

Y. W. C. A.
RESOURCE CENTRE

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CANADIAN WOMAN'S PAPER

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THE OTHER WOMAN

Vol. 3 No. 2

Fall '74



editorial

Recently, Toronto feminists organized a benefit for the Native Peoples' Caravan. Women in the Women's Movement have to start dealing with racism. In future issues, we would like to have articles on native women in relationship to feminism and the Women's Movement. We need opinions and articles from Native Women or organizations in which Native Women are involved. We don't want to do a liberal white trip, pretending to understand Native culture and the extent of Native oppression. Until we deal with the differences we will not understand the grounds for similarity. Why hasn't there been ongoing communication between white and native women? So long as we identify with male issues and boundaries of race, class and sex, so long will we be divided as women in groupings along those lines.

We hope the article by Marilyn Collins on the physically/mentally handicapped is a beginning to feedback from handicapped individuals and organizations regarding their oppression as a group. Minorities have been institutionalized long enough, cut off from each other by patriarchal interference with minds and bodies. Medicine and psychiatry with their specialist elite are a means of controlling rebellion, or of dealing with results without looking at cause: dealing with disease within a society which creates it. We plan to give much more exposure to women's physical and mental health problems and the alternatives to male medicine and psychiatry.

It has taken longer than we thought to get more information together about the National Film Board. So keep tuned for an article in our next issue.

Come and work on your paper, we need help!

Lesbian Sisters: Have you heard anything about the massacre of Lesbians who were attempting to regain Lesbos? The Patriarchy has done it again: we only hear via the underground what is happening in Lesbian struggle.

For deciding to remain seated for the exit of the judge, 5 lesbians spent from 10-5pm in court minus an hour and a half in the "bullpen" cells downstairs at City Hall plus \$25 fine each. Oh yes, the assault charge laid against the pig from the Brunswick incident was dropped for lack of evidence.

We have a number of articles continued on Page 25. However, since this page is invisible, you will have to smear lemon juice and a bit of tartar sauce on the back cover to see what they really are.

On the weekend of Oct. 19-20, the Secretary of State held a consultation with 76 women's groups, 16 of which were native women's groups, in order to communicate the objectives of their program and to discuss our priorities for International Women's Year (IWY). Unfortunately, the government doesn't seem to be interested in our priorities. Though this isn't surprising at least some good things happened.

The native women's groups are hoping to sponsor a conference of the visible minorities in Canada as part of IWY and received support for their plans from all the delegates.

The Women's Centres that were represented are trying to start a loosely-knit coalition of Women's Centres across Canada to help increase communications and to provide support for centres when needed (witness Otto Lang's interference with the Saskatoon Women's Centre grant on account of their abortion counselling and referral service). A meeting is planned for March 1-2 in Thunder Bay, Ont.

The Ottawa Women's Centre is writing the proposal to get IWY money for the meeting. If you are a Women's Centre (your definition), write to Celia Griffiths, Women's Centre, Box 6072, St. Johns, Newfoundland. They are gathering information on interest in the idea.

Now for the bad news. Two major problems arose. First the Sec'y of State: Sue Findlay, the founder and chairwoman of the Women's Program is being replaced just in time for IWY! It was Sue who got the Sec'y of State \$2.5 million for IWY. Her job was reclassified upwards, a competition for the job was held, and lo and behold, she lost the competition. This action jeopardizes the whole IWY Secretary of State program and calls into question the sincerity of the government's commitment to women. The job contracts of the women working for Sue will run out around the end of November. Will they be replaced too? If so, the IWY program will be in big trouble.

The second problem is the way the IWY Secretariat plans to spend its \$2.5 million (totally separate from Secretary of State): \$1 million on salaries etc., \$1 million on a series of 5 conferences (\$200,000 each for what?) and to top it off, \$500,000 on an ad campaign for IWY, awarded to the only group without any women on its creative team. Their ad slogan "Why not?" is offensive and useless. The IWY Secretariat defended giving the ad campaign to a male group by saying their presentation was the best—the Secretariat didn't want to take sex into consideration!!!!?? Who better to run an ad campaign promoting women than women? Who is it who defines a silly slogan like "Why Not?" as best?

If you want to protest, hit the

will Int. Woman's Year be a farce?

politicians and the bureaucrats—they're the ones who made the decisions. Write to:

Secretary of State:
Hugh Faulkner, Minister
Maurice Heroux, Dir. General
of Programmes
Andre Renaud, Asst. Under Sec'y
of Citizenship
Jean Boucher, Under Sec'y of
State 130 Slater St., Ottawa;

Secretariat:
Martha Hynna, Coordinator,
Status of Women, Privy Council
Office, East Block, Ottawa;
Mary Gusella, Director
Shirley Popham, Chief of Info.
IWY Secretariat, Privy Council
Office, 63 Sparks St., Room 700,
Ottawa.

Both:
Katie Cooke, Chairwoman, Advisory
Council on the Status
of Women, 63 Sparks St., Box
1541, Ottawa;

Marc Lalonde, Minister responsible
for Status of Women, House
of Commons;
Members of Parliament (no stamp
necessary): Flora McDonald,
Iona Campagnolo, Monique Begin,
Aideen Nicholson, House of
Commons, Ottawa.

The more letters the better!

Saskatoon mother loses children

A lesbian mother who had argued that her sexuality was irrelevant to her fitness as a parent was ordered to surrender her children to her former husband by a Saskatoon court on August 9.

Following her divorce, the mother had been awarded custody of her two children. But the former husband went to court, seeking to regain custody on the grounds that, as a lesbian, the woman was unfit to raise the children.

The man had previously seized custody of the older of the children illegally but, foreshadowing its final decision, the court hearing the case allowed him to keep the child until a settlement could be determined.

Hoping for a precedent-setting decision which would rule the matter of sexuality irrelevant in deciding parental fitness, gay people and organisations across Canada poured money into a defense fund set up by Saskatoon Gay Action.

Although the precedent expected was not forthcoming, the decision which was handed down does not establish an unfavourable precedent, since the presiding magistrate gave no reason for his decision in his written opinion.

The court ordered the mother to surrender her remaining child at noon of the day following the announcement of the ruling.

The mother's first reaction was to flee the city with her lover and child, but she ultimately decided to return and surrender her 3-year-old son.

On her return, she discovered that her former husband had entered her home illegally and taken away furniture and other possessions.

She subsequently went back to court and obtained visiting rights, but on condition that she post a one-year bond.

The woman and her lover are now considering an appeal of the lower court decision on the grounds that the court gave no reason for its decision in its ten-page opinion, and that the former husband is an unfit parent, inasmuch as he has engaged in theft.

Reprinted from The Body Politic

NATIONALISM and/or CULTURALISM

Your article entitled "Nationalism: Anti-Imperialism" was just unbelievable!

How can you possibly accept the idea of nationalism so blindly? Ask yourself what makes your country special. Well, open your fucking eyes, because it's the earth-shattering fact that you were born there. It's just an acceptable (to most) extension of your ego. My country. Whoopee!!

Why don't you try to drop the loyalty role, too, while you're trying to become a person. Being a person with no labels (Canadian-American) is certainly better than what you are trying to say.

Nationality is just another institution like religion. Both are brainwashed into you before you can read or write.

When you talk of your need to "Enforce Barriers Necessary To The Preservation Of The Culture

Dear Sisters,

Yesterday, two great things happened to me. One, I had no cavities, at my yearly dental checkup; and two, I encountered (on the main street of Clinton!) Cora the Feminist Bookmobile. I had no time to talk, only to look and to listen; but I carried away new inspiration and a copy of your paper *The Other Woman*. Reading and thinking on what I had read finally made me get off my ass and make a statement of some sort.

