



1974  
November

winnipeg  
liberation

women's  
newsletter

The Monthly Newsletter is published by Winnipeg Women's Liberation, office at A Woman's Place, 143 Walnut St., 876-4581. Subscription price is \$3.00 a year and single copy price is 25c.

If you have any letters, articles, announcements, poems, literary articles to submit, send them to the above address.

The price of the newsletter has increased due to the increased cost of our larger off-set edition. Thanks to the many people who have been sending in their subscription fees. Those of you who paid recently and paid \$2.00, we will still keep you down for a years subscription, but we would appreciate the extra \$1.00 if you can send it.

### CONTENTS

Calendar	1
Women's Party and Christmas Gift Ideas	2
A Woman's Place News	3
Women's Movement on Campus	4
Abortion Rally	4
Land Embarks on Witch-Hunt	6
Food Boycott	7
Other Groups Around Town	12
Feature Articles	
Women in the Labor News	8
OFY Summer Project Reports	11
The Torture of Women in Chile	13
Politics of the Women's Movement by Sue White	15
Women in History Nellie McClung	18

NOVEMBER EVENTS

WEEK OF November 3 - 9

Monday, Nov. 4 - Meeting of all those interested in participating in Women's Theatre, 8:00 p.m. A Woman's Place.

Thursday, Nov. 7 - "Theories of Women's Liberation," talk and discussion at U. of M. - UMSU Building, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 7 - Film on Emotional Health sponsored by MACED - 8:00 p.m., YWCA

Saturday, Nov. 9 - Women's Party - 8:00 p.m. on at 9-277 Arbutnot st.

WEEK OF November 10-16

Monday, Nov. 11 - Remembrance Day - No Meetings

Wednesday, Nov. 13 - YWCA Class on Menopause Begins

Wednesday, Nov. 13 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES FOR DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

Thursday, Nov. 14 - "History of Women" Talk and Discussion at U. of M. - UMSU Building, 7:30 p.m.

WEEK of November 17-23

Monday, Nov. 18 - Country Reels will show some of their Video-Tapes they produced this summer and maybe some short films.

Thursday, Nov. 21 - "Sexuality" Talk and discussion at U. Of M. UMSU Building, 7:30 p.m.

WEEK of November 25-30

Monday, Nov. 25 - Coordinating Committee Meeting and Mail-out of newsletter, 8:00 p.m.

Thurs., Nov. 28 - "Women in Literature" talk and discussion at U. of M. - UMSU Building - 7:30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

WOMEN'S CALENDARS

We have ordered Women's Calendars again this year to sell. They make very good Christmas gifts.

The Calendar was researched by five women from Saskatoon under a Canada Council grant.

The calendar is intended to reveal the struggles and achievements of Canadian women in politics, the arts, labor and sports.

The format of the date pages has been changed--the amount of information has been reduced to allow more space for writing. The opposing pages include photographs, graphics, poetry and written material on women and events in Canadian herstory.

The price of the Calendar has increased to \$4.00.



Saturday

November 9

8:00 p.m. on

9-277 Arbuthnot

All Women Invited

Bring something to share-- drinks--snacks--a favorite record.

Christmas Gift Subscription to the newsletter.

Please send a gift subscription to the Women's Liberation Newsletter to the following:

Three horizontal lines for an address.

Begin with the \_\_\_\_\_ issue.

\_\_\_\_ Enclose a gift card with the first issue from:

One horizontal line for a name.

A check for \$3.00 is enclosed.

# <sup>a</sup> Woman's Place News

DID YOU LOOSE US IN THE  
SUDDEN MOVE AT THE END OF  
THE SUMMER???

We are at 143 Walnut, which is one block west of Mayland and  $\frac{1}{2}$  block north of Westminster. We are open from 9:30 a.m. through early evening, though we are sometimes closed over the lunch hour, so phone first if you want to come then. Same phone - 786-4581

## GRANTS

### LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM

Woman's Place and Country Reels have applied for joint funding from LIP for December through till the end of May. The project will concentrate on an outreach program directed mainly towards schools - providing information on career opportunities, kinds of discrimination to combat and women and the family. Resource material will be expanded to include local up-to-date provincial and city-oriented information in these areas and this information will be communicated through the use of educational packets, videotapes, literature, films, speakers and seminars. The seminars will be for both female and male students.

To complement this an internal research program will be set up to collect information on labour rights and job opportunities for working women, and the other resources at the Centre will be worked on and improved.

We should know whether our application has been successful (and how many positions there are to fill) sometime after November 15.

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

Woman's Place has decided to apply to IWY Secretariat for funds to establish a media collective. The proposed project is still fairly general but will concentrate on training and encouraging women interested in communications and facilitating the dissemination of produced material. Lois Browne will draw up a preliminary budget which will be sent to those interested for discussion at the next meeting. If you want to attend, call her in about a week's time at 453-3972 for the date and time.

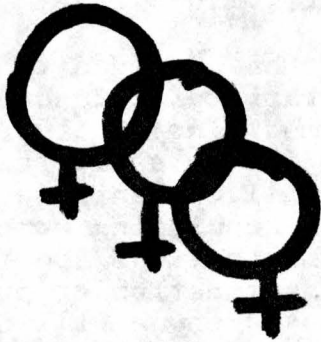
## FLEE MARKET -- CLOTHING

The North Winnipeg Community Action Center had a Flee Market on Sat. Oct. 19. A Woman's Place was asked to put up a table which we did. We decided to get rid of some of the clothes which are flooding the basement. We were going to give them away, but the Flee Market wanted us to sell them at a low price which was the idea of the Flee Market and also other people were selling clothes and it wouldn't have been fair for us to give ours away.

