which have brought abortion into focus. One was finding a copy of "Feminists for Life" in my mail. I read it...carefully, wanting to know what it meant. It's an anthology of articles, only one of which I could find any agreement with, one in which the author called for "both sides" to sit down and talk and figure out a way to create a world in which abortion wasn't an issue. Sure, of course.

Another was one of my best friends, weeping in my kitchen, struggling to articulate what she was feeling, why she no longer went to abortion rallies, why the whole issue hurt and wounded and angered her...struggling to talk about her daughter's abortion, all of



The new Bill: what now?

Abortion

We were all braced for restrictive abortion legislation, but most observers expected relatively open access to abortion in the early stages, and severe restrictions only later.

Instead, we have the re-criminalization of abortion in all stages.

What's wrong with this bill?

- It puts abortion back in the Criminal Code, where it does not belong. See the editorial on page 3 for all the reasons why.

- It puts the decision about abortion squarely in the hands of doctors, not women. (You might reply that *all* medical decisions are in the hands of doctors, but you have a *right* to an appendectomy or treatment of a broken leg – under this bill, a woman never has a *right* to an abortion.)

- One prosecution, even if it is eventually thrown out of court, will stop hundreds of doctors from performing needed abortions. Even if there is never a prosecution, the threat of it will stop many more.

- The bill does nothing to stop the kind of third-party interventions we saw this summer in the Daigle and Dodd cases. In fact, it probably provides opportunities for even more of these invasions of

privacy. For instance, if a potential father (or a neighbour, or an anti-choice activist from Denver, for that matter) thinks that he can prove a woman is having an abortion for reasons other than health, he may be able to have criminal charges pressed. At the very least, he can make the woman's life and the doctor's life very miserable.

As Marjorie Nichols pointed out in the *Ottawa Citizen* (Nov. 7/89), doctors will also have to be concerned about entrapment by anti-abortion zealots masquerading as prospective abortion patients.

- The bill does nothing to address the real issues related to abortion: access, and prevention. Many women across Canada will still have no access to legal abortion in their communities. They will be forced into expensive and disruptive delays by obtaining abortions elsewhere, or face an unwanted pregnancy.

What will happen in the House?

According to Lise Bourgault, the MP who chaired the Tory caucus committee on abortion, the major objective in writing and re-writing the bill

was to garner the 148 votes needed to pass it into law. (Too bad the objective wasn't to write the best possible legislation.) Obviously, they think they have reached that number, or they would not have brought it forward.

The Government is counting on Cabinet solidarity to help reach the magic number. Ministers have apparently been told to vote for the bill, or resign. This causes a dilemma for both anti-choice and pro-choice ministers. In fact, anti-choicers Benoit Bouchard (Transport Minister) and Perrin Beatty (Health

Minister) have indicated they may resign instead of voting.

One who we might have expected to take such a stance is Barbara McDougall, Minister for the Status of Women, and a formerly strong proponent of choice. But media reports would have us believe she is happy with what even she is calling a "compromise."

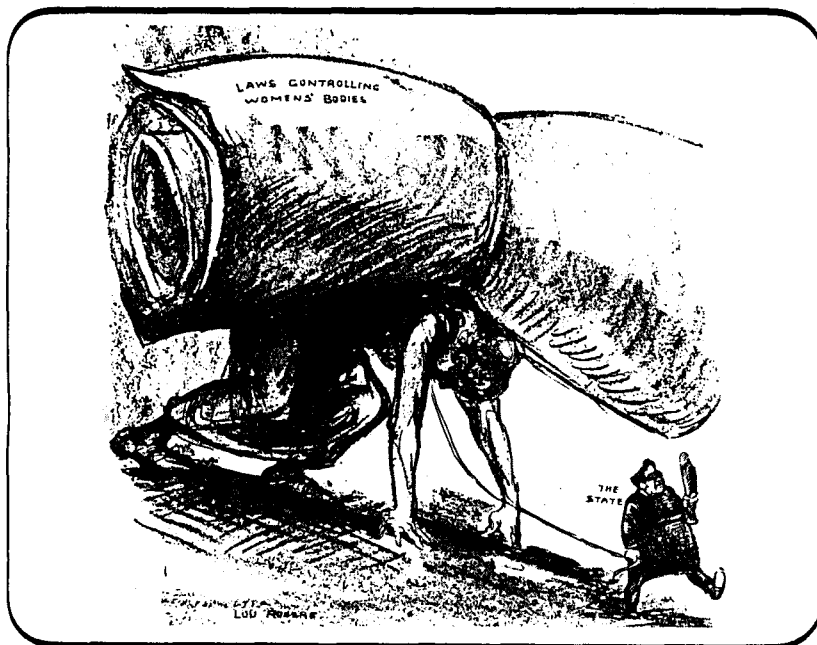
This will be a free vote for the Liberals. It is difficult to predict how everyone will vote, but at least some hard-line anti-choice MP's will oppose it. Moderate pro-choice Liberals, such as Status of Women Critic Mary Clancy and others who would have voted for legislation based on gestational limits, have indicated they will not vote for criminalization.

The New Democratic Party caucus discussed the bill and has taken a strong, united stand to vote as a block against the legislation.

However, a principled stand by the NDP and Liberals may not be enough. The Tory backbenchers will be allowed to have a free vote on the issue, but Bourgault's committee thinks they can swing enough support just within their own caucus, even if every opposition MP votes against it.

However, it is far from over. MP's in all parties (and perhaps some Ministers, too) can be persuaded to change their minds. We won't know until the final vote is in.

"Her Legal Status." Birth Control Review, May 1919



What it says

An Act respecting abortion

Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

1. Sections 287 and 288 of the Criminal Code are repealed and the following substituted therefore:

"287. (1) Every person who induces an abortion on a female person is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two 10 years, unless the abortion is induced by or under the direction of a medical practitioner who is of the opinion that, if the abortion were not induced, the health or life of the female person would be likely to be threatened.

(2) For the purpose of this section, "health" includes, for greater certainty, physical, mental and psychological health;

"medical practitioner", in respect of an abortion induced in a

province, means a person who is entitled to practise medicine under the laws of that province:

"opinion" means an opinion formed using generally accepted standards of the medical profession.

(3) For the purposes of this section and section 288, inducing an abortion does not include using a drug, device or other means on a female person that is likely to prevent implantation of a fertilized ovum.

288. "Everyone who unlawfully supplies or procures a drug or other noxious thing or an instrument or thing, knowing that it is intended to be used or employed to induce an abortion on a female person, is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years."

2. This Act shall come into force on a day to be fixed by order of the Governor in Council.

That seems to be the haunting fear of mankind – that the advancement of women will sometime, some way, someplace interfere with some man's comfort.

Nellie McClung
1978 Herstory

Act now

- Write your MP and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, House of Commons, Ottawa, K1A 0A6

- CARAL has a "No new law restricting abortion" postcard campaign. If you can help distribute these, contact your local chapter of CARAL.



The trouble with Tremblay

Abortion

by Judith Allen

How can two fairly inarticulate men with "control" agendas have the power to influence national policy when millions of adult, articulate, caring, thinking, feeling, responsible women are ignored?

Contrary to popular belief, this past summer's spate of injunction applications (brought by men purporting to be fathers seeking to prevent their female liaisons from making the decision of whether or not to become mothers), is not a new phenomenon to the law. Such applications were brought by "boyfriends" and "husbands" when Section 251 of the Criminal Code was still in force, and at least one such application was brought since the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in *Morgentaler* which struck down Section 251.

Such applications have failed for a variety of reasons, none of which brought Parliament rushing to fill an alleged legislative gap. They failed because the purported fathers had no standing to bring such applications since fathers have no legal interest in the fetus and therefore no legal right in relation to the fetus. They failed because the fetus has no legal interest independent of its host (the woman) that is enforceable prior to birth.

The application brought by Mock in Alberta last summer failed because the would-be father was unable to meet one part of the three part test for the granting of injunctions, namely the balance of convenience. Presumably the constitutional right of the

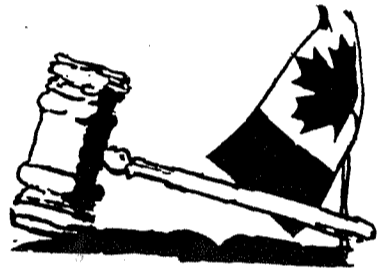
woman to security of the person as found in *Morgentaler*, outweighed the non-legal interests of the purported father and of the fetus.

In other words, the present state of the law looks like this: The majority in *Morgentaler* found a constitutional right to security of the person which right, at the very least, includes access to abortion free of institutional barriers, including unnecessary delays. There is no right for fathers with respect to the fetus. There is no right of the fetus.

The anti-choice movement thought it might be able to get a judge to create a father's right and/or a fetal right and the injunction route was used as a possible vehicle. Mr. Justice O'Driscoll of the Supreme Court

foundation in law--common law, statute law or *droit civil*.

The questions that remain are as follows: How can two fairly inarticulate men with "control" agendas have the power to influence national policy when millions of adult, articulate, caring, thinking, feeling, responsible women are ignored? When the highest Court in the country has shut down a legal tool that has been manipulated by the anti-choice movement, why is the federal government working hard to introduce a criminal law which will be enforced by, you guessed it, men just like Tremblay and Murphy? Realistically, there won't be police patrolling hospital wards searching for late term abortion seekers. Women and doctors will be dragged into Court by



of Ontario, Mr. Justice Vau of the Québec Supreme Court and three members of the Québec Court of Appeal felt that they could create such rights even though the Supreme Court of Canada made it quite clear in the *Borowski* decision that such creative acts had to come from Parliament, if at all.

Although the Supreme Court of Canada has yet to render reasons for their decision to allow the appeal in *Daigle*, and although the reasons are unlikely to be unanimous, its a unanimous decision of the highest Court in the country that such applications "are without basis in law".

The implications are clear. This legal avenue has been firmly closed down. Such injunctions should not be issued because they have no

third party interventionists of the anti-choice persuasion. Why is the federal government so eager to give them a legal tool with which to drag people into Court? Why is the Prime Minister going to let Members of Parliament vote according to their own consciences when the women who actually have to live with the real impact of the decision of whether or not to carry a pregnancy to term are not allowed to vote according to their consciences? Does Brian Mulroney believe that women have no conscience, no morality?

The danger of these cases is that they serve to convince the government that there is a gap in the law, though none really exists. The government's purported remedy will ideally serve the

anti-choice movement as it will provide the first step towards establishing a legal status for the fetus. The anti-choice movement will bemoan the fact that Parliament refuses to protect the fetus from conception, but the anti-choice movement will be the big winners if a criminal offence is re-introduced. It will provide them with a tool with which to harass women, and the medical community serving them, and it will be used in a much longer range strategy.

The intensely frightening thing about the injunction applications is that the judges used flawed legal reasoning to twist known experienced reality, i.e., that pregnancy is certain and that paternity is always uncertain, into a fiction of the exact opposite. There is a joke about a girl who comes home and tells her mother she is pregnant and the mother replies, "Are you sure its yours?"

In both the Ontario case and the Québec case, the woman was prevented by the applicant and the Court from knowing whether or not she would become a mother, whether or not the pregnancy was hers, while the Court allowed the applicant to claim that he was the father, i.e., that the pregnancy was his. Interestingly, while one man is in one Court alleging that the pregnancy belongs to him, and

Less than .03% of abortions in Canada are performed past the 24th week. Hospitals do not allow, doctors do not perform, and women do not seek late term abortions.

thus the woman should be forced to carry the pregnancy to term, another man in another Court will argue that a particular pregnancy did not belong to him, and thus he should not have to submit to blood tests or pay for the woman's pre-natal care. Men can define if and when and with

whom they are parents but women are not allowed to decide whether or not to become parents. Women should be very wary of judicial language that denies and subverts known, experienced reality. Women should be very wary of a federal government that wishes to legislate fiction.

We do not need a new criminal law regulating abortion. Less than .03% of abortions performed in Canada are performed past the 24th week. Hospitals do not allow, doctors do not perform and women do not seek late term abortions. However, when a late term abortion is necessary it is the woman and her doctor that are in the best position to make the decision. Police, crown attorneys, judges and third party anti-choice interventionists are **not the appropriate** decision-makers.

We do need accessible, affordable childcare, safe and effective birth control, accurate sex education and improved maternity benefits.

Members of Parliament are now weighing the mail they receive from the anti-choice movement, rather than counting it. We must write, phone and harass our M.P.'s to let them know that the pro-choice movement will not be silenced on this issue. We do not need to fine and jail and force women to carry pregnancies to term who do not feel they have adequate financial, social, physical and emotional resources to do so. Tell your M.P. that Tremblay should not be allowed to set public policy in this country.

Judith Allen is a member of the National Steering Committee of the National Association of Women and the Law and practises law with Nelligan/Power in Ottawa. The title of this article is courtesy of Sandra Sorensen who is the Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Margot Young graciously provided computer and editorial advice.

Of silence and power (cont'd from page 10)

But what I've been hearing from women for quite a while now is that they need a place to talk, a place to be heard, a place to discuss these complex, convoluted, difficult and often painful issues.

How, for example, could we not have mixed feelings about abortion? I want a place, not just to discuss abortion, but how I feel about the issue. I and the women I have talked

to want to go back there, to that safe, talking/ thinking place we seem to remember we once had, get clear about what's really going on, and how we all feel, and then decide what to do. But there never seems to be time.

Everything is so urgent. Everything is a crisis. And perhaps it is. But we do ourselves and the causes we fight for a disservice by not

creating spaces to both think and talk freely, and safely, about them. It has to be possible to be both active and thoughtful at the same time. I hope. Otherwise I'm in the wrong place. And the wrong business.

Luanne Armstrong is a B.C. feminist from Kamloops who teaches at a community college.

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Abortion

Compromise our principles?

Never!

by Cindy Moriarty

"Compromise" is a word in compatible with the ethics of choice. A woman cannot be a little bit pregnant any more than she can be a little bit sure if her right to choose and her right to access those choices. The government is playing politics. The Prime Minister wants to pass legislation, whatever the cost to women, to save his political neck. Especially in light of the controversy over the Goods and Services Tax. The Prime Minister wants to push abortion through as his success story. I, for one, am not interested in Mr. Mulroney's political neck. I am interested in the lives and rights and freedoms of women. Abortion should be such a right.

It distresses me to hear women saying we should compromise because otherwise we'll be faced with a much tougher law. Some pro-choicers believe that a "so-so" law is better than a really bad one. Think about it! Is it really?

We have never been so close to total victory and total free choice on the abortion issue. In any struggle of this nature the resistance

increases to the level of pressure. We're only facing this much resistance because we're so close to winning. If women break ranks now, if we divide then we've lost. Now more than ever the pro-choice position must be solid, firmly rooted to the ground and firmly rooted to our knowledge of what's fair and right for women.

Women are scrambling, trying to anticipate the legislation in order to plan a strategy. Although I'm not optimistic about the content of potential legislation, I am confident of our ability to overcome whatever it holds for us. Regardless of its content we have to fight and we have to believe we can win. I believe we can win. I believe, deeply, that we will win.

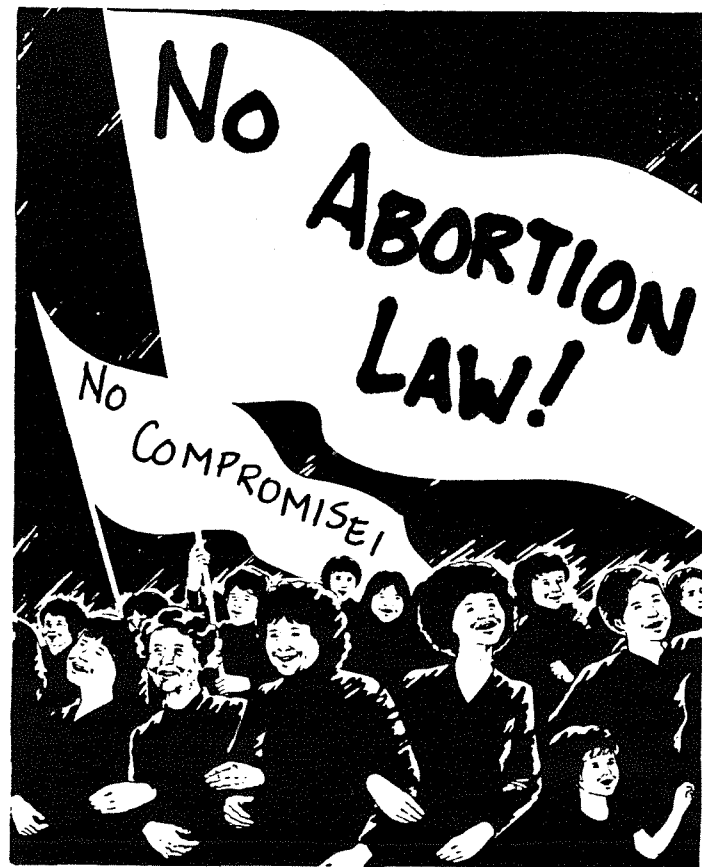
In January 1988 the Supreme Court of Canada struck down the old law. They ruled it was unconstitutional, that the therapeutic abortion committees (TACs) caused unnecessary delays and that the whole process caused a profound interference with a woman's right to freedom and security of the person. The judgements were also based

on the inequity of application of the T.A.C.'s and the inequity of access.

Any new criminal law would pose the same problems. Criminal law, by its nature, is prohibitive thereby requiring a monitoring mechanism. Whether that mechanism is a therapeutic abortion committee, a second doctor's approval, or the interpretation of certain criteria (i.e. definition of health) the process remains the same. If the process is the same, then any new law, by nature, will violate the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms just as S. 251 did prior to 1988.

The lack of access to a second doctor in Newfoundland is no different than the lack of access to a T.A.C. Same process - same problem - same decision in the Canadian Supreme Court.

Regardless of the legislation, Parliament will have to make allowances for extreme circumstances. How will these be interpreted. How will arbitrary personal judgement be any more appropriate when imposed in a new law than with what we had



before? It is not unusual, in Ottawa, for women to be in their 22nd. week of pregnancy before they receive results of genetic testing. If abortion is their decision they need it quickly at that point in the pregnancy and going through an approval process, no matter how fast it's "fast tracked" will cause unnecessary delays.

If legislation is passed, it will mean more court battles and more expense. CARAL and other organizations are committed to the struggle for reproductive freedom. It's taken years for women to get this close. We can't afford to relinquish now. Pro-choicers must remain firm and must be prepared to take any new law back to the Supreme Court where the Morgentaler decision gave us a loud clear signal.

Women will have choice, but we will have it sooner and surer if we all stand up and all speak out. Parliamentarians are feeling the heat. Don't let them cool down. Call, write, sign petitions, sign postcard, participate in your area's day of action on October 14th. Don't be tricked with politics.

Reproductive rights are fundamental to our equality. Control of our own bodies is the very essence of our rights to women. Remember our history; remember the back streets; remember our butchered sisters illegal abortions, remember our strength and our convictions. Remember our future - we will have choice. There is no compromise!

Cindy Moriarty is an active member of CARAL in Ottawa.



Dawn Black, M.P., NDP status of women critic

Women and New Democrats: working for choice, social and economic equality

The Women's Report is a quarterly publication about my activities, and issues of interest in the House of Commons. The next report is a special issue on reproductive choice. If you would like to be on my mailing list, please write to me postage-free at the House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6.

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A Liberal perspective

Choice with a longer view

Abortion

by Mary Clancy, M.P.

Canada has just witnessed a bizarre side show in the summer of '89. Just a year after the Supreme Court of Canada issued its landmark decision in *R. vs Morgentaler*, two cases, Chantel Daigle in Quebec and Barbara Dodd in Ontario, brought the abortion debate back to the front burner.

It is safe to say that no other public policy question has created such a polarization in all our history. On the other hand Right to Life groups stand fast on the premise that all life is sacred and that the taking of any life is to be prohibited.

On the other side there is a smaller but equally vociferous extreme that says life begins at birth and the termination of a pregnancy is solely between a woman and her doctor.

The second flaw in the theory relates to the availability and efficacy of contraceptive methods. "The pill" is not the panacea it was originally thought to be. Indeed, every form of contraception comes with side effects and / or failure rates. Combined with a puritanical attitude that prevents proper comprehension and practice; it is no wonder the incidence of unwanted pregnancy is so high. is usually not dealt with.

Then we have the mammoth social problems affecting women and children in our society. Abuse, neglect, poverty, homelessness, the stigma of out-of-wedlock pregnancy and the economic problems attached to child rearing; these are the harsh realities and we have yet to even scratch the surface for a



be said that the woman have the right to self-determination. It is unfortunate that the battle of establish this truth must be fought in the emotional quagmire that surrounds the abortion issue but rarely do protagonists have the luxury of choosing their battleground.

Many, if not most Canadians find themselves in a dilemma. They don't like abortion. Neither are they prepared to force a woman to bear a child she does not want. Further, the majority of us never want to see the most private lives of others splattered across the newspapers and television screens as they were this summer.

The truth is that there is no satisfactory answer to this dilemma, at least in the short term. The long term answer of education, support services and real change in the economic and social acceptance of woman and their children will be a long time coming. We must continue to fight for them but we need an answer to the abortion question now.

As a feminist, the belief that all women have a right to self-determination, "security of the persons", is fundamental but I also understand the view, similar to that of Mme. Justice Wilson in *Morgentaler*, the limits may have to be placed upon that right. Limits that are recommended by the medical profession and legislated for outside the Criminal Code. It is my belief that only legislation reflective of this view has no hope of gaining a parliamentary majority.

My own party has declared the vote will be free, i.e. not according to party line, reflecting the divergent but deeply held views of most caucus members.

To those that find any limit on the right to terminate a pregnancy to be a threat to women's right to choose, I can only say that in pluralistic society such as ours, it is only the art of compromise that can come close to achieving consensus.

Mary Clancy is the Member of Parliament for Halifax, Nova Scotia.




The majority of Canadians I believe fall somewhere between. The concept of abortion is abhorrent but equally abhorrent is the concept of women forbidden to control their own bodies.

For some, the time for choice begins when a woman becomes sexually active. This theory that woman either refuse to become sexually active or if she does then she protects herself by the use of contraception. There are unhappily several major flaws here. First, as a society we are woefully inadequate in preparing ourselves to deal with our sexuality. Sex education is sporadic and generally deals only with the mechanics of the situation. Occasionally, the psychological ramifications will be touched on but all too rarely, and the question of responsibility to oneself, one's partner and society is usually not dealt with.

solution. One example is our Family legislation. Both federally and provincially in any laws that relate to children you will find the phrase "the best interests of the child are paramount." It's a fine theory but it is more honored in the breach.

So the premise that proper choice is made before embarking on a sexual relationship is just not reflective of the reality of life. Neither is the often quoted statement, "Just say no." Saying that to a woman, whether she's a sixteen year old in the those of adolescent passion or a 35 year old giving in to her partner's demands, is equally pointless.

The other area of debate lands squarely in the realm of the status of woman. I suspect that even the most vehement anti-abortionists (at least the females) felt revolution at the "my woman, my kid" comment during the Daigle fiasco. Let it



MARY CLANCY, M.P.

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION CRITIC

FOR THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Best wishes to the womanist staff and readers in the battle for true equality. Mary Clancy

Marlene Catterall
MP- Ottawa West

I welcome your calls and letters, and news of community events.



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Abortion

NDP oppose recriminalization

by Dawn Black, M.P.

Last year, the government introduced three motions in the House of Commons on abortion, and all were defeated. This year, Brian Mulroney and Justice Minister Doug Lewis have promised an abortion law. Doug Lewis's most recent statements indicate that it will be a criminal law, based on gestational limits, that can withstand constitutional challenge. There is a change of mood in the House. Anti-choice MPs have said they would vote for this law as a first step in the complete banning of abortion. This session, there are anti-choice women MPs. And some other female and male MPs who are somewhat pro-choice have said they would support such law, as a "compromise"

If the law is passed, it means the state will be able to force women to have children under certain circumstances. As anti-choice MPs have said, the law can always be made more restrictive later. The law is likely to be challenged in court on the pro-choice side, but could very possibly lose. Meanwhile, anti-choice protesters will not go away happy. They will continue to attempt every tactic to ban abortion altogether, except by addressing the reasons why abortions take place. A new law will not preclude more anti-choice legal fiascoes similar to the Chantal Daigle case.

The U.S. Supreme Court recently effectively restricted access to abortion by giving individual states more control

pro-choice are the polls, and it isn't enough.

I receive about 5 anti-choice letters to every pro-choice letter. The anti-choice letters tend to be personal, handwritten letters to every MP.

Consequently, Members of Parliament are bombarded daily with misinformation. I have received "pictures" of fetuses supposedly aborted at 26 weeks. This when only 0.3% of abortions are performed after 20 weeks and only 0.3% after 24 weeks, and usually only when the mother's life is in danger. I have received pamphlets claiming that abortion is more dangerous than childbirth, when in fact, the reverse is true. Another favourite is the "post-abortion syndrome" in which women who are "victims of abortion" suffer severe psychological damage and depression. They do not suggest, however, that women should stop having children because of post-partum depression.

Another tactic used by anti-abortion lobbyists is gibing the impression that abortion in Canada today is a free-for-all, and that women have abortions because they are pressured by others or for purely frivolous reasons. This denies the truth about access to abortion, which is uneven throughout the country. This denies the hardship and expense women in the Atlantic provinces and rural areas face when trying to obtain an abortion. This denies that women have minds and sound judgement, and that abortion is not a decision any woman takes lightly. Anti-abortion lobbyists do not seem to understand that pregnancy and childbirth is a major event in the life of a woman or a teenaged girl.

Anti-choice crusaders tend to get more media attention: They use American tactics of chaining themselves outside clinics, etc. All of this is giving many MPs the feeling that there should be a law to regulate abortion, as if this would make all the court challenge and all the protesters disappear.

Basically, the Tories want to bring in a law based on gestational limits, not because there is a problem of late abortions in Canada, because there is not. They want to look like they can deal with an important and controversial issue. They don't care about women, they don't even care about fetuses. If they did, they would take an entirely different

approach, one that I advocate: banning environmental and workplace reproductive hazards, eliminating poverty, ensuring access to child care, support services, greatly expanding parental leave, funding family planning education and research into safe, effective contraception.



Members of Parliament are bombarded daily with misinformation. I have received "pictures" of fetuses supposedly aborted at 26 weeks.

women's well-being, and secondly, that a "compromise" doesn't already exist. Late abortions simply don't happen unless there is a very serious medical reason.

My strategy is to firmly oppose any recriminalization of abortion within and outside the House of Commons. I am producing a plan of action for government to follow instead of making criminals out of women and girls, which incorporates family planning funding, reproductive health measures, and access to abortion services throughout the country. I want to join other women to prod the pro-choice majority to speak up, and not be co-opted by criminal compromises.

Win or lose this battle, the war for reproductive freedom is not over until equality for women is attained. This is a part of the larger struggle against the oppression of women. I hope that our work together may lead to a world in which state control of women's bodies is unthinkable. Our goal probably won't be reached in our lifetime. We still have a long, long way to go.

Dawn Black is M.P. for New Westminster-Burnaby and is the New Democratic Party Status Of Women Critic.

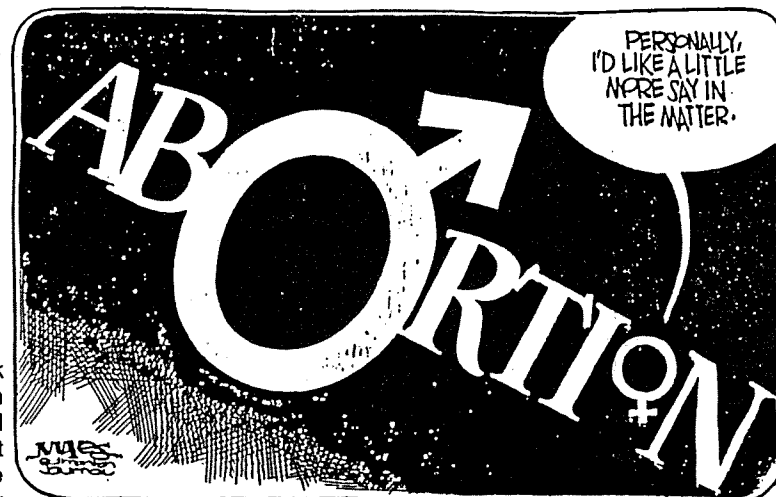


position. The New Democratic Party policy is to oppose all criminal law on abortion, which means voting against criminal legislation. However, there are only 43 NDPs out of 295 seats. It is not enough to defeat legislation.