I live (sometimes) in Goderich, a town of about 7,000 on Lake Huron. In my unbiased opinion it is the most beautiful place in the world—it is the home of my ancestors and of my childhood. I love it, but I've left it—and I want you to know why.

Here, "Women's Lib" is a joke. We play with it when we want to change boyfriends or wear blue jeans to school. To ~~the~~ boys, if you're "liberated" it is your duty to screw them; instead of having a choice of what you want to do, you have to say yes. And if you do say yes, you're still a slut here and that word still hurts. So while there is more sex today and ~~it is more open~~, it still is the same two-faced rip-off it was in the 50's. There are more unwed pregnancies (doctors won't give you the pill without your mother's permission, and you have to go to London for an abortion). There are more forced marriages; recently there was a 15 year old married (pregnant) to a 16 year old boy. And so, inevitably, there are more failed marriages.

That We Choose To Identify With", you are as small as all these American red-necks waving their previous "Old Glory" and sewing patches on their windbreakers that say "Love It Or Leave It."

Well, Fuck-You Canada, and fuck-you wonderful U.S. of A., because I've had a taste of both and the sounds people make when they talk about nationalism are not human.

No one is stealing your culture. No one should hang their IDENTITY on any fucking culture. Learn to stand on your own, as a person.

I am a Canadian which only means born there. I have been living in the U.S. for two years which only means I don't have enough money to travel further.

Carol Poissant
Orlando
Florida.

from
GODERICH
to
TORONTO

But sadder than all of that is the tremendous waste of woman power, here and in all rural areas. Our grandmothers were pioneers, but we are anachronisms! Progress has stripped us of homebuilding skills, and we have no other alternatives. Let me detail the opportunities for a woman in Goderich.

After grade 12 or 13, we have 3 choices. One: leave Goderich for school or a job and those that go usually make something of themselves. Two: stay here and either attend a business school or become a clerk, waitress, secretary-typist or factory worker. And three: get married right away, have babies and get fat.

So much for careers; that takes up only part of your life. For her contribution to the town life, a woman can join a sorority, which has fashion shows and teas; a church group, which has bazaars, bake sales and teas, or a ladies' auxiliary of the Canadian Legion, Rotarians, etc. As far as political groups go, one has a choice of

EDITOR'S NOTE:

I understand your distress at living in a world where nationalism can be regarded as still another patriarchal oppression. I feel however that we are divided by our use of terms, and not by our goals. The fight for national identity as Canadians is twofold. It is on one hand a fight against cultural imperialism by Amerika, an imperialism based on a laborious, dehumanizing technocracy which requires professionals and specialists to serve its economic ends. Such a job hierarchy requires the enforcement of mass conformity upon the people, and is the source of sex, race, and class rigidification.

On the other hand, many Canadians are engaged in a fight against federalism, and hence against nationalism. North Ontario, Quebec, the Maritimes and the West, all have distinct regional priorities not in line with federal policies. We use the term "nationalism" to describe our struggle against imperialist technocracy; perhaps "culturalism" would better describe the efforts of ethnic/racial/economically disprivileged groups to counter this. The issue, however, is far from closed. We will rely on feedback from our readers and on our own dedication to an ongoing analysis.

joining the Liberal, Conservative or NDP "clubs". Of late, some citizens' groups have been formed to agitate for municipal action on building regulations, noise bylaws, etc. and we have been granted a daycare centre. There are a few women with guts and initiative here, and you know what? They're regarded as jokes. One marvellous woman who cared about the cleanliness and beauty of our town was ridiculed by the clique that runs my town for the benefit of the construction industry!!

Leaving that topic (I was getting angry, thank God!), I must mention the physical condition of women. Fitness Canada has reported that Canadian women are even less fit than the men, who are themselves in appalling condition. We are fat, weak, prone to illness and tired. We know little about nutrition. There are no gymnasiums or indoor pools, exercise, yoga and dance classes are non-existent. The main sports are driving around and drinking beer. Although men (who usually have fairly demanding jobs) have year-round organized sports, there is nothing for women. Also the schools place far more emphasis on small boys' sports than on little girls' physical development.

Education is another sticky issue. Any girl that starts high school with a shred of self-respect or individuality left, after 8 years of crushing boredom and ceaselessly programming, is bound to lose it in a whirl of boys and beer parties. Until she looks just like everyone else in her tight pants and sparkly eye shadow, and has forgotten what ambition she had. We never look towards a career; after high school the future seems foggy, directionless, purposeless.

CONTD PG 19.

the handicapped

Sensuality

A child with scoliosis. Jeered at, laughed at, gossiped about and ridiculed, she would not let the tears fall from her eyes but bravely pick herself up and walk home. Now a woman of twenty, she is still only three feet tall. When they are dining in a restaurant, her mother is still asked: "What will the little girl like?"

This scoliosis victim bears the stigma of her size and is extremely shy. Whenever anyone talks to her she views them as pitying her. This young woman is attracted to a man of her own age, but when she has the opportunity to sit with him and a group of his friends she does not participate in the conversation. When asked her opinion she replies as concisely as possible. The young man is friendly towards her, but as to a relationship, there is none. The handicapped are stigmatized and they know it. Some passively accept it. Some rage a bitter war against it.

Marriage is regarded as the ultimate state of social acceptance. A handicapped woman who married later in life reinforced this view when she spoke of what it was like before she got married. She had the feeling other people looked at her as if something was wrong with her. Acquaintances did not invite her to social gatherings and she felt uncomfortable in a group of married couples. Her husband, a paraplegic, was given greater status and promotion in his job once he was married.

What are the possibilities for a handicapped person to get married? How does a couple who are both handicapped manage to overcome the difficulties of daily living on their own? How much outside help do they need? What are the possibilities for a handicapped person to marry a non-handicapped person? What were the adjustments the non-handicapped would have to make? As a victim of cerebral palsy, I became more and more perplexed by these questions and endeavoured to find out the answers. Marriage is a sensitive issue among handicapped people. Some people reacted with indignation at the topic, indicating to me that marriage for the handicapped was no different than for the normal person, once the initial difficulties of getting the non-handicap to adjust to the handicap and to see the disabled as persons was overcome. Others reacted negatively, suggesting that the handicap should accept the fact that marriage between the handicapped and non-handicapped was impossible, and that was all there was to it.



Recently a questionnaire was sent out on "Sex and the Handicapped" and one boy in particular was quite perturbed and indignant at being asked questions pertaining to the topic.

Marriage seems to be a sensitive topic among handicapped people because there is for many an overhanging threat that handicapped people are not likely to get married. Many handicapped persons feel that because of their dependency on other people marriage is out of the question with either a handicapped person or a non-handicapped person and being forced to face the issue creates emotional disturbance.

Handicapped people who are married or who are likely to get married resent being questioned because they don't like to be considered unique or different from the "normal". "There is no problem". I approached an official at Belwoods Parkhouse who said that relationships between residents is a confidential matter and he would not be willing to discuss it with me.

For many handicapped people the question of social integration with able-bodied people is so difficult that it is considered to be virtually impossible. In Toronto many people grew up in Bloorview, a home for handicapped children, and when they reach the formidable age of eighteen are transferred to Belwoods Park House or Participation Homes, homes for handicapped adults, the majority of whom have cerebral palsy. Living in an institution there is little opportunity to meet able-bodied people, with the exception of staff and volunteer workers. Staff and volunteers view themselves as custodians for the disabled, and although relationships are extremely friendly with much joking, chatting and teasing they remain platonic rather than intimate.