We did sell some clothes (mostly for 25¢ & 50¢) and 11 patches. We made \$6.75 on the clothes and still had to bring most of them back again so it was not an unqualified success. We have a number of baby clothes that were given to us lately and we are going to take those somewhere where they can be given away to people who need them. We will continue to have a Children's clothing exchange, so if you have clothes your children have outgrown, you can bring them down. Those of us with small children have been making good use of things people have donated.

MONDAY MEETINGS - see Calendar on page 1

THEATRE GROUP and METAPHYSICAL (OCCULT) GROUP see page 12



## THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT ON CAMPUS

The Women's Liberation movement at the University of Manitoba is in the process of organizing. A three-person co-ordinating committee has formed, which is taking care of the details of finding office space, applying for funds, etc.

Consciousness-Raising groups are being planned, but the times have not been set as yet.

An introductory series of weekly discussions is taking place on Thursday evenings on basic topics related to Women's Liberation. The discussions so far have been on Socialization; Marriage, Motherhood and the Family; and Education. Women from A Woman's Place are giving a short presentation each week on the topic and then there is discussion.

These meetings are a good introduction to Women's Liberation issues and a chance to discuss these issues as they relate to University students.

It also gives people in the group a chance to get to know each other before the Consciousness-Raising groups start in which people can deal with issues at a more personal level.

The topics for the coming weeks are:

- Oct. 31 - Women in the Economy
- Nov. 7 - Theories of Women's Liberation
- Nov. 14 - History of Women
- Nov. 21 - Sexuality

Nov. 28 - Women in Literature

Dec. 5 - Politics and Strategy of Women's Liberation

The meetings are usually taking place in Flin Flon room near the Cafeteria in UMSU Building on campus. (Check the meeting list for the day in UMSU). 7:30 P.M.

Those of you on campus, watch for articles and notices in the Manitoban. You can contact the group through the Manitoban or the Abortion Action Coalition office in UMSU.

\* \* \* \* \*

## ABORTION RALLY - OCT. 16

Wed. Oct. 16, the Committee to Defend Dr. Morgentaler held a Rally at the U. of Winnipeg. Typical Winnipeg-style, there were about 40 people there. Only 1 other woman from Women's Liberation, that I know of. (There was a larger rally during the day at the University of Man.)

Abortion seems to be becoming a dead issue. I believe that all those people who have strong feelings about repealing laws, think that these laws are so obviously unjust, that as a matter of course politicians will see the light and change the laws.

Women--don't kid yourselves! Laws never change without pressure from those oppressed. The reforms have helped some women but not enough. Many women are waiting weeks in agonizing suspense--risking their safety with every week's delay, while hospital committees who oftentimes haven't even interviewed her decide her fate. The following is a text of the address that I gave to represent A Woman's Place.

5  
ABORTION SPEECH

Abortion is the democratic right of every woman. We must have control over our own bodies. Freedom of choice has been denied long enough. Abortion must be removed from the criminal code.

It is women alone who bear the responsibilities for carrying, bearing and rearing children--therefore we demand the right to plan the best time for the arrival of each child.

We are taught that motherhood and children are revered in our society --yet they make up the largest proportion of the poor.

Our society does not provide adequate child care facilities to help families to work to provide a decent standard of living.

Public education on birth control methods is totally lacking, especially for young people. Young women are forced to carry and bear unwanted children in retribution for so-called sexual transgressions.

The media and government want us to believe the abortion rate is rising --when in fact, no one every knew how many were performed illegally in the past. Also, the number of unwanted children can never be measured except by looking at the battered child statistics and the numbers in our jails and sanitariums.

Otto Land and the anti-abortion camp would lead us to believe that repeal of the abortion laws is a minority position--I do not believe that most Canadians support the abortion laws.

We must condemn Otto Land and his autocratic statements. He is not entitled to make decisions for all Canadians.

The anti-abortion camp is highly organized, with big money backing and thousands of members in major Canadian cities. They are getting themselves elected to hospital boards (Niagara Falls) and harassing doctors who perform abortions.

Only 260 out of 1300 hospitals in Canada are performing any abortions.

Those of us who believe strongly in removal of the abortion laws from the criminal code must inundate politicians with our views and continue public education programs.

Write Otto Land, Peter Reilly a pro-abortion MP, your federal and provincial MLA's.

Encourage the silent majority to speak up.

1975 is Internation Women's Year. The abortion laws must be repealed as a basic step to women's liberation.

Ellen Kruger

CRY OUT

## LANG EMBARKS ON WITCH-HUNT

Otto Lang in a self-appointed crusade against abortion has taken it upon himself to intervene in the affairs of government departments who are giving grants to women's groups that counsel on abortion.

He is worried that these groups may advise women to seek help in the United States where many state legislatures have legalized abortion.

The Woman's Place deplors this flagrant abuse of power on behalf of the Minister of Justice. Where is the "justice" when a man who has a high government office and easy access to media coverage decides for millions of women that they should not have the opportunity to be counselled on abortion.

There is nothing illegal in this counselling. The United States legislation has seen fit to legalize abortion and many cities across the border are providing safe, therapeutic abortions. There is no crime involved in giving women who seek abortion information details about the services.

Now Lang is "investigating" women's centres. By cutting off funds to these centres, Lang is also cutting off much needed birth control services, counselling on legal Canadian abortions, self-help health clinics and many more programs for women.

The Saskatoon women's centre has been waiting since last April for a \$5,760 grant allocated to them by the Secretary of State's women's department.

Whether or not people believe in abortion is not the issue at stake this time. The issue is one man foisting his personal beliefs (he is a Roman Catholic with seven children) on an entire civil service, cutting off the chances for many

women's organizations to carry out their programs for helping other women.