Mulroney and Lewis have also said that this law would be a free vote. This means Liberals and Conservatives are not bound to vote for the party position, even if they had one. The New Democratic Party is the only elected party with a clear policy opposed to recriminalization of abortion. Tory caucus may be pressured into voting in favour of government legislation, but there is still room for heavy lobbying. Please try to lobby your MP even if you know she or he is pro-choice. Tell your MP that you will not stand for any criminal sanctions against women making the choice of whether or not to bear children. If Lewis is true to his word, a court challenge of the new law would fail. This is why we must direct our efforts into preventing the introduction or passage of the bill.

over abortion law. Missouri has already restricted access. Some states are looking at parental consent clauses. This would mean parents would have the power to force their 12 year old daughter into going through with a pregnancy against her will. Doug Lewis has said that he would consider increased provincial control. The federal government would like nothing better than to be able to distance itself from the whole issue. This would essentially leave abortion in the hands of people like Bill Vander Zalm. I don't think Lewis will follow up on the idea of provincial control, as the government seems firmly set on criminal law on abortion.

We know that 71% of Canadians favour choice. However, Members of Parliament tend to see a skewed view of the world: they look at polls, they look at the letters pouring into their offices, they look at media reports of demonstrations, and measure public feeling about an issue. And so far, the only one of these things that clearly tells MPs that Canadians are





New U.S. film

Abortion: For Survival

Abortion

by Beth Ryan

For pro-choicers seeking sanity in these crazy days of anti-choice hype, a new American film on abortion offers some solace.

Abortion: For Survival is a documentary of about 30 minutes which features a young woman actually undergoing an abortion at the sixth week of her pregnancy. The procedure takes all of one minute and 24 seconds, and what we see at the end is about a tablespoonful of blood and tissue. No crushed head, dismembered limbs, or blood-spattered baby.

No wonder the film is hard-hitting: it shows the reality of abortion. The film presents the sane voices of pro-choice doctors and other professionals who know that abortion is necessary in our society, and no amount of legislation will change the fact that women will have abortions when they need them.

As Dr. David Grimes says in the film: "Where will

abortions take place? In safe, legal compassionate surroundings, or in back alleys?"

The experts who give their opinions on camera understand that for women, their children, and even for our planet, the right to legal, safe abortion is a matter of survival. A 1988 study of access to birth control in 115 countries revealed that abortion is used more frequently as a method of birth control than all but a few methods of contraception. The film points out that we cannot have effective fertility control without abortion as a backup.

"The anti-choice or the no-choice people really don't care about people. And they really don't care about children. The problem is, there are not enough white babies to go around."

Bylle Avery

"It's never been accomplished in any society to my knowledge," says Grimes.

The film is excellent for how it places abortion in a global perspective. It provides us with disturbing world-wide statistics which North American anti-choicers like to ignore:

•As many as 200,000 women die each year from botched illegal abortions.

•One woman dies every three minutes in the Third World from a badly performed abortion.

•It is estimated that worldwide about 30 million unwanted pregnancies result from contraceptive failure.

•Worldwide, there are 55 to 60 million abortions a year

The film then brings abortion down to a very personal level by describing a woman who had gone to a back alley abortionist during the Depression. She died because the doctor who was called in refused to treat her. The woman's brother describes how when the doctor arrived, he walked over to the woman's bed, pulled up the sheets, saw what she had done, and then

turned around and walked out the door. The story is a moving historical testimony to the need for safe, accessible abortion.

We have our own modern version of that Depression doctor in the people who make up the new anti-choice groups. They are every bit as ruthless.

Byllye Avery of the National Black Women's Project hits on the real abortion issue in western society:

One woman dies every three minutes in the Third World from a badly performed abortion.

"The anti-choice or the no-choice people really don't care about people. And they really don't care about children. The problem is, there are not enough white babies to go around."

And try as they might, so-called pro-lifers cannot mask this simple truth.

Consider the realities of adoption in the U.S.:

In the U.S., 34,000 children wait to be adopted. 82% of them are older, handicapped or have special needs. 51% are minority. Those seeking to adopt overwhelmingly request healthy white babies. Another 450,000 children wait in state facilities and foster homes after being removed from their parents for abuse or neglect — part of the 2.2 million children who are abused every year.

These facts President George Bush conveniently forgets when he insists that adoption is an alternative to abortion.

I found **Abortion: For Survival** both moving and enraging at the same time. It gives us a real look at abortion, and exposes the hypocrisy of the anti-choice movement in the U.S. It could be a vital educational tool if it could reach enough people. Unfortunately, many people will never see it because it tells the truth about abortion.

Abortion: For Survival was produced by the Fund for the Feminist Majority, 8105 West Third St., Los Angeles, CA 90048, Tel. (213) 651-0495.

Tory women pass pro-choice motion

At its annual meeting this August during the PC national convention, the National Progressive Conservative Women's Federation adopted a clearly pro-choice resolution.

According to participants at the meeting, the outgoing national executive originally read the statement as a parting message, stirred by the recent Daigle case and aware that the federal government was considering abortion legislation. After the outgoing president had read the statement, a delegate from the floor moved that the entire assembly adopt it as a resolution, for presentation to the Tory national convention happening the same week.

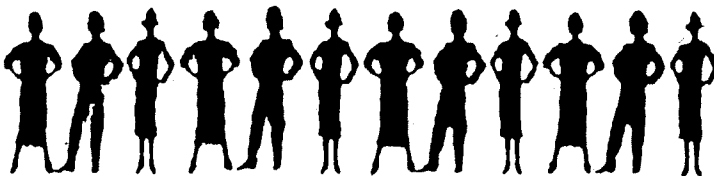
Among the close to 300 delegates present, only three did not support the resolution.

Observers were struck not only by the overwhelming support for the position, but also by the fact that the Women's Federation is considered a "grass-roots" organization, representing

party members at the community level cross Canada. As Justice Minister Doug Lewis said, "The PC women's organization is representative of the party."

The message is clear. It remains to be seen whether the Cabinet and caucus will hear it.

The text of the resolution reads as follows:



1. The National Progressive Conservative Women's Federation commends the Federal P.C. Government for its continued commitment to the improved and equal status of women in Canadian society.

2. We encourage the

government to take strong and concerted action to address systemic discrimination through key social and economic policies of importance to women, including, among others, those of education and retraining, childcare, housing, domestic violence, women's health care and women's economic equality both in the workforce

and in the home.

3. In light of the Prime Minister's recent statements that legislation on abortion will be introduced by the government this coming session, the National Progressive Conservative Women's Federation states unequivocally that it believes the decision to have an

abortion is a matter of personal conscience and one to be made solely by the pregnant woman in consultation with her medical doctor.

If the government chooses to introduce legislation on this important matter for all women, it must do so in such a way as to protect and uphold the constitutionally guaranteed rights of Canadian women to security of the person and sexual equality under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Any limitations in this legislation should apply only to the stage following viability as defined by the Canadian Medical Association.

The word 'health' must remain broadly defined to include mental as well as physical well-being.

4. The Canadian family has undergone many changes during the past three decades. As part of our commitment to enhance and assist all family members and encourage the family in all of its forms as our

basic social unit, the National Progressive Conservative Women's Federation recommends the formation of a Royal Commission on the Family.

The Commission should have a broad mandate. Among the issues it must consider are (a) the effect of an aging population on the family generally and women as caregivers in particular; (b) the special needs and aspirations of members of today's family; (c) the special needs of children as we move into the 21st century; (d) the effect on families of changed social and economic roles and pressures.

Federation president Susan Green said it was a vote that the federal Conservative government and Tory MPs cannot ignore.

"This is the first opportunity that our Progressive Conservative MPs have had to hear what women in the party have to say on the issue. ...I believe it will make a difference."

Bad news from the United States:

Abortion

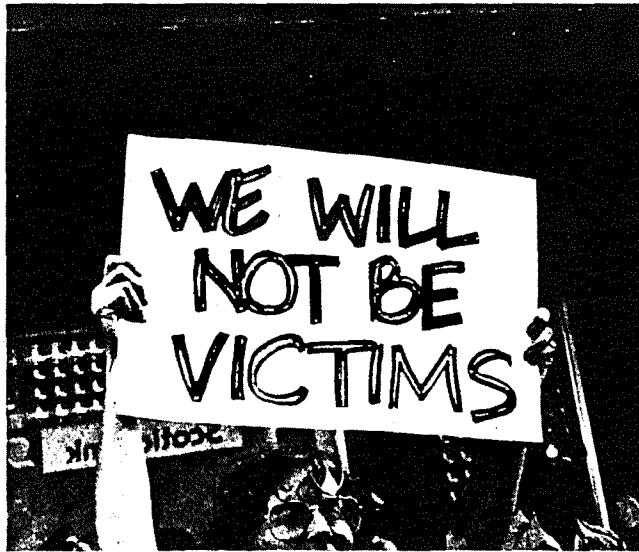
The overturning of

by Nicole Jasmin

They were challenging the Constitutionality of a Missouri statute regulating the performance of abortion. The Missouri law restricts abortion in four ways. The case was *Webster v Reproductive Health Services*.

It declares that life begins at conception. At its most extreme that would mean that life began as soon as intercourse was completed - at the time of the fertilization of the ovum of a female by a sperm of a male. This provision would ban the use of the IUD and the "morning after" pill which operates to prevent pregnancy after conception.

The second restriction goes even further and requires that all state laws be interpreted to provide unborn children with the same rights enjoyed by other persons, (but does not seem to apply to pregnant women). The legislation states that "unborn children have protectable interests in life, health, and well-being." The law shall be "interpreted and construed to acknowledge on behalf of the unborn child at every stage of development, all the rights, privileges and immunities



available to other persons, citizens and residents of the state."

But what does this mean? Every zygote that fails to implant in the uterine wall, it appears, will require a death certificate. Pregnant women who commit crimes may be given their freedom until after the birth of their children in order to avoid a rash of civil suites on behalf of fetuses who have been incarcerated without due process. Pregnant women may find tax savings for

claiming unborn children as dependents.

The legislation also specifies that a physician, prior to performing an abortion on any woman who he has reason to believe is 20 or more weeks pregnant must ascertain whether the fetus is "viable" by performing "such medical examinations and tests as are necessary" to make a finding of (the fetus') gestation age, weight, and lung maturity, regardless of whether the tests subject the pregnant woman or the fetus to additional health risk or add to the cost of an abortion.

There is no medical reason to suppose that a 20 week fetus is viable. A brief from the American Medical Association states "that to require amniocentesis for all abortions after 20 weeks would be contrary to sound medical practice and, moreover, would be useless for the purpose of determining lung maturity until no earlier than between 28 and 30 weeks gestational age." "To be required to find lung maturity would require physicians to perform a highly intrusive procedure that would yield no result relevant to the question of viability."

The final restriction prohibits the use of public employees and facilities to perform or assist abortions not necessary to save the mother's life. Public facility is defined as "any public institution, public facility,

public equipment, or any physical asset owned, leased, or controlled by the state or any agency or political subdivisions thereof." This means that the State could enforce a ban against private hospitals leasing state-owned equipment or land.

This decision has left women in Missouri with fewer choices, and if a woman is poor and unable to travel with virtually no choice. Anti-choice/ anti-women state legislators have already responded to this decision by introducing restrictive legislation.

The decision of the court was not unanimous. Of the dissenting judges, one was Justice Blackmun, who writes "...the fundamental constitutional right of women to decide whether to terminate a pregnancy survives but (is) not secure. The ruling of the court returned to the States authority to control the intimate, personal and life-directing decision whether to carry a fetus to term. The plurality of

71% of Americans feel that abortion should not be recriminalized.

the Court implicitly invites every state legislature to enact more and more restrictive abortion regulations in order to provoke more and more test cases, in the hope that sometime down the line the Court will return the law of procreative freedom to the severe limitations that generally prevailed in the United States before January 22, 1973."

Justice Blackmun closed his remarks with, "I fear for the future. I fear for the liberty and equality of the millions of women who have lived and come of age in the 16 years since *Roe* was decided. I fear for the integrity of, and public esteem for, this Court. I dissent."

By the majority decision the Supreme Court of the United States has disregarded

When women's fundamental rights are threatened and undermined anywhere in the world, all women are threatened. Legal challenges in the United States reminded us of how fragile women's rights are.

On July 3, the Supreme Court of the United States handed down a decision that threatens women's right to decide whether to terminate a pregnancy.

The challenge posed to the court was brought forward by health professionals and private nonprofit corporations providing abortion services in Missouri.

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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Roe vs. Wade



Can the United States still lay claim to being the greatest democracy on earth? Gloria Steinem, *Ms* July /August 89, writes that the most crucial question of democracy is not what gets decided but rather who decides. Accordingly the U. S. 's democratic process is under attack from within.

In the *Webster* case alone, over 78 briefs were filed to contribute to the arguments. Forty-five of them were anti-choice, 33 pro-choice. The anti-choice briefs, were submitted by a comparatively limited range of groups - primarily Catholic or fundamentalist religious and anti-abortion organizations. In contrast the briefs supporting choice came not only from women's and civil rights groups but from medical, religious, international, labour, free speech and environmental organizations.

The Supreme Court of the United States was stacked with appointments made by a right-wing president (Reagan) and has a right-wing agenda that is racist and sexist. These traits have been demonstrated by

the law and shown great contempt for the women of the United States. Millions of American women have planned their lives around their reproductive freedom that is essential if women are to gain political and economic power. The important question is how could this happen? Why are American politicians and the Supreme Court so out of touch with women's realities? 71% of Americans feel that abortion should not be recriminalized.

"I fear for the future. I fear for the liberty and equality of the millions of women who have lived and come of age in the 16 years since Roe was decided. I fear for the integrity of, and public esteem for, this Court. I dissent."

Justice Blackmun

Court rulings that have eroded affirmative action and civil rights.

American women find themselves with no ally in the White House. President George Bush in his inauguration speech spoke of "protecting the unborn". He has said that he wants to see *Roe v Wade* overturned. (*Roe v Wade* made first and second trimester abortion legal in the United States).

In the United States pro-choice forces are involved in the following:

1) NOW, (National Organization of Women), at its July Annual Meeting, proposed to become a political party;

2) They are ready for civil disobedience;

3) They are setting up underground railways from anti-abortion states to less restrictive ones;

4) They want reproductive freedoms to be added to the list of human rights (via a constitutional amendment). I don't believe this would have much chance of passing, as the U.S. does not even have an Equal Rights Amendment for women;

5) They are expanding such semi-legal, early abortion alternatives as menstrual extraction and RU 486;

6) They are taking the United States denial of women's rights to the United Nations and the World Court;

7) and they are translating pro-choice energy into pro-choice votes and targeting anti-abortion politicians for defeat.

Abortion

The effect of this decision in Canada

This decision affects Canadian women who go to the United States for their abortions - women from some Atlantic and Prairie provinces. Because the Canadian anti-choice/anti-women movement imports its tactics (Operation Rescue) and tacticians (T. Randall) from the United States, an anti-choice decision there is a threat to women's rights everywhere.

Nicole Jasmin is a pro-choice advocate, lobbyist and spokesperson. She is a member of CARAL-Ottawa.

—DAWN on reproductive rights—

This statement was endorsed by the DAWN Canada Board on March 25, 1989.

For disabled women, as for all women, the choice to be a parent must be an informed choice. We must have access to appropriate birth control information and materials so that our pregnancies can be planned and chosen. Beyond that, should birth control fail, we must - - like all women - - have the right to terminate a pregnancy when we decide that abortion is necessary.

For women with disabilities, the term "reproductive rights" encompasses more than the right of access to birth control and the right of choice. It also includes the right not to have fetuses taken from us against our will, and the right to retain our wombs, our ovaries, our fallopian tubes. It takes in the right not to have our bodies used as a testing ground for unproven contraceptives and questionable new reproductive technologies, and the right not to be injected with harmful hormones that disrupt our normal body functions, in order to "simplify" caring for us.

Medical science uses us as the objects of tests, but it also strives to keep us from

replicating ourselves. Practitioners seek to interrupt pregnancies which could perpetuate us: they seek to destroy what we have created, if it is formed in our image.

New reproductive technologies have simplified the identification of fetuses with disabilities; our society's concept that disability is abnormal and undesirable has created an expectation that identification must result in elimination. We would reiterate the question disabled activist Marsha Saxton posed to a conference examining the concept of a "handicapped-free society": "Why should a prenatal screening revealing a fetus be automatically followed by a systemic abortion?" Certainly, we should be informed about all available medical tests, and told the results of all the tests we choose to undergo. We should also be put in contact with parents of children who have the disability concerned, and with existing support groups. We can then consider all this information when making our decisions.

As feminists, we know that a woman's right to control her body is fundamental to women's equality. Yet other feminists have been slow to

support the right of women with disabilities to control our bodies. Perhaps now that Chorionic Villi Sampling (CVS) can be used to detect the sex of the fetus in the first trimester, making abortion for the purposes of sexual selection possible, feminists will come to understand the issue from our perspective. For it is not women on their own who are choosing to abort fetuses that will become female infants. According to a doctor who performs such tests and appeared on CBC-radio's **Cross-Country checkup**, on March 12, 1989, it is "couples from mid-Eastern backgrounds, where men need

sons as heirs." All women must have the right to make informed decisions as to whether we mother, and under what circumstances. As Maria Barile has stated, we must ensure that, "Freedom of choice will mean that all women



by Jillian Riddington

will have access to all the available information that will permit them to make a choice that is truly their own."

Neither men wanting heirs nor doctors who see us as producers of "undesirables" should make that choice for us.

Note: The most controversial tests and administration of harmful drugs involve giving depo-provera to women in institutions, and others. For information, contact the Canadian Coalition on Depo-provera, C/O Healthsharing 101 Niagara St., Toronto, Ont.

Taken from **The Only Parent in the Neighbourhood: Parenting and Women with Disabilities**

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Operation "Bully": An undesirable import

by Ann Baker

Abortion

Rubbing sleep out of their eyes, a crowd of people begins to gather in front of an abortion clinic in Los Angeles at 5:30 a.m. Song sheets and posters are passed out, instructions given, and the site leader gets on her cellular phone and calls Command Central to report that they have 150 activists ready to respond to information regarding the whereabouts of a caravan of cars exiting off one of the area's numerous freeways.

At Command Central, telephones are ringing with similar reports from eight other mobilization sites around this vast city and its suburbs. On a huge wall map, each clinic location is flagged with one colour, and each mobilization site is indicated with flags of a different colour. The coffee pot is already half empty, a tray of Danish pastries greatly diminished, and the evidence makes it clear that this roomful

of people have been functioning for an hour already.

One telephone line is kept clear for a report from someone within the caravan, leaving from a church parking lot somewhere in Orange County. As the caravan passes each exit on the freeway, that location is called into Command Central, and any clinics that are accessible from that exit are eliminated as a possible target of Operation Bully — the anti-abortion publicity stunt dreamed up by a religious zealot in Binghamton, New York who had been unable to hold any job for more than six months.

For the last two years, Randy Terry has not had to worry about whether he sold any cars on his used-car lot. He has been raising big bucks to keep his project in business. And it is just that, a business. Operation Rescue is not a registered non-profit organization that receives tax-deductible contributions. It is a business enterprise that will admit to a 1988 income of over \$300,000 but probably raised much more than that. No one has seen his books, and he has not filed a tax return with the Internal Revenue Service since 1986.

Randy Terry is not the first failure who stumbled into success as a demagogue. One is reminded that Hitler could not make it as a paperhanger.

Since November, 1987 Terry has led, co-ordinated, or encouraged clinic blockades in approximately 165 cities in the United States and Canada. During that period, there have been nearly 30,000 arrests with many of the militants being arrested repeatedly in many different cities. Statistically, about 40% of those arrested account for 72% of all arrests. Many people arrested in both Vancouver and Toronto were from the States, although there is certainly a core group of militants in both cities.

Typically, Operation Bully functions secretly, from the matter of their budget to the selection of an abortion clinic as their target for a blockade. So although pro-choice supporters may know that some clinic in northeastern Ohio or the west coast of Florida will be hit on a particular morning, there is no way to anticipate which clinic has been targeted. This makes preparing clinic defense a process of some infiltration, some intelligent guesswork, and the ability to move significant numbers from one location to another quickly once it has been determined where the militants are going.

The pro-choice community in Los Angeles has developed the most sophisticated method of clinic defense. As potential targets are eliminated on the wall map in Command Central, activists at nearby mobilization sites are notified that Operation Bully will not be coming to their area. These pro-choice teams are then ready to move to whatever clinic is the actual target for the day. There are nearly 100 providers who could be hit by Operation Bully.

Basically this system works effectively because

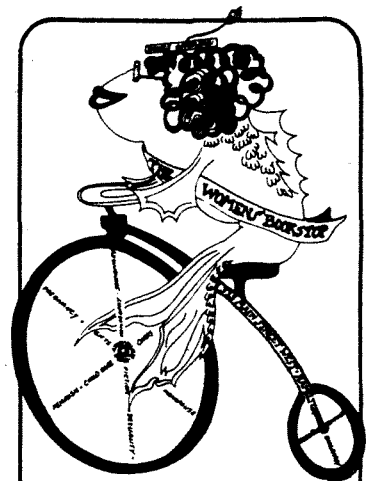
there are hundreds of pro-choice supporters willing to give up a Saturday morning chance to sleep in. It also works because such a large base of volunteers enables the coalition to do telephone solicitation to the thousands of other supporters in the area in order to raise money to cover their expenses for cellular telephones, walkie-talkies, and a phonebank in the office.

However, on a recent weekend, after being outsmarted by the pro-choice side at nine different clinics on a Saturday morning, the militants proved how determined they were. They knew the one clinic that was open on Sunday, and showed up there at 6:30 a.m. to prevent staff and patients from gaining access to the building. In this way they gained media coverage for two days rather than one. In their constellation of values, this was an important accomplishment.

Operation Bully describes itself as the 1980's version of the civil rights movement, employing non-violent civil disobedience to awaken America to what they believe is the evil of abortion. However, their non-violence is a tactical behaviour rather than a philosophical position. Randy Terry and Joe Scheidler have both admitted they are not opposed to violence against clinics, but that it gives their movement bad press.

In fact, they may be non-violent if they are unopposed when they arrive at a targeted clinic. However, if clinic supporters are at the clinic before the militants arrive, their non-violence dissipates quickly. Reports from all over

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News Release

The following is a statement on "Operation Rescue" released by national civil rights leaders in the United States on January 23, 1989.

We challenge the comparison being forced by anti-abortionists between their Operation Rescue demonstrations to shut down abortion clinics around the country and the civil rights struggle of the 1960's to assure equality for all Americans.

The adoption of the tactic of civil disobedience is their right, but the appropriation of the moral imperative of the civil rights movement is all wrong.

The civil rights struggle waged some thirty years ago sought to extend constitutional rights to all Americans and to have those rights enforced.

Today's anti-abortionists, quite to the contrary, are attempting in their Operation Rescue protests to deny American women their constitutional right to freedom of choice. They want the constitution rewritten.

Dr. Martin Luther King, joined by thousands of Americans and concerned citizens from around the world, marched on Washington to gain equality and non-violent social change.

When Operation Rescue troops are out in force; they picket abortion clinics in Atlanta and other cities, they block entrances to clinics, harass doctors and nurses and taunt and threaten women who have made the difficult decision to terminate a pregnancy.

Women seeking an abortion, their constitutional right, have to run a gauntlet of people screaming "murderer" and "baby-killer." Perhaps it is more accurate to compare Operation Rescue demonstrators to the segregationists who fought desperately to block black Americans from access to the civil rights movement.

The hard-won achievements of the civil rights movement were compelled by a broad based consensus among Americans for equality for all and by judicial and legislative actions that assured equal justice under the law.

Operation Rescue's claim for constitutional protection for the unborn lacks such a consensus. Americans remain steadfast in their support for women's reproductive right to choose abortion, and attempts to overturn *Roe v Wade* consistently fail.*

We would urge all those who want to stop abortion to engage in a concerted effort aimed at preventing unwanted pregnancy through sex education, access to contraception and the development of new contraceptive methods.

This press release was signed by 13 civil rights leaders including:
The Rev. Jesse Jackson, President, National Rainbow Coalition and founder, Operation Push.
Mary E. King, Author of Freedom Song: A Personal History of the 1960's Civil Rights Movement
Joseph L. Rauh, four-decade civil rights lawyer and activist.
Andrew Young, Mayor of Atlanta and former senior staff member of Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee

* (Editorial note: This was prior to the Webster case in the United States. 71% of Americans do not believe that abortion should be criminalized.)

Excerpts from pamphlet by

Operation Rescue

Abortion

What is Operation Rescue?

Operation rescue is one of the most important and exciting events since Roe vs. Wade. It is a nationally organized opportunity for God-fearing people to stand up for pre-born children, and join together in the largest rescue mission in pro-life history. Thousands of people from across the country will join forces in New York City from April 30 to May 7, 1988, to peacefully close down abortion mills. We will gather around abortuaries on our knees, begging God to forgive America for the blood of twenty million children that is already crying from the ground, and asking Him to turn this nation back to Him. (edit. note: the children referred to, are in fact fetuses) Operation Rescue is pledged to be peaceful and non-violent.

Children will be saved

We will arrive early in the morning, day after day, at given abortion mills, surrounding them with our bodies. This will prevent abortion mill employees or pregnant mothers from entering in to kill their children. Sidewalk counsellors will be prepared to talk to the mothers and take them to a pregnancy help centre for further counselling and help. Many children around the country have been saved from death by rescue missions such as this.

But what if we are arrested?

If we are arrested, it would be a tremendous testimony to millions of Americans and their political representatives, that people still exist who are willing to stand for their fellow human beings, even at personal risk. If 1500 people spend a day in jail together, it would be an inspiration to multitudes of Christians to take a stronger stand for the children.

In short, one of the greatest things that could ever happen in the cause of the children would be for hundreds and hundreds of decent citizens to be in jail together for a day or two, for trying to rescue children from death. In the civil rights movement, the sight of hundreds and hundreds of blacks jailed together for peaceful protest against the injustice of segregation, helped win the sympathy of the nation to their cause.

What is at stake?

Time is running out for America. If we don't end this holocaust very soon, the judgement of God is going to fall on this nation. Judah was destroyed because some Jews killed their own children and others stood passively by and didn't try to stop them. We are all guilty of letting this holocaust continue, and we will all share in God's punishment upon America, whether it be drought, war, AIDS, financial collapse or some other calamity.

movement) and focus on a side issue, in order to avoid the central issue at hand - murdered children.

Hence I understand that for the children's sake, this gathering must be orderly and above reproach.

Therefore...

1) As an invited guest, I will co-operate with the spirit and goals of Operation Rescue, as explained in this pamphlet.

2) I commit to be peaceful and non-violent in both word and deed.



the United States, and from Toronto as well, make it clear that they are willing to use force to gain access to the clinic door, or to prevent patients from moving through a corridor provided by the clinic defense people. They don't come out swinging because that will look bad on camera, but they do push and shove, elbow and bite. Since they have been thoroughly trained, one suspects that this was included.

The real evidence that they don't understand the internal dynamics of civil disobedience is that they have repeatedly demonstrated their disregard for the law when they cannot get what they want from the police and the courts. One of the fundamentals of civil disobedience is an acceptance of the legitimacy of law, even while protesting one law in particular. Consequently, those who practice civil disobedience in the great tradition of Gandhi and King accept their sentences and fines. Operation Bully participants have thumbed their noses at secular law in the name of a "higher law" to which they have allegiance.