Dependence

We are dealing then with a situation involving jealousy and competition among inmates for the affection of normals, and the "professional" code of interaction binding staff/custodians of institutions.

At both Belwoods and Participation House there seems to be little involvement in the community. Belwoods Park House is located at Shaw St. and Spadina. The community there is poor and there is little chance for contact with these people. Out of their pension the residents are given thirty-four dollars for spending money. Since most of the residents can't use public transportation, there is little money for taxis or expensive Wheel Chair Mobile Services. Participation House is in an even worse situation, at least at present. It is located up in Markham where there is only one bus running on a supposedly hourly schedule from the city.

The Home is a fair distance from the center of Markham, and the home itself is surrounded by fields with a few residential houses seen at a distance. This makes for little contact with the community. To phone for Wheel Chair Mobile Services is long distance. And it cost one woman twelve dollars for a taxi to go home, which was at the centre of the city to her family. Participation House does have its own wheelchair van, but it can rarely be used on an individual basis. This isolation and very little opportunity to go out except for the occasional show or shopping spree makes it difficult for the handicapped resident to obtain any degree of social interaction.

Is marriage possible between the residents of an institution? It has been found that ten couples who lived at Belwoods are now married and are living outside of Belwoods; many are living at Main Square, an apartment complex, not especially geared for handicapped people, but it does have a shopping center, doctors, etc. within the complex, which are easily accessible to handicapped people. The only special facilities for handicapped people are special bars placed in the washrooms and a special bus that can be used by persons free of charge. The complex is not strictly for handicapped people but has many other citizens which makes it possible for a couple to become socially involved with non-disabled people.

CONT'D ON PAGE 20

the NEW WOMAN CENTRE emerges

from montreal Y

On Monday, July 15, the YWCA Women's Centre was shut down, its staff locked out by the Y administration.

In June 1971, Cerise Morris, a recently graduated M.S.W., was hired by the Montreal YWCA with the exciting (though vague) mandate to provide counselling and group services for women and to support efforts to improve the status of women. Six months later, she and Marilyn Rowell launched the YWCA Women's Centre, whose ambitious aim was to fulfill that mandate. The Centre gradually gained credibility and support in the community. Within 3 years it became a focal point for the feminist movement in Montreal.

The Y had never been comfortable with certain of the Centre's activities and methods of operation. In the winter of '73, the Women's Centre staff found themselves paralyzed politically by an administration ruling that they might not, as a Y department, support the efforts of the Morgentaler Defense Committee.

This incident, one of many points of friction between the Centre and the Y administration, stemmed from the original mandate. The people at the Centre felt that a very close responsiveness to the needs expressed by its community, the women of Montreal, was its main function. The Centre was characterized both by the range of women it served and by its flexibility in meeting the resulting variety of needs. Such a method of operation necessarily created difficulties within a large formally structured organization. Furthermore, advocacy of an improved status for women was viewed rather differently by the two groups. If one may not challenge the status quo, as it is legally as well as socially enshrined, how can change be effected? The Morgentaler case was and is of paramount importance to women everywhere. The Y, however, viewing itself as a membership rather than a community organization, felt that the Defense Committee's stand did not reflect the opinion of Y members.

In late June, Cerise Morris was fired by the Y. While publicly recognizing Cerise's capability and success in coordinating the Women's Centre and serving the needs of the Montreal community, the administration felt she was unable to meet her internal respons-

ibilities to the Y. In the weeks that followed, the staff of the Women's Centre, joined by consumers of the Centre's services and professional resource people, tried to find a means of working through their conflicts with the Y. They asked the Y to explain or justify its firing of Cerise.

They also requested that Ms. Morris' firing be suspended pending an investigation by a neutral ad hoc committee composed of staff, administration and community representatives. The Y, declaring it was not publicly accountable

for any administrative decisions, refused to reconsider and finally resorted to the efforts at settlement by locking up the Women's Centre and locking out its staff and community.

The New Woman Centre officially opened the day after lockout. The staff felt they could not divert any more time or energy from the job at hand-serving the Montreal women's community.

montreal-information centre threatened

The Women's Information and Referral Centre is being forced to vacate its office premises at 3595 St. Urbain St., an office it has occupied since its inception in 1972. La Corporation de l'Hopital Sainte Jeanne d'Arc has served notice on Women's Info. that its office must be vacated by October 12, 1974, because the building is to be demolished. Women's Info. and the St. Urbain Street Action Committee demand a public inquiry into this proposed demolition.

Women's Info. does not want to move. The Centre presently pays \$75/mo. (rent is far cheaper in Montreal anyway) for a large fully serviced space. Furthermore, they have not received a satisfactory explanation for the building's demolition.

This building, which was formerly the nurses residence of Ste. Jeanne d'Arc Hospital, consists of 12 large six-room flats. Despite a critical shortage of large family-sized accommodation in Montreal, the building has been kept empty by the hospital for at least 2 years. The Women's Info. and the Ste. Jeanne d'Arc Baby Clinic have been the only permanent tenants since this time. In addition, the Indoor Park has occupied space in the past.

vancouver sister asks for help



To Whom It May Concern:

I just thought I'd send in this bit of information hoping you might print something in your paper about it; and I would also appreciate some information on the newspapers out here in Vancouver and a good one to approach as far as helping them is concerned. I am from Toronto. I left approximately two months ago to hitch across Canada. As you can tell I made it and to my surprise, without any problems. I went directly to the Bridge YWCA which is a hostel for women. I didn't really get involved with the place until a short time before I left. The reason I did get involved was because we were all notified that it was closing. So one evening I and two other women decided that we should do something effective and soon. So we planned a protest march. Well, the next day we had a meeting and much to our disappointment very few women were interested enough to show up. So that flopped. However, I did write a letter that I sent to City Hall and to Norman Levi who made the decision to close the Y. The Y is supposedly closing, and being renovated, for a senior citizens' home for men only. I don't think I would object so strongly if it were for women since that is the purpose it serves at this time. The official date of closing was the end of October.

I just happen to be concerned about where my sisters will go this winter and next summer. I happen to be one of the lucky ones who had a place to go. It's very hard to find any sort of housing whatsoever out here, especially not for \$160.00 which is the amount given to the women by welfare. I don't know exactly how much you know about the Y so I'll give you a brief run-down. It's run by welfare. A person goes to the Y, then speaks to a welfare worker, then is told to stay at the Y if there is no other alternative. The Y is free. It gives three good meals a day, \$1.00 every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday along with free shampoo, tampax, laundry facilities, body soap, linens, etc. Now they are closing.

What we can do, if anything, I don't know, but I tried. I hope you will sympathize with me and perhaps print something.

Thank you, yours
sincerely,
Cathy Hong

STARTING A FEMINIST NEWSPAPER



This article is the first in a series about starting a feminist newspaper. I am using the word "newspaper" broadly here. You may not want to start a newspaper/magazine similar to The Other Woman, but you might be interested in starting a newsletter for your group. In any case, we are going to try to supply the information you will need. This issue I will discuss preliminary organization and staff. Future articles will deal with finances, printing, copy, organizing, layout, distribution, legalities and other subjects.

It will be necessary to get together a number of women who are willing to devote a lot of time and energy into putting out the newspaper. If you have ever organized a consciousness-raising group you can use the same method in beginning a newspaper staff. That is, try to get together women from different backgrounds, age groups and so forth. Of course, too much variety could be divisive so make sure that at least two women have similar backgrounds and things in common. If you can, start with more women than you need to physically produce the paper (around 2 to 6) because you will find that there will be a few

people who won't be able to cope with the demands of putting out a newspaper. Something T.O.W. is always trying to build up is a group of regular contributors who are not members of the collective but who submit graphics, poems, etc. However, we aren't very successful at it. See what your group can do.