We'd like to see as many women as possible send in letters of protest to the Department of Justice condemning Mr. Lang and the government for allowing this personal abuse of power.

Write Otto Lang  
Minister of Justice  
House of Commons  
Ottawa

or start up a petition.

- NATURE HAS GIVEN WOMEN SO MUCH  
POWER THAT THE LAW HAS VERY  
WISELY GIVEN THEM LITTLE -

Dr. Samuel Johnston

*A Woman's Place  
badly needs:*

*a Vacuum Cleaner*

*a Better Typewriter*

*a small electric*

*Coffee pot - about 9-cups*

*If you have any of  
these items to donate  
please bring them down.*





WE ARE READY TO PROTEST AGAINST THE  
HIGH PRICE OF FOOD  
ARE YOU??

We know you are tired to attending meetings  
so all we want is your support and  
A FEW HOURS OF WORK

The Winnipeg Food Prices Committee is calling  
for a BOYCOTT OF ALL CHAINS and SUPERMARKETS on

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9

To make the boycott really effective,  
the National Farmers Union is going to hold a  
sale of FARM FOOD at the LEGISLATIVE GROUNDS,

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9

from 1:00 on at WHOLESALE PRICES

our DEMANDS are:

- 1) an immediate reduction in food prices, without reducing real income of farm or labour
- 2) an end to profiteering
- 3) the creation of a publically owned retail food outlet, for Manitoba grown food stuffs.

JOIN US! DO YOUR SHARE!

BOYCOTT--Buy direct from the farmers--write your M.P. & M.L.A.

HELP DISTRIBUTE our LITERATURE, that WEEK

Phone 475-4777 or 786-4581 to help out

Endorsed by: Woman's Place, Winnipeg Labour Council, Women's Labour Caucus, M.F.L., etc.

# WOMEN IN THE LABOR NEWS 8

"PRAY FOR THE DEAD

AND FIGHT LIKE HELL

FOR THE LIVING."

Thousands marched under this banner, a call used by Mother Jones who organized miners from 1890's until her death in 1930.

## WOMEN IN FOREFRONT OF MINERS' VICTORY by Paula Swan

Coal miners at Brookside in Kentucky have just scored a major victory. This is the culmination of a 13-month struggle in which several significant turning points can be attributed to the courageous action and support of a number of the miners' wives, daughters and other women supporters. Together they forced Duke Power Company, the sixth largest electric utility chain in the U.S. to sign a contract with the United Mine Workers (UMW) union.

The miners joined the union in July 1973. Duke Power Co. refused to negotiate or sign any contracts with UMW unless it in turn agreed to a no-strike clause and seniority according to ability as opposed to experience.

The Brookside miners went on strike. That was thirteen months ago. The Brookside miners, and their families were unwaveringly adamant and determined in their demands.

Trying to destroy the strike, Duke Power Co. via its subsidiary, Eastover Mining Co., resorted to innumerable intimidation tactics. At first these included delays in negotiations, outright firings of striking workers, and threats to evict the strikers and their families from the company-owned housing.

But the strike kept building. Then there were court injunctions limiting the number of picketers allowed outside the mines. And most recently the company enlisted the aid of fifty professional strikebreakers armed with automatic weapons, who together with the state police, tried to break the strike with violence and murder.

Realising that the men's strike was their struggle too, numbers of the miners' wives, daughters, widows and other women of the town formed the Brookside Women's Club. Despite the threat of arrests and jail sentences, they maintained pickets outside the mines and thus were successful in closing it down. Several of the women were arrested and were given severe jail sentences.

Then miners in another mine owned by the Duke Power Co. in Highsplint also joined the UMW and joined the strike.

Many picketers were seriously wounded by machine-guns fired at the picketers and also by clubs and pistols. The company strikebreakers would also fire at night at miners homes.

Despite these attacks, the men and women were determined to continue the fight. During the week of Aug. 19-23 the strike movement reached a climax. Over 3,500 militant miners, their wives, children and other supporters converged on Harlan for a rally and march to support the 400 striking miners at Brookside and Highsplint.

This was the focus of "memorial" week organized by the UMW. Over 120,000 UMW miners from all the major coal-producing states in the U.S. closed down 1,200 mines. They were protesting hazardous working conditions in all mines, inadequate safety legislation, the large number of deaths and the prevalence of Black Lung disease. They pledged their support for all the striking

9  
miners and protested increasingly violent company strikebreaking tactics.

Only two days later a 23 year old miner was shot in the head by a company foreman. The murder aroused so much outrage that emergency negotiations were called by Duke Power Co. and UMW officials in Washington D.C.

Duke Power conceded defeat and accepted the terms of the agreement presently operative at the other 1,200 UMW organized mines. As well, all fired strikers must be rehired, and all court and Labour Relations Board charges must be dropped along with eviction notices.

Bringing this vast and powerful company to its knees has been a significant and inspiring achievement for both men and women in their struggle for the right to organize.

(information from the Guardian)

\* \* \* \* \*

#### YWCA EXPOSES TREATMENT OF IMMIGRANT WOMEN WORKERS by Terry Donaldson

Immigrant women hired by Vancouver cleaning and garment firms often work in exploitative and sometimes illegal situations, a provincial government report says.

The report, prepared by the social concerns committee of the YWCA, says that it is common practice in several local clothing factories to lay off seamstresses just before Christmas, rehiring them in the first week of January. By doing this, the company avoids paying holiday wages.

Other factories pay their workers on a piece rate basis, enabling them to circumvent minimum wage laws, the report says. In at least one woman's case, this has meant no increase in pay for four years.

The report also says that the faster the workers, who might benefit from this system are usually paid on an hourly basis.