In the last analysis, Operation Bully violates the tradition it claims to follow. They are not civil rights activists attempting to force the law to acknowledge

fundamental, constitutional rights that have been subverted by other laws. The anti-abortion militants who blockade clinic entrances and harass patients and staffs are the 1980's version of the white segregationists who prevented blacks from using public schools, public accommodations and the voting booth by harassment and intimidation.

Blacks acted together and in sizeable numbers to take back their rights. Large numbers of pro-choice supporters are acting with clinics and patients to make the exercise of the right of liberty and choice a possibility for millions of women. We need to be joined by a loud chorus of common sense citizens who will stand up and denounce these domestic terrorists who will stop at nothing to prevent women from being free.

Ann Baker is the president of The 80% Majority Campaign, a national pro-choice research and information service in the United States, which provides data and analysis to activists in pro-choice organizations and clinics, and publishes The Campaign Report, which is available for \$35 US per year. Write to The 80% Majority Campaign, PO Box 3298, Roosevelt, NJ 08555, USA.

Signature _____

Please join us with your body.

Abortion

Cheryl: A personal abortion story

by "Cheryl"

I became pregnant in 1972. I was 21 and had been going out with my boyfriend a little over four years. Neither of us had left home yet and this was the first "real" relationship for both of us. Sex was not talked about openly at home but the expectation was clearly that we weren't supposed to be sexually involved. The only verbal instruction I received was that I must ensure respect for myself.

Being a normal couple we participated to various degrees in sexual exploration. This involved most sexual activities short of actual intercourse. I often resented and argue about the fact that when we had an opportunity to be intimate, it was invariably pushed to the point where I had to put the brakes on. It always seemed to be my responsibility to set the limits.

Our activities gradually progressed to the point where it was inevitable that we would be engaging in sex with penetration. Birth control information wasn't readily available and I felt awkward and sheepish in my search. I found books in the library but they were somewhat vague or contained dubious information such as douching after sex, wrong information. I took it upon myself to obtain condoms and spermicidal jelly. It was embarrassing for me and I resented my boyfriends lack of initiative in sharing our responsibility.

As I recall there were probably only six occasions when we had actual intercourse before I became pregnant. I was panic-stricken. The information I had was quite vague. On condom use it gave effectiveness ratings but never said anything about what to do if the condom came off during intercourse. That's what happened in my case, it slipped off inside me. I sensed I was pregnant at that moment.

I remember my cousin who had a baby at 16 and put it up for adoption. It was a shameful event, lots of whispering and knowing looks. I was not a shameful person; I was doing something pretty natural with someone I cared about and I was using birth control! Never the less I felt like a social outcast. I didn't like the stigma attached to pregnancy out of wedlock.

I started evaluating my situation, I was earning only \$120.00 every two weeks and living at home. I could not imagine raising a child on that salary. I also knew by this time

that I did not want to marry my boyfriend even though he wanted to marry me. I tried envisioning what it would be like giving up a baby after carrying it nine months - I could not bear going through life wondering where and how it was. I didn't want to be sent away like other women to give birth. I thought why should I be sent away, it seemed unfair, he's not being sent away even though he's part of this. I did



not want to be pregnant and didn't want to carry it to term. I thought about an abortion. I found the Betty Farhood Centre in the yellow pages of the telephone book and called to find out what to do in case I was pregnant. I was told to have my urine tested in a few weeks to be certain and then call back. At least now I had a connection and hope.

The next month and a half took on the clandestine aura of a spy film. I took the urine sample into a drugstore on the other side of the city. I found an old band-type ring so I would look married and gave my name as Mrs.....

My boyfriend and I talked at length about the possible pregnancy. It never struck me that he should have more than an opinion about my decision. I hadn't wanted a pregnancy. I was the one who took precautions and I still resented his lack of effort to share the responsibility and his constant pushing for sex. I thought however, that we needed to have things worked out before we got the results.

I spent hours in the library reading everything I could about pregnancy. I looked up the stages, imagined what size the fetus would be. For me, I realized it was a real child, it wasn't just a thing, not just part of me and abortion was not just an operation. I would be terminating a potential life. I

even had a sense that it was a girl. After considering my alternatives and searching my soul, I knew the decision that abortion was the only option I could live with at that time. It was not a question of whether or not something is alive - it was what I thought was the best solution for me.

The phone call from the pharmacy came while I was at work. The test was positive. I had mixed feelings. I was

really excited and proud and at the same time filled with fear and panic. I called my boyfriend and he had a similar reaction. Time was a critical factor so I began making arrangements.

I called the Betty Farhood Centre again. I couldn't call from home so all the calls were made covertly at work. It was a tense period. I arranged for two appointments; the first to go over the procedures; the second to make a deposit. As we took the bus to the Centre I was feeling tremendously stressed and the nausea lasted from morning to night. I wondered if we were doing something illegal. I did not know what the law was but illegality was not enough to deter me.

The counsellor initially made an appointment for me in Malone New York. That was convenient because we would make it a day trip in my car and it wouldn't raise the suspicion of our families because being abroad together overnight just wasn't "acceptable".

The second visit shook us. We were informed that the Malone clinic was closed meaning we'd have to go to New York City via Montreal the next week. It would cost more and we would have to be away overnight. I paid the \$250.00. I wouldn't let my boyfriend pay for the abortion but let him cover our travel costs - it was a

matter of principle for me.

During the following week I worried about what would happen if I couldn't get the abortion. I thought about old remedies like slippery elm bark. I seriously considered suicide, throwing myself down a flight of stairs, taking a drug overdose, or slashing my wrists. I soon smartened up. I asked myself how I could live with the responsibility if the suicide attempt failed and I damaged the baby? If I was unsuccessful in my attempts to obtain an abortion and I had to bear this child, I wanted to bring it into this world as healthy as possible. I cut out everything that could possibly harm the fetus.

Because we were going to New York, we decided to tell our parents in case something went wrong. We were trying to make responsible decisions. We started with my parents. It was a shock to them. My mom cried and my dad didn't say anything. I felt really sad for disappointing them. I explained that I was going for an abortion. My mom wanted to come with me but in a way I was still cutting the apron strings and said no. We talked more about the procedure and she advised me to have a general anaesthetic.

I found his parents more empathetic and more willing to discuss the practicalities. They had been keen on having me as a daughter-in-law and were quite concerned about my well being. They gave me a big hug and said, "it's ok sweetie, we're with you". The father



wanted to know more information about the clinic. He also asked us what our future plans were, how would we handle the matter of sex and if we intended to marry? He had contacts in New York and had a friend check that it was a bonafide clinic. I was reassured by that because I'd pictured some sort of back street "butcher shop" and that I would be treated cruelly because "it was my fault I was pregnant!"

Friday I left right after work to meet my boyfriend at the bus

station. My head was filled with apprehension and worries. What if he wasn't there, what if we couldn't find the Betty Farhood Centre in Montreal, was it just a scam? Would I be disqualified from surgery because I had an active ulcer? Would the fact that I had a retroverted uterus make a difference? He was at the bus station and we left for Montreal.

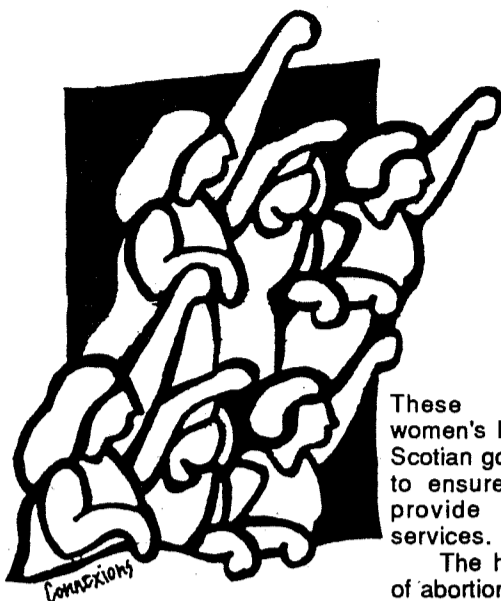
We arrived at the Betty Farhood Centre around 8 pm., made a final deposit, signed waivers, and filled out a medical questionnaire. It was pretty confusing, I couldn't speak French at that time and there was a crowd of about thirty-five women all trying to get processed. We were all loaded onto a bus around 10 pm. and left Montreal. There was a wide assortment of women on the bus, all ages, some with a boyfriend / husband, some with a friend, some unaccompanied. For the first time in my life I felt a common bond with other women.

Soon we pulled up to the customs office at the border. Immediately, I thought they would stop us and say "Look a busload of pregnant women going for an abortion" and we'd all be arrested. We entered the States with no incident.

We arrived at the Park Med. Clinic around 6 am. This was my first time in New York and I was thinking what a strange reason to be there. It appeared that they were expecting our busload although there were some local women in the waiting area. It took about 1 1/2 hours to process our group through the initial paperwork and blood tests. We were all wearing little paper gowns and waiting in an inner room. Those of us having a general anaesthetic were given a sedative. At this point we were directed into examination rooms. A nurse came by and went over the procedure and then several doctors / technicians came by to do pelvic exams and ask questions. I had the impression that these people were competent and non-judgemental. Still, I carried my own feeling that I was going to be punished.

Finally, my name was called to go in to surgery. Walking into the room I don't remember much. It seemed to be a large room curtained off into several smaller operating areas. I asked the anesthesiologist where the

Cont'd page 45



Hypocrisy shadows Nova Scotia abortion law

Abortion

by Amani Wassef

These are all crucial to women's health, yet the Nova Scotian government has failed to ensure a commitment to provide these "health" services.

The highly charged issue of abortion is not, as it is often presented, about fetal rights. It is an issue of control and power over women. Women's interests, experiences and ways of knowing are not represented by those who hold authority. Women have been systematically excluded from the type of work which produces thought, knowledge and authority. For this reason, men's stand-points have been represented as universal. It is from this stand-point that the Nova Scotia government can base its premise that there is no access problem for women. Claiming they have spoken to the "experts," they conclude the system is working fine. Why, I wonder, are the women of Nova Scotia not considered the real experts when it is about our bodies and our futures?



Despite government legislation, the Morgentaler Clinic opened on May 25, 1989, although, only as a telephone counseling and referral service. Since that time there has been over 170 calls from women throughout the Maritime region. More than half of the calls have been from Nova Scotia residents.

My experience as a worker in the Halifax Morgentaler Clinic leads me to view the problem of access differently from that of the government. There is indeed an access problem for women seeking abortion. The women hardest hit are from Newfoundland and Prince

Edward Island. For these women there is little choice but to travel the lengthy and expensive distance to Maine or Montreal.

After receiving a very desperate call from a low-income woman in Newfoundland, I checked out the possibility of her coming to Nova Scotia for an abortion. After some investigation, my answer was "...if we let one in it will be like opening the floodgate. They all have special circumstances when it comes to abortion. You have to learn to see through these kind of women." It wasn't until this point that I realized, with horror the anti-woman system we are fighting against. I wondered why, if there is no access problem, there was a concern about a flood of women entering the province seeking an abortion?

A woman from Prince Edward Island was not even able to obtain the phone number for the Halifax clinic. She was told by a social worker that PEI was abortion free and she wished it to remain that way.

A woman from New Brunswick who had decided to have an abortion, phoned five different organizations in efforts to obtain information. She finally called the Halifax clinic in frustration. Each of the organizations she contacted told her she could speak with a counsellor only after viewing an anti-abortion film. Feeling insulted and angry, she had to phone outside the province for assistance.

Women in Nova Scotia stand a slightly better chance of obtaining an abortion than the other Atlantic provinces, but it is not without hardship. Through the telephone counseling service, women raise the problems they are experiencing in trying to obtain abortions: many cannot find a supportive physician to give them a referral; some are told they must sit before a board and plead their case; some are

told abortion is permissible only in life threatening cases; some are flatly denied help; and some are told that only one abortion per woman is allowed in Nova Scotia.

For women under 19 years of age, obtaining an abortion is problematic without parental consent. It is again ironic that a woman under 19 years of age is not seen as responsible enough to make a decision concerning her body; however, she is deemed responsible enough to bear and raise a child.

It is testimonies such as these that reveal the reality of women trying to obtain information on abortion, or the abortion itself. Regardless of where she is from, the decision is always difficult and there are always obstacles which must be overcome.

On August 8, 1989, the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL) went to court to challenge the Nova Scotia government with respect to the latest legislation. The outcome of the proceedings resulted in a postponement until September 28, 1989. On this date the Attorney General of Nova Scotia took CARAL to court on the grounds that it had no standing to challenge the abortion legislation. The reasoning behind this was that you cannot challenge a law unless your rights have been violated, and a group (such as CARAL) has no charter of rights.

If the Attorney General wins their challenge, it means CARAL has no standing to go to trial. If CARAL wins a date will be set to proceed by way of a full scale trial.

The judge has reserved judgement, which means he will make a decision later. However, he did seem to clearly indicate he is leaning in one direction when he said "abortion lobby groups have no right to challenge Nova Scotia's anti-abortion laws because they have no direct interest in the case."

In October, he ruled in favour of the Government of Nova Scotia.



We must continue to write our government stating our outrage at the repressive legislation. We must continue to rally in public to voice our concerns. We must continue to educate people to the real facts of access for women in both Nova Scotia and other Maritime regions.

More than anything, we must remain strong and undaunted in our battle for choice.

Amani Wassef works at the Halifax clinic and is an active member of CARAL.

In the early months of 1989 there was rumour that Dr. Henry Morgentaler might open an abortion clinic in Halifax. When this rumour became fact the Nova Scotia government was quick to react to this threat by introducing a variety of legislative strategies to prevent its opening.

The last attempt came on June 6, 1989 under the guise of new found concern for equality of health care for Nova Scotians. It was An Act to Restrict Privatization of Medical Services. Abortion was listed as one of the procedures to be restricted. Health Minister David Nantes stated "...The purpose of this act is to prevent the development of a two-tiered system of health care which would work unfairly to the advantage of the more affluent. It was predicated on universality and equal, insured access for all..."

The hypocrisy of the government surfaces when the act is examined under a more critical light.

Irony seems to veil the Nova Scotia government. It preaches universal and equal access for all in the same year it refuses to acknowledge homosexuals as human beings worthy of inclusion in the Human Rights Amendment. I also find this act an affront to all the women in Nova Scotia as we have always known and been part of a two-tiered system of health care.

It is important to reaffirm that health care covers not only medicinal needs, but how we are treated on a daily basis as human beings. It must allow us to make responsible decisions about our bodies without the impending threat of court injunctions and character assassinations. It must include commitment to ensure funds for transition houses, rape crisis centres, affordable day care spaces, second stage housing, adequate social assistance, support programs for single mothers, and programs for ethnic minorities. These are all crucial to the ideology of an equal and universal health care system.

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Abortion

Abortion across the country

Newfoundland



Access

•The General Hospital in St. John's is the only hospital in the entire province where abortion services are available. (46 public hospitals in the province)

•The gynecologists at the hospital are allowed to perform abortion only up to 12 weeks. As of April 27 there is only one doctor doing abortions. A maximum of eight women are seen each week. The appointments are always filled. Often there is a waiting list because there are more women requesting the service than is made available. Generally a woman will have to wait several weeks to get an appointment.

• Outside of St. John's there are no abortions done.

• There are no services for women in Labrador. Those who can afford it, fly out to Montreal.

(Waterlily, Summer 1989)

Pro-choice activities

• A pro-choice demonstration was held in St. John's on July 27, inspired by the Chantal Daigle case, this was the first time such a demonstration had taken place in Newfoundland. Over 100 people attended the hastily-called demonstration in St. John's, held before the Supreme Court building.

• A day of action for October 14.

Anti-choice forces

•The anti-choice movement appears to be well-organized in St. John's. The two St. John's MPs (John Crosbie and Ross Reid) receive enormous amounts of anti-choice mail, but very little pro-choice mail.

• This summer a large anti-choice demonstration was held by Action Life.

Nova Scotia



Government Position

•The government opposes free-standing clinics.

• Allows hospitals to perform abortions.

Access

•10 of 44 hospitals provide abortion services. The Victoria General provides over 85% of abortions in Nova Scotia. The other nine hospitals combined perform the remaining 15%. Each hospital has its own rules and restrictions that women must meet to receive the service. For example, one hospital only performs abortion if the woman has contact with Rubella, others only do them up to eight weeks' gestation; some still have the two-doctor recommendation system

The major problem facing women in Nova Scotia is finding a physician who will refer them to a hospital (usually the Victoria General).

CARAL Halifax operates an Abortion Information and Referral Services (AIRS) which provides women with information on how to obtain an abortion in N.S., and can provide women with names of supportive physicians.

The Newfoundland Clinic is also open in Halifax for telephone referrals to supportive N.S. physicians, or Newfoundland clinics in Toronto and Montreal.

Other access problems include waiting periods to obtain an abortion at the Victoria General Hospital, and restrictions to women who are under 19 years old. It appears

that our lobbying and all the press this issue has received has had an impact on at least these two issues. We have no concrete evidence but the hospital is claiming that the waiting period has been reduced to up to 10 days from three weeks. Also women under 19 can obtain an abortion without parental consent if they can prove they are capable of giving informed consent.

CARAL Halifax is initiating a study to examine the question of access in Nova Scotia.



Pro-choice activities

•February 1989 - Dr. Henry Morgentaler announced his intention to open an abortion clinic in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

•March 1989 - The government responded by introducing new regulations to the Health and Hospital Act which prohibited providing abortion services in free-standing clinics. They also introduced a regulation to the Medical Insurance Act, prohibiting Medicare payments for clinic abortions.

•May 1989 - CARAL National and CARAL Halifax announced they were launching a legal challenge of the Nova Scotia government's anti-clinic regulations, which CARAL contends are unconstitutional and an abuse of power.

• May 1989 - The N.S. government introduced a new Act to Restrict Medical Services. This Act was pushed through the legislature very quickly just before the session ended. This act is intended to restrict abortion services to hospitals, and is disguised as health legislation. But the government admits it is a way of keeping Dr. Morgentaler from opening his clinic.

The Act contains regulations (passed in July 1989) which list the medical services that must be confined to hospitals. This list includes several medical services which are expensive

and unlikely to be performed in clinics; and abortion is included on the list.

•July 1989 - The government withdrew the regulations they made to the Hospital, Health and Medical Insurance Acts to restrict abortions to hospitals, and prohibiting MSI coverage of clinic abortions, a further indication that the Act to Restrict Medical Services is intended to prohibit abortions from being performed in clinics.

•June 1989 - CARAL revised its lawsuit to challenge this Act

to Restrict Medical Services.

•August 1989 - CARAL announced it will change the format of the lawsuit against the government from a hearing to a full trial.

•CARAL National and CARAL Halifax are actively fundraising to pay legal costs for this legal challenge. The trial format will cost even more.

This challenge has implications for the whole country. Other provinces are waiting to see whether the Nova Scotia government will be successful in prohibiting clinic abortions so they can introduce similar legislation.

Anti-choice activities

•Main groups: Campaign Life and Nova Scotians United for Life.

•They picket the clinic and Victoria General Hospital with a handful of people every week.

•Originated the "pink and blue project" which included billboards, lawn signs, buttons, and bumper stickers. These items are half pink, half blue, with this message: Unborn Babies are Special Persons, Let Them Live.

•Anti-choicers have this summer bought time on 6 billboards in Halifax and Dartmouth. There has been some public outcry, and defacing of the signs.

Elaine Wright,
CARAL Halifax

Prince Edward Island

Access

• No abortions are available in P.E.I. Women must travel outside the province or to the United States.



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Abortion



New Brunswick



Government Position

The provincial government remains resolute in its anti-choice stance. Their policy of requiring two doctors' permission clearly flies in the face of the spirit of the 1988 Supreme Court decision. The most recent statement by the provincial government is that they will continue to apply its abortion policy. Perhaps they are waiting for new federal legislation to be introduced. Health and Community Services minister Ray Frenette opposes abortion although he believes it is a legal, moral and personal individual choice.

Access

- An abortion must be: "medically required", according to two physicians (chosen by the woman); performed in an accredited hospital (four hospitals perform abortions in the province: Saint John Regional; Dr. Chalmers, Fredericton, Moncton City; Oromocto Public and performed by a specialist in obstetrics or gynecology (there are 33 such specialists in the province.)

- The requirement that the abortion be performed in a hospital is supported by the New Brunswick Medical Society's private legislation

Therefore, women wanting abortions from other regions usually must go to another province (often Quebec) or state (usually Maine.)

From N.B. Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

- A woman who does not live in the southern part of the province (the four hospitals are located in the southern part of New Brunswick) and who cannot find two doctors to "o.k." her abortion simply does not have access to the procedure. If you live up in Edmunston (northwest) or Campbellton (north central) or Newcastle (northeast), you simply have no choice but to leave not only your community, but in fact your province.

Pro-choice activities

- A CARAL chapter exists in Fredericton and is always looking for new members. Contact us through Arlene Glencross at (506) 450-7053. I know there are many more women and men in New Brunswick who support a woman's right to choose...what I don't know is where they live or why they don't come out of the woodwork to actively support this right. Now is the time to stand up and be counted.

Anti-choice activities

- Operation Rescue has reared its ugly head in New Brunswick: in recognition of the "international day of rescue" in January (12-14/89), pro-lifers marched outside of the home of a Moncton based doctor who is believed to perform abortions at the local hospital. The protesters called themselves "Lifesavers Moncton" and said they were protesting the violence being done to "pre-born children" by doctors such as Dr. Caddick.

Amanda Le Rougetel

Québec



Government Position

- The Québec government's reaction to the abortion debate is to bury its head in the ground, and hope not to antagonize anyone. The provincial government has been eroding services with funding cuts. It is more and more difficult for women in advanced stages of pregnancy to obtain abortions.

Access

- There have been free-standing clinics in Quebec since the early 1980s, notably the CLSC (Community Health Centres) clinics. However, these are generally clustered in urban areas, and access for northern and rural women is often difficult.
- Though access has always been better in Quebec than

elsewhere, the courts have not reflected the feelings of the pro-choice majority. They sent Morgentaler to jail in spite of repeated jury acquittals, and they granted and then upheld the injunction against Chantal Daigle this past summer. The Daigle case, as did the Morgentaler one before it, proved a locus for mass mobilizations. The day after Daigle's appeal was denied, people protested across the country, with over 10,000 in the streets in Montreal alone.

Pro-choice activities

La coalition Québécoise pour le droit à l'avortement libre et gratuit (The Québec coalition for choice on free and accessible abortion) has been mobilizing around choice for years. The Coalition has a broad-based membership of about 250 women's groups, including the Fédération des femmes du Québec, women's centres and shelters, and members of the trade union movement. A demonstration is being planned in Montréal for October 14.

Anti-choice activities

The Catholic Church and Coalition Pro-Vie are active in Québec.

Every Friday morning there are usually a handful of protesters in front of the Morgentaler clinic. Operation Rescue has begun to drive from Toronto to Montréal to picket. On May 26, sixty-two people were arrested outside of the clinic, 40 of them from Ontario.

La Coalition Québécoise pour le droit à l'avortement libre et gratuit

Ontario



Government position

- Passively pro-choice
- The Minister of Health has introduced legislation which require licensing procedures for any new medical clinic. This will not affect the already existing two clinics, but two newly established clinics in Toronto (by Dr. Nikki Colodny and Dr. Manole Buruiana) would go through this procedure. The measure is widely seen as aimed at abortion clinics.

Access

- Most southern cities in Ontario have access to some abortion services.
- Access is still difficult in northern and rural areas; the bulk of hospital providers are in urban areas.
- Dr. Henry Morgentaler and Dr. Robert Scott have operated free-standing clinics in Toronto for a few years. There are no such clinics outside Toronto.

Pro-choice activities

- Dr. Morgentaler recently obtained a court injunction barring picketers from his premises. It has cut down on the bulk of the picketers, who now seem to be targeting the Scott clinic. The escort service organized by the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics (OCAC) at the Morgentaler Clinic has been discontinued, though supporters are kept busy responding to the repeated attempts of Operation Rescue to shut down the clinics.
- OCAC has been organizing for seven years. New pro-choice activist groups have formed in Kingston, Kitchener-Waterloo and London.
- CARAL chapters are active and building.

Miriam Jones,
Ontario Coalition of Abortion Clinics



that states that its members could be guilty of professional misconduct and their license could be restricted or suspended if they perform an abortion outside a hospital. This was added in 1985 to prevent "Morgentaler clinics" from opening in N.B.

The requirement that Medicare-covered abortions be performed in accredited hospitals is a government decision.

The four accredited hospitals where abortions are performed do not take patients from outside their health region.

Abortion



Abortion across

Manitoba



Government Position

• The anti-choice conservative government of Gary Filmon is:

• doing nothing to improve access where it is needed, especially in the north;

• pressing the federal government to "take charge of the situation," i.e., bring in a new abortion law.

• As well, the Manitoba Hospital Services Commission will not fund abortions outside of hospitals, i.e., in the Morgentaler Clinic or other clinics willing to provide services.

Access

• In Winnipeg, you can get an abortion at: the Morgentaler Clinic, and three hospitals, including the Health Sciences Centre. Outside Winnipeg, the cities of Brandon and Portage la Prairie, both in the south, provide services. There are no facilities in the north.

Pro-choice activities

• Ongoing lobbying of provincial and federal politicians, including presenting a brief to the Women's Initiatives Committee of the provincial government in January 1989 on the need for greater accessibility to services throughout the province and for the provincial government to fund services performed in any medically approved facility, not just hospitals.

• A choice celebration in February 1989, a big wine and cheese evening in a posh hotel ballroom. The purpose was to celebrate the first anniversary of the Supreme Court decision by honouring Dr. Henry

Morgentaler (he spoke) and to raise money to support his upcoming challenge of the provincial government's refusal to pay for abortions performed in his clinic. The Manitoba Health Services Commission will fund only hospital abortions.

• Sponsor-a-Picket for Choice, June 1989. The campaign was launched with a party at the Morgentaler Clinic to celebrate the fact that the Clinic had now been performing abortions for a year. (After the Supreme Court decision in January, the Clinic was licensed again by the Manitoba College of Physicians and Surgeons. It had been open before, but only for counselling and referral. The police had

raided and closed it down and confiscated all the equipment three times.)

Anti-choice picketers were out preventing women and clinic workers from getting in. The idea of Sponsor-a-Picket for Choice is to have people pledge money towards an anti-choice picketer. The sponsor chooses a picketer, and sends money to the Coalition for Reproductive Choice each time her/his picketer is seen at the Clinic. The Coalition then informs the League for Life of how much money their picketers have raised for choice. This has been very successful, with lots of pledges, and only occasional picketers.

• Two demonstrations this summer at the Legislative Building around the Chantal Daigle affair.

• Preparations for October 14 National Day of Action: demonstration and events at Legislature; more than 70 volunteers on foot and by phone collecting signatures on petitions and informing supporters of our position; collecting \$10 each from people to run a full page ad in local Saturday papers with the theme of "no new law - don't lose the right to choose." If successful, will publish 1,100 names of pro-choice supporters.

Anti-choice activities

• There are several anti-choice activities, most from fundamentalist and the Roman Catholic churches. The major one is the League for Life, with Pat Soënen as its long-time president. Besides political lobbying, from time to time, they picket the Morgentaler Clinic, this year even going so far as to picket the homes of pro-choice doctors, an activity which lost them sympathy.

The Manitoba Coalition for Reproductive Choice believes that some of the organizations are really the same few people appearing in the guise of a new organization, e.g., the Pregnancy Distress Centre, the Crisis Pregnancy Centre, etc. They ran large, prominent ads in bus shelters and in the newspapers, most recently warning us about the "post-abortion syndrome." Joe Borowski only surfaces occasionally now.

Lynne Bingham
Manitoba Coalition for Reproductive Choice

Saskatchewan



Government Position

• The Saskatchewan provincial government is openly anti-choice. Its position of doing nothing to facilitate access to abortion services has nothing to do with funding, but everything to do with the political will to offer no services.

Access

• Regina - One physician who is performing a few very selective abortions. The vast majority of women must go to the Morgentaler Clinic in Winnipeg.