As in a C-R group, it is best to begin with women you already know and trust. However, since this is not possible, spend the first few meetings talking of general personal things and perhaps exchanging life herstories. As everyone gets to know one another, trust and maybe a philosophical base on which to build the newspaper will develop. In fact, this kind of analysis may be helpful even to women who know each other well. (See "How to Start a Political Rap Group", Vol.2, #4 of T.O.W.)

How a staff is organized is important. You will need to decide whether you want to create positions such as "editor", "co-editor" or whether you have all members equal. You may find that you will need a treasurer and someone to co-ordinate distribution. Also, you may want somebody to act as a chairperson. The Other Woman is organized as a collective. We do not have a chairperson, but usually whoever prepares the agenda before the meeting tries to focus the group's attention and makes sure we don't wander too far from what needs to be discussed.

Of course, the way you decide to structure your group will determine the decision-making process and conduct at meetings. Fair warning: forget parliamentary procedure. Besides being inhibiting and boring, you'll eventually come to a peculiar situation and there will be nothing in the rule book about how to get out of it.

In short, you will need to invent your own structure according to the needs and personalities of your group. You're on your own. However, do deal with structural problems when they arise and, above all, don't get yourself caught in an inflexible structure. I suggest, though, that you be strict with each other with regard to meetings -- attendance, promptness and so forth -- especially in the beginning.

Keep a written record of all your meetings. This has many practical advantages and remember: you will be making herstory.

Before I finish, I want to say a few things about time. Making decisions collectively involves a great deal of time, but this political process is absolutely necessary for the survival of a collective and a strong feminist newspaper. This is a lesson The Other Woman has learned well. (See "OFY Reflections", Vol.3, #1, of T.O.W.) Protect this valuable time. It may be at the expense of your finances, your copy deadline and occasionally your patience, but it is vital.

Cindy Wright



A LETTER: feedback from an Edmonton sister

Dear Sisters

A few comments re: The Other Woman, Aug. 74 issue.

I disagree with your not printing an ad for the Amazon Quarterly. I consider this a fairly good magazine altho their comments on Canadian nationalism rankled in me too. Nevertheless, their ad should be printed. I agree that Canadian women's papers should have predominantly Canadian content; but we must support our sisters across the border just as they must support us.

I'm glad that you haven't let the OFY grant affect you adversely. Unfortunately, the Canadian gov't is now attempting to buy off the women's movement as it did the student and hippie movements--and are succeeding as far as I can see!

I'd like to add another comment on the postal code problem. Although I say that you should use the code to pacify the P. O., I think you should keep in mind that it is still a touchy issue. Should anything further happen, support must be given. Also, in general, the code should be ignored as far as possible.



I'm glad that T.O.W. is supporting the Grape and Lettuce Boycotts. I've found that most women's papers support boycotts only if concerned mostly with women. Grape and Lettuce affects men, women, children, old, young, those who pick as well as those who buy. It affects workers. We must remember that we are workers as well as women.

In Love and Sisterhood,
Von aka Barb Walter

The winning of the Mother Led Union's first demands will mean slightly better food and clothing for Family Benefits families. Perhaps even more important, the formation of the Union means that mothers are collectively asserting their rights as workers for the first time, and rejecting the "welfare case" label. The Other Woman recently talked to Jean, a resident of the Lawrence Heights public housing project, about her social status as an FBA mother and her membership in the Mother Led Union.

Jean thinks of the MLU as "a dream come true. I feel very good about it as a woman and a human being and I think this should have happened a long time ago."

When Jean got involved with the MLU at the Woman's Action Group Conference this June, she was already acutely aware of the single mother's social and economic problems. "That goes back years ago, maybe to the second year of being a single parent, when I had a welfare worker come to the door. I had kicked my husband out and I was told many many times, in so many words, 'why did you kick him out,' that I should have put up with the unfairness and the whole bit, and I didn't see that as my role in life."

She remembers that, on one occasion, when her husband's support payments had started falling off, "we were so very hungry and I phoned the North York office and they said, 'we can't help you.' It's not our fault you kicked your husband out.' "

"The little woman is being ostracized from all angles, but worst of all, while she's being ostracized, who's getting the worst shake of all are any children that are involved."

The social humiliation begins as soon as the man leaves and the woman goes on Family Benefits. "When the man deserts, she's immediately not functioning as a woman. You never feel adequate. You never feel great as a human being. You're always being put down."

In her neighborhood, she found herself cut off even from married women who were formerly her friends. "When my husband and I parted, friends I had had, not too long after were no longer my friends. It didn't take me very long to see that...I stopped to think, why is it they don't want to bother with me anymore. I'm still me whether my husband is here or isn't here. Somebody said 'maybe they think you're a threat to their marriages' and I laughed."

The Mother Led Union is changing this sense of social shame into pride. Through its first three demands, the Union aims to secure for single mothers just a little of the money and time they need to "feel great as human beings."

the mother

Jean feels that the winning of the first demand, wage parity with foster parents, will mean more, in material terms, to her children than it will to her personally. When asked what she would do with the raise, she replied, "I don't want to laugh. That's like saying 'what does inflation do to me?' What we would do with it naturally is put it to the children. Then they can maybe wear proper clothes." She remembers the reaction of the welfare worker when she once tried to borrow money from her next cheque to buy one of her sons a winter coat. "She gave me a blast and said 'now look, you're going to have to learn like other women to wait.' " But "it was then November and had gotten really cold and I didn't think he should



wait." MLU means an end to patient waiting.

"This would happen" if the Union got wage parity. "We'd get a little better type nutrition on the table and more adequate clothes. The milk's going up. Everything is going up. It's just going to sort of balance things out. You can't really say what you're going to do with it. It's not like the woman's going to be able to go to parties."

She added, "I absolutely don't have any social life. I can't afford to go to baby showers or out on the town with women or whatever. I just can't do that. I don't have that money. It goes to the kids."

The demanded wage increases won't give her the extra bit necessary for a personal social life. "I can show you my clothes. I haven't had anything new for

years. That's another reason I couldn't socialize, because I just don't have the clothes. Girlfriends have said to me 'get out of your shell; try to go out with men'... I say, where am I going to go? In the first place I don't have the clothes to do this. And it's the same with Sunday school. I stopped going to Sunday school last year because I just don't have the clothes to wear to go to church."

The winning of the second demand, the right to work outside the home for more than a token income supplement, will affect every member of many mother led families. "There's a lot of women on Family Benefits working part time right now, but that's a rip off." Some are forced to protect their meagre earnings by concealing them from the government. "All their laws have made it so that people have to lie and cheat all the time." When the MLU wins the right to increased earning power "naturally there's going to be women going out to work, including myself."

The satisfaction of the third demand, expanded day care facilities, will come too late to affect Jean's choices in life. "That was one of my problems, when my kids were small. I never heard of day care when my kids were little and I wanted so badly to stay at home simply because there was no day care."

MLU members think that the day care centres shouldn't be open just to women who work outside the home; every woman needs time away from her children. The woman who works at home "is a human being. The aspect of looking at her as a worthwhile human being is all gone. You're just a welfare bum. A workhorse. I don't see it that way."

Jean is concerned about a problem the MLU hasn't yet considered: what happens to the single mother when her children grow up and the Family Benefits payments stop? The government pays women a poverty wage to rear the next generation. When the work is done, even that pittance is cut off.