Some hotels send chambermaids home without pay at the start of a shift because the hotel is not very busy at the time. The report charges that the women sent home are those with less seniority, usually non-whites.

Many factories allow women to use the washrooms only during their ten minute coffee break. The report says that many women spend their entire coffee break in line for the washroom.

A committee spokeswoman says the idea for the report grew out of frustrations YWCA social workers encountered as they worked with Chinese, Portuguese, Italian and other immigrant women.

"Attempts to train these women for better jobs were useless because employers would hire them only as chambermaids, cleaning ladies, seamstresses, or in other menial capacities," she said.

Funded by a federal Local Initiatives Project grant, the team set out to discover the conditions these women faced and to suggest ways in which the situation could be improved.

Committee members interviewed 186 women extensively. The process was difficult because of the reluctance of the women to talk to a stranger about themselves.

The report concludes that policies of employers and government agencies insure that the women will be kept isolated, unable to participate fully in Canadian society.

The spokeswoman said there are three reasons for the situation.

First, although some of the practices cited are clearly illegal, legislation does not exist to

cover most of the abuses.

"Employers are just taking advantage of loopholes in the law," she said.

And the enforcement of laws that do exist is inadequate.

The labour standards branch of the labour ministry, which is responsible for policing, does not have the staff necessary for regular inspections, the report says.

Branch staff will respond to complaints, but only if they are written in English. "But few of the women can write English, and none will complain because they fear that they will lose their jobs," the spokeswoman said.

Third, she blamed employers for being too willing to take advantage of people who do not have the means to resist oppression.

The report, copies of which have been sent to the ministers of labor, health, human resources and education, Canada Manpower and the Unemployment Insurance commission, makes several recommendations.

It recommends that permanent inspectors be hired by the labor standards branch. It recommends that workers be able to choose between a piece rate and an hourly rate, and that those on piece rate be guaranteed a minimum wage. It recommends legislation that would ensure women will get the holiday pay to which they are entitled.

The committee also wants "lack of Canadian experience", to be prohibited as a reason for rejecting employment, since it is often used in a discriminatory way, and suggests that manpower and the unemployment insurance commission hire interpreters in their offices.

The report also recommends that the human resources ministry

organize day care centres in industrial parts of Vancouver.

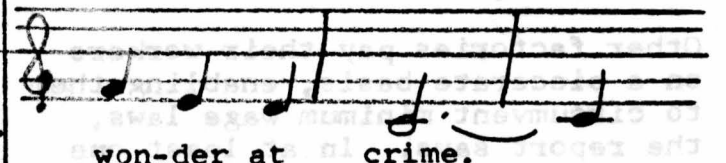
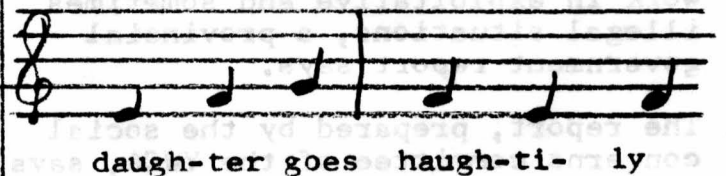
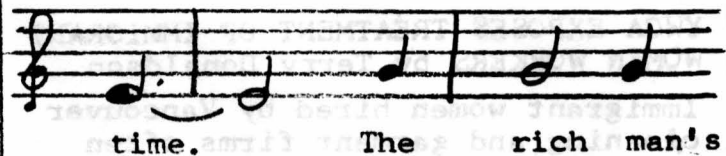
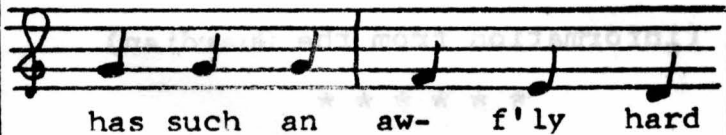
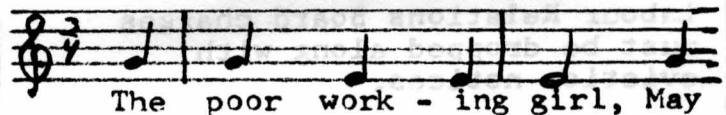
Renata Shearer who heads the committee says that the ministers have acknowledged the receipt of the report but she is not yet able to tell what effect the report will have.

"We want to sit down and discuss our recommendations with the government soon though nothing definite has been arranged so far," she said.

from The Ubysey

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE POOR WORKING GIRL



# OFY SUMMER PROJECT REPORTS

## A WOMAN'S PLACE

From May 15 to Aug. 31, A Woman's Place was blessed with an OFY project. It was decided among the staff that the priorities would be in keeping the centre as well organized, in terms of facilities provided, as possible. Some of the projects worked on were the Lesbian Resource Centre, the library, the children's room, establishing contacts with other women's centres across Canada and putting out a relatively good newsletter.

The work put into the Lesbian Resource Centre resulted in regular Tuesday night meetings (Women Relating to Women). The objective of these meetings was to generate more meaningful communication between gay and straight women.

Several new books were purchased and donated to the library with an emphasis on feminist literature. An attempt was made to regain the many overdue books ..... with some success.

The children's room was reorganized to provide a more attractive atmosphere. Several new materials were added plus a complete, much needed clean-up.

Letters were sent to several women's centres in Canada requesting information on the activities, programs, problems, etc. There was a fairly good response - these can be found SOMEWHERE in the centre.

The newsletter speaks for itself.

Staff relations at the house were generally positive. There were no serious conflicts that were destructive to the working ability of the staff as a whole. Minor problems

that did occur were worked out either at the weekly staff meeting or on an individual basis.

A great deal of time went into finding a new house. By mid-July the staff realized that a serious effort had to be put into relocating, partly because of the condition of the house, and partly because of the attitude of the house owner. Also, a lot of time and effort (mostly effort) went into the actual moving.