• Less women from Saskatchewan are going to the States than once did, as the clinic situation in neighboring states has deteriorated. Women must pay \$350 for an abortion in the Winnipeg Morgentaler Clinic.

• Saskatoon - Situation is better. If a woman can prove residency in the immediate area, hospitals in the city are performing abortions.

• Moose Jaw - Abortions will be performed for women with proven residency only.

• It is safe to say that the rest of the province has no abortion services at all.

• The lack of access to services in Regina is exacerbated by the fact that there is a gynecology monopoly on abortions; until very recently, only those specialists were permitted to perform abortions. As soon as extra-billing was banned in this province, it was no longer in



their financial interest to do abortions, so they stopped. There is also a scarcity of these specialists. Another problem is that the only method by which abortions are done is under general anesthetic. Newer, safer technologies are not used.

Pro-choice activities

• A tiny core of volunteers has carried out pro-choice action. The Regina Citizens for Reproductive Choice prepared and presented a report to the Saskatchewan Commission on Directions in Health Care in March 1989.

• In June, Dr. Marjorie Maguire from Catholics for a Free Choice (U.S.) spoke in Regina, Moose Jaw, and Saskatoon.

• Two demonstrations in August on the Daigle case.

Anti-Choice Activities

• The activities of the anti-choice groups in the province are too numerous to list. When the issue was brought up at a meeting of the Regina Citizens for Reproductive Choice, many members laughed and said to just say that the anti-choicers run the provincial government. They have conferences, and various fund-raisers; they meet with government ministers, as well as with the other parties. They recently had a meeting with the provincial NDP leadership. Regina Citizens for Reproductive Choice has asked to meet with the Health Minister for two years now, but with no luck.

Joyce Way
Regina Citizens for Reproductive Choice

Yukon North West Territories



Access

• There is one hospital in Western Arctic which provides abortions, in Yellowknife. Travel expenses are covered by medicare. There are problems with delays and so many women are forced into their second trimester, and the lack of adequate birth control centres and counselling resulted in the region's having twice the national average of abortion procedures in 1985, the last year for which statistics are available.

Pro-choice activities

• This summer, a Western Arctic chapter of CARAL was organized, based in Yellowknife.



ss the country



Abortion

Alberta



Government Position

Abortion procedures may be performed in hospitals at the discretion of the medical and administrative personnel.

Two doctors must be involved in the decision to terminate a pregnancy. This rule was instigated by the then Minister of Health for the Province of Alberta, Marvin Moore, when the Supreme Court of Canada struck down the law requiring the involvement of the therapeutic abortion committee (TAC) in abortion decisions.

Abortions are paid for by Alberta Health Care.

Access

- Number of abortions currently being performed:
 - Calgary - 70 per week
 - Edmonton - 35 per week
 - Lethbridge - 7 per week
 - Red Deer - 5 per week
 - Grand Prairie - 2-3 per week
- (All numbers are approximate)

- A pro-choice coalition is in the process of organizing. There are currently eight member organizations and more are being approached by an outreach committee.

- Planned Parenthood affiliates are organizing special events to celebrate the 20th anniversary of legal access to birth control and abortion.

- Edmonton - Sept. 1989 - Abortion by Choice, the CARAL chapter in Edmonton, held a forum on reproductive health and technology.

- National Day of Action, October 14, will be recognized in Calgary, Edmonton and Lethbridge.

Anti-choice Activities

- Calgary - Ongoing activities include Operation Rescue type action, i.e., chaining people, usually men, to suction equipment in hospital abortion clinic.



- The waiting period in Calgary and Edmonton is currently on average three to four weeks.

Pro-choice activities

- Calgary
 - July 1989 - spontaneous demonstration at the federal building in response to the Daigle case.
 - September 1989 - Planned march and demonstration with speeches from MLA's, the western V.P. of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, a spokeswoman for NAC and CARAL Calgary.

- September 1989 - A one-page pro-choice message to MPs endorsed by 840 Calgaryans was placed in the *Calgary Herald*.

- Harassment of pro-choice supporters at demonstrations and with abusive notes through the mail, including death threats.

- Numerous misleading listings in the telephone directory, advertising phony clinics and counselling agencies.

- Edmonton - Operation Rescue type activities. Harassment at pro-choice demonstrations.

- Fort McMurray - Through anti-choice pressure a gynecologist prepared to perform abortions was driven out of town by lack of general referrals, and was unable to earn a living.

Dee Pearson
CARAL Calgary

British Columbia



Government Position

The anti-choice position of the Social Credit government has never wavered. Premier Bill Vander Zalm's religious convictions are matched by those of his health minister, Peter Dueck. Neither of them like to mention the A-word. When they have attempted to speak out in the past, their government's popularity plummeted. Some say it will never recover due to the alienation of the women of B.C.

The B.C. government was asked to provide core funding (the overhead costs) for the free-standing clinic, instead of just the doctor's fee as they do now. Dueck refused the application, saying the clinic didn't qualify as a "treatment and diagnostic centre." Clinic supporters say it does, it seems to be the government's prerogative to not provide funding if it doesn't want to.

Access

- The vast majority of abortions performed in British Columbia are at four hospitals located in the Greater Vancouver area: Lions Gate, Burnaby General, Vancouver General and Shaughnessy Hospitals. Smaller centres do some abortions, but exact figures are not available. We know women are having abortions in Kamloops, Victoria, Smithers, Terrace, Quesnel, and Prince George. Many other communities like Port Alberni and Langley have no access.

- Vancouver's free-standing clinic, the Every Woman's Health Care Centre, provides D & E's to the end of the 19th week.

- Four-week average delay between the time a woman sees her family doctor and the time the abortion is performed.

- With the exception of the clinic, general anesthetic is used. Process is D & C usually.

- We have reports that some doctors at some hospitals do exclusively saline inductions after the 14th week.

- Counselling services minimal or non-existent at hospitals, available at the clinic if the woman wants it.

Pro-choice activities

- October 14 - Vancouver, March through part of downtown, rally at Sunset Beach.

- The Every Woman's Health Care Centre Society's "Pledge a Protestor" campaign. Here's how it works: You pledge a nickel, dime, quarter, dollar - whatever you like - towards every anti-choicer who shows up at the clinic or choice rallies. Then at the end of the month, you'll receive an invoice

The police were reluctant to make arrests if a protestor moved away from the clinic door before the police arrived, which has been Operation Rescue's most recent tactic. The injunction was expanded September 6 and now allows police to make arrests on evidence supplied by people other than the police themselves.

- The anti-choice minority is very well organized and very vocal. Besides their pickets



Bonnie Acker

showing the total number of anti-choicers times your pledge. If, for example, you pledge a nickel and 100 anti-choicers are counted, you owe \$5.00.

If 200 supporters pledge a nickel, the Clinic collects \$1000 towards the cost of quality reproductive health services provided by the clinic. What's more, you'll be letting the anti-choicers know how they're helping the clinic every time they protest a woman's right to choose.

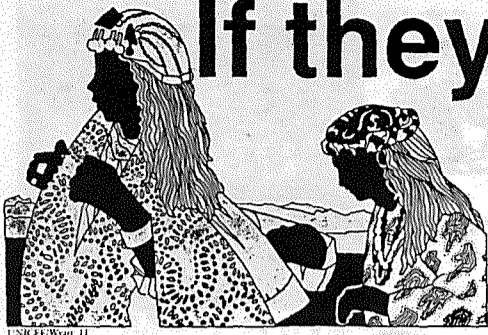
- B.C. Coalition for Abortion Clinics post card campaign to federal government.

Anti-choice activities

- Proliferation of phony clinics operated by the anti-choice mostly outside the City of Vancouver. Harassment of patients at the free-standing clinic by the anti-choice.

- Operation Rescue and assorted other women haters block the doors of the clinic and occasionally the surgical day care pavilion of Vancouver General Hospital. There is an injunction in place against blocking the doors of the clinic, several protestors have been jailed and/or fined.





If they really cared about children

Children: jailed, tortured and killed

by Hilary Homes

Children arouse our protective instincts. And so they should. They are, after all, a society's deepest trust, to be protected and provided for. But 30 years after the United Nations proclaimed the Declaration of the Rights of the Child - a document which itself consecrates childhood as a time for "play and recreation"... "affection, love and understanding" - children in more than 50 countries are unjustly imprisoned, tortured and killed by their governments. In many countries, children are sub-persons, even non-persons. They are ignored when it suits the authorities, tormented to make their parents capitulate, and shot if they happen to be in the line of fire. There are no wonder years for these children. Only fear and repression.

In the Israeli Occupied Territories, Palestinian children have been unjustly detained, unfairly imprisoned, severely beaten, or shot dead by Israeli forces almost every day since the beginning of the *intifada*

(uprising) in December, 1987. According to United Nations figures, more than half the casualties recorded in the Gaza Strip during the first year of the uprising were children under 15.

°Every minute 18 infants die, and 17 of them are in the developing countries.

In Sri Lanka, Peru, Columbia and Iraq, children have "disappeared", sometimes together with their parents and siblings, in the context of political struggles. In Sri Lanka, hundreds of people, including many children and students, have been apprehended by the Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) and screened for links with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, a Tamil separatist organization. Ten-year-old Kayathilli Vino Sangaralingham

"disappeared" in Sri Lanka since 1983.

Fifteen-year-old Sandra Patricia Velez Velez was four months pregnant when she "disappeared" on Feb. 25, following the bombardment of the Colombian village of Yondo by army units belonging to the XIV Brigade. The attack was apparently part of an anti-guerrilla operation. Though witnesses claimed they saw Sandra being detained by soldiers, the military authorities have so far denied holding her.

It is not uncommon for children to be detained or brutalized by government authorities in reprisal for the activities of adults. In October, 1986, Swedish police detained a 16-month-old baby for two days after being unable to locate its parents to serve them with an expulsion order returning the family to Peru.

°In all regions of the world, governments spend more on military activities than on health. The disparity is greatest in West Asia and North Africa and least in Central and South America.

In Chile, children as young as 10 have been intercepted in the street and told to pass warnings on to their parents. "Tell your mother to stop her activities or you'll pay for it," was the message two men gave in December, 1987, to the children - aged 10 and 11 - of Cecilia Benitez, social democratic member of a campaign for free elections.

In Guatemala, uniformed soldiers and men in plainclothes burst into the home of 13-year-old Susana Tzoc Mendoza on Nov. 22, 1988. They were looking for her father, a local human rights activist who had fled the country after receiving death threats. The soldiers beat Susana with gun butts and left her vomiting blood.

Like Susana, many children are abandoned or otherwise suffer when their parents become victims of human rights violations. It is estimated that during the years 1980-84, some 100,000 Guatemalan children lost at



least one parent, and that about 20 per cent of these children became orphans as a result of political violence. In the German Democratic Republic, 14-year-old Rene Meibohm was sent to a children's home after both his parents were imprisoned for repeatedly trying to emigrate.

In many countries entire families are imprisoned. Sometimes pregnant women give birth while in detention.

Like adults, children may be subjected to torture while in detention - often in front of a parent to elicit a confession or to intimidate an entire community. Recently, torture has been systematically used in Turkey, Indonesia and South Korea to make the children themselves confess to crimes. Despite the fact that Turkey has ratified the United Nations Convention Against Torture, anyone detained for political reasons is at great risk. On June 30, 1988, 13-year-old Ozgur Cem Tas was detained and tortured for two hours by police seeking information about two cousins suspected of sympathizing with Kurdish guerrillas. Ozgur was blindfolded, handcuffed and beaten. His hands were then released and he was suspended from hooks and subjected to electric shocks. When he threatened to lodge an official complaint, his captors said: "Even if you complain to God, what does it matter?"

While some children die in detention, others may be victims of "extra-judicial" executions, or may be simply caught in the cross-fire as the authorities attempt to break up demonstrations. In the Tibet Autonomous Region of China, a number of children were among the dead after police opened fire on pro-independence protesters in October, 1987. Two families were targets of the Philippine Army in early 1988. Among the dead were seven children, including a three-

year-old. Both families were associated with the Basic Christian Community, an organization active in community development projects and defending individuals whose rights have been violated by the authorities.

A similar pattern of "extrajudicial" executions of children occurs in South America. In Surinam, an apparent attempt by government forces to contain armed opposition by a rebel group operating in the eastern part of the country led to large-scale killing of civilians, mainly women and children, in 1986 and 1987. On Aug. 1, 1986, witnesses saw three-year-old Cakwa Kastiel shot dead in his mother's arms. According to written reports, soldiers shot the child in order to frighten villagers into giving information about a rebel group, the Jungle Commando. In a related incident, 35 people were killed

°Since 1945, dehydration has quietly claimed over 150 million lives, many more than the combined civilian and military deaths of both world wars. And almost all of its victims have been children.

by soldiers in the village of Mooiwana on Nov. 29, 1986. Nineteen of the victims were children under 18, some as young as a few months or years. Witnesses have testified that five children were among a group of people lined up by the army and shot.

Daisy Saldarriaga Sanchez, 13, and Elvia Lucia Munoz Restrepo, 16, were among a group of four people killed by Colombian soldiers in



UNICEF photo by M. & E. Bernheim

°Every minute six children die and another six become disabled from one of the six diseases which can be prevented by immunization.

"disappeared" in November, 1987, with her mother and two older sisters, 12 and 17, after being arrested by members of the IPKF. Despite a relative's claim that she saw the child at the IPKF camp, authorities continue to deny the arrests. The Sangaralinghams are among 800 people who have

the world would be a different place

°In many of the developing countries at least half of the deaths of children under one year of age occur during the first month of life. These are caused mainly by the mother's poor health before and during pregnancy, unsafe childbirth practices, and inadequate care immediately after birth.

rally in Cape Town.

Under state of emergency detention provisions the authorities are not required to inform the parents of the child's whereabouts. Despite South African laws to the contrary, children are often held in the same cells as adult prisoners. Torture and ill-treatment of children is routine: more than 80 per cent of children claim to have been tortured during detention.

Despite international human rights law prohibiting the execution of juvenile offenders, more than 20 countries in the Americas, Middle East, Africa and Asia allow, in law or in practice, the execution of children who were under 18 at the time of their

their Cambodian peers. In the late 1970's and early 1980's, Canada accepted hundreds of unaccompanied refugee minors from Southeast Asia. Most of these children had been either deliberately or accidentally separated from their parents in Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos. Others were orphans selected by relatives to go abroad. In recent years, the admission of unaccompanied minors into Canada has dropped considerably; between 1984 and 1987, only 95 children were accepted.

With increasing public awareness of human rights violations against children, world governments have pressed for greater international legal protection

Number of children who starve to death every day: 40,000

For its part, Amnesty International has begun to develop special techniques for addressing human rights violations against children.

But this is only half the battle. Until governments understand that children are people too, entitled to more - not less - state protection, the wonder years will continue to be the birthright of a tiny elite.

Hilary Homes is coordinator of the Youth/Campus Network, Amnesty International Canadian Section - English-speaking in Ottawa.

°Some 14 million children are still dying each year from common illnesses and malnutrition, most of which could be prevented by relatively simple, relatively low-cost methods.



April 1989, after a strike by 59 workers in the militarized zone of El Carmen de Atrato. The bodies were reportedly buried very quickly without forensic examination, and relatives were not given the opportunity to formally identify them.

Most people think of political activists as adults. But school children in many countries participate in or organize protests of their own. In some cases, the leading roles taken by young people have led to their detention by the authorities. In South Africa in 1985, when the first state of emergency legislation took effect, arrests, detention and killings of children took place on a massive scale as primary and secondary school children alike organized school boycotts to protest inadequate funding of nonwhite schools, youth unemployment and rent increases in the townships. According to the Detainees' Parents Support Committee, during the years 1984-86, 312 children were killed by security forces and at least another 1,000 were wounded; 11,000 children were detained without trial and a further 18,000 were arrested on charges related to anti-apartheid protests; 173,000 children were held in police cells while awaiting trial.

The violations continue. More than 200 children were detained under state of emergency regulations from mid-1988 to February, 1989. And in August, police used whips, tear gas and rubber bullets against school children gathering for an anti-apartheid



UNICEF photo by Beyer

offences. In a retrograde step deplored by human rights organizations around the world, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in July 1989, that the execution of offenders as young as 16 at the time of their crime is permissible under the Constitution. Three juvenile offenders have been executed in the United States since 1985, and as of August, 27 juvenile offenders were on death row in 12 states.

As we approach the 1990's, millions of people, predominantly women and children, are living in exile as refugees. In Southeast Asia, more than 150,000 Khmer refugees live in camps set up along the Cambodia-Thailand border. The children in these overcrowded camps receive a poor education in relation to

for children's rights. This fall, on the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Child, the United Nations General Assembly will debate whether or not to accept the Draft Convention of the Rights of the Child. Ten years in the making, this convention consists of 54 articles covering civil, political, economic and cultural rights for people under 18. In many areas the document mirrors the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provisions against torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and the death penalty. The rights to freedom of opinion and expression, and due process of law are also enshrined. Refugee children will be granted special protection and assistance in locating their parents and relatives.

You can help! Contact

- 1. UNICEF.** Canadian UNICEF Committee, Comité UNICEF Canada. 443, Mount Pleasant Road CDN - Toronto, Ontario M4S 2L8 (416) 482-4444
- 2. Amnesty International.** Canadian Section (English Speaking) 130 Slater St., Suite 900, Ottawa, Ontario. K1P 6E2 (613) 563-1891
- 3. Canada's International Immunization Program.** c/o Canadian Public Health Assoc., 1565 Carling Ave., Suite 400, Ottawa, Ont. K1Z 8R1 (613) 725-3769

°Half of the children in Africa are living in absolute poverty.



UNICEF photo by T.S. Satyan

A DAY FOR CELEBRATION

On October 18, 1989, we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the **Persons Case** and the 10th anniversary of the **Persons Awards**.

As incredible as it may seem, Canadian women were not persons, in the legal sense, until 1929. According to a British common law decision of 1876, women were "persons in matters of pains and penalties, but not persons in matters of rights and privileges."

Through the efforts of five women activists from Alberta, who launched a challenge of this exclusion all the way to the Judicial Committee of the British Privy Council, Canadian women were granted the constitutional status of "persons" on October 18, 1929. From that day on, women became eligible for appointment to the Senate. The "famous five" Alberta women were Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney, Irene Parlby and Henrietta Muir Edwards.

Like much of the history of women in Canada, the Persons Case was forgotten for many years. In 1979, on the 50th anniversary of this event, the Persons Award were instituted to recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions towards improving the status of women in Canada.

Since 1979, 54 women from across Canada have been Persons Awards recipients. On October 12, 1989, six other outstanding women received the Awards. Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauvé, Governor General of Canada, presented Award medals to the recipients during a ceremony which held in the Senate Chamber on Parliament Hill.

As the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, I take tremendous pride in introducing the achievements of these six exceptional women.

Kay Armstrong, of Saanichton, British Columbia

Dedicated to helping women around the world, Kay Armstrong was a Vice-President of the International Council of Women and a founding member of MATCH, an international agency which supports programs for women in developing nations. She also served as President of the National Council of Women.

The Honourable Ellen Fairclough, of Hamilton, Ontario

One of Canada's most prominent female politicians, the Honourable Ellen Fairclough was a long-time Member of Parliament and the first woman to serve in the federal Cabinet. Throughout her political career, she promoted equality for Canadian women and encouraged their participation in all levels of politics.

Dorothy Inglis, of St. John's, Newfoundland

As a founding member and Vice-President of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, Dorothy Inglis has become a well-known spokesperson for women's equality. She is currently the author of a feminist column in the St. John's **Evening Telegram**, and an active member of the St. John's Status of Women Council.

To all the recipients of the Persons Awards, I express my thanks, on behalf of Canadian women, for your work, your strength and your devotion to your goals. And for showing us, by your example, the integrity and wisdom to which all of us should aspire.



Helen Levine, of Ottawa, Ontario

Helen Levine has had a long and distinguished career in social work, as a case worker, educator, counsellor and author. As a professor at the School of Social Work at Carleton University, she introduced women's issues and feminist perspectives into the social work curriculum for the first time.

Alphonsine Paré-Howlett, of Montréal, Québec

Alphonsine Paré-Howlett's long-time dedication as a volunteer led to the creation of many organizations dedicated to the advancement of women. She has been particularly active in the Fédération des femmes du Québec, the Fondation Thérèse Casgrain and the Joint Committee of Montréal, whose members represent the National Council of Jewish Women, the Montreal Council of Women and the Fédération des femmes du Québec.

Caroline Robins, of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

As President of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and the Canadian Teachers' Federation, Caroline Robins worked tirelessly to improve working conditions for women teachers. She headed the Canadian delegation at the World Confederation of the Teaching Profession in 1957, and later helped initiate the Canadian Confederance on Education.

Barbara McDougall



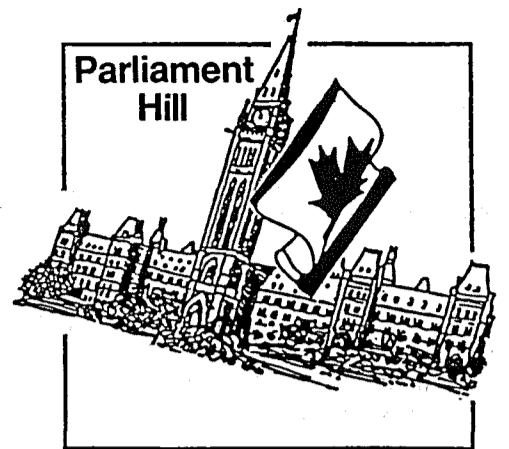
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What's happening in the House this session?



by Shelly Potter

This fall new abortion legislation will doubtless rival the Goods and Services Tax as the most controversial item on the federal government's legislative agenda.

Cabinet ministers have worked hard to arrive at a compromise abortion law which is thought to meet Charter guarantees and respond to the desire of many Canadians to see abortion in the later stages of pregnancy regulated. Whether it's a saleable compromise remains to be seen.

Once introduced, the Bill is dealt with as all other House of Commons bills. It receives first and second reading, in which the Bill is first tabled and thereafter debated on its principles. No amendments are made at these times. The Bill is then referred for study to a legislative committee, put together by the House Striking Committee which consists of Jean Charest, Jim Hawkes, Bob Layton, Jean-Robert Gauthier, Albert Cooper, Don Boudria, and Rod Murphy. The Chair of the legislative committee is chosen by the Speaker.

Legislative Committees, under the direction of the Chair who heads an all-party steering committee, have a measure of latitude in how they deal with a Bill. Most, as a matter of course, hold hearings in Ottawa. Some, such as the committee which examined C-21, the Unemployment Insurance Amendments, travel to a handful of cities holding public hearings. While the steering committee determines if and where it will travel and chooses the witnesses the

committee will hear, anyone can submit a written brief for consideration.

Once out of committee, the abortion bill will be sent back to the House for Report stage and Third reading. At report stage any MP can

amendments could determine the final shape and tone of the law.

The abortion bill is just one of several pieces of legislation to be introduced into the Commons in the coming months. Also on the agenda are amendments to the Divorce Act, new pornography legislation, pension reform, legislation to establish a race relations foundation, and a Heritage Language Institute.

Amendments to the Divorce Act are small but important, and consist of removing religious impediments to remarriage. Until now it has been possible in some faiths to withhold a religious divorce and use it as a bargaining chip in the determination of the settlement. Without a religious divorce one cannot remarry into one's faith. With this amendment people must first do everything in their power to be free of religious impediments before proceeding to a civil court. So while this amendment cannot solve the problem of a man or woman simply refusing to grant a divorce, it will help to prevent coercion.

Long awaited by many, new pornography legislation is to be introduced this fall. Unlike the previous failed bills which were thought to be unduly restrictive, this new bill will leave aside contentious questions and focus on two areas of wide agreement, child and violent pornography. As to whether the penalties will be the same as in the failed bills, sources at the department of Justice say this decision has not yet been made.

Justice Minister Doug Lewis has also been consulting with his provincial counterparts, youth servicing organizations, and the police regarding the Young Offenders Act. Accordingly, two issues have been identified for revision: sentences for murder, and transfer provision to adult court. No legislation has yet been drafted, but we still might see some by Spring.

With regard to pension reform, federal public servants are finally going to have their pension plans brought up to par with others in the federal jurisdiction. This summer legislation was passed to stop the denial of survivor benefits upon remarriage. Treasury Board Minister Robert de Cotret is now preparing to introduce replacement legislation for C-33, the Bill that died with last year's election call, which would have established a

management board, and change inflation provisions. The management board, once established, will examine a range of issues debated over the past decade, such as credit-splitting on marriage breakdown, treatment of part time workers, and survivor benefit structure.

Multiculturalism Minister Gerry Weiner is getting ready to table legislation to create a Race Relations Foundation. The foundation's mandate will be to undertake public education and awareness, publish information and research, and act as a clearinghouse for community groups, academics, and the general public. It has not been decided where the Foundation will be located. It will have an

endowment of \$24 million, \$12 million of which comes from the government and \$12 from the Japanese community.

The Bill to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act is back in the House for Report stage, at which time Members can propose amendments. And also underway is the process to introduce GST. The Commons Finance Committee has been examining the GST Technical Paper and holding hearings. Once this is completed the Committee will report to the House, and there after, sometime before the Christmas break, a Bill will be tabled.

Shelly Potter is a former special assistant to a Federal Cabinet Minister.

What's happening in Parliament this Fall

- Abortion legislation
- Goods and Services Tax - GST
- Amendments to the Divorce Act
- Pornography legislation
- Creation of a Race Relations Foundation
- Amendments to the UIC Bill

propose an amendment, so long as it is not one which was dealt with in committee. Amendments are voted on and thereafter the bill goes on to be read a third time, and debated on its principles. The total time it takes a bill to pass through these stages varies greatly, depending on the priority it is assigned, and the extent to which the opposition wishes to debate it. Very speedy passage can take as little as a day, but the average time for a controversial piece of legislation is in the area of one to three months. With the House split fairly evenly between pro-choice and pro-life Members, the votes on the

"Women have never yet lived in their own world. Man has assigned woman to his sphere. A woman's sphere is any thing a man does not want to do himself. This is a simple distribution of labour and easily understood and is very satisfactory to half the population."

*Nellie McClung, 1916
1986 Herstory*

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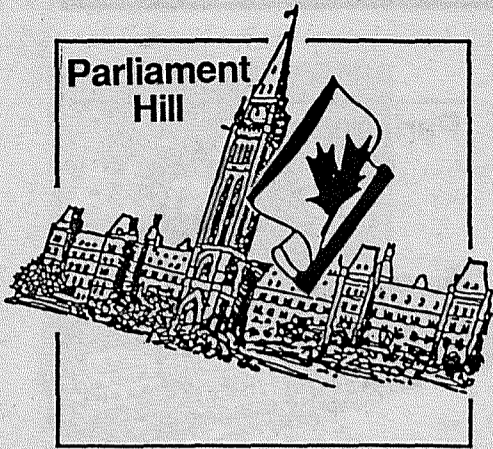
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Parliament Hill



The end of a - killing

The following are three of the many presentations made at the hearings into the cuts to VIA, held across Canada by the Liberal Party this summer.

Winnipeg

My name is Stella Kolisnyk and I'm a very concerned Canadian. Our Trans-Continental train is sacred to Canadians, and I'm not about to see it scrapped without a fight.

1) Mulroney has lied or broken another promise to upgrade and modernize the passenger service. It was one of the platforms he was elected on.

2) If the East is cut off from the West as proposed, the country will be divided instead of united. Manitoba will be a big loser in jobs and tourism to name just two things. Some of us have a fear of flying, and going by bus or car is very uncomfortable for those of us who are suffering from arthritis, etc. We find trains the most comfortable mode of travel. So we are stuck with no means of seeing our children and grandchildren who are scattered all over Canada. It is especially hard on seniors, of which I am one.

3) Mulroney wants to reduce our deficit on the back of VIA. There are other means. Scrap the bilingual program which costs millions every year and nobody wants. Put that money to upgrade or retain VIA which everyone wants according to the latest poll. In a poll taken in April, 89% thought it a bad idea to discontinue VIA services.