She isn't sure what most FBA mothers do after their children have grown up. "I'd say they'd have to go on welfare or live with one of the children. I wouldn't want that to happen to me."

She wonders what will happen after her youngest leaves home. "Did I do the right thing by choosing to put my children first? I've been seriously thinking, well, now I've got to get cracking and get on to something that will put me into the working stream." But the leap into the "working stream" won't be easy. "Where can a woman 40 or 45 get a job?"

led union

A Winnipeg mother of four recently staged a successful one family strike on the steps of the Manitoba Legislature. Barbara Ness dropped off her four children at the government building before she went to school for the day. The children were carrying lunch bags and a letter addressed to the Health Minister, Saul Miller, complaining that Ms. Ness' welfare payments weren't sufficient to cover her babysitting costs.

When Health Ministry bureaucrats found that they had been pressed into service as babysitters, they quickly acceded to Ms. Ness' demands. "I don't think Mr. Miller is inclined in that service," commented Deputy Minister Theodore Tulchinsky. Officials agreed that the mother probably qualified for more aid under a new provincial day care programme.

Ontario's Mother Led Union is planning a similar strike on a much larger scale to back up its first three demands - wage parity between foster parents and family benefit mothers, an increase in permitted earnings for women on family benefits, and expanded day care facilities for all mothers, whether they work outside or inside the home.

Last year, a Toronto mother, exasperated by her long wait on the Ontario Housing Corporation waiting list, occupied a vacant Ontario Housing Corporation unit in North York. When she was evicted from this apartment, she pitched a tent at City Hall and remained a public embarrassment to the government until she was housed.

needs. Only through collective bargaining can mothers command the resources that they all need to live in comfort and dignity.

Up until now, women who work in the home did not often cooperate to achieve common political goals, because society does not recognize them as workers with common interests. It is thought natural for men who work together in factories to form unions, but a gathering of women in a home is called only a coffee party.



The MLU is turning homes into centres for union organizing and signing up members to fight for the best possible first contract with the government.

Women shouldn't have to strike alone.



The MLU strike will involve collective rather than individual action. A thousand union mothers will be dropping about 3,000 children at Queen's Park if their demands aren't met. A united group will, of course, be infinitely more powerful than a single woman and the stakes will be correspondingly higher.

The free lance Winnipeg strike is a reminder that in the past mothers have often fought for their families by staging strikes and occupations. But they have usually been solitary strikers, because they couldn't locate or band together with women who share their problems.

This year a Toronto mother moved her family into a house which had been standing vacant for several years and no one has yet dared to throw her out. Angry mothers have often sat in the OHC or welfare offices, pressuring the government into offering them the money or accommodation they so desperately need.

The demands of these solitary strikers have usually been met, in one way or another, because the public exposure of government maintained poverty is a painful embarrassment to the bureaucracy. But the power of one woman and her family is severely limited and women acting alone have usually been able to win no more than satisfaction of their immediate

Poor sole support mothers are organizing to fight for themselves, but they welcome support from other sectors of society. If you back the MLU's demands, send a supporting letter to Rene Brunelle at Queen's Park.

The MLU is currently developing the clout for effective strike action by organizing MLU locals throughout Metro Toronto. Up until now, union members have been concentrating their energies in Toronto's west end.

Neighborhood locals will be focusing not only on the three demands and the strike action, but also on immediate district issues, if members are interested in broadening the scope of their unit's activities. If you are interested in setting up an MLU local in your area, leave a message for Joan Clark at St. Christopher House, 364-8456.

The Union has already initiated the process of collective bargaining with the government. Union members discussed the issues with Glen Heagle, Minister of Income Security, early in September, and met last month with Rene Brunelle, Minister of Community and Social Services.

The Perils Of Pauline

There is a belief that is clung to tenaciously in most sectors of the business community. If thou shalt hire a female for any position whatsoever, she shall know how to type.

Years ago Pauline made a momentous decision. She decided to take Latin in high school rather than typing--typing not then being a prerequisite for university entrance. Little did she know that that decision would return to haunt her. Time flowed by and Pauline emerged from the ivory towers clutching a fragile sheepskin which bespoke of numerous essays, countless cups of coffee, a well-stocked library, a penchant for bridge; and a collection of trivia that would hold her in good stead for years of cocktail parties.

T-town beckoned and the mighty arms of the education system unfolded her. Teaching was interesting, challenging, gratifying--all those things that the idealists say it can be.

Again years pass and Pauline became sophisticated, poised and self-confident but she never did become a football coach; thus permanently thwarting her progress up the educational ladder. Then came changes and more changes. In fact, some of these changes happened so fast that their results could not even be envisioned.

Last year this method. Next year another. Are we into plan K or plan Q? Pauline was confused but not alone. Occasionally even her superiors didn't know if it was "group dynamics" or "interaction with other disciplines" week.

Finally, total benumbing frustration set in and Pauline decided to escape. She was now too busy shaking off the chalkdust to worry about that decision made years ago. Pauline was ready to get out into what her friends called "the real world".

The first position was easy to find. Too easy as it turned out. Her employer was interested in an alliance that poor Pauline had never even considered. But there are other jobs she thought. However, the real world gradually began to chip and gnaw away at Pauline.

"But, my dear, you don't know how to type." True enough--but Pauline wasn't looking for a job in the steno pool at the back and call of all those rising young junior execs.

"A high school teacher? I've had poor experience with former teachers." This was a frequent response. Everyone, unfortunately, knows a teacher and everyone has their opinion--mainly, it seems, negative. Good or bad a teacher

is stereotyped.

"I don't like degreed people." This was an unsettling opener thrown at Pauline. Was it caused by envy, jealousy or smugness? Surely one is aware that education and knowledge are not necessarily equated. And Pauline has not exactly been cloistered away for the last 9 years.

The reactions and rejections of Pauline continued until this cruncher. "Why don't you get married? Then you won't have to work." Who is this guy? How can he make such statements? Pauline wants to work. She doesn't want to collect unemployment insurance. She doesn't want a nice home in the suburbs. She's an uptown girl in a downtown area. Besides, Pauline doesn't really sweep floors all that well.

Oh yes. Pauline has found 2 jobs. The first one didn't work out and the second is still up in the air. Her ego is bruised; her psyche is damaged.

Typing or teaching? That seems to be the question.

an open letter to successful women

Dear Sisters,

I am speaking to all of you who have "made it" in a man's world. I am speaking to the women bank managers, and the women doctors, and the women race car drivers, and the women athletes, and the women politicians, and the women astronauts, and the women scientists. I am speaking to all you women who have become rich and successful and who are saying things like "I'm not a women's libber" or "I made it so any woman can" or "I believe in femininity" or "I'm already liberated."

I have a few things to say to you that are very important.

First. You did not make it alone. You are where you are today because of the hard work, the sacrifice, the imprisonment and death of thousands of women before you. You owe your position to the women who fought to liberate you from corsets and long skirts and fainting spells and "the curse" and legal non-existence, and forced ignorance, and idleness, and "women's weakness" and a firm belief that you are incapable of doing a man's job. The women's liberation movement is not new--it has existed for hundreds of years, and you are part of the first generation to reap some of the benefits gained by these brave women. Do not forget this.

Second. Femininity is not the issue. When women's liberation says that platinum hair and pancake faces and uplift brassieres and girdles and giggles are the symbols of women's oppression, we mean just that. They are SYMBOLS; they are not the source of oppression. You cannot eliminate fascism by banning swastikas any more than you become a fascist by wearing one. Swastikas were a good luck symbol in many cultures. Symbols are different in different cultures. In North America women do not wear veils. We do not suggest for one minute that a woman is liberated by going without a bra or makeup. It is the media that has made an issue of these things--not us. Women's freedom is not in any way dependent on how we dress, despite what the liberated fashion mongers would have us believe.