..... and thus ended another OFY project. The length and vagueness of this report shall go unnoticed. Thank you.

## WINNIPEG WOMEN'S HEALTH COLLECTIVE

The WWHC began the summer with the intention of setting up a type of crisis centre providing abortion and birth control information and providing guidance for female related problems.

For several reasons we were unable to pursue a project of this nature. As a result we decided to write a comprehensive booklet listing the medical and social services available to women in Winnipeg. The booklet was to include: a women's medical survey which we hoped would be an indication of the type of medical treatment that women receive in Winnipeg; write-ups on birth control methods, abortion methods and procedures for obtaining an intown and out of town abortion; menstrual difficulties; venereal diseases; cancer; pregnancy and childbirth, etc. We also had a special section on rape and a proper gynecological examination.

We then had an index of all social services of interest to women. There was also a section on having a baby in Winnipeg which included a directory of prenatal classes, a breakdown of services offered by maternity

WINNIPEG WOMEN'S HEALTH COLLECTIVE (cont'd)

wards, a complete directory of day care services including lunch and after-four programs and several other related articles.

We then had a comparative drug store survey of contraceptive prices in Winnipeg and a survey of high schools, trying to determine the type of sex education that is available to high school aged women.

Unfortunately, we were unable to get enough funds to pay for the printing (150 - 180 pages). The summer was interesting and would have been extremely gratifying if we had been able to finish our project.

OTHER GROUPS AROUND TOWN

NEW DAY CARE CENTER OPENS IN THE WEST END

Full-time day care for children 2-5 is available in the West End in St. Margaret's Anglican Church, 160 Ethelbert at Westminister.

The center just opened on Oct. 1, 1974 and openings are still available.

Apply at St. Margaret's from 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Monday - Friday. Phone: 775-5756 or West End Cooperative Resource Center, 796 Banning 9:00-5:00 Monday - Friday, 775-5346

THE MANITOBA ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN WITH EMOTIONAL DISORDERS (MACED)

is meeting for a film night on emotional health at 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 7 in the

Elizabethan Hill Room at the YWCA, Webb Place.

Julie Paquette 489-2282

YWCA class on MENOPAUSE

This lecture/discussion series will attempt to cover the physical and emotional problems encountered during the menopause.

Dates: November 13,20,27 December 4

Time: Wednesday evenings 8 PM

Place: 1st floor - YWCA

Cost: \$5.00 (members) \$8.00 (non-members)

Register in advance at the YWCA \*\*\*\*\*

WOMEN'S THEATRE GROUP

There is going to be a meeting at 8:00 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 4 at A Woman's Place for all people interested in Women's Theatre. The Women's Theatre group is reorganizing. There have been requests for performances and some concrete suggestions for the group have been drawn up and will be presented at the meeting. There has been a LIP Grant application submitted, but it is not known whether this will be granted.

All those interested in Women's Theatre--we need you!!

\* \* \* \* \*

METAPHYSICAL (OCCULT) GROUP

A small but enthusiastic group is meeting at A Woman's Place. The meeting day has been changed to Mondays at 8:00 p.m. and meets on the 3rd floor.

On Nov. 4 the leader will be out of town, but the group will be meeting. Nov. 11 is Remembrance Day so there will be no meeting.

Each meeting will concentrate on a topic, but the exact schedule of topics has not been set.

13 THE TORTURE OF WOMEN IN CHILE

" Types of torture for prisoners in general include: removal of testicles; ice baths; manhandling of women; removal of fingernails; hanging by hands and feet with ultraviolet light at head and humid wet floor below; electric shocks particularly on gums, genitals and anus; blindfolding and hooding; burns with acid or cigarettes; immersion in petroleum or water; whipping; unhealthy and infested cells; obligation to witness and take part in sexual activities; knocking down and pushing on rocks; witnessing tortures; ingestion of excrement; torture on rack; hanging by the neck; withholding water for a week; deliberate fracturing of arms; throwing people around while blindfolded; picks and needles under fingernails; nudity in the sun. "

Does it seem too unbearable to be real? This is what is happening in Chile today. Sadism, torture, imprisonment without trial, not only to crush any political opposition, but to crush the spirit as well.

And it's been going on since September 1974 when the military junta of General Sergio Arellano overthrew the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende.

The above information is from a communique smuggled out of Chile last April and sent to the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners.

The communique reads like a nightmare:

" In this jail [El Buen Pastor] since the 11th of September there are from 90 to 95 women held there as political prisoners, most of them without any charges, never questioned nor assigned judges (military), not to speak of lawyers. Three have already been condemned. One of them, Viola Munoz, a brilliant sociologist and specialist in the education of pre-school age children, no political party militancy, no real charges, condemned to

twenty years. Once they have been condemned, they are passed to the common delinquency quarters of the prison. They practically cease to exist. They no longer appear in the lists of political prisoners.

There are three or four young women who were brought in from the now renowned Tejas Verdes prison, renowned as one of the most refined torture camps. The prisoners are so badly tortured there that the sadists have a "recuperation camp" where the prisoners are taken if they are to be handed over to a more permanent and therefore public jail, or be brought back to be freshly tortured.

These young women have horrible vaginal infections, at least three are pregnant, naturally not knowing by whom, having been raped innumerable times during their stay at Tejas Verdes. They demand desperately that they be permitted to abort. When they asked for a doctor they brought them an ear specialist who told them that "they should be proud of what they bore in their bellies."

Most of these girls and women are intellectuals or writers as Lucy Lorsche, Ines Figueroa; teachers like Viola Munoz and Monica Hermosilla; actresses like Elsa Rudolph; women labour leaders like Amanda Altamirano, who having sold newspapers as a young girl in the north came to have a seat in the Chilean Senate since July 1972. They have no other accusations against them but that of having sympathized with the cause of the poor of the country and the government that they chose legally.