4) We are now a multi-lingual nation. Tourism brings millions. Tourists love seeing our vast country from the comforts of a reclining seat on the Trans-Continental. They come from all over the world. I've travelled once a year since I was a child, so I know first

hand. They think scrapping VIA is insane and a backward step.

5) Every industrialized country is modernizing their passenger system with rapid transit, etc., as did Amtrack USA. Amtrack is now realizing 72¢ on the dollar and soon will not need subsidizing. Why are we tagging behind?

6) About subsidies, why is VIA being made the scapegoat? Historically, rail has imposed a much smaller drain on the federal and provincial treasuries compared

you get. It's uncomfortable for seniors whose numbers are greater every year, and for families with children. It's too confined. So, listen to the people's voices. That's what you're there for, to represent us.

9) Seniors: Another lie and another broken promise. We, the pioneers, built the rail system and we love it. You have no right to scrap it. It's the most comfortable way for us to travel and we travel a lot as our children are scattered all

Québec

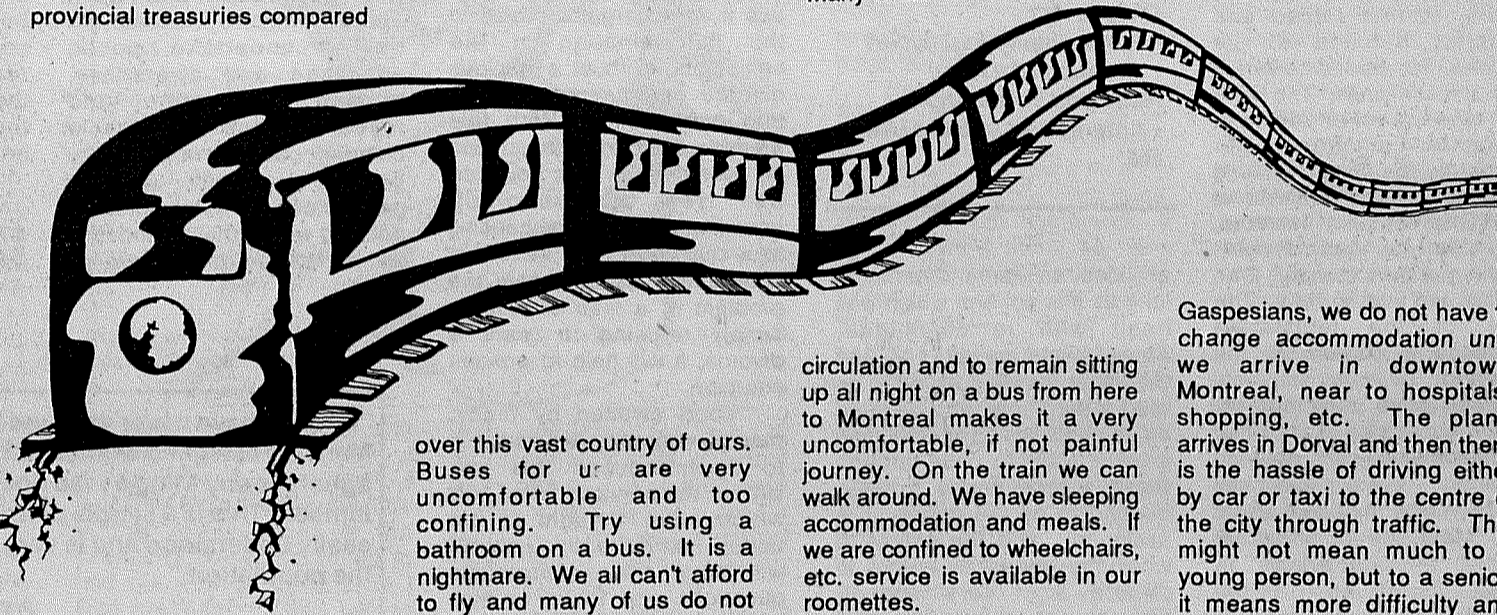
I am here today because I firmly believe that VIA is essential to Gaspésians. I represent three aspects of our Gaspésian society. First, as one of our steadily increasing number of Senior Citizens, I believe that the VIA Service is essential to us. Elderly people find travel on the train is necessary because:

1) It is much more comfortable than the bus. Many of us suffer from lack of

or Quebec for medical or other reasons several times a year would find their resources more greatly depleted if they were forced to take the plane.

3) The train is much more reliable. Our Gaspésian weather and our hilly roads make travel by bus hazardous in winter. The planes frequently are unable to land in Gaspé due to foggy weather or icy conditions. The train may be late but it will always get us to our destination more safely.

4) The train is more convenient. For elderly



over this vast country of ours. Buses for us are very uncomfortable and too confining. Try using a bathroom on a bus. It is a nightmare. We all can't afford to fly and many of us do not drive cars anymore. What are we to do? Please don't take our only means of travel from us.

10) What about the loss of 4,000 jobs? Many of the men spent most of their lives working on the passenger cars. What now? What's that going to do to the economy?

11) The Conservative government is again favouring the East and ignoring the Western provinces, especially Manitoba. We will be left without any transportation by rail, and its accompanying loss of jobs and tourists.

12) Mulroney, you have deliberately hood-winked us by promising to upgrade and now that you feel you have a foothold, you plan to dismantle the passenger service, especially the Trans-Continental. We won't forget. We trusted you once and once again you have broken that trust.

Thank-you for giving me a chance to express my view. I know that I speak for thousands that will not get this opportunity.

Special thanks to Chris Baker of the office of David Walker, MP who provided the transcripts.

circulation and to remain sitting up all night on a bus from here to Montreal makes it a very uncomfortable, if not painful journey. On the train we can walk around. We have sleeping accommodation and meals. If we are confined to wheelchairs, etc. service is available in our roomettes.

2) The train is much cheaper than the plane. As many of our Senior Citizens are existing mainly on Old Age Pensions, economics becomes a serious problem and those who have to travel to Montreal

Gaspésians, we do not have to change accommodation until we arrive in downtown Montreal, near to hospitals, shopping, etc. The plane arrives in Dorval and then there is the hassle of driving either by car or taxi to the centre of the city through traffic. This might not mean much to a young person, but to a senior, it means more difficulty and money. Even the difference between the Central Station and the bus terminus can become a problem.

As a member of the Anglican Church, I go to Quebec or Sherbrooke at least

"Without aggression, without any noisy obtrusiveness, a few Canadian women by deep thought, by clear vision or by honest service have prepared the way for those who will follow, and have proved the right of all to work as they are able."

National Council of Women, 1900
1986 Herstory

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by Gayle M. MacDonald

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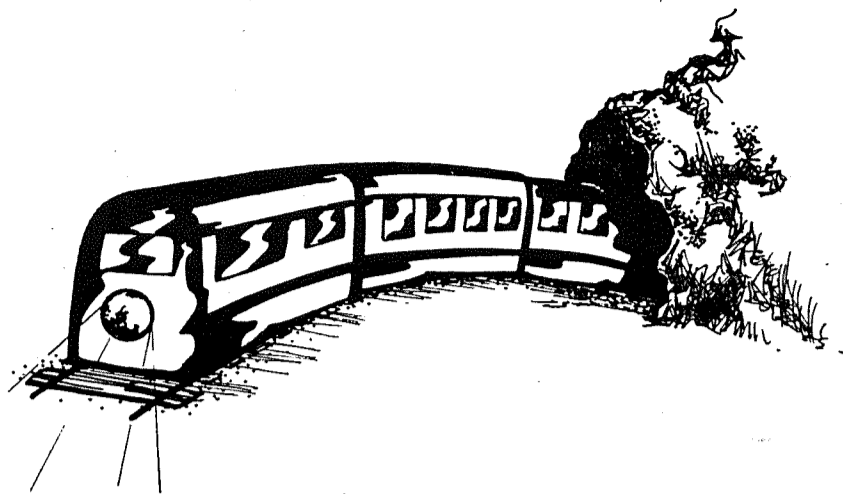
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way of life Via Rail



three times a year. The cost of these trips would be doubled at least, if I went by plane, and as I previously stated, would be much more uncomfortable by bus.

As a regular citizen with a family, I appreciate the availability of the train service. For instance, last year my daughter's family of five came home from Ontario for Christmas. They chose to take the train because, due to the possibility of storms at that time of the year, they felt the train was the most reliable method of transportation to assure them of arriving and returning on the day they wanted to. Also, the plane fare would have been much more expensive. It should be noted that it's much more difficult for families with little babies to travel by bus. On the train hot water and food, facilities for changing diapers, etc. are available. Frequently, with the bus, one has to change accommodation in the middle of the night. Lately, one of my friends changed buses three times coming from Montreal. This would be extremely annoying for mothers with small children.

For the above reasons, I would strongly advise that the members of the Government and VIA Rail reconsider their plans to cut VIA Rail. I feel that as Canadian taxpayers, Gaspésians have a right to VIA Service and as voting Canadians, we have a right to expect our Members of Parliament to honour our wishes. If they do, cutting VIA Rail will not be considered.

Winnifred Duncan, of St. Peters Ladies Guild, in St.-Georges-de-Malbaie

In a poll taken in April, 89% thought it a bad idea to discontinue VIA services.

Bonaventure County Women's Institutes

Bertha Hayes and I represent the Bonaventure County Group of the Women's Institutes of Canada. The aim of the Women's Institute is to raise the standard of living in communities and to be a voice for women.

Perhaps I can tell you how our institute began. In 1897, a woman in Stony Creek, Ontario, Adelaide Hoodless, lost her son through typhoid fever. He had contracted the fever by drinking unpasteurized milk, and Mrs. Hoodless realized that most women, like herself, did not know enough about hygiene in the home. With the help of the Farmers' Association secretary, she called on women to attend a meeting for the purpose of organizing learning experiences. 108 women turned up...in the days of travel by horse and buggy.

Adelaide Hoodless' idea took root and spread, and spread...Today we have 76,000 WI members in Canada, and the organization is worldwide, with 9 million women belonging together, and September 1989 will see an even larger world gathering in Kansas City.

From the early pressing for pasteurization of milk and clean water coolers in rural schools, to our 1988 support for our post offices and for clear identification of irradiated foods, the WI has been in the forefront for better conditions in our communities. All this brings us to VIA passenger travel.

Nous, les membres des Women's Institutes (Instituts des femmes) demandons au gouvernement fédéral de permettre au VIA RAIL de continuer le service des trains en Gaspésie, en fournissant les octrois nécessaires. Nous avons fait la même demande lors des auditions de Transports Canada en 1977; c'est dans l'esprit de notre mandat d'améliorer les conditions de vie rurale. Certainement dans les régions éloignées, comme la Gaspésie, un moyen de déplacement convenable fait partie des conditions de vie.

From January 1 to June 30, 1989, 915 persons travelled by train through the Port Daniel station. A large percentage of these are elderly people for whom travel by other means is either too expensive or too uncomfortable. Another part is made up of sick and handicapped Gaspésians who must go to Quebec or Montreal for treatment.

Just how can a lady, 78 years old, who has had a leg amputated and who has an artificial leg, spend 12-14 hours in a bus for her trip to Montreal every three months for adjustment? Or an 85-year-old man in the same circumstances? A patient who goes for chemotherapy treatment either in Quebec or Rimouski needs to be able to lie down while travelling. Winter conditions (from December to April on the Gaspé Coast) make us very dependent on the train. When the bus or private cars are stuck in a snowdrift or sliding on icy roads, the train goes through.

And for those of our Gaspésians who have died away from the Coast, how does the government propose to have their bodies brought home to their own communities for burial? There were 42 corpses brought to the Gaspé Coast by train in 1988, and 48 in 1987.

Does the government want to impose an extra financial burden on those bereaved families along with the grief and expense a death necessarily brings?

Let us consider the younger Gaspésians. Our students travel to CEGEP in Gaspé by train. No meals are served in the cafeteria at the CEGEP on weekends, so many students come home every week. Who will support the cost of restaurant meals and the lack of a box of mother's cooking to get through the next week? Our teachers too go for courses, for conventions, for union meetings to Gaspé, to Quebec, to Montreal. By train, they can sleep while travelling, and arrive in time for the morning sessions. If we have no train, they will require more days, thus more supply teachers. This is an added expense and inconvenience.

Our own QWI members attend our provincial convention at MacDonald College; again they travel by train. In the last year there were 13 groups of schoolchildren who went by train on their class excursions. For them, it is a great learning experience, and for many the first opportunity to take the train. Will they be deprived of this chance to see our country? They don't have some of the advantages enjoyed by their counterparts in the large centres; will they lose the train ride, too?

We think of tourists coming by car, but in the first six months of 1989, 25 cyclists in Port Daniel alone used VIA to carry both their bicycles and themselves for part of the tour of the Coast. Many other visitors come by train, too. For some it is a homecoming; for

others a chance to see the Gaspé. The train is a safe, medium-priced way of travel. It is more economical than planes and more comfortable than buses - yet both these methods of transport are able to make use of roads or runways, generally built and maintained with government grants. Why then should the same government decrease grants for the Gaspé train? We realize that many grants have been given recently for social and cultural considerations; we feel train service should be a priority. It is a service to all.

The Gaspé Coast has a population of 120,000; Prince Edward Island has 96,000. Yet PEI has two airports and a ferry service subsidized by the government that, I have read, costs taxpayers \$10 per person when using the ferry. I have not been able to verify this figure, but it is subsidized. Why then does it seem objectionable that the Gaspé train be subsidized? Air travel is out of reach for the average citizen. Bus travel is often inconvenient. Will our government next decide we go back to coastal passenger boats?

We are Canadians. We pay the same taxes as other Canadians. We expect to have the same service as other Canadians.

This is what we ask, what we insist - that our Gaspé Coast train service be maintained and that the service be economically managed by VIA so that Gaspésians are provided with the means for the young, the old and the dead to reach their destination.

Bertha Hayes, Vice-President, and Ethelyn Vautier, Treasurer, Shigawake, Que.

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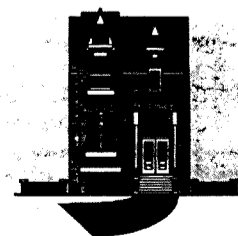
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Royal Commission on Reproductive Technologies

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney announced a Royal Commission on Reproductive Technologies on October 25.

Dr. Patricia Baird, Professor and former Head of the Department of Medical Genetics, University of British Columbia, will head the Commission.

Six other Canadians will also serve as commissioners. They are Bruce Hatfield, Martin Hébert, Grace Jantzen, Maureen McTeer, Suzanne Rozell Scorsone and Louise Vandelac.

Here are brief bios of the commissioners:

•Dr. Patricia Baird, Professor in the Department of Medical Genetics, University of British Columbia. She is a

He is currently on the active staff at the Foothills Hospital, Calgary, and a staff member of the Bethany Chronic Care Hospital and the Carewest Group of Hospitals. He has been a clinical associate professor of Medicine at the University of Calgary Medical School since 1982. He is a member of many groups such as the Canadian Medical Association Committee for Ethics and the Alberta Medical Association Committee on Ethics (Chairman.)

•Martin Hébert has been a member of the legal firm Guy et Gilbert since May 1989. Prior to that, he had been Private Secretary of the Leader of the Opposition in the Quebec National Assembly

and Oxford University in England. She is the author of many publications and articles on the Philosophy of Religion and has participated in international lecture tours and series.

•Maureen McTeer is a controversial addition to the Commission as the wife of External Affairs Minister Joe Clark. She is a well-known feminist who has been public on her pro-choice views on abortion. She is a member of the Toronto Planned Parenthood Association, and of the Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF). McTeer was an active member of the national coalition of groups and individuals who originally called on the federal

"Advocating a condition in which most couples should be encouraged to remain childless seems as patently absurd as endorsing the commonly held view that all married couples should have children."

*Dr. Jean Veevers
1981 Herstory*

medical consultant, Health Surveillance Registry, Minister of Health; professor and, until recently, Head of Medical Genetics for the Grace, University and Children's hospitals in Vancouver. She is a member of the Medical Research Council, a member of the Science Council of Canada Study Committee on Genetic Predisposition, and a member of the National Advisory Board on Science and Technology.

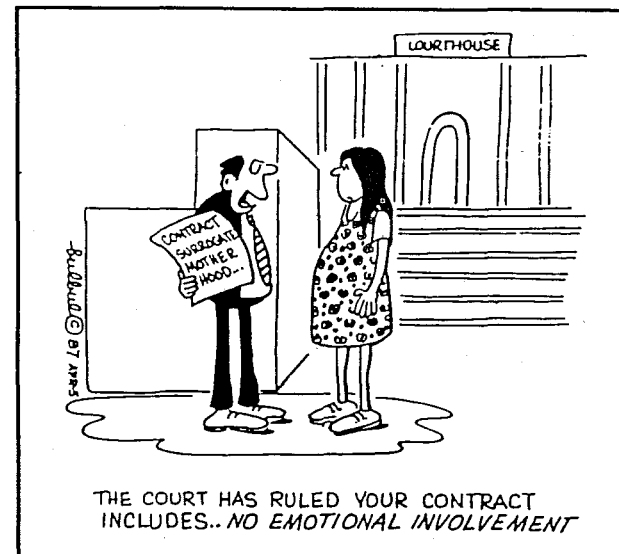
•Dr. C. Bruce Hatfield has been a private practitioner in internal medicine since 1959.

and Assistant Private Secretary for the Prime Minister. He is a founder and member of the Board of Directors of the Society of Medicine and Law of Quebec. He is also a member of a number of hospital ethics committees.

•Grace Jantzen is a lecturer in Philosophy of Religion, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, King's College, University of London. She previously taught at several universities, including the Universities of Calgary and British Columbia in Canada,

government to establish a royal commission on reproductive technologies. She ran for office during the last federal election but was defeated by a Liberal.

•Suzanne Scorsone is currently the Director, Office of Catholic Family Life, Archdiocese of Toronto and has held this position since 1981. She is the spokesperson for the Archdiocese of Toronto on family and women's issues. She is a panelist on *The Stiller Report* with Vision TV and a contributor to *The Catholic*



Register and an author of various articles and publications.

•Louise Vandelac is an associate professor of sociology at the University of Quebec in Montreal and a member of the National Bioethics Council on Research on Human Subjects. She received her Doctorate in sociology for a thesis on infertility, sterility and reproductive technology. She has conducted research for several years in these areas, notably in France and Quebec, and has published widely in the field.

What the Commission will be examining:

- implications of new reproductive technologies for women's reproductive health and well-being;
- the causes, treatment, and prevention of male and female infertility;
- reversals of sterilization procedures, artificial insemination, *in vitro* fertilization, embryo, transfers, prenatal screening and diagnostic techniques, genetic manipu-

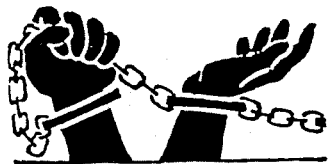
lation and therapeutic interventions to correct genetic anomalies, sex selection techniques, embryo experimentation and fetal tissue transplants;

•social and legal arrangements, such as surrogate childbearing, judicial interventions during gestation and birth, and "ownership" of ova, sperm, embryos and fetal tissue;

•the status and rights of people using or contributing to reproductive services, such as access to procedures, "rights" to parenthood, informed consent, status of gamete donors and confidentiality, and the impact of these services on all concerned parties, particularly the children, and;

•the economic implications of these technologies, such as the commercial marketing of ova, sperm, and embryos, the application of patent law, and the funding of research and procedures including infertility treatment.

Let the commission know your views on these important issues.



Canadian tribute to human rights

Fund-raising continues for the Canadian Tribute to Human Rights, the world's first tribute to human rights, which is now under construction on Elgin Street in downtown Ottawa. The Tribute, a monumental sculpture measuring half a city block in length, was created by Montreal artist and architect Melvin Charney.

The Canadian Tribute to Human Rights Inc. is a non-profit, registered charity which has raised nearly half of the \$742,000 required to complete the sculpture. Contributions are tax-deductible. Donors' names will be recorded in a ceremonial program designed for the public dedication in the spring of 1990. In addition,

major benefactors (donating \$5,000 or more) will have their names inscribed on a permanent bronze plaque adjacent to the Tribute.

Major benefactors to date include Amnesty International (Canada), the Assembly of First Nations, Canadian Cooperatives and Credit Unions, Canadian Teachers' Federation, EGALE (Equality

for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere), the Jewish Community Council of Ottawa, the National Association of Japanese Canadians, and the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, among others.

Donations or information requests are most welcome; please write to the Canadian Tribute to Human Rights, Box 510, Station "B", Ottawa K1P 5P6.

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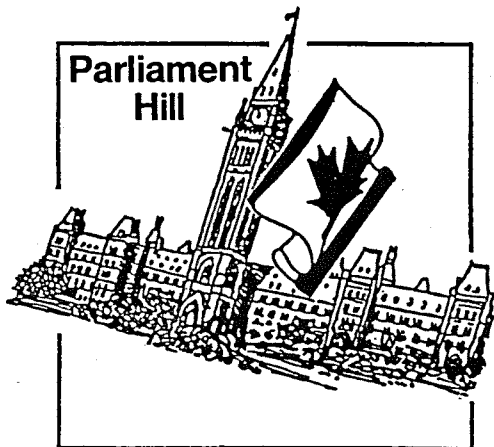
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The high cost of postal profits

by Deborah Bourque

Canada Post Corporation recently announced that the Corporation had made a \$93 million profit in 1988-89 and projected a \$100 million profit for 1989-90. Of course Canada Post management is pleased to be rid of their deficit and the government is pleased because they will be receiving dividends to help reduce their deficit, but who pays for this profit? What has been the cost to postal users? And to postal workers?

The legislation governing Canada Post does not require it to make profits. It **does** however, require the Corporation to maintain basic and customary services, to improve and expand products and services, to provide a standard of service that will meet the needs of Canadians and to provide security of the mail. Canada Post is supposed to keep an eye on finances as it carries out this mandate and to try and reach financial self-sufficiency, but profit making is not its primary goal. Nor should it be. Canadians have a right to

Tory appointed committee however, these options should be considered if the 1990 goal of breaking even was not reached. Despite the committee's rejection of privatization "at this time" Canada Post's five year plan released in 1986 relied on privatization as one of the primary means of eliminating over 8,000 jobs. The other methods proposed to reduce jobs and turn Canada Post into a profit making enterprise were: - closing postal stations and offices, increasing community mailboxes, reducing rural routes, reducing absenteeism, rollbacks in job security provisions, introducing new technology, reducing street letter-boxes, and contracting out work. And since 1986, we have seen these plans put in place in every community in Canada.

The post office is for sale

There are several options available to a large Crown

labour costs and a quick buck. But for you and I the privatization of Canada Post means nothing but massive job loss and decreased service.

Canada Post has contracted out the cleaning of postal facilities, the retail postal services, a large part of the parcel business, the transportation of mail and the maintenance of the mechanized equipment and

retail sector, usually for women.

Absenteeism, Harassment

Perhaps the most disgusting aspect of Canada Post's efforts to reduce costs and turn a profit has been their program to reduce absenteeism. The Corporate plan is to reduce annual absenteeism by 7.3 days per

all, of their job functions are prohibited from attending work on modified duties. 111 employees are forced to choose between reporting for work when ill or facing threats, harassment and disciplinary punishment. Often Canada Post refuses to pay legitimate sick leave applications, even when a doctors certificate is produced, so ill workers face financial penalties as well.

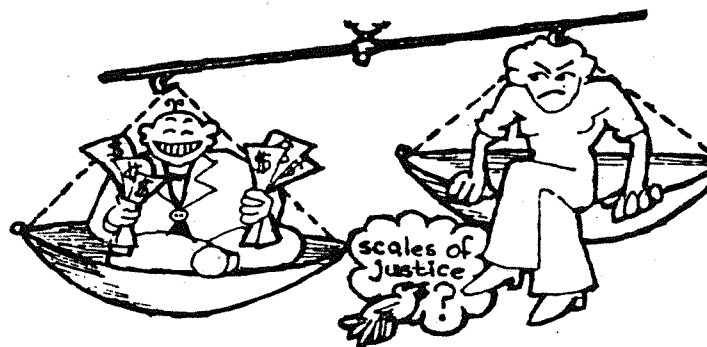
Productivity harassment and personal harassment abound. Cutbacks in staffing and increased mail volume means that fewer staff are moving more mail than ever before. There is tremendous pressure on employees to do the work of two and three people. The work environment has become more and more dehumanized. Workers are often not permitted to talk to their co-workers while sorting and Canada Post has recently introduced a policy where employees must ask permission to use the washroom. Line supervisors are out of control, themselves under extreme pressure from upper management to increase productivity and to reduce absenteeism in their sections.

Is it worth it?

Privatization and absenteeism harassment are just two examples of the lengths to which Canada Post and the government will go in their attempts to make profits. Service cutbacks in all areas of the postal service, like replacing door-to-door delivery with supermailboxes, for example, is another way. For postal workers and for postal users, it is not worth it. There is no need for profits As Canadians, we want a postal service that will pay for itself and run efficiently and meet our postal needs. Now Canadians can "proudly" state that we have a post office that makes a profit on the backs of unhealthy, scared and harassed workers and dissatisfied customers. There has to be more to life than making sure that private or government corporations are making a profit that we will never benefit from.

Canada Post should put their profits back into postal service, to improve the quality of service for all Canadians.

Deborah Bourque works for the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.



Graphic by Jeanne Taylor

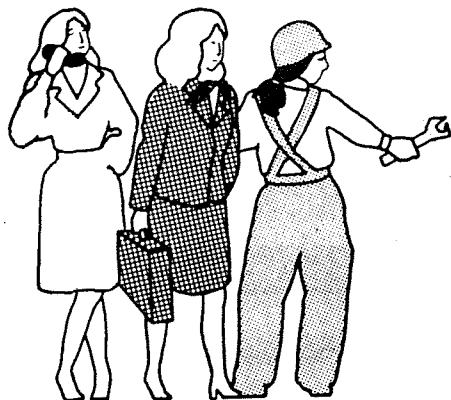
vehicles. For postal workers, this means the loss of many thousands of jobs. It means many more years spent working night shift in noisy, unsafe postal plants doing mind numbing work or many more years working part-time rather than full-time. It means redeployment or reclassification for some workers. For postal cleaners, mostly women and immigrant workers, it meant going from unionized decent paying jobs to minimum wage employment. For postal customers, it means less security of the mail and service cutbacks. Ultimately it means higher prices and a reduction of hours and longer line-ups at postal stations. We have already seen the erosion of two day guaranteed service. Now, you have to pay an extra \$1.50 to have a service that was guaranteed four years ago - two day turn around on mail.

Above all, the privatization of postal services means a cheap labour strategy. A strategy whereby decent, middle income, unionized jobs are being converted into minimum wage job ghettos. And as is usually the case with privatization, women are greatly affected. In rural centers, where over 8,000 women could lose their livelihood. When rural post offices are contracted out, wages are cut-sometimes to as low as \$1.00 an hour-with no benefits. In urban centers, privatization of retail outlets means the creation of more low paying, non-union jobs in the

employee, a saving of approximately \$40 million. To gain support for its program Canada Post has distorted and exaggerated the level of absenteeism at Canada Post. (In fact, absenteeism at Canada Post is slightly less than in comparable industries.) The way Canada Post has implemented its attendance program has resulted in postal workers undergoing severe stress, nervous breakdown, and even suicides. For many postal workers, the only option is to quit or take early retirement.

CUPW members are routinely harassed, threatened, pressured and intimidated simply for not coming to work when they are ill. Horror stories are common of supervisors harassing workers' families, phoning in the middle of the night to see if the person is really sick, harassing employees' physicians for confidential medical information, systematically dragging employees into the office demanding medical information after the use of one day sick leave, and many other such tactics.

Workers who are unfortunate enough to be injured on the job in an unsafe work environment are not spared these same attacks either. Injured workers are either forced to return to work too early, risking further injury, rather than face release, or those injured workers who are capable of returning to work and performing many but not



enjoy quality, affordable and accessible postal service wherever they live. But what we are seeing in recent times is the Conservative government and Canada Post management's attempts to reinterpret (or deliberately misinterpret) the legislation to force Canada Post to earn significant profit. Here's how it's being done.