Third. Freedom is not the same thing as being successful. When you say you are liberated you are saying that you do not experience the normal prejudices of being a woman. Of course you don't. You have made it in a man's world. But it is still a man's world, and what you call liberation will not be true freedom until it is the right of

all women, not the privilege of a few. Women's liberation does not deal in exceptions--we deal in averages. And the average woman still faces many prejudices in her everyday life. You are not liberated until all women are liberated.

Fourth. There are still a lot of women who have gained nothing from the long struggles of our foremothers. They are poor women, Indian women, Black women, immigrant women, working class women, very young women, very old women, lesbian women, single mothers, insane women, and "fallen women". The Women's Liberation movement is concerned with continuing the fight for women's freedom until all these women share the security of a good job, like the one you already have. They too are working hard, under adverse conditions and against incredible odds. It is no wonder that women like you are still the minority. We want to keep on fighting against prejudice and ignorance, at whatever cost, until conditions are equalized for all women and men. This is what Women's Liberation is all about.

cont'd on p.20

Sister Sarah made a special appearance at the Mayor's Task Force Working Women's Conference Sept. 21st. One very short incident saddened me. Our Special Lesbian Issue was sitting on the table along with other back copies. One woman came along to have a look and, upon noticing this issue, asked me, "You mean you sell this to *them*?" Reply: Oh yes, why not?" Upon which, she immediately turned the paper over to its back cover and walked away very fast leaving me no time to catch my breath.

Contrary to popular belief, this is *not* a lesbian newspaper. I felt guilty trying to sell the paper at the conference knowing that the content of the issues did not reflect the interests of a broad-based women's movement. However, I also caught myself falling into this: "Isn't this a lesbian paper?" Reply: "Oh no, it's a woman's paper." This is true but my defensiveness showed thru in the way I phrased my answer because what is a lesbian if not a woman? It is the defensiveness that says we have nothing to do with those "queer" women but only with "real" women's issues. It is a double bind: To Be or Not To Be.

••••

The government will review its ban on homosexual (and epileptic) immigrants as part of an over-all review of immigration policy.

The green paper on immigration policy, to be published in December, will not state government policy but will set out alternatives for discussion before a new immigration policy is established.

The Immigration Act now lists homosexuals under prohibited classes along with prostitutes and pimps.

TORONTO RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

Has produced a booklet on RAPE: The Crime Against Women. Write to P.O. BOX 6597, Postal Stn. A., Toronto, Ontario.

Note: Talk to the Women's Self-Defence Centre, 12 Kensington Ave., for courses on how to defend yourselves. (In the Sullivan-Beverly area, 6-8 women have been raped in the past month!) Do you know that women workers at the P.O. must sign a "no liability" clause when hired for the night shift? And now some liberal feminists have helped to pass a law that says we are no longer entitled to a cab ride home at night.

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Women joined the Chilean army for the first time yesterday after pledging not to marry for at least four years. The first group of women chosen numbered 78. Well, sisters of the revolution, you made the right choice but a year too late!

••••

CBC will be showing the production of *Red Emma*, the early life of Emma Goldman, sometime in February. Watch for it!



The new *
The original
gossip column
by **SISTER**
SARAH *send me your news and views!*

WORKING WOMEN

Analysis of income tax returns for 1972 shows that people age 40-44 earned the highest average income-9,564. But when that's broken down by sex, it shows that the men of the group had 11,259 while the women got less than half as much-5,555. And when all men and women are compared, the comparison is just as odious. Average income for all men-9,074, for all women-5,208. So much for equal pay.

The typical low-wage earner in Ontario is a young (under 25) married female with no dependents and with a Grade 10 to 12 education, so says the Research Branch of the Ministry of Labour. Clerical jobs were the single largest occupation for women, followed closely by jobs in the service industry. The definition of a low-wage earner was someone whose income was 2.50 an hour or less, or \$100 a week or less, for full-time employment.

...The first Black Woman to attend a New Brunswick University was Mary Matilda Winslow of Woodstock, who entered the University of New Brunswick in 1901. She graduated with honours in 1905 but had to seek employment outside of the province since she was unable to find teaching positions in N.B. schools. She was teacher for a Black community near Halifax but eventually moved to the States because of the lack of opportunity for educated Blacks in Canada.

SHOT MAN AFTER RAPE, WOMAN SENT TO PRISON

Inez Garcia, 30, was sentenced in Monterey, Calif. to 5 years to life in prison for slaying a man she said helped to rape her.

Women in the crowded courtroom screamed in anger when the judge imposed sentence. They cited the case as an example of how women are treated in rape cases.

"I killed the son of a bitch and I wish I had killed the other." Inez stated in court.

During her 3-day trial, Ms. Garcia testified she was forced to strip and was then raped by Luis Castillo, 17, while Jimenez held her.

"I killed the guy and I missed Luis, but I mean to kill him too." Castillo was not charged with her rape.

UNION WOMEN

Buried in the back pages of the Sept 20th Star and Globe was a news item on striking legal secretaries in Windsor. The picture shows one of their employers crossing the picket line. The 2 lawyers involved are not concerned; they will be hiring replacements.

This is the first strike by unionized legal secretaries against a law firm in Canada. The strike by the 2 members of the Office and Professional Employees International Union is another phase in a 1 1/2 year struggle by a group of Windsor secretaries to organize union locals in city law offices. Bargaining units have been certified in 5 law offices, amid charges by secretaries of intimidation and despite strong opposition by some firms. One Windsor firm has recently signed a contract. Job security seems to be more of an issue than money just now.

STRIKING BIRTH CONTROL WORKERS

Seeking a contract, 121 workers went on strike at Wyeth Ltd. in Windsor, the chemical company that makes the largest selling, single-form birth control pill in Canada. They are members of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union, Local 9368.

"Patience is a virtue. Yeah, she's a nice woman, you just have to learn to put up with her."

ABORTION

According to the Canadian Medical Association, more than 40,000 abortions were performed last year and even more are expected this year.

THE MAYOR'S TASK FORCE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN in Toronto has produced a report on Abortion Counseling Services currently operating in Metropolitan Toronto. I would suggest every woman write to the Task Force asking for the confidential copy (not the public one) and pressure them to also publicize this report as it needs to be known that it is available. There is an uncensored version going round which does not tell the full story as the confidential report has been held back for fear of a libel action against the City. Write to: 8th floor, East Tower, city Hall, Toronto 367-7203. Oh yes, spread the word: DO NOT use these two abortion referral services - Medical Referral Centre or Women's Services as they are BAD.

FEATURE...

FIGHTING THE OTHER COLONIALISM: THE WOMEN'S STRUGGLE IN GUINEA-BISSAU

by Stephanie Urdang

In April and May of this year, I spent four weeks inside liberated areas of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, and some four more weeks with PAIGC in Dakar, Conakry (the Party headquarters) and Boke, near the border, the party administrative center.