These women and girls arrive at the Buen Pastor jail from other torture camps where they have been subjected to the most monstrous abjections. several have had live mice introduced in their vaginas. In Tejas Verdes in the "Buin

THE TORTURE OF WOMEN IN CHILE  
(CON'T)

Regiment", one girl reported having been "thrown" at the young conscripts to be raped, whether they, the soldiers, were willing or not.. In a place near Chena th they were blindfolded and mass tortured, so they didn't know what was happening, who was being tortured or raped, or whose turn came next. Girls finally came to jail from these places with their hair pulled off in handfuls, their nipples blown off or burnt, their genitals destroyed by electricity.

There are more than two hundred such torture and detention camps all over the country. From exact reports regarding refinement in the methods and massification, it seems to be that Tejas Verdes would be one of the worst. There are hundreds of personal reports. They all coincide that in Tejas Verdes there are Brazilian, Argentine and Uruguayan "instructors" in torture.

We have to name places of human sacrifice such as the Isla Quiriquina, Putrabaquedano, and each regiment, as in the case of the "Tacna" or the Buin where you can be taken on an all-round visit without seeing what monstrosities are being committed there. The prisoners are in the gutters. The soldiers are afraid to act, but most often they can't stand it, and they speak, as do nurses, policemen, neighbours. Many lives have been saved by these anonymous heroes.

We hereby make a most urgent and desperate call to all the human rights organizations, to lawyers' and doctors' organizations all over the world, to women's organizations to defend the integrity, dignity and liberty and lives of these women. There are thousands of men and women subjected to barbarity in Chile. "

Most of us find it extremely difficult to understand the meaning of torture. Writing on the subject in

the May 30 issue of the New York Times, Anthony Lewis commented: "Perhaps we find the reality so unbearable that we turn away rather than contemplate it." International pressure has forced many Latin American governments to release prisoners, to stop torture and generally improve the conditions under which they are held. Such pressures against the murderous policies of the Chilean junta can save the lives of many people and help gain the release of political prisoners. The Chilean junta can be placed in quite a vulnerable position on this issue. To survive economically and politically it must have international support. Although many governments and institutions have strongly denounced the junta and withdrawn economic and military aid to Chile, the United States has provided \$62 million in direct and \$340 million through the Inter-American Development Bank and World Bank, in which it has controlling interest.

We must show the Chilean junta and U.S. and Canadian politicians who support dictatorial regimes in Latin America that we do not support them. You can help by:

Send Telegrams and letters to Gen. Sergio Arellano, Junta Militar, Santiago, Chile, demanding that these women be freed.

Write Robert Andras, Minister of Manpower and Immigration, whose department is allowing only restricted immigration from Chile to Canada, thereby turning a deaf ear to the tortures and executions going on in that country.

Write to: Robert Andras, Minister of Manpower and Immigration, House of Commons, Ottawa.

For any further information on happenings in Chile contact R. DeGaltano, Canadian Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners, c/o 1290 "Lagnus Ave. Winnipeg, Manitoba.



# POLITICS OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

## TIME FOR ASSESSMENT?

For the two years and a bit of its existence, A Woman's Place has categorically refused to assume the focus it must have as the most visible exponent of women's liberation in Winnipeg. As one of many who have come to A Woman's Place, been frustrated, and left, I feel strongly that it is time to reassess. The alternative for A Woman's Place is for it to roll over and die.

Over the past two years, there have been a number of demonstrations staged by the Abortion Action Coalition, and members of the coalition have consistently confronted political candidates with the issue. Women's right to control their bodies, and therefore their lives, is a fundamental precept of the women's movement. How many women from A Woman's Place have helped to build these demonstrations or even taken part in them? The answer is so small, with such a fundamental issue at stake, as to be ludicrous. Granted that the abortion struggle in Winnipeg has been most effectively co-opted by the LSA-YS, what woman has attempted to change that? Yet this small organization has consistently managed to focus media attention and public support on the issue of everywoman's right to free, safe, and legal abortion.

Over the past two years, Gays for Equality has staged a demonstration, a Gay Pride week, a Gay Pride march, and confronted political candidates again and again with the demand for equal rights and dignity for homosexuals. GFE is, as opposed to the Abortion

Action Coalition, unallied with any specific political dogma. Freedom of sexual expression and smashing of sex-role stereotyping are endemic to the women's movement. Yet, token dykes and sympathizers excepted, how many women from A Woman's Place have actively contributed to this struggle? In fact, as has been evidenced by previous articles in the newsletter, some of the women active in women's struggle (identified by sexist comments directed at gay women) seem almost diametrically opposed to the idea of gay rights. (There may be a reason, however invalid for this: Marxist analysis does not account for the basis of gay oppression.)

The essential point in these two illustrations is not that women from A Woman's Place refuse to support other struggles. What is suggested is that the worst evidence of the failure of A Woman's Place as the focal point of the women's movement in Winnipeg is that no similar listing of achievements can be made. Since an initial flurry of action most publicly remembered as the attempted destruction of a beauty contest held at the University of Manitoba, it would seem that there is bending over backwards to divest Winnipeg Women's Liberation, and therefore A Woman's Place, of political clout. Ironically enough, A Woman's Place, its formation and its direction, have served to castrate women's liberation in Winnipeg.

It has been difficult so far, to make distinction between the activities of A Woman's Place and those of Winnipeg Women's Liberation. I feel that for all that for all practical purposes the two

cannot be separated: A Woman's Place has become the focus for the energies of the movement and as such must be willing to stand and represent it.