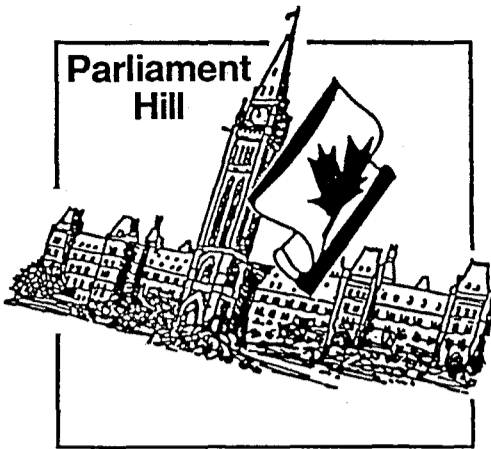
The profit making plan

In 1985, the Tories established the Canada Post review committee to try and divert criticism over proposed rate increases. This review committee recommended that Canada Post reach financial self sufficiency by the year 1990, but rejected both privatization and deregulation at that time. According to the

Corporation like Canada Post wanting to privatize - the selling of shares, or the contracting out of services, or the sale of all or part of the operations to the private sector.

Canada Post has chosen, up to now, to go with the sale of parts of its business and with contracting out. It is clear however, that these other options are presently being seriously considered by the government, including the selling of shares, deregulation and wholesale privatization.

What does this mean to postal users? For those favoured business customers of Canada Post, it means lower postal rates and increased service. For the government's business friends, it means a shot at the most lucrative parts of the postal business. For Canada Post, it means reduced



Women and the GST

From a newsletter provided by
Dawn Black, MP

The Mulroney government's new Goods and Servicing Tax (GST), which comes into effect in January 1991 unless stopped, will have an especially devastating impact on women.

Women to pay a greater proportion of tax:

Women make, on average, 66% of what men do. With lower average incomes, women will pay a proportional greater amount of their income in tax. Many low-income earners don't file income tax, and so will not receive the rebate. The rebate isn't enough to make up for all the sales tax you will pay in a year anyway.

A tax on mothers who work outside the home:

Prepared food for take-out will be taxed. Government is again punishing women who must work outside the home to make ends meet, and who don't have the time to cook meals from scratch every day. Not only is the Conservative government reneging on child care, which places an added burden on mothers working outside the home, but now wants to tax them to death. Literally to death. The new tax will even apply to coffins and funeral services.

A special tax for women: Sanitary napkins and tampons will be taxed. Apparently the Tory government does not consider these a basic necessity.

Taxes on everything women buy:

The GST will apply to hydro, heating oil, diaphragms, condoms, children's clothes, diapers, haircuts, telephone, stamps and postal services,

With the GST

In 1991/92, total consumption taxes will have increased by 171% since 1984/85, when Mulroney was elected.

plumbing and home repairs, boots and shoes, books, movie tickets, kids' meals at McDonald's, and much, much more.

Exemptions are not really exempt:

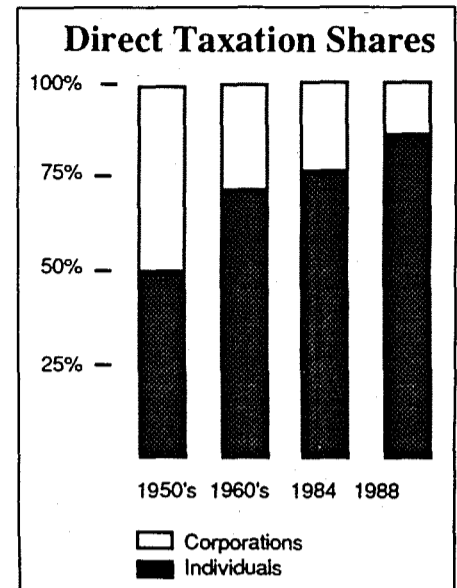
There is no direct sales tax on child care or rent, but taxes on everything the child care centre and landlord buys, i.e. heating costs, light, plumbing,

cleaning services, repairs, supplies. This means operational costs will increase, and so will your child care bill and rent.

Taxes on women and children, but not on corporations:

The GST is a regressive tax, it taxes consumption rather than income. Everyone pays the same, no matter what their income. Brian Mulroney pays the same tax at the cash register as a single mother with three kids. Finance Minister Michael Wilson feels it is best to tax poor and middle-income Canadians than the thousands of large, profitable corporations in Canada that pay no taxes at all. Mike Wilson would rather tax diapers and children's clothes than corporate polluters that spill toxins into our rivers, lakes and oceans, that make our land unsafe for our children to play on, and destroy the air we breathe.

Total taxes will gobble up 52% of family income in 1989.



Making an unfair tax system even more unfair:

Fifty percent of women who file tax returns have incomes of \$10,000 or less, compared to only 23% of men. Many of these women live below the poverty line, yet pay income tax. Our tax system rewards high income earners with tax cuts and shelters. Women are already doubly penalized with lower wages and proportionally higher taxes.

Worse for women in economically depressed regions:

The 9% federal tax is in addition to existing provincial taxes. This means Newfoundlanders will pay a 21% total tax on many goods.

Adding insult to injury:

Michael Wilson is promising a lower grocery bill, just as government promised lower prices after free trade.

The latter hasn't happened. The former won't happen either, because businesses aren't required to lower prices. Why would they lower prices and reduce their profits?

Taxes with no return

The new tax will not be used for social services. The government has abandoned child care, severely cut funding to women's groups providing valuable services to women in communities, decimated the unemployment insurance system, cut Established Programs Financing for health and education. The GST is a direct result of free trade. The removal of tariffs by the free trade agreement means the government is losing \$3 billion a year in income. It is making up for it by taxing poor and middle-income Canadians.

cont'd pg.35

Stop the GST.....Stop the GST.....Stop the GST.....Stop the GST.....Stop the GST.....Stop the GST...Stop the GST

BREED ILLITERACY Tax Books, Magazines & Newspapers

Here's the damage a 9% increase in the cost of books, magazines and newspapers can do:

- Because they are highly price sensitive, sales of Canadian publications could drop by 20%. This will mean less variety and selection at bookshops, newsstands and libraries across the country.
- The very people on whom Ottawa is spending millions of dollars to make more literate - poorer and less educated Canadians - will be hit hard.
- Since you don't pay federal tax on books, magazines and newspapers now, this will mean a 100% tax increase.

If it weren't so devastating, the irony would be laughable.

But something can be done. The Goods & Services Tax is coming under attack. It won't take effect until 1991. So, there is time to convince the federal government it is making a terrible mistake in taxing the lifeblood of our culture.

You can help us, and right now isn't a moment too soon. Just mail the attached card to Prime Minister Mulroney today.

Published by the Don't Tax Reading Coalition, 260 King St. E, Toronto, Ont., M5A 1K3

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Prime Minister Brian Mulroney
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

Mr Mulroney,

Let me add my voice to thousands of other Canadian readers. A tax on books, magazines and newspapers is bad policy and bad politics. Don't tax reading under the GST.

Please keep me informed on how you plan to redress this wrong.

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Code

Stop the GST.....Stop the GST.....Stop the GST

Women and the GST

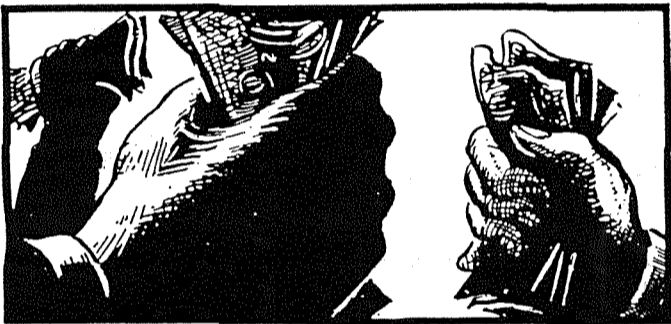
Tax Reform?

The top 1% of families (\$117,000) had an average tax saving of \$3,570 in 1988 compared to what they would have paid under the 1984 system. The poorest 32% of families with incomes of less than \$12,940 gained a grand total of \$53. Everyone else lost. A family with an income of \$40,000 paid \$840 more in taxes in 1988 than it would have under the 1984 system.

Women will have a harder time re-entering the paid labour force after caring for children because of fewer employment prospects.

What you can do about the tax:

Let the Tory government know that you won't stand for it. Organize or participate in rallies. Write to Finance Minister Michael Wilson postage-free at the House of Commons. Talk to your friends and family about the importance of defeating this



Bad tax has repercussions:

Inflation will be driven up by this regressive tax. This is especially hard on people with limited incomes. The Mulroney government deindexed the Family Allowance. It does not keep up with high inflation. Four out of five women in the paid workforce are non-unionized. They are in no position to bargain for wages that keep pace with inflation. A layoff of workers is also predicted, as people will be able to afford to buy less, and demand for products and services will slow down. Layoffs tend to affect women most, as they are the "last hired, first fired". Most part-time workers, who tend to have less job security, are female.

tax. Organizations can present a brief to the hearings. Women in Japan recently mounted a national campaign against a proposed 3% sales tax and won. The women of Canada can do the same for a 9% tax!

Between 1984 and 1988, Federal direct taxes from individuals increased by 61%. Corporations, although they reaped a pre-tax profit of over 40% over 1984-1988, paid virtually the same taxes in 1988 as in 1984.

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Across Canada



"Many women feel their position does not need to be improved, but this does not mean that all Canadian women are so fortunate. It is important that women show concern for others of their sex...I am my sister's keeper."

Jean McIlwrick
1981 Herstory

A Guide to Feminist Expertise

The CRIAW Bank of Researchers

A computerized database of feminist researchers working in various fields and committed to the advancement of women. The Bank allows you to identify researchers with whom you may wish to network or who are working in fields in which you may be seeking expertise. An indispensable tool for journalists, professors, action or community researchers, policy makers and conference organizers.

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N.B. We encourage all feminist researchers to register in the bank. Application forms available from CRIAW.

The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW) is a national membership-based organization that you can join. CRIAW encourages, promotes and disseminates research into women's experience through:

- A computerized Bank of Researchers (highlighted above)
- A variety of publications, including a substantial quarterly newsletter, two series of individual research papers (many of which are being used in women's studies courses): **Feminist Perspectives** (more topical, issue-oriented), and **The CRIAW Papers** (more academic), conference proceedings and more
- an annual conference in a different city and on a different theme each November (this year's is in Québec, Nov. 11-13, on the broad theme of Women and Development)
- small annual research grants, awards and prizes recognizing achievements in feminist research, writing, and service to the women's movement.

Membership fees are on a sliding scale. For membership, publications or other information, contact CRIAW at the address above. L'Institut canadien de recherche sur les femmes (ICREF) vous invite à devenir membre de notre organisme bilingue.

Women in the Saskatchewan Economy

A report which documents women's position in the Saskatchewan economy has been released by Community Educators for Women (CEW). This Saskatoon based group, with representatives from the YWCA, the Saskatoon Public Library and the University of Saskatchewan, is involved in developing community programs based on women's learning needs.

Entitled **Profiling Women in the Saskatchewan Economy** the report was undertaken in response to a recognition that there is a lack of current Saskatchewan - based information regarding women's status in the workplace. What information is available is widely dispersed, and difficult to access and understand.

Using recent Statistics Canada data, the report highlights areas such as labour force participation, unemployment, full-time and part-time work and the relationship between income and education. Some of the major findings of the report are:

- During the last decade, Saskatchewan women's labour force participation increased by 11.6%.
- Women of all ages are employed in Saskatchewan; the greatest number of women employed are in the age group of 25 - 34 years.
- The majority of those living in poverty in Saskatchewan are women. Forty-eight percent of female headed families with children are low income. Approximately 34% of unattached females over the age of 65 live below the poverty line.

Profiling Women in the Saskatchewan Economy also briefly addresses women in agriculture and business as well as native, disabled and immigrant women. An extensive bibliography accompanies the report.

Copies of the report are available from: U-Learn, Room B13, Division of Extension and Community Relations, Univ. of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, S7N 0W0. There is a charge of \$9.00 to cover printing, postage and handling. Please make cheques payable to University of Saskatchewan.

Across Canada



Redefining Victims

by K. Linda Kivi

May of this year marked the founding of the Canadian Organization of Victim Assistance (COVA). COVA was started by mostly men, mostly situated in the legal system to "promote the provision of quality services to victims."

The organization kicked off with a conference entitled "COVA: A Concept Whose Time Has Come" which made many feminists and grassroots representatives squirm. As we all gathered in an expensive hotel in Calgary with the same institutions (legal system, police) that revictimize women victims we began to ask where are the real victims at this conference. Incidentally a victim

offices, policy makers and other governmental agencies. It quickly became evident that COVA had been established to serve their needs, not those of the people who are most often victimized, women and children.

Workshops were used to showcase Police and Crown based "victim assistance services." Meals were hosted by various police forces and speakers, mostly men, came from the upper echelons of government. "Feminism was an "F" word. "Survivor" only applied to the families of homicide victims. And a victim is someone you feel sorry for and patronize.

On the first evening of the conference, a meeting of like minded women was called, thus forming the feminist caucus. They wanted to know who had mandated a group of lawyers, policy makers and police, mostly men, to speak on behalf of women survivors and those who work in support of them? Why was there no official recognition of the fact that the majority of victims of crime are women and that most of those are of gender crimes such as rape and battering? How did a not yet existent COVA garner funding to hold a lavish conference when shelters and rape crisis centres have long been fighting for funding to meet nationally?

These concerns pointed to the reality of COVA; it is more than just one more organization. COVA already has distinct ties to various levels of government. In one word, it has pull.

The experience of other victim assistance organizations like COVA in other countries is illuminating. Both in England and in the US (NOVA) the victim services approach has undermined and in some cases shut down the operation of grassroots services. Looking at some of these experiences gives a bleak picture of COVA's potential impact on the grassroots. When NOVA met in Toronto in 1981, Canadian grassroots representatives blocked the formation of a

similar organization here. They had already recognized the dangers inherent in the victim assistance movement.

The experience of Rape Crisis Centres in England is a case in point. Helen Reeves, the Director of Victim Support Schemes in London, spoke on a panel about how Rape Crisis Centres were forced to close down or go underground if they did not comply with a list of modes of operation supplied by her organization. The police

advocacy and support functions performed by Rape Crisis Centres are not being done by police-run victim programs.

Police and crown based programs are self-serving; they are not feminist and thus have

effects of such ...violence on the victim." Some of the features of appropriate support mentioned include: female counsellors, understanding of power imbalances between men and women, understanding criminal responsibility and empowerment. The lack of specific training and perspective on gender crimes in victim assistance programs means that dangerous myths may be reinforced and that appropriate support, advocacy and laying of criminal charges are jeopardized.

Representatives from Interval House played a major role in challenging COVA organizers at the May conference and submitted their brief to the press along with other information about the proceedings. At a meeting with the conference steering committee on the third morning of the conference, members of the feminist caucus were able to express their concerns about the process being used to establish the COVA Board. The committee had planned to appoint and announce a Board of Directors at the conference without input from the potential membership. The feminist caucus put forward a slate of candidates, women who were prepared to work from "within". Among caucus members, there was much lively debate about our tactical approach to COVA: working to make COVA accountable from within vs. working against it from without. Agreement was reached that regardless of which route women chose, lines of communications should remain open and that we should not polarize on the basis of personal or organizational tactical choices.

Overall, the COVA experience gave much food for thought and concern. It also emphasized the need to be continually on the watch for the backlash of patriarchal society in its many forms. As grassroots workers and feminists we need to inform ourselves about developments such as COVA and continue to monitor them and speak out when they threaten the services that we offer to our communities.

Linda Kivi is co-ordinator of the Sexual Assault Services of Guelph and is a feminist-activist about town.

When the nature of women's functions is ultimately appreciated and her goal attained, the army and the navy will not exclude women - the women will exclude the army and the navy.

Iva Z. Conboy, 1936
1986 Herstory



were directed not to refer to the Centres and government was pressured to withdraw their funding. Of approximately 35 Centres, only 5 received Victims Services approval. The offices that received funding were able to fulfill criteria such as having a policy that obliged victims to report to the police. The issue of choice - whether a woman reported to police - was removed from her hands.

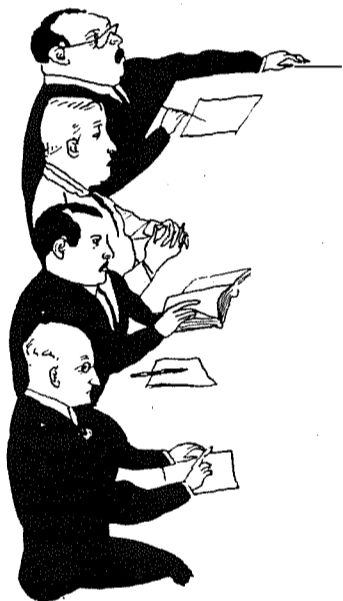
A similar scenario could reasonably happen here. For example, Rape Crisis Centres in Ontario have been notoriously underfunded since their inception over 15 years ago. Many Centres have gone under due to a lack of funds (Algoma, Waterloo, etc) On the other hand, victim assistance programs are relatively well funded. Victim services in Peel Country, for example, receive about \$200,000 annually from the provincial government; the 22 Rape Crisis Centres in Ontario receive a total of \$600,030. This huge disparity has an enormous impact on the ability of these organizations to deliver services.

The Peel Service is attached to and supervised by the Peel Regional Police force. As it is mandated to respond to sexual assault calls, any Rape Crisis Centre that tried to establish itself in Mississauga or Brampton would certainly be told that they would be duplicating services. Yet, we can see from examining victim assistance programs, that the

no analysis of social, political and economic power imbalances and the oppression that stems from these imbalances. People who are violated are not empowered as survivors, they are victims. For these services, a victim is a victim regardless of whether your house was hit by a tornado or you have been repeatedly beaten by your partner. Clearly, survivors of natural disasters, drunken drivers and robbery have different support needs from a woman who has been raped.

A position paper prepared by Interval House of Hamilton-Wentworth, outlines clearly the problems inherent in victim services that do not recognize differences between men and women's needs. First and foremost is the issue of safety. The Interval House paper talks about victim service models which involve sending volunteers to the scene of a domestic assault to "cool out" a situation but places both the abused woman and the volunteer at risk when the offender has not been removed. This approach does nothing to actually change the behaviour of the offender or create safety for the abused women.

The second major point in the Interval House paper deals with "appropriate interventions and crisis counselling". "To provide appropriate support, the counsellor must understand the underlying causes of gender crime and the



is anyone who has had something bad happen to them that has brought them in contact with the legal and judiciary system. That includes everyone from rape victims to people whose house has been burgled.

Representatives from women's organizations, rape crisis centres, battered women's shelters, immigrant organizations, disabled people's groups, visible minority communities, native people and gay and lesbian organizations were hugely overshadowed by massive representation from police forces, crown attorney's

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Quebec nurses strike

Across Canada



I have been a nurse for some fourteen years now. I could have chosen a number of career paths. Yet, I chose to be a nurse. At the time I had some ideas as to why I wanted to be a nurse. However, like most students undertaking a career, I did not know what the consequences of this choice would be.

I soon discovered what it meant to be a nurse. Nursing was hard, back breaking work which carried an awesome amount of responsibilities. Not only was it physically demanding but it was emotionally draining. More often than not, I was rushed to the point of carrying out the bare essentials. Often breaks are not taken, meals are cut short if not skipped all together and a trip to the washroom can, at times, prove to be a luxury. Frequently, I finished later and was so tired that I was nauseous. On the way home, I reviewed my day in detail to quench an unreasonable yet nagging fear that just maybe I forgot something... This last exercise is commonly carried out by many nurses.

To work as a nurse also means working week-ends, holidays, evenings and nights. Overall this isolates you from the main stream of life. I have been lucky in that my family and friends have worked on holidays and celebrations around my schedule. However, this is not always possible for many nurses. Many of my colleagues spent Christmas working and alone. As for shift work, I did not fare as well. My stomach and I often disagreed. I became a regular at the doctor's office and at the drugstore, I even had an "all expense paid trip" to the hospital. My physician believed that night work was the culprit. Today, I am one of the lucky few who works days only. I feel human again.

The nursing profession is in a crisis situation. It is having difficulties attracting students and retaining the nurses that are presently practicing. Our contract demands were aimed at these two specific aspects to try and halt this decimating trend. The basic fact is that there is a shortage of nurses. The pay, the working conditions and the lack of recognition are responsible for this situation. It has become a question of survival.

Yet, the Quebec government did not show, last June, the political will to deal with the issues. The fact that we had the support of the public and of our employers demonstrates I believe the extent of the situation. I have never been comfortable with the idea of being on strike. Furthermore, I consider myself to be a law abiding citizen. However, two months ago I had to consider these two issues. I have been on strike only once before for one day. It was a legal strike and was meant as a symbolic gesture.

said yes to an illegal strike knowing full well that we would staff the hospitals adequately and that in the aftermath, there would be a price to pay.

We were able to improve on the government's last offer of June. It is not a perfect agreement but it does begin to address some of the problems affecting the nursing profession which is a profession in crisis. It is not attracting young people and it is not retaining its experienced professionals. These phenomena are found throughout Canada, the USA and even



In Quebec, there is an Essential Services Act better known as Bill 160. It provides a very strict and very high percentage of services to be maintained in health care establishments during a strike. It varies from 80% to 90%. The end result is that the right to strike exists on paper but is virtually non-existent in reality. A legal strike in my hospital means that some eight or so nurses can walk out. Any given day, we are short as many nurses; some week-ends we are short up to seventeen nurses. Furthermore, the law considers every department essential and therefore must remain open.

Yet, every Christmas, my employer closes down some of those very same departments that my union cannot by law close down while on strike. There is obviously double standards at work. This law may be legal but is not morally or ethical right. With all of this in mind, in the absence of any way to fight for what I believe in coupled with the fact that my boss is also the legislator, I

Europe.

This contract deals more so with the retention aspect by reversing the trend from part-time positions to full-time employment, by increasing substantially the upper echelon salaries to narrow the gap between the nurses and other health care professionals. It also deals with the different inconveniences of nursing. The night work is one of the most pressing issues. Nursing management is experiencing serious staffing difficulties on the night shift. This agreement through its reduced working hours for night nurses will allow them to get extra time to rest and therefore extend the period of time where they are still able and willing to work the night shift. All things considered I believe this agreement to be a stepping stone to the future as long as the next negotiations continue in the same direction.

What this agreement has not addressed sufficiently is the aspect of attraction to the profession. This particular aspect will ensure the long term survival of the profession. Traditionally the candidates to the practice of the profession were exclusively women. Today, the percentage of women in nursing is in the mid-nineties. Women can undertake virtually any career path they choose, thus

"The hand that rocks the cradle does not rule the world. If it did life would be held dearer and the world would be a sweeter cleaner place than it is now."

*Nellie McClung
1985 Herstory*

Aquelarre

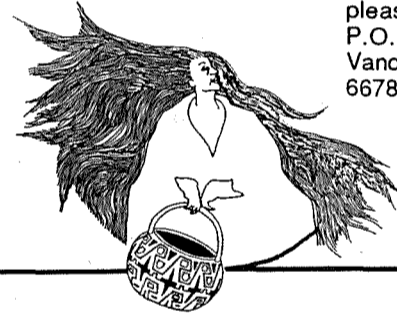
In August this year, AQUELARRE Publications released its premiere issue of a quarterly magazine, also called AQUELARRE. The first of its kind in format and scope, AQUELARRE offers unique insight into the social, political and cultural life of the Latin American women's community in Canada and abroad. It provides a stimulating vehicle of intercultural exchange and discussion around themes that are of particular concern to all women.

AQUELARRE covers a broad spectrum of issues and interests, with interviews, literature, testimonies, essays, humour reviews and visual art.

Its first issue includes: an exclusive interview with novelist Isabel Allende; poetry by Lake Sagaris, a Canadian writer residing in Chile; testimonies by Latin American women residing in Canada; a look with visual artist Claire Kujundzic at her journey through Nicaragua, and much more. The second issue, soon to be released, will focus on human rights and the rights of women.

Published in a Spanish-English edition, AQUELARRE promises to become a vital link between communities at this crucial time of change in North American society.

For more information, please contact AQUELARRE, P.O. Box 65535, Station "F", Vancouver V5N 5K6 (604) 251-6678.



decreasing the usual source of the candidates.

Furthermore, with roughly the same number of years of education, they can earn approximately the same monies with much less responsibility. Over the last ten years, nursing has dropped from the top ten career choice list to the last ten choices on a list of a hundred careers.

I also believe that today career choices are based on status, income earned and a preference for work that requires minimum or no personal investment, caring and giving of the self. If this is true as is all of the above, then

the nursing profession is indeed in serious trouble as is the health care system as we know it. Going out on an illegal strike was worth it to try and slow down the profession's decline because, though it may sound trite, I am proud of and enjoy being a nurse and I would make the same choice again. And, I will continue to fight for the nursing professional, social and economic standing.

*Doreen Whitehad, N.B.Sc.
is a member of the United Nurse/ Les Infirmières et Infirmiers Unis in Québec.*

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Across Canada



Fighting racism - at home

by Priscilla Settee

This conference is a first for a meeting of this magnitude for the a Trade Union movement. However it is the second of its type for the province. Saskatchewan Coalition Against Racism held a founding meeting in Regina earlier this year.

Keith Goulet, M.L.A. for the Cumberland constituency, spoke of the human and economic costs of racism.

Vicki Wilson, a founding member of the Aboriginal Women's Council of Saskatchewan gave an account of the education system and its impact on native children. Her information comes from her own experiences as a very young child being hauled away in trucks to attend residential school. Her story of children literally being herded into the backs of trucks, with no toilet breaks, and the only rain protection being a tarp thrown over them moved and angered everyone present.

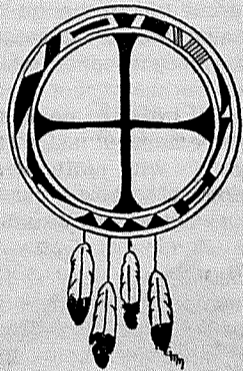
These children later were beaten for speaking to their families. The attitude in those days were to "educate the heathen" and destroy the fundamentals of the family and the community. Parenting responsibilities were taken away from the family and the extended family. This practice had a devastating impact which exists to this very day.

Children were forced to accept another religion and told that their indigenous religious expressions were pagan and wrong. This practice was later backed up by law and anyone who practiced their traditional religion was fined or jailed.

John Kwok of the Canadian Union of Public Employees related early Chinese history in this country. The attitudes that Canadians had towards Chinese Canadians were that they were a cheap source of labour and were actually used

as sources of economic competition. Kwok claimed that the only real Canadians are Indigenous people and that all other citizens are merely "citizens with seniority". This statement brought a smile to more than one face, and also put the struggle against racism into perspective.

Guest speaker, Maria Campbell gave a moving and personal account of racism.



In all seven workshops were presented, entitled: Racism in the Workplace, Racism in Education, Apartheid: Saskatchewan Parallels, Racism in the Justice System, Human Rights in the Workplace, and Racism in the Media.

Saturday evening featured the Saskatoon Native Survival School drama entitled "Can you see what we see".