The purpose of my visit was to look at the part that women are taking in the revolution, and the fight for women's liberation within the broader struggle. For three weeks I accompanied Teodora Gomes, Political Commissar of one of the regions* of the South front. For another week, after a break in Conakry, I was in Boe Oriental, a sector of the East front. During this time I visited schools, hospitals, medical posts, peoples' stores, villages, and interviewed many women all the way along—peasant women from the villages, members of village councils, teachers, directors of schools, nurses, regional *responsables*.** I stayed in political and military bases, at schools, at hospitals and once in a village. Except for the bombing raids, I sometimes felt I was on a holiday. Plentiful food, comfortable beds, lots of sleep. Even the many, many hours of walking in the forests and more quickly across the open plains and rice fields, I at times found very invigorating. The scenery could be spectacularly beautiful when the forest would open out onto the plains at dusk or sunset. I left Guinea-Bissau in love with the country and its people, inspired by the success of the ongoing struggle, and the growing militancy of the women in regard to their own liberation.

I went with the view that an important measure of the success of any process of social change is how the exploitation of women is acknowledged and how the struggle for the liberation of women is related to the struggle for the liberation of the society as a whole. I went hoping that what I would find would be very positive in this regard. I did. PAIGC has long stated that the need for women to free themselves from domination must be seriously taken into account in their overall program. "Our revolution cannot be successful without the full participation of women," said Amilcar Cabral. On the other hand I did not expect to find 50 percent of all work done by women. I know that the struggle for women's liberation is a long one, that they have both the traditions of the society and the treatment of women under Portuguese colonialism to combat. What I wanted to see was the *process* by which PAIGC is trying to achieve its goal of a society without exploitation of any kind.

Two Colonialisms

"In Guinea-Bissau we say that women have to fight two colonialisms, one against the Portuguese, the other against men," said Carmen Pereira to me on my second day inside the country. She is the top woman in the Party, being on the PAIGC Executive Council of the Fight, and the Vice-President of the National Assembly of the new State. She is responsible for the social reconstruction program of the whole South front. I had slept the night at her base, Donka, and spent a few hours with her in the morning.

Two colonialisms? This is not a new concept, but I was interested to find it expressed here, and to find it reiterated by many women, and men, throughout my trip. It forms the basis for the theory and the practice of the PAIGC regarding women. I am struck by it because, as we women in Europe and North America try to grapple with the development of a coherent theory, the very concepts we are using are found in a revolutionary situation such as Guinea-Bissau.

The need for a women's struggle was one recognized from the start of the revolution. A Party directive states:

"Defend women's rights, respect women and make them respected; but convince the women of our country that their liberation should be their own achievement, by their work, attachment to the Party, self-respect, personality and steadfastness before everything that could be against their dignity."

Although men are seen as colonialists, they can not be seen as the enemy in quite the same way that the Portuguese colonialists are. In fighting the first colonialism, the enemy is easily identifiable. Although, always insisting that it is not the Portuguese people who are the enemy, the identification of the enemy as the Portuguese Government which is perpetuating that colonialism is clear enough. In what ways are men, perpetrators of the colonialism of women, the enemy? As was often said to me—we are fighting to change men's minds. This process is part of our overall struggle to build a new society. It is not simply a struggle against men; men are not seen as the enemy as such.

For Women Life Was Doubly Hard

Given that this is the Party's perspective, and the perspective of the women, most of them to whom I spoke extremely militant, how does the fight against the second colonialism manifest itself?

In order to understand what changes are being wrought through the social reconstruction program of the Party, some sense of what is being fought against is helpful.

I asked many women what life was like living under the



An early morning march. Teodora Gomes in the foreground

Portuguese. In the south I spoke to a Balante woman, Bweta N'dubi, who was one of the first women mobilized and a member of the first village council. She is now an elected regional deputy, acting as liaison between the population and the member of the National Assembly for the area—also elected. She has had no formal education and cannot read or write.

"My family were peasants and they worked in the rice fields and grew rice. When they needed something they took rice to the Portuguese stores and traded it, or sold it for money. But they had no way of knowing the cost of the product they were buying, and the Portuguese paid whatever they wished for the rice. There was nothing they could do about it. If you argued about the price, you would be beaten. With the money you received you had to pay taxes for everything—palm trees, domestic animals, land. If you were unable to pay the taxes, you were beaten and put in jail. Then to pay for the land, your family would be taken by force and made to work for nothing." She went on to describe how she had been forced as a young girl to work on the construction of a road, without pay, living in the forest, and supplying her own rice. Those who tried to escape were beaten severely. She added, "we had no possibility to go to school—there were no schools. Neither were there any hospitals or doctors."

For women, life was doubly hard. "Women suffered more under colonialism than men," a young woman director of one of the main schools in the country, Jacinta de Sousa said to me. They had to contend with the colonialism of men as well as the Portuguese. Women's work was extremely hard. Besides contending with the effects of Portuguese colonialism—women as well as men were rounded up for forced labor—they had to produce food, including many hours of pounding every day; collect water, which could take many hours; wash clothes, cook, care for the children, work in the rice fields; bring food to the men working in the fields; clean the huts. Additional burdens would be placed on them if the men



Stephanie Urdang

were away under forced labor to the Portuguese—very often the case. Their work was never ending and physically arduous. In addition the traditional customs effecting women meant they were treated as inferior, and expected to remain in the background. Their husbands were chosen, by their fathers, and they could not leave them, even if mistreated. Polygamy was common, particularly amongst the muslim group.

During the four weeks I spent in the country I witnessed vast changes. There are schools, hospitals, clinics, peoples' stores, elected peoples' tribunals. The rate of infant mortality due to disease has decreased, people have enough to eat, they are well dressed in comparison to photos I saw taken at the beginning of the war, and they do not pay taxes. All necessities of life are provided for, and free. "Today we have everything we need," said Bweta N'dubi. And this comment was echoed again and again by all the women I spoke to.

And changes as women?

In a Fula village in the East, in answer to my question about this, I was told, "But look, before it was out of the question for me to talk to visitors. Or to speak in front of men. Now I am talking to you, and men are right here. Does this not show you how much freer we are?" And they spoke about how men are now helping to a greater extent with the children, with fetching water, with other household tasks. And in addition the Party has fought hard against traditional customs which oppress women—such as forced marriages, polygamy, lack of divorce for women, and general attitudes to treating women as inferior.

It was clear to me, endorsed by the enthusiasm and respect shown to the Party, that PAIGC has been instrumental in bringing about remarkable changes in the lives of the population in general and of women in particular. And all in the space of one decade.

Doing 'Man's Work'

In addition to the changes mentioned above, women are taking on responsibility and becoming leaders—inconceivable before. Involvement of women in the Party, in the struggle, in social reconstruction grows steadily each year. But how did they begin? What made this rapid progress possible?

At the time of mobilization, when the trained mobilizers went into the countryside to win the support of the peasants, they raised the question of women's liberation and the need for equal rights. At first only a few women would attend the village meetings called by the mobilizer. But these women would tell others what was said and encourage them to attend meetings. Gradually more women gained enough confidence to go themselves, and the word spread further. "I first heard about women's rights at the beginning of mobilization," said Bweta N'dubi. "I understood what was being said immediately, that equality is necessary and possible. Today I work together with men, having more responsibility than many men. This is not only true for me. I understand that I have to fight together with other women against the domination of men. But we have to fight twice—once to convince women and the second time to convince men that women have to have the same rights as men."