Which it has done exceedingly ineffectually. A Woman's Place has become a standing joke in organizational terms with all of those who have had contact with it. Politicians will freely acknowledge that it is a relief to be able to avoid dealing with "women's issues" - no one is forcing them to do so. The media is uninterested in the activities of A Woman's Place (unsurprising, as fewer and fewer kaffeeklatches are making the news). What is happening that is so effectively bringing about the "failure of feminism" in Winnipeg?

The factor that immediately leaps to mind is lack of structure. The labelling of any and all structure as male-defined and therefore necessarily evil has brought organizational chaos to A Woman's Place. Projects are begun and just as quickly disbanded. Telephone inquiries meet with ineptness or effectiveness that hinges solely upon the relative personal competence of whoever happens to answer the telephone. Letters go unanswered, are lost, or are answered late. As for those women who (somehow) hear of A Woman's Place and are interested enough to come down... Diane Everatt said it pretty effectively last month. There is no co-ordination, and what is far worse, there is no concern about the lack of it.

This factor must also take into account the "group-therapy" atmosphere which pervades A Woman's Place. Despite all the attempts of a few determined women, almost every agenda is squandered on the minute detailing of personal neuroses. Focus almost immediately becomes

dissipated by the tendency of too many women to use the general meeting as Ann Landers. The resultant alienation of new women, and the frustration of those women who are interested in a political rather than a social commitment is immense.

With no structure, it is not surprising that there is no focus. Aside from the fact that political action would seem to be anathema there is no definition of what practicalities must be approached for the achievement of liberation. It can be defined that there are two opposing camps operating out of A Woman's Place. One is the Marxist (???) - it is difficult to define what only comes across as dogma) which seeks to control any political energy by co-opting it as part of the "larger struggle" - that amorphous blob to which any thinking person is supposed to be committed. The other is the feminist, failing fast, frustrated at the inability of A Woman's Place to deal effectively with those things that cannot be defined as "interesting" - a euphemism for non-committed, non-political. The resultant infighting drives away those who cannot identify their camp.

It has been defined, then, at least by a number of interested observers, that A Woman's Place has neither focus nor structure. What is the answer? One thing it isn't is consciousnessraising. To turn to CR is an insidious way of refusing to acknowledge political impotence. CR is a beginning, a tool, but never an end, which is what it could easily become for A Woman's Place. It is the source of political energy, but not the focus for political energy. But it is not surprising that there are those who contend

for GR when even there no participant seems willing to make anything other than a sketchy contribution.

(It should be understood that the Women's Labour Caucus cannot be construed as evidence of political activity by Marxist? Socialist? women as a tool for their larger commitments.)

If there is to be a solution to these criticisms, which while they have been made as an individual, are the result of thinking and talking with other women, it must come soon. And in endeavoring to be a constructive critic (though some will doubt that) I would suggest an assortment of alternative solutions: to see any one of them put into effect would be improvement.

Consider a Co-ordinating Committee whose majority composition is from women who are actively involved in the day-to-day running of the house. It is they who, from listening and talking to people who use the house, will have the clearest concept of where the focus should lie. It will of course be necessary to refuse the possibility of co-optation by political elitists whose only political acumen springs from what is derived from the "party line".

Evolve a standard and structured system of dealing with telephone and at-the-door inquiries. (How amusing it is when everyone knows that men are not allowed in the house, but none can give the reason.) Keep telephone logs: they will show why people are calling and also what services are not being made use of. Recognize incompetency (we are all sisters, but don't stretch that concept to avoid dealing with someone's fuck ups) and stop allowing those who are incompetent to handle house business.

WOMEN

Explain the necessity of various functions (eg. answering letters) find someone to do it, and make sure it gets done. Examine the criticisms (eg. Diane Everatt's letter, tokenism toward lesbians) identify the source and work to rid A Woman's Place of it, whether that means a change in attitude or taking someone down a notch. Build up contacts with other organizations and use them as resources.

It is too late to hide behind the various shields that have evolved. A Woman's Place has become the battle ground for little else but the struggle between great white liberalism (kaffeeklatches and Ann Landers) and co-optation by various brands of socialists. If you have to look at it like that, who cares?

Sue White

now all the things that you defend  
are what you hide behind  
you sing yourself to sleep  
each night  
by saying everything takes time  
but stop  
I don't want to hear it  
I don't want to hear it  
anymore  
you keep right on talking  
but I don't want to hear it  
no I don't want to hear it  
anymore \*

"\*Stop, I Don't Want to Hear It"  
Melanie Safka

# WOMEN IN HISTORY

'Windy Nellie' born  
101 years ago Sunday,  
October 19.

## McCLUNG LIT WAY FOR WOMEN

by Linda Taylor

"Never retract, never explain, never apologize, get the thing done and let them howl!" That was Nellie McClung's motto.

Born 101 years ago, McClung was one of Manitoba's outstanding citizens. She remains today as the most successful politician in Winnipeg's first century. Skilled as a teacher, author, lecturer, MLA, her heart and her strength lay in her devotion to the emancipation of women.

She is mainly remembered for her leadership in the Manitoba suffrage movement which won for women the first equal voting rights in Canada.

Yet her inspiration, her writings, and her energy encouraged women throughout the country to fight not only for suffrage, but also for greater equality in all spheres of activity.

Anyone unfamiliar with Winnipeg's history, who imagines the Women's Liberation Movement to be an outgrowth of the turbulent 1960s, could find the opinions and activities of McClung and her associates a great surprise.

The Manitoba suffrage groups and the Women's Christian Temperance League--a close ally on most occasions--were known throughout North America for their large membership and hard work.