The following statement is a quote from their brochure: "This story is based on the experiences of some of the students who were placed in non Native foster homes. Oftentimes the Native foster children emerge with no clear

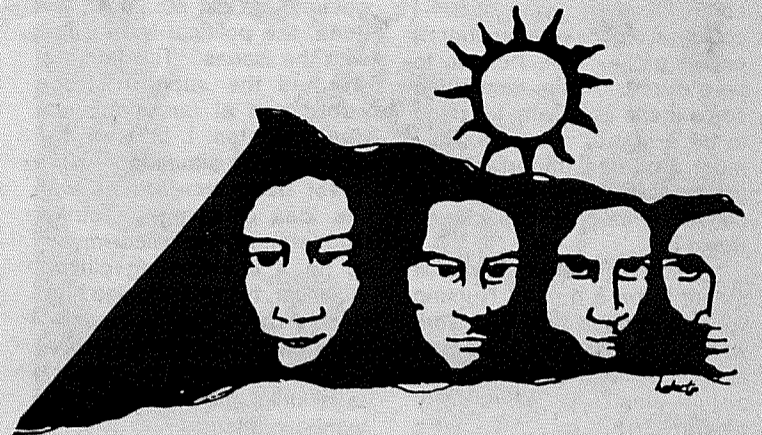
sense of their unique heritage. Shame, confusion and despair frequently beset them. Saskatchewan is one of the few provinces without a network of Indian controlled child welfare agencies and unlike other provinces has no legislation to encourage such agencies. Yet two-thirds of all the children in the Saskatchewan child welfare system are Indian or Metis. We feel hopeful about these young storytellers who have reclaimed their identity. Their own parenting promises to restore the strong Native cultural links within a secure family structure. Their struggle for family is illustrated in the example of Marlon Pippin/Severight* who died on February 1, 1989 in Regina. We dedicate this story to his memory".

The people who watched the drama were visibly moved by the strength displayed by the six young women and men and their ability to tell their stories. Characters and scenes were captured using traditional techniques of humour and story telling. Every person present recognized more than one of their relatives and their own community's stories.

Sunday the conference wrapped up with a fairly lengthy list of plans to implement in the future. Generally there was optimism that racism like any other negative phenomenon can be destroyed with an understanding, willingness and a concrete organized plan of action.

* This case is about a young native man who was shot under suspicious circumstances.

Priscilla Settee is part of the Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Council.



Vancouver

Invisible Colours

IN VISIBLE COLOURS, the international women of colour and Third World women Film and Video Festival and Symposium, takes place in Vancouver November 15-19.

Over 28 countries will participate at IN VISIBLE COLOURS, representing an impressive cross-section of cinematic styles, subjects and perspectives.

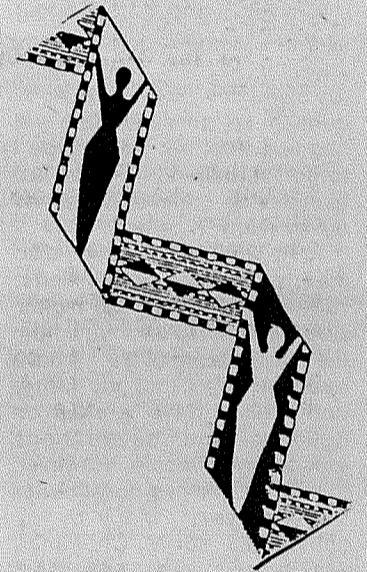
This event is shaping up to be a resounding success. More than 80 titles have been accepted for screening, and at least 44 national and international, critically acclaimed directors are scheduled to appear.

Two of the Canadian works will be premieres: OLDER, STRONGER, WISER, directed by Dionne Brand and Claire Prieto, profiles women in Ontario's Black communities; and UNNATURAL CAUSES is a "filmeo" by Lillian Allen and Maureen Judge and is based on Juno award-winner Allen's song of the same title.

Of particular interest is ORI, an award-winning title by Brazilian filmmaker Raquel Gerber. A documentary about the African diaspora and Black cultural continuity in Brazil, ORI explodes on screen with energy.

WHO WILL CAST THE FIRST STONE?, shot entirely in secrecy by Pakistani director Sabiha Sumar, documents the use of Islamic law to jail or execute Muslim women accused of adultery.

Other intriguing titles include the Oscar-nominated WHO KILLED VINCENT CHIN? by veteran U.S. filmmaker Christine Choy; FAR FROM WAR by Hu Mei, one of the "fifth-generation" directors of China; RICHARD CARDINAL: DIARY OF A METIS CHILD, by



Canadian native Alanis Obomsawin; and NICE COLOURED GIRLS, by prolific Australian Aborigine filmmaker Tracey Moffatt.

In concurrence with this innovative showcase of documentary, animation, experimental and narrative works, will be a three-day series of panels and workshops. These will provide a valuable forum for women from around the globe to explore the practical realities of producing, financing and distributing films and videos.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS is sponsored by Women in Focus and the National Film Board, with support from the Vancouver Society on Immigrant Women. It will take place from November 15 to 19 at three Vancouver locations: Robson Square Media Centre, Vancouver East Cinema and Simon Fraser University-Harbourside.

For information: call Lynne Jorgesen or Fariba Ferdowsi (604) 685-1137.

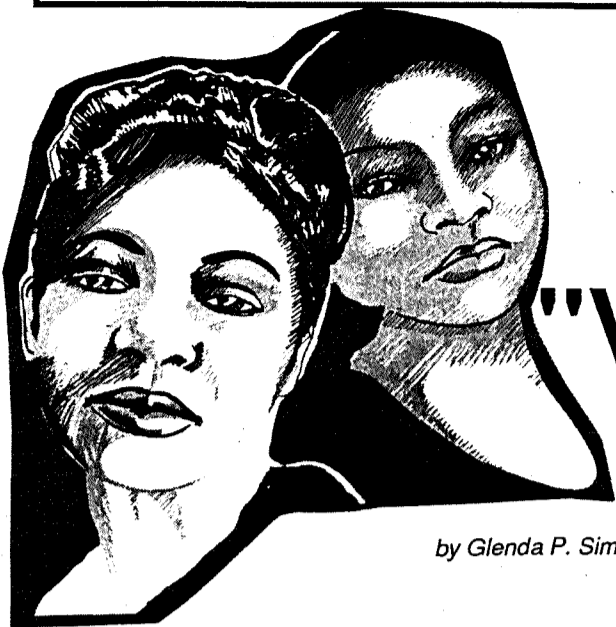
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by Glenda P. Simms Ph. D.

What is a "Visible Minority?"

"My career has been one of much struggle characterized by the usual persecution which attends everyone who pioneers a new movement or steps out of line with established custom."

Emily Stowe, 1896
1985 Herstory

Recently I began to pay closer attention to the large numbers of Canadians who, like myself, are opposed to being labelled as "visible minorities". I now wonder if the problem of self identification which is reputedly preventing both government and private sector employers from adequately implementing employment equity programs lies partially in the use of the label "visible minority" and partially in the lack of political will to address some of the most serious social and institutional barriers of the Canadian society.

Those of us who have raised these concerns find this "visible minority" label demeaning, anonymous and psychologically distressing.

As a black Canadian woman I object to the term on a number of grounds. Firstly, it denies my identity, I am not a "visible minority". I define myself as a black woman who was born in Jamaica and is now a proud first class citizen of

Canada. Secondly, it undermines my ability to define myself and instead imposes an external definition. This is psychologically unacceptable. This is an assault on my psyche, and is part of the historical process of denying my inherent human right to seek the essence of selfhood within my being and in the context of my personal history.

I have no idea of the genesis of the term "visible minority". I became aware of its acceptance at the official governmental level when the document **Equality Now**, the report of the Special Committee on Visible Minorities in Canadian Society was released in March 1984. In this document the term "visible minorities" was sanctioned as the appropriate label for 1, 864,000 or 7 per cent of the Canadian population with origins in Africa, China, India, Pakistan, Japan, Korea, South East Asia, Latin America, the Pacific Islands, the West Indies, the Philippines and the

Arabic countries.

As a black woman, I am very aware of the political and social uses of labelling. Back then, my people were part of the nigger/ nigra/ negro continuum. Later on, they were the "darkies". Still later, they were rendered "coloured". In the turbulent sixties and seventies they became "black". Contemporary writings inform us that they are, "people of colour, Afro-Canadians, or the most visible of the "visible minorities".

In spite of the variety of labels and regardless of the social and political reasons for the changing definitions, what is undeniable is the fact that the Canadians who are now marginalized have paid their dues to society. These are people who are descended from ancestors who helped to break the frontiers of Eastern, Central and Western Canada: worked on the railroad, fished in the coastal waters, ploughed and gathered in beet fields, potato plots and vineyards,

farmed in obscure communities in some of the harshest climatic conditions, and have given unconditional love to generations of "white" Canadian children. In more recent times many of the "visible minorities" have come to Canada as students, domestic workers, professionals, skilled trades people, sponsored spouses and relative, and as refugees.

Given this perspective, the questions that need to be answered include the following: Why does Canadian society find it difficult to create a climate in which all its citizens find justice? Why is it necessary to have employment equity programs for women, the disabled, Native Canadians and the so called "visible minorities"? Does the definition of so many Canadians as "visible minorities" obscure the real problems of injustice and racism in Canadian society? Does the targeting problems of such diverse peoples as one group result in equity or does it create a "hierarchy of the oppressed"? Who are truly the most disadvantaged people in the Canadian society?

I have no answers to these questions. What I do know however, is that the Canadian society is changing at a very rapid rate. Whether we live in isolated Northern communities, in rural townships or in teaming urban centres such as Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Winnipeg or Edmonton, we cannot escape the following documented facts:

- More and more Native people are becoming urban dwellers.
- One in three Canadians are neither English nor French.
- One in four Canadians fits the category of "visible Minority".
- Immigration rates will rise in line with the government's plans and projections.
- The majority of new immigrants will be from Asia, Latin America and South America.

In light of these facts it is important for society to concentrate less on exotic definitions and more on solutions to the social and economic inequities that cause so many Canadians to seek redress for historical wrongs.

The challenge is to pay attention to the sons and daughters of the "visible minorities". These are the youth of tomorrow. They are not immigrants. They are Canadians who know no other land. They expect justice. They will demand justice. They will fight for justice. They will challenge this society in ways that it has never before been challenged.

Let us join for the future and come to terms with injustice rather than spend too much effort in the creation of new and meaningless categories of Canadian citizens.

Glenda Simms is Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, Nipissing University/ college, North Bay.

Anne-Marie Grignon Memorial Fund



Photo courtesy of Joy Cummings-Dickinson

A fund has been established at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton in the name of Anne-Marie Grignon, a professor of French who died tragically last year. The Anne-Marie Grignon Memorial Fund is a special fund to acquire Acadian and Quebec Women's Writing; it was established recently by the Women's Studies Program and the President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women. The collection of books which will be housed in the Harriet Irving Library on the UNB Fredericton campus will serve as a symbol of appreciation for Dr. Grignon's personal and professional accomplishments. Donations to the fund may be made at the development office on UNB's Fredericton campus. Three UNB professors, representing the President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women, made the inaugural contribution to the fund. From left to right are: Gillian Thompson, history department; Patricia Belier, collections department division, accepting on behalf of the Harriet Irving Library; Wendy Robbins, English department; and Anne Brown, French department.

**National Organization
of Immigrant and
Visible Minority Women
of Canada**

National Office:
Suite 1102, 251 Laurier Ave West
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5J6
(613) 232-0689

**Organisation nationale des
femmes immigrantes et femmes
appartenant à une minorité
visible du Canada**

Across Canada



the struggle for recognition

"For generations women have been thinking, and thought without expression is dynamic and gathers volume by repression. Evolution when blocked and suppressed becomes revolution."

Nellie McClung
1979 Herstory

by Juliet A. Cuenco

Domestic workers in Canada

A domestic worker described how her employer angrily told her that she is "up against a Canadian with money" and threatened that "she could easily be deported."

These harsh words demonstrate just how vulnerable domestic workers are to abuse.

Women who do domestic work in Canada are mostly from the Third World. The Philippines tops the list as the country where most foreign domestic workers come from. In 1988 alone, Filipino domestic workers have reached approximately 10,000.

Given these two realities it was not surprising that Filipino domestic workers would come together to discuss their common concerns. The national dialogue on Filipino domestic workers, organized by The United Council of Filipino Association in Canada, was held last March during the International Women's Day Celebrations in Toronto.

During the Dialogue, the women workers, joined by others who support their issues, shared their common experiences and reaffirmed that organizing was vital to their recognition in society.

The women workers underscored the many reasons they were vulnerable. They cited that their two years temporary status in Canada, the lack of domestic workers' rights in provincial legislation, the wide latitude of power exercised by immigration officers exacerbated by the lack of knowledge by domestic workers of their rights and of the bureaucratic system are contributing factors to their vulnerability.

In addition, where a domestic worker is a woman of color from another country, speaks a different language and has few friends and family, the potential for abuse is great. For Filipino

domestic workers, their cultural value system has worked against them as women struggle for autonomy and dignity and adds another dimension to their potential for abuse. Values such as *utany na loob* (gratefulness), *pakikisama* (smooth interpersonal relations), and *hiya* (shame), contribute to a subservient mentality which can lead to exploitation.

While there are domestic workers who are happily employed because they have employers who are fair, reasonable and supportive, there are still many domestic workers who work under unjust conditions.

Many workers have reported violations of their employment contract, their common complaints are low pay and long working hours without extra pay for overtime. (Ontario legislation entitles domestic workers to overtime pay after 44 hours work a week)

Others have not been given days off, deprived of telephone use and are only allowed to eat after everybody else in the family has finished their meals. Without friends or uninformed of support groups, domestic workers are isolated and suffer in silence. There was a case of a worker who had remained in the house of her employer for

two weeks while her employers were away on holidays because they did not leave her the house key.

Nine serious cases of abuse against workers were reported. These involved physical abuse, sexual harassment and other forms of intimidation.

Foreign domestic workers have to meet the requirements of the Foreign Domestic Workers Program of the federal government and their rights as workers are covered by provincial employment standard legislation. Once accepted into the program, they work as live in employees. Their status in Canada is temporary for two years. They hold a temporary working permit and are assessed each year, based on self sufficiency criteria as interpreted by an immigration officer. A favorable assessment results

domestic workers. For example, after working a maximum 44 hours a week, domestic workers are entitled to overtime pay. (Most workers do not receive overtime pay either to maintain good relations or the employer gives them time off in lieu of pay which the legislation allows.)

Domestic workers find themselves in a Catch-22 situation. Generally paid very low wages, domestic workers have to demonstrate self sufficiency in order to be able to stay in the country. Subject to the interpretation of an immigration officer, they have to convince them that they are financially secure (they must produce a bank deposit) and integrated into the community.

Domestic workers therefore often work as volunteers during the days that they are

thereby jeopardizing their chances for permanent residence. Although release letters are no longer required (employers used to write a letter of release for change of employment) it is not uniformly followed across Canada. Such practice is a powerful tool for intimidation and further subjects a worker to subservience.

While performing a much needed service for Canadian families due to the increased labour force participation of women and current day care crisis, domestic workers continue to be unrecognized in Canadian society. Of course, the housework that they do is traditionally viewed as woman's work and is always undervalued, no matter what woman is doing it.

Over the last ten years domestic workers have been organizing across the country in an effort to profile their issues and increase the community's awareness to their exploitation.

INTERCEDE (Toronto organization for domestic workers' rights) is on the forefront of a continuing struggle for protection of domestic workers rights. Its history includes the first recorded demonstration of domestic workers in Canada in 1981, resulting in some important changes in the Foreign Domestic Workers Program. One progressive step in favor of domestic workers has been to allow domestic workers who have worked for two years to apply for immigrant status from within Canada.

There are current attempts on the part of the federal government to examine the FDW program. There is a need for community consultation, and groups working on domestic workers' issues should bring their concerns to the attention of the government.

In the meantime, the struggle of domestic workers for recognition continues. Coordination of efforts and solidarity are needed to mount great pressure for change to benefit a marginalized and invisible sector of Canadian population.

Juliet Cuenco is the Executive Director of the United Council of Filipino Associations in Canada.



in a placement's landed or immigrant status.

The employment standards code in each province varies in terms of protection of domestic workers' rights. UCFAC's study pointed out that discrimination is built right into the labor and employment laws of each province. The study compared provincial legislation which set out protection afforded to workers from Canada including minimum wage, maximum hours of work, overtime pay and the right to unionize. Some provinces set a different and lower minimum wage for domestic workers. In some provinces such as Alberta, domestic workers are not covered in legislation where other workers' rights are ensured.

Ontario, where the largest concentration of domestic workers are found, has shown progress in protecting

supposed to be off in order to prove that they are integrated into the community.

Their experience as good workers obviously counts as to whether they get to stay, and domestic workers are generally scared to displease their employers or even challenge employers for fear that they will be given a negative reference

"For too long we have believed it our duty to sit down and be resigned. Now we know it is our duty to rise up and be indignant."

Nellie McClung
1980 Herstory

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Some thoughts on racism

by Anne Vespry

First, a disclaimer. I am not an expert. I am a woman of colour, but I do not, cannot, and would not want to speak for all women of colour. Not even for all women of this particular colour. I cannot say that what I believe now is what I will always believe. Even since I started to write this I have read things which broadened my view.

Violence against women is usually seen as a male domain. The Marxist analysis shows men as using violence to enforce capitalist goals. White men are seen as encouraging sexism and racism to ensure a continuous supply of cheap and docile labour. This leads

those, can continue guilt free.

Blaming and guilt are not productive, but unless we take responsibility for our own racism we will be unable to change it. And we must change it.

The racism (and other isms) within women's groups does as much if not more damage to women than does society at large. The feminist institutions which should provide sanctuary, and encouragement to women have either betrayed women of colour or been too busy fighting charges of betrayal to have energy to meet their original goals.

lowest common cultural denominators leading to the loss of the features which make different cultures interesting, there is another drawback to the theory. It does not work.

People still cling to their traditions, and even Black Americans who were forced to deny their cultures find themselves oppressed. The theory is fine, but until physical racial characteristics disappear, discrimination will persevere.

Modern feminism owes a lot to the United States women's movement. Unfortunately that debt

is there a single Black culture or Native culture or Asian culture or... These differences between English-speaking Caucasians are mostly hidden now, but before we can solve current problems it may be necessary for us to realize that - just as we are all racist - we are also all, in some sense, parts of minority groups.

The realization of heritage, of belonging to a particular ethnicity as opposed to White vs. Non-white / Of Colour is not enough to guarantee racial harmony.

There are two fights happening in the women's community. Using a broader

oppression is just that - creating hierarchies. Our goal must be the destruction of inequality, not the creation of a new system. Within this goal, we must also try to make sure that the final system of equality is not based on the lowest common denominator. We must work to empower those without power. We must share and increase our strengths without creating new areas of weakness and resentment.

If the two main perceived groups disintegrate into individuals each proud of her own roots, if we are willing to admit ignorance about other women's lives, and if we are



some Marxist feminists to claim that if capitalism is overthrown, sexism and racism will disappear automatically. There may be some truth to this, but it is not an excuse for allowing racism to go unchallenged.

Similarly, there is the radical lesbian feminist or separatist view that men are the problem. This leads to the claim that if men go away, all violence and discrimination will disappear. No doubt, some would, but I do not understand how any woman who has participated in women-run organizations can believe that we are not quite capable of damaging each other.

It is true that men and the malestream system use racist stereotypes to justify their crimes. Existing as a woman of colour means that the legal and justice systems automatically believe you deserve whatever happens. It is also true that the racism ingrained in our society can lead men of colour to violence. The term is "displacement" - when someone stronger hurts you, you pass it on to someone weaker. He can't punch his boss, so he beats his wife instead.

The drawback to all these analyses is that they move all the blame outside of the women's community. The racist is seen only in the form of the capitalist, the man, or the bigot. I, who am none of

I believe that this internal violence is more damaging to politically active women because we have traditionally armoured ourselves against attacks from outside. Not only does this lead to disenchantment and burnout, but it also serves as a deterrent to women of colour who might otherwise have given important input. It is also important because it is within our own power to change.

I am finding this difficult to write as I am still new to accepting my own racism. It was easy to believe that as a woman of mixed race I would not make assumptions about anyone based on their ancestry. That was racist - I looked in the mirror of my heritage and judged myself on that basis.

It is probably impossible to reach adulthood in this world without picking up racist stereotypes. Even in cultures without strong heritages of xenophobia (fear or hatred of foreigners), contact with those foreigners tends to inspire chauvinism. It is quite possible, however, not to act upon those stereotypes. With time it may be possible to grow out of them.

The American theory is that once everyone is part of the same "melting pot" culture, there will be no basis for discrimination. Not only does their melting pot select the

includes the attitude that current feminist goals are generic and should fit all women.

The Canadian ideal of "multi-culturalism" has not, at first glance, succeeded any better. Yet this would seem to be more the fault of the way the idea has been taught than of the idea itself. As long as multi-culturalism is presented as "We Caucasians should appreciate the quaint customs of other less civilized folks", it will only serve to breed more racism.

There is, however, no single Caucasian culture. I must admit to having enjoyed looking at the history of Canada's early settlers with their "No Irishmen need apply" signs, and white folk killing white folk for a change. Neither

view might end both of them. The obvious battle, where the phrase "middle class white woman" carries as much hatred as "male chauvinist pig" used to, is between the white "majority" and the non-white "minority". The less obvious (to the community at large) strife is between various "minority" groups.

Once the old elite becomes guilty enough to start giving away its power, it becomes tempting to try to gain as much of that power as possible. If those in power start channelling time and energy to groups they had previously ignored or oppressed, then the more oppressed one can prove oneself to have been, the more recompense one will be given.

Creating hierarchies of

ready to begin educating ourselves about what causes are important to women of other ethnic groups, then perhaps the battle will be won - by all sides.

Before the women's movement can change structures of oppression and violence in society at large, we must change ourselves. Only the creation of a global, multi-cultural feminism will stop the damage done by forcing women to choose between working to empower women and working to protect their cultural identities against imperialism.

Anne Vespry is a 24-year-old lesbian of colour trying to find ways to live in this world without either starving or denying her feminist conscience.

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Storytelling: life with

by Bernadette Jagunos

The following is a talk given by Sister Bernadette Jagunos at a workshop on Women and Militarism in Northwest River, Labrador, which took place earlier this year.

Through her religious community and GABRIELA, a women's mass organization in the Philippines, Bernadette has done extensive work in developing public education programs on the impact on women and children of the U.S. military bases in the Philippines. She has worked on the issues of prostitution and the trafficking of women and mail-order brides. She has also represented her community in coalition work on issues of education, sovereignty, justice and peace.

It's my pleasure to be here with you tonight to share the Philippines experience of foreign military bases. For those of you who don't know, the Philippine islands are in Asia, right across the world from here. We are a small country. The land size is only 1/4 of Canada. Our population is 58 million. Sixty percent of our people live under the poverty line. We were colonized by the Spaniards for 350 years and by the Americans for 50 years. That explains why we have, on our soil, two major American military bases, namely the Subic Naval Base and Clark Air Base. There are fifteen or so other U.S. military installations in the country, occupying about 175,000 acres of land. The exact number of American military facilities is not known because some of them are kept from the public.

The American military bases and facilities in the Philippines perform four vital functions: as command and control center of the American military operations in the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean; as a major center and link in the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean; as a major center and link in the U.S. global communication system and the American intelligence network; and as the rest and recreation center for the American troops deployed in the region.

The Filipino people did not want the American bases. While still under the colonial power of the United States, the Filipinos rejected the American offer of independence in 1933 in exchange for the retention of the U.S. military bases in the Philippines. The American forced the bases on us when after the 2nd World War, the United States willfully withheld

damage compensation and made it contingent on the retention of their military bases in the country. In the face of the staggering task of reconstructing our physically and economically devastated country, the Philippine government accepted the condition.

The American military bases pose a grave threat to the security and survival of our nation. During the second World War, the bases did not protect the Philippines from Japanese attack; rather they attracted the invasion of Japan. Nuclear arms are present on the bases even though the United States maintains a policy of neither confirming nor denying it. In the event of a nuclear war, the Philippines will be a major target of nuclear counter

A few days later, local nuns found 15 other girls, aged 12 years and up, suffering from syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes and multiple beatings. They all belonged to a ring of child prostitutes maintained by an American naval officer. After an Irish missionary priest exposed this story, and after much pressure from local and international groups the officer was transferred to Guam.

In May 1986, a 12-year-old child prostitute died from an infection caused by a vibrator lodged in her body for 3 months. The culprit was an Australian tourist. But the incident shows that the two cities near the bases, namely Olongapo and Angeles, have earned the reputation of being cheap rest and recreation joints for American servicemen, also attracting

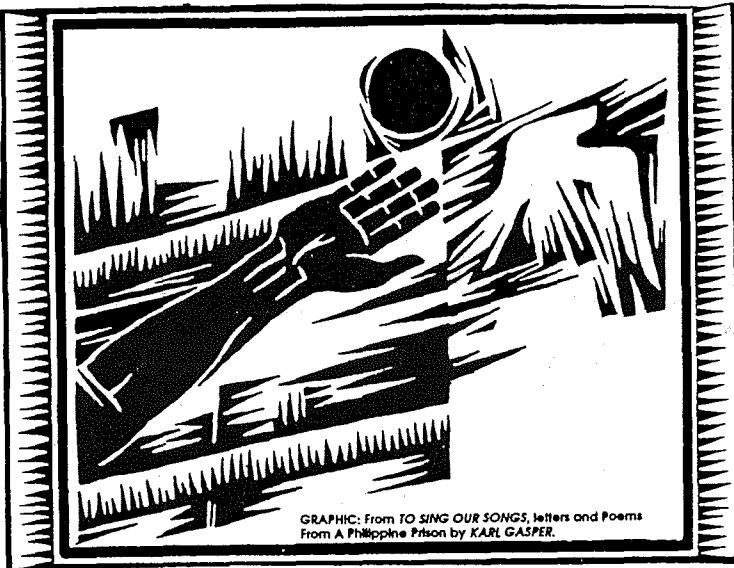
about 15,000 prostituted women, including street-walkers. The ones who are victimized in the rest and recreation industry in the base areas are poor Filipino women. They come from all over the Philippines but mostly from poor families in depressed and often highly militarized provinces. They do not want nor intend to become prostitutes. But they have no real options for personal survival as well as that of their families. There is no work for them in their own provinces. They are driven to the base areas.

Economic benefit is one of the reasons given for the retention of the U.S. bases in the Philippines. About 60,000 Filipinos work on the bases. In exchange for access to the bases, the United States gives economic and military aid to the Philippines. But, the greater portion of the bases economic contribution comes from the money spent by the servicemen for rest and recreation.

This base-dependent economic prosperity is not only unstable and artificial, but also dishonorable. It is a prosperity that is dependent on war. Businesses expand during war and contract with peace. As well, in the rest and recreation industry of the base areas, the Filipino workers most of whom are women, are the objects of the most revolting and exploitive practices.

Because of competition among bars and clubs, owners force hospitality girls (what the local officials like to call prostitutes) to perform degrading acts on stage in order to attract customers. The shows are not only nude, but also very violent. One show, for example, has a nude woman carrying bundles of candles, dancing slowly as hot melted wax drops on all parts of her body and face. To the American soldiers, Filipino women are no more than "little brown fucking machines" or "human kleenex". These two expressions, used by the servicemen to refer to the women in Olongapo and Angeles who offer them "rest and recreation services", reflect the extent to which our women have been objectified and dehumanized in these military bases.

While the businesses capitalize on women and their bodies, the women themselves get very little benefit. Most of them do not get fixed salaries, only commissions. The ones who are getting rich from the rest and recreation industry around the base areas are the bar owners. The income of the women, especially in Olongapo, is irregular. When there is no ship in port, the women have little or no income and are forced into debt. When a ship arrives, they may be able to pay off their debts, buy personal needs and send a little money to their families.



GRAPHIC: From TO SING OUR SONGS, letters and Poems from A Philippine Prison by KARL GASPER.

attack considering that the bases are an integral part of the American's offensive and defensive nuclear system.

Moreover, the power of the U.S. bases and military presence have been used, time and again, to fight our own people, Filipinos who resist the exploitive system and seek justice. In the 1950's, the American military helped to crush the rebellion of peasants demanding for land reform. On the other hand, U.S. support and military presence propped up dictatorial regimes like that of Marcos.

In a poor county like the Philippines, the presence of foreign military bases profoundly affects the lives of the people. They aggravate our social problems. Let me relate to you two cases which illustrate the social consequences of the American military bases in our country.

Some time ago, 2 twelve-year-old girls were brought to a hospital in Olongapo City where the Subic Naval Base is located. Their bodies were covered with syphilitic sores.

men from other parts of the world seeking sexual adventures.