Once the armed struggle had begun and the first areas of the country were liberated, village councils were elected in each village to attend to the organization of the day-to-day life of the village, and to act as a liaison between the population and the Party. The Party insisted that at least two out of five members of the councils be women. In this way, it was assured that women would be brought into the leadership at a village level, and through experience gained there could later enter broader fields of responsibility. But given the traditions, this ratio would not have been readily supported, by either sex. A simple tactic was used to assure that women would be included on the council. Each village councillor was assigned a particular task. Women were to be responsible for providing food (rice) for the guerrillas—an extension of 'women's work' and hence quite acceptable. My first reaction when told this was slight disappointment. I wanted women to be chosen on their own right. But I was being naive. A long history of detrimental customs and traditions must be overcome. As Fidelis Cabral, Commissioner of Justice said to me, "You cannot change overnight all the customs of the people. They will turn against you." It is precisely because of attitudes like these, that PAIGC has been so extraordinarily successful. And now there are women vice-presidents and presidents in the village councils, and women who have responsibility beyond the village. Bweta N'dubi is a testament to this. She was extremely confident and articulate. "For me personally there have been many changes in my life," she said. "For example, sometimes I have to leave my home for up to three days at a time on a Party mission and my husband has to stay at home. This would have been impossible before. I feel I have changed personally from my experience, I have much more confidence. Before life was very difficult for women, but the Party brought new ways and a new life for women. However, it is important for women to fight to defend themselves and their rights."

Much of the success in the changing of attitudes is due to the consciousness, from the very beginning of the struggle, of the need to liberate women in all ways. It was an ever present topic of discussion at village meetings. I was told how consistently Amilcar Cabral spoke about it with the population and with cadres. This is borne out by an address of Cabral's at a village meeting in 1966, which Chaliand quotes in his book on Guinea-Bissau.

* Guinea-Bissau is divided into three fronts—South, East and North. Each front is divided into regions, each region into sectors.

** *Responsible* is a term used for Party members who are responsible in their work for a particular area of the struggle—hence health responsible, responsible for education, for justice. Political responsables are called 'Political Commissars.'

"Comrades, we are going to place women in high-ranking posts, and we want them at every level from the village committees up to the Party leadership. What for? To administer our schools and clinics, to take an equal share in production and to go into combat against the Portuguese when necessary. . . . The women and girls will go into villages as nurses or teachers, or they will work in production, or in the village militia. We want the women of our country to have guns in their hands. . . ."

"Comrades, young girls are going to be coming into the villages from our bases. But don't let anybody think that these girls are up for sale as brides. They will get married if they wish, but there will be no forced marriages. Anyone who does that is worse than the Portuguese. These young girls are going to work in the villages, go to school, be in the militia, and the Party will exercise complete control. . . ."

"Women must hold their heads high and know that our Party is also their Party."

Women in the Army—if necessary?

This brings me to the question of women in the army. I seldom saw women armed. And those that I did see were political cadres* not members of the army. Cabral said (above) "to go into combat against the Portuguese when necessary." When I asked Carmen Pereira why women were not in the National Army (FARP) she said, "but it is not necessary." At first this puzzled me. Why is something that is necessary for men, not necessary for women? But maybe for PAIGC, as a result of their particular experience, it is not necessary. It was explained to me that they feel that, due to the biological difference between the two sexes, women do not make as good soldiers and find it extremely hard to keep up with the men in combat. In the early days of the war, women fought with men. Now they are members of the local village defense militia, and perform important support functions for the national military. Guinea-Bissau is a small country and there were more men than needed who wanted to join FARP. This is in contrast to Mozambique and Angola where the size of the countries necessitated the fullest involvement possible in the army; where FRELIMO for instance, has had a women's detachment to their army. I ceased to be puzzled. PAIGC has had to fight a war, the most efficient army possible had to be a priority. But there is no doubt too, that guns and power are usually equated. And I wondered, seeing guns *everywhere* just what effect this would have on the girls and boys growing up? But on the other hand the women of Guinea-Bissau are militant in their fight for their liberation. And they are vigilant of any attempts by men to dominate them. I came away with the feeling that their determination will counteract the fact that they are not armed to the extent that men are. Now with the war over, it is the future that will count. The society can now be less war oriented.

Building a New Society

And now the Party and the State can continue with full concentration on the program of social reconstruction. This facet of the overall struggle has always been stressed as being as important as the armed struggle itself. In what ways had this affected the role of women?

One of the bases for the new society is on the one hand the eradication of traditions of the people which go against the principles of the Party and are hence exploitative, while on the other hand giving renewed status to their culture and national history. A Party directive states: "Oppose without violence all prejudicial customs, the negative aspects of the beliefs and traditions of our people. Oblige every responsible and educated member of our Party to work daily for the improvement of their cultural formation. . . ." Among the negative aspects which effect women are forced marriages, lack of divorce for women, and polygamy. Marriages arranged by parents are virtually non-existent now. And divorce is a possibility for everyone. I was told that at the beginning of the struggle, many women joined the Party in order to escape the fate of an arranged marriage, or to procure a divorce from a man they did not love and had been forced to marry. The Party thus played an important role in providing protection for women when they first began to resist the customs that oppressed them. Now divorces are heard by the People's Tribunals, one elected by each village or group of villages. Overcoming the practice of polygamy is a lengthier process. "We have to move, but we have to move slowly," commented Fidelis Cabral. "The custom has been with us for generations and we cannot change it in an instant." It is not possible to demand that all men divorce their wives, barring one. But at village meetings and in talking with the population, cadres are told that the Party is against the practice. For members of the Party, polygamy is not permitted, even for practicing Muslims. But for the whole population such limitations cannot be placed. However any man who loses a wife through divorce or death cannot replace her, unless he only had one in the first place.

But for PAIGC the eventual key to eradicating all negative traditions and entrenching the new society is education. The need for it is a constant theme. In the same address by Cabral, quoted above, he says "parents may no longer refuse to send their children to school. The children are caught up in chores. . . . But the children need to go to school just as the parents need the children's

help. . . . I am an engineer. Perhaps there are people present who are smarter than I. But there are not engineers among them because there were no schools. The Party wants to give all the children of our people a fair chance. Our people's main enemy is Portuguese colonialism. But any adult preventing the education of our children is also our enemy." But it was not so much the resistance to sending sons to school that the Party found it had to contend. It was sending daughters. Jacinta de Sousa told me: "The problem is with the fathers. The girls are needed in the house to help their mothers, and they won't allow them to go to school. The politics of the Party is against this, and things are changing. But it is still a very big problem, particularly in this area which is Fula [Muslim]. Our Party places great emphasis on the children because they are the future of our country. Political commissars go to the village and explain why education is so important, particularly for girls. They stress that we want to reconstruct a free society, a society without sex discrimination."

In all the schools I visited there were far fewer girls than boys, on the average about 25 percent. However in Conakry at the Pilot School, the highest grade school, one third of the students were girls. This is an encouraging percentage given that it is from here that students go abroad for further study.

In order to help overcome the detrimental traditions, and to enable the students to become well versed with and understand the PAIGC program, time is set aside each week at all schools for political education. The question of the domination of women and the need to fight against it is regularly discussed. "We especially insist on the rights of women to the boys" said Jacinta de Sousa, "so that they understand that what they have learnt in their own homes regarding women is not true. The boys come to school with the opinion that they are superior."



Stephanie Urdang

A Glimpse of the Future

It was the consciousness of the women's struggle that I found in the women cadres that I met, that gave me a glimpse of the future. As much as Bwena N'dubi and village councillors I met epitomized the changing situation for peasant women, so did many of the young women cadres epitomize the new society that is emerging. Articulate, militant, confident, they spoke with ease about the revolution and their concept of it, about the need for a women's struggle. One evening I sat with a number of young men and women around the table, eating dinner at a boarding school in Boe. The women were the young 19-year-old director of the school (Jacinta de Sousa), a woman teacher, Maria da Goia, the nurse attached to the school, Baidida Nambuna, and Fina Crato. My interpreter, Mario Ribeiro, turned to me and said with some awe and a great deal of satisfaction, "