The suffrage struggle, as McClung describes it, was "a bonny fight-- a knock-down, drag-out fight, but it united the women of Manitoba in a great cause. We really believed we were about to achieve a new world."

"Windy Nellie" as the press liked to describe her, was a warm and witty woman, soft-spoken and homey, yet cutting and pointed in her criticisms of those institutions which oppressed women. And she expressed these views in books, on podiums, on streetcorners, wherever and whenever there was an audience.

To people who would argue that men were chivalrous and protective of women she had a ready retort.

"Chivalry," she wrote, "is a poor substitute for justice if you cannot have both. It is like the icing on the cake, sweet but not nourishing."

### Hollow Attitude

"The great army of women workers are ill-paid, badly housed, and their work is not honored or paid for. What share have they in man's chivalry?"

Truly chivalrous men, she added, would give "women every weapon whereby they can defend themselves. . . this is the new chivalry, and on it we build our hopes."

The weapons she chose were words, thousands and thousands of them in her 15 best-selling books. But she defended those women who chose other weapons for the fight.

"The militant English suffragettes broke windows and destroyed property and went to jail for it, joyously and without a murmur--it was the protest of brave women against the world's estimate of women. It was the world-old struggle for liberty."

The crimes that enraged McClung were crimes against humanity, and her arguments contained fundamental

criticisms about the nature of Canadian society.

In 1915, in In Times Like These, she wrote of those crimes. "What about the crime of holding up the market, so that the price of bread goes up causing poor men's children to go hungry?"

"What about allowing speculators to hold great tracts of land uncultivated waiting for higher prices, while unemployed men walked the streets, hungry and discouraged, cursing the day they were born. . . . The crime which the state commits in allowing such a condition to prevail as yet unnamed."

Never one to attack specific individuals, she spoke out harshly against the liquor interests and the system of charity, which she said was "very ineffectual, and merely smooths things out, without ever reaching the roof. . . ."

"The rich brewer whose business it is to encourage drinking is usually the largest giver to the Children's Aid Society, and is often extolled for his lavish generosity, and sometimes when women think of these things they are struck by the absurdity of a system which allows one man or a body of men to rob a child of his father's love and care all year, and then gives him a stuffed dog and a little red sleigh at Christmas and call it charity!"

Full employment and economic security for all were goals she constantly worked toward. "The economic dependence of women is perhaps the greatest injustice that has been done to us, and has worked the greatest injury to the race."

Nellie McClung believed that women were morally and ethically superior to men, and would use political power to make the world a "better and cleaner place."

Nowhere was this more evident than when she spoke out against war.

"Although men like to fight, war is not inevitable. War is not of God's making. War is a crime committed by men and therefore, when enough people say it shall not be, it can not be. This will not happen until women are allowed to say what they think of war."

Nellie was first introduced to political work at WCTU meetings. Not the prim tea-drinking ladies pictured in history books, WCTU members were hardy and courageous women. It was a time when drinking was causing the breakup and impoverishment of families.

Teaching at 16  
McClung's teaching career began at 16 in High Bluff. Shortly thereafter she chose her husband, the son of a WCTU pioneer.

"His mother, God bless her, educated him," she said. "so Wes is not the sort of man who thinks his wife should always be standing behind him ready to spring to attention."

In 1902, pregnant with her first child, Nellie rebelled. "Why has something not been done to relieve this infernal nausea? If it was a man's disease it would have been made the subject of scientific research and relieved long ago."

During this period, encouraged by her mother-in-law, she began her first novel. Published in 1908, Sewing Seeds in Danny, became an immediate best seller and sent through 17 editions.

In 1911, she moved to Winnipeg and plunged immediately into the effort to unseat the Conservative government, headed by Sir Rodmond Roblin. After three years of endless meetings with a conservative caucus which insulted, and out-

raged her, she and the temperance league decided on a new tactic: a woman's theatre night. They produced a play in which the sex roles were reversed, and men came asking for the vote from an all-woman parliament. McClung was perfect in the role of Sir Rodmond, imitating his every word and gesture. And when she said "any civilization which had produced such noble men as I see before me is good enough for me," the audience was in a state of hysterical laughter. The Walker Theatre was filled with converts to the cause.

#### Danger in offer

She joined with the Liberals who promised woman's suffrage, and offered Nellie a cabinet post. She considered it carefully, but found the offer fraught with danger.

"If a woman succeeded, her success would belong to her as an individual. People would say she was an exceptional woman. She had a 'masculine' mind. But if she failed she failed for all women everywhere."

She left soon afterward for Alberta where she helped the women of that province gain the vote just months after the Manitoba victory.

In 1921, she was elected to the Alberta legislature, but was defeated in 1926. It was only a temporary setback. She then fought for women to be recognized as persons under the BNA act. She and four other women fought the case through the Supreme Court of Canada, and to the London Privy Council.

London overruled Canada: women were indeed persons. Now they could receive appointment to the Senate.

McClung achieved numerous other firsts for women. She was the first woman appointed to the CBC board of directors, and to the War Board; first female representative to the League of Nations, and delegate to the international ecumenical conference of the Methodist Church.

She continued writing until her death in Victoria at the age of 78 in 1951.

It was back in 1915 that she prophesied: "The time will come when women will be economically free and spiritually independent enough to refuse to have their food paid for by men, when women will receive equal pay for equal work and have all activities open to them. . . when free men and free women will marry for love and together work for the sustenance of their families."

"It is not too ideal a thought. It is coming and the new movement among women who are crying out for a larger humanity is going to bring it about."

These goals were not accomplished in her lifetime. But when they are Nellie McClung will receive the recognition she deserves. Nearly 100 years ago, she started the process.

In 1973 a commemorative

stamp was issued to honor

suffrage pioneer Nellie

McClung on the centenary

of her birth.