The massive prostitution of Filipino women, including children, is one major consequence of the presence of the American bases in the Philippines.

American officials dismiss the problem of massive prostitution as an unfortunate reality near any base, and unless human nature changes these issues will likely remain with us. But the truth is that the prostitution of women in Olongapo and Angeles is really a part of the military establishment, created and maintained by it. A vital function of the U.S. bases in Subic and Clark is to provide a rest and recreation center for the American troops in Asia and the Pacific. A major form of this rest and recreation is the prostitution of women. When an American aircraft carrier docks in Subic, it brings into Olongapo 7,000-9,000 American soldiers who stay 5-10 days for rest and recreation.

In Olongapo, there are

The end of the decade is coming!

In our next issue of *The Womanist*, we will be honouring some of the outstanding women of the decade. But we need your help. Write to us about women who have made a difference in your community over the last ten years, women who have made a special contribution to advancing a feminist vision, in whatever way. Send it to us by December 1st.

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a military base

"It is not so much a woman's duty to bring children into the world as to see what sort of the world she is bringing them into."

Nellie McClurg.
1978 Herstory

The social impact of the American military bases in the Philippines



When the ship leaves, the cycle of poverty for these women begins again. Some women, hoping to escape their miserable situation, fall into the empty promises of love and marriage by servicemen out only for a good time. They end up feeling even more exploited and used.

Drugs are widely used by the women in order to remove their feelings of shame when they perform degrading shows on stage, or to anaesthetize their feelings of low self-esteem, or simply to remove the boredom of their lives. Youths are also easy victims of drug pushers. Not only are youths addicted, but they are often used by drug traffickers to retail drugs. Their families reluctantly accept this because what the youths earn often represents the families' only income. Life in the military

bases is distorting the values of the youth. The American soldiers, who are rowdy and abusive, appear to these youths to have all the money for fun and pleasure and become their role models.

The second generation of prostituted women in Olongapo and Angeles are Amerasians, i.e. children of Filipino prostitutes and American servicemen. There are about 30,000 Americans in the base areas and one is born every day. Some of the children are sold by their mothers to childless couples, domestic help recruiters or brothel keepers. But many end up abandoned, living in the streets and becoming child prostitutes themselves.

On top of the social and psychological ills, the women in the bases face serious health problems. Incidence of

venereal diseases is very high. In 1988, 47 women in the base areas tested for AIDS. Just a few weeks ago, a prostitute in Angeles became the first victim of AIDS to die in the Philippines. Given the health care system in our country, we are afraid that we will soon have an AIDS epidemic of catastrophic proportion. There is a social hygiene clinic run by the city and financed by the bases which tests the women for venereal diseases. This precaution, however, is not so much for the women as for the servicemen. The women have no way of checking whether their customers have AIDS or other venereal diseases because the servicemen are not given any tests.

Some women and children in the base areas have become victims of criminal acts committed by U.S. servicemen. In these cases, it is hard for them or their families to prosecute the offenders. A Filipino woman was killed and mutilated by an American officer some years ago. A 16 year-old boy scavenging for metal scraps was shot by an American from Clark Air Base who claimed he mistook the youth for a wild pig. There have been cases of fishermen in Subic killed by U.S. marines, of attack dogs unleashed on 9-10 year-old children about to scavenge base garbage because they were trespassing base properties, of houses and crops near training fields bombed and destroyed during practices. Of 50 or so criminal charges against American servicemen, none ever faced Philippine courts. The offenders were simply transferred out of the country with the base officials certifying that the crimes were not committed during performance of duty.

Among the most victimized by the presence of the U.S. military bases in our country, are the tribal people, called the Aeta. They were evicted from their ancestral land, their houses burned or destroyed without compensation when the bases were established.

Eleven deaths occurred because the natives defied evacuation. In exchange for the tribal lands they took, the U.S. bases granted the natives some privileges. Some of them were allowed to collect the garbage in the bases which enable them to sell scraps and other recyclable materials. Others were hired as lowly paid night security guards or jungle

survival training instructors. (Obviously, the employment and privileges doled out by the American bases to the tribal peoples were not meant to develop personal and communal skills for self-sufficiency and reliance. The once self-reliant natives are now destitute. And the American officials are passing the responsibility for their welfare to the Philippines government.

From our experience of having the U.S. military bases on our land for about 100 years, it is increasingly clear to us that they are not there for the protection and benefit of

not to remove them from the bases since at present, it is their only means of survival. Rather, than organizing efforts aimed at breaking down the isolation among women and at empowering them so that they will gain control of their lives, see the connections between their situation and that of the nation, and become involved in changing them. Lobbying is another important activity. Some female prostitutes with the support of the Alliance Against Institutionalized Dehumanization, a coalition of women against military prostitution and trafficking in women, have brought a class



Filipinos. They do not serve our economic and national interest. Whatever economic benefit trickled down to Filipinos cannot ever compensate for the extremely high social cost of having the military bases in our country. We are therefore calling for their removal from our country.

What are we doing about the bases issue? In particular, what are women's groups doing? All over the country, in different regions and localities, there are groups like labor, peasant, youth, professional, urban poor, church, etc. who are strongly committed to the removal of the bases. The opposition to the continued presence of the American military bases in the Philippines is growing. This is the result of our massive and sustained information and education campaigns about the bases. The women's groups, in particular, have been able to focus greater attention on the social dimension of the bases problem, specifically on the issues of women. Organizing is strong and sustained. In the case of women in the rest and recreation industry, the aim is

suit against the U.S. military establishment for the spreading of AIDS in the Philippines. They are also lobbying that there be a regulation enforcing the testing of American servicemen entering the country for AIDS and other venereal diseases, that the government give immediate attention to the welfare and safety of women with AIDS and the American government provide lifetime financial support to the Filipino women who contracted AIDS in the U.S. bases. Finally, building solidarity with peoples in other countries and with groups like the Peace and women's movements has helped to focus on the plight of prostituted women in the military bases in the Philippines. Through our unified action, we can stop military prostitution in Third World countries as well as prevent it from happening in other countries. The withdrawal of the U.S. military bases from the Philippines could hasten global disarmament and ultimately enhance the creation of a freer and safer world.

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"Remember, the best revenge is writing well."

Audrey Thomas, 1979
1987 Herstory

A Review

Pornography and the Sex Crisis

Author: Susan Cole

Published by Amanita Enterprises

For as long as I can remember I have had this deep dislike, no hatred of pornography, in all its forms. In particular, I dislike Playboy and its companions, movies and strip shows.

I have had occasion to view all of these forms of "entertainment", so the dislike is not imaginary but very real. Yet, I have never been able to explain the reasons for my disgust to people who saw pornography as harmless, even useful, without getting into an outrage. I could explain how degrading I found it personally but I could never define pornography. At no time has my argument seemed logical, of course logical according to the norms of this patriarchal society.

Susan Cole's book **Pornography and the Sex Crisis** helped me understand pornography for exactly what it

is. I may not win debates but it helped clear my mind and strengthen my convictions.

Cole's book is to say the least edifying. It's full of new, interesting ideas; in fact it has too many new ideas to deal with in one reading or to deal with here. It is not for the weak of heart. Cole makes us examine many of the myths surrounding pornography, and traditional sexual ideologies. It is radical even for those of us who are already classified as radical.

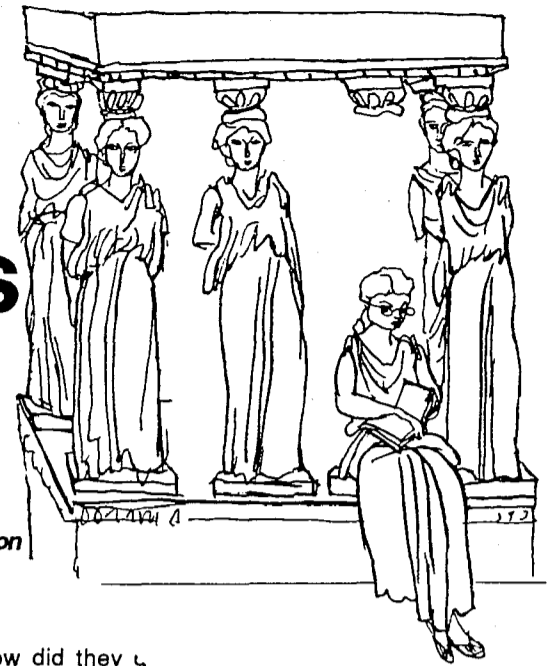
Cole's book takes you through every aspect of the pornography debate. She begins with an analysis of what pornography really is, who it portrays, who it affects, who it hurts, and what it says about the people in it and people who buy it. Of course women are hurt the most by pornography.

Women are dehumanized, degraded and made into objects, and this is especially

so for violent pornography. The original Greek meaning of the word itself describes pornography best: *graphos* meaning depiction and *pornos*, the lowest of female sexual slaves.

Pornography is not an image or harmless representation as many propose. It is a practice, real people buy it and it affects the lives of real people. There are many examples of true stories told by women who are abused in the process of making "harmless" images. One only gets to see the picture, not what happens behind the scenes. It is the sexual subordination of someone for someone else's sexual pleasure.

Likewise, it is important to question the reasons why women pose for pornography. Who are they, are they there because they "like it" or out of



By Genny Dawson

necessity? How did they get there?

This book also looks at the laws surrounding the publication of pornography. Cole explains why Canadian laws have come under attack by so many groups, liberal and conservative alike. However, unlike those of us who complain, Cole gives a new perspective on how the law could be formed. The law must deal with some of the following: the subordination of women, not images; target the harm of women's experience; make the law women-centered, women-initiated and women-driven. Meanwhile it must permit artistic and educational dialogue on sexuality. This is followed by a detailed legal definition.

In addition, Cole puts forth a new, innovative suggestion for fighting pornography, a civil remedy, where one could sue pornographers for their damage. This idea is most interesting. Cole acknowledges the financial reality of most women but suggests resources could be pooled.

Cole recognizes that laws will definitely assist the cause but society must change its ideas on pornography. This has to be done through an examination of the way we view pornography. Why does it exist, who supports it and why? What does it say about men and women and how they relate to one another? Does it subordinate women, make them look and feel good? Does it control or liberate sex drives? What about our sex drives and our sex roles?

Despite what many feel about the choices we have regarding sex, Cole believes that "there is really one narrow definition of sexuality in our culture and the sexual choices so many people wish we had are illusory."

Pornography is an institution in our society. The movies and ads we watch are full of stereotypical women and relationships. Women are still portrayed as sexual objects to be adored and possessed. The rock videos we watch do not encourage diversity of thought or behaviour.

Many of us continue to wear make-up, uncomfortable high heels and tight dresses. These things physically confine women. What purpose does our whole dress code serve? When we examine many of these things - what has really changed over the years? It is still vital for women to be sexually appealing to men; the money spent in the fashion industry is a valid reflection of this.

If we derive sexual pleasure from traditional dominant/passive relationships, and this is what is continually portrayed in pornography, maybe we should look at our so-called sexual norms.

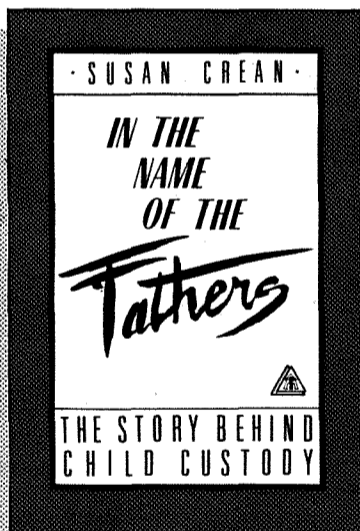
As Cole asks, "Why do sex and female hurt go together?" Maybe we need to look at what gives us sexual thrills. It is not difficult to watch daytime TV and see this scenario; man and woman bitterly argue, they get angry, they hate each other, they push each other around, someone gets slapped, and everyone knows sex will soon follow.

Cole ends this book by offering interesting, positive solutions to many of these questions. She also gives us her vision of a positive, healthy world, one where lovers of all sexual orientations, communicate, not screw.

For me, answers to questions such as those outlined in this book can be found in many ways, from reading books like this one or by talking to those we care about. However, my understanding of what hurts and of what feels bad comes from inside. Pornography feels wrong for me, and now I understand why much better.

No one can answer life's questions or solve all the ills of this world, but this book gives good advice on many controversial issues. To me it was like having someone hold my hand on a very difficult journey.

Genny Dawson is a passionate feminist happy to find new ammunition for debate in Susan Cole's book.



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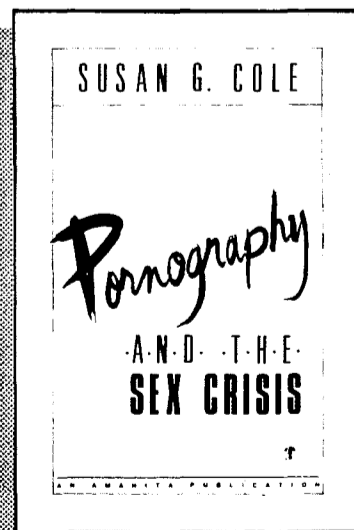
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Herstory Celebrates 15 Years

by Marian Duensing

(updated by Anna Marie Boquist)

Probably the first thing to catch your eye when looking at the Saskatoon Women's Calendar Collective annual publication is the title: **Herstory**. It names "whose" story and it names the struggle women are conducting with our misrepresentational language. The introduction of a word such as "herstory" represents the manipulation of diction by women to ensure they are represented by language. In the fifteen issues of **Herstory**, these Saskatoon women have written a startling history of Canadian women whom the textbooks seem to have forgotten.

Herstory is inspiring and functional. It has won a place in the hearts of many, reflected in annual, national sales beyond 6,000 copies. The person who uses this calendar becomes acutely aware of the struggles and achievements Canadian women have met and continue to confront.

The issues included are numerous, ranging from motherhood, rape, poetry, marriage, marriage contracts and the instigation of services of Interval Houses and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada. Individual Native women, some of their organizations, the YWCA, Pre-Trades for Women and the recent influx of women into the RCMP and other non-traditional vocations fill the

calendar pages.

It is a most difficult task, choosing a few examples from **Herstory** as representative of the whole. The 1980 collective aptly expressed a similar feeling when they referred to "...the entire galaxy of Canadian women to explore." (p. 109) But one might well

women may have the same opportunities as men." (p.11) She went on to New York Medical College for Women and returned to Canada where she practiced medicine and lectured on women's rights.

The absolute poignancy of this particular event in women's history comes alive when you



begin with the 1974 edition where the struggle-achievement motif surfaces in the story of Emily Howard Stone and her daughter, Augusta Stone-Gullen. Emily's application to the University of Toronto Medical College was refused by the president who told her "the doors of the University are not open to women and I trust they never will be." Emily is said to have replied, "Then I will make it the business of my life to see that they will be opened, that

turn the page in **Herstory** to find that Emily's daughter, Augusta Stone-Gullen became, in 1897, the first female graduate of the Toronto School of Medicine and the first woman to become a medical doctor in Canada.

Two inspiring facts emerge from this account: what men threaten women with can be challenged and women can make the changes in society necessary to their own needs if they persist with strength and

patience.

Several biographical pages enhance our admiration for women who have contributed to literature, visual art and music. Margaret Laurence, Margaret Atwood and Alice Munro are commended for their strong female characters. Dorothy Knowles, Pittseolak Ashoona and Sylvia Daooust are a few of the women artists portrayed, while Liona Boyd, Zara Nelsova and Kate and Anna McGarrigle are applauded for their contributions to music.

Elizabeth Poelzer is another **Herstory** highlight, a contributor to improvements in the quality of Canadian education. She grew up in the Benedictine Colony at Muenster, Saskatchewan and taught from the age of seventeen. She finally returned when she was eighty. She also raised twelve children, eleven of whom became teachers.

In sports, Marilyn Bell is recorded as having crossed Lake Ontario, the English Channel and the Juan de Fuca Strait.

In another area, one that men have traditionally conditioned women to compete in, Janiel Jolley created an uproar by entering the 1970 Miss Canadian University beauty pageant; she did so to protest society's institutionalized evaluation of women on the basis of their physical

attributes.

The Saskatoon Women's Calendar Collective varies in size from year to year. It is a non-profit organization, originally funded with the assistance of various grants, donations and personal contributions. More recently, the collective has been able to rely on royalties to provide an operating budget.

The writing of each year's edition is shared by the members of the collective, each person doing background research on their chosen topics. By January of each year the manuscript is completed and forwarded to the publisher.

Herstory has survived a number of crises over the years, including the loss of their publisher in 1983. To celebrate its fifteenth anniversary the collective members will hold a reception in Saskatoon on Saturday, October 28th 1989. The special occasion will honour supporters of **Herstory**, past and present collective members and those women who have been featured in the calendar over the past fifteen years.

"In its own small way, the survival of **Herstory** reinforces what our research has taught us and what we have tried to share through this book: a growing respect for the hardihood and vigour of womankind." (1976, P. 108)

Abortion

A Personal Story

Cont'd from pg. 20.

vacuum aspirator was. I wanted to see the machine. Soon I was on the table, my thighs strapped into supports and my arms strapped at my sides. The doctor came over to the table with a cervical dilator which resembled large silver knitting needles. He said it was going to hurt. He inserted it and I felt an incredible pain and I lost consciousness. I wondered later if this pain was a necessary part of the procedure or whether I was being punished.

I recall coming to in the recovery room with other women. I asked the nurse if the abortion had been performed. It was over! They had injected a drug to induce contractions to expel any remaining tissue. The cramps were horrible. I cried for a while, it was a combination of pain, sadness, relief and anaesthesia. When we were able to clean ourselves up and get dressed, we were led to a small room, supplied with

cookies and juice and were given birth control information. It was hard to absorb at that moment and I felt totally disoriented. The women in the room were from a range of racial and socio-economic backgrounds. Some appeared deeply moved, some less; all the women seemed relieved. We were all back on the bus by 1:30 pm. I was feeling greatly relieved, almost elated. My mood was swinging from depression to the other end of the pendulum. However, with the abortion completed my other feelings surfaced. I harboured a lot of resentment and anger. I had survived shame, humiliation and made a painfully difficult decision. I felt that I personally bore the brunt of the burden for being sexually active.

We arrived home late Saturday night. I outlined the trip to my mom and reassured her that I was ok. The next day I went to church. I was working closely with a church teen

group and I felt enormously frustrated in the months following that I couldn't share some of my experience with them. Sexual discussion was taboo. I wanted society to take off its blinders, realize that many of their kids (nice kids) were sexually active and that simply telling them to abstain was not adequate. Young people needed proper information to make choices and they needed support and guidance. During the following year three girls in the teen group became pregnant.

Two months after the abortion I left home and broke off with my boyfriend. I had nobody to talk to, I couldn't talk with my family and I had no close friend and no money for counseling (even though I didn't realize that I probably needed it). It was a really lonely time for me.

In the following years I became more politicized about women's access to abortion, about men's responsibilities

vis-a-vis contraception, about the kinds of birth control information available to young people and many other related women's issues. I do not feel guilty or ashamed of that decision seventeen years ago. But there isn't a year that goes by that I don't remember the date of the abortion, the "date of birth" and how old the child would be now. It was like ending a relationship with someone I cared for who wasn't good for me, painful but necessary. My decision to abort was not easy but it was the best choice for me at that time and it was **MY** choice.

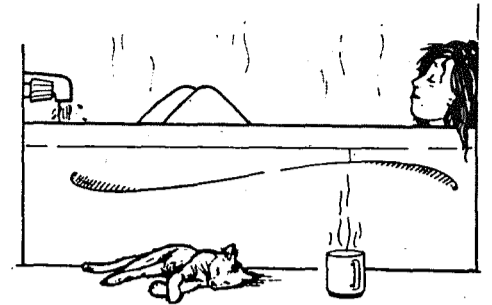
Since my experience in 1972 access to safe abortion in Canada has improved. There is more social acceptance and medical care is often subsidized. For the most part, we are no longer carted off to foreign cities in the middle of the night seeking a medical procedure we are desperate for. The rights we have fought for need to be expanded and

protected. I cringe as I read about the Dodd and Daigle cases; as I hear anti-choice moralists on radio call-ins stating that women who seek abortions are promiscuous and should be sterilized (what penalty I ask, for their male counterparts?) I believe in everyone's right to take a course of action which is acceptable to their own personal conscience. It is not up to boyfriends or husbands who grasp for control over our lives; nor for vote seeking politicians who can change the status quo with the stroke of a pen. It is not up to so called "pro-lifers" who blindly refuse to consider "quality of life" forcing even more women into the welfare ghetto.

Ultimately it is the woman who should have control of her own body and her personal destiny - if she doesn't have that fundamental right then what has she? We must never return to the backstreet butchers, the ruined lives or the dark secrets.

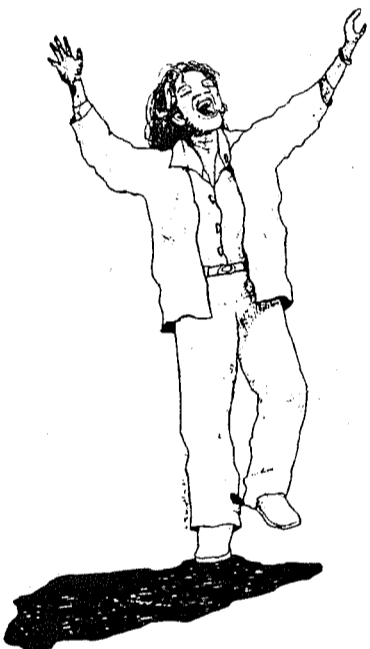
"Most of us do not attempt to realize a fraction of our capabilities. Yet most of us could live, not one, but many different kinds of lives, each full, intense and complete."
 Helen Gregory
 1980 Herstory

How the well are you?



by Cathy Beaumont

"There are two themes for this issue," the publisher said. "Violence against women and the abortion debate. Maybe you could focus your column on the wellness aspects of these?" "Sure," I said, wishing to sound eager and confident, "I'll give it some thought." I hung up the phone and started thinking. Seven days later I was still thinking, the publisher was wondering if I had fallen off the face of the earth, and I was wondering if I was beginning to lose it.



So this is writer's block, I thought. Not quite as agonizing as I'd imagined it, but certainly a presence in my daily life. I'd be standing in line at the grocery store, studying my fellow prisoners in the lineup, and wondering who among them had ever been assaulted, who had had to make a decision about an abortion. I'd be out for a revitalizing bicycle ride, and this small voice from the back of my head would say "So, what are you going to write about?" In this baseball-mad city, on the biggest baseball weekend of the season, I was the only person who didn't give a damn about the Blue Jays - I only wanted literary inspiration.

My challenge was this: find the connection between wellness, freedom of choice on abortion, and violence against women. The issues are, in my mind, big "i" important to the welfare and status of women in Canada. In contrast, what is wellness? A sort of important thing you look after once you have all the important things taken care of? I don't think so. And here's why.

The abortion issue is about control - the right of women to have control over what happens to their bodies. The right to make informed decisions without anyone telling you that you can't do that. Violence against women is also about control - the right of women to choose what they

do with their own lives without physical coercion or punishment.

Wellness is about control, too. As a person moving toward wellness (remember, it's a journey, not a destination), you're always learning and growing. You're discovering things about your physical self. You're working on relationships with other people - friends, co-workers, family, people you're very close to. You're learning to accept yourself as you are, with love for yourself, while striving to become a better "you."

People who describe themselves as "well" often feel that more of their lives are within their control. They feel responsible for taking care of themselves. They tend not to blame the "other guy" as often. They have what is called "an internal locus of control." What they have done is reclaim the power of their own selves and lives to the extent that this is possible.

Now that last phrase, "to the extent that this is possible," is really important. I won't tell you that all you have to do is believe you have control over something and you can change it. (This week I read in the news about a Soviet psychic who believed he could stop an oncoming freight train with his mind. It didn't work.) We can't change abortion legislation by thinking hard.

We can't stop men from assaulting women by wishing. But believing you can change yourself; and believing in yourself, is possible and important. So that in this world, as imperfect as it is, we can each make our contribution, do our share, and act from a powerful base of self-understanding.

Developing and maintaining an internal locus of control is, like most aspects of wellness, an ongoing process. Many people find that affirmations are helpful. Affirmations are short sentences or phrases that you can think or say to yourself to help strengthen your feelings about yourself or to feel more powerful or confident. It's best if you make up your own affirmations, but here are a few examples to get you started:

- *Today I am honest, spontaneous, and true to myself
- *I listen to my gut feelings.
- *I am creating safe ways and places to express my anger.
- *I am unique.
- *Today I am the best I can be.
- *I treat myself exactly as I want to be treated.
- *Today I am recognizing and expressing my needs.
- *I am learning to listen to the voice/spirit/power within me.
- *I am willing to trust the process of change.
- *Trust and love begin with me.
- *Today I am 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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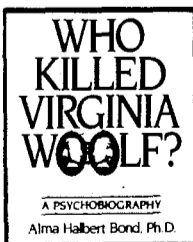
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"When in doubt, take the losing side. The winners don't need you. They're doing O.K."

Hilda Hellaby
1986 Herstory



...Women must band together to better conditions for this and future generations, to enable them to go into the world and meet the requirements nobly and honestly.

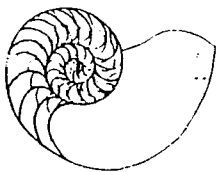
Louise Lucas, 1932
Herstory 1983

Rumour Has It

New Publisher at Ragweed Press / gynergy books

Libby Oughton has sold Ragweed Press / gynergy books, the Prince Edward Island publishing house, to Louise Fleming of Charlottetown.

Fleming says that she "plans to keep the business in Charlottetown and to continue to build on its national reputation of literary quality and diversity."



Ragweed / gynergy specializes in books by and for women, children's books, Canadian literature and Maritime history. It has a backlist of over 100 titles, including **DON'T: A Woman's Word**, Elly Danica's powerful story of incest and recovery.

"I'm pleased that Ragweed will continue to serve as the voice of Maritime writers and I'm especially happy that the new publisher plans to develop the gynergy imprint introduced in 1986," Oughton said.

Fleming has worked in management and policy development in both the private sector and the federal public service. She holds a Master's degree in Canadian Literature from McMaster University. She looks forward to maintaining the same business arrangements with Ragweed's suppliers, sales reps and distributors.

For more information, contact Laurie Brinklow or Louise Fleming at (902) 566-5750

Kit Holmwood has been elected president of the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL), the country's national pro-choice organization. She is replacing **Norma Scarborough** who stepped down after serving as president for the past nine years.

Kit has been active in CARAL since 1983, working in the Halifax, Ottawa and Toronto chapters. She first became involved in the women's movement as a volunteer counsellor at the Birth Control, VD and Abortion Referral Centre at Queen's University in the early 70s.

She has been on the national board of CARAL for three years and a Maritime representative for the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, serving as Chair of the Reproductive Rights Committee for the past five years.

She will be the first non-Toronto present of CARAL, and will be working from her base in Saint John, New Brunswick.

Norma Scarborough was the guiding force for CARAL during the 1980s, and her strong presence will be missed. As Kit Holmwood said in a recent CARAL newsletter, Norma took on the role of president with "industry, diligence, and warm-heartedness."

"Her decision to step down as President is a loss we all feel. But her fatigue is something we are all familiar with, the strain of heading a political organization in constant struggle takes its toll," said Kit.

All Canadian women who believe in choice have benefitted from the untiring work of Norma Scarborough. We can never forget the key role she played in the victory won by Morgentaler at the



Supreme Court in January 1988. Despite all the efforts since to erode women's right to reproductive choice, that victory still stands as a milestone in the history of Canadian women.

Norma Scarborough has been a thankfully sane voice in the abortion debate in Canada. Her courage and stamina have paved the way for our long struggle ahead.

CLASSIFIEDS

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We have noticed that most feminist periodicals do not get distributed much farther than the women's community. By being free we find that we can distribute *The Womanist* to places where women are, such as laundromats, corner stores, and community centres.

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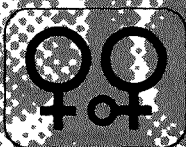
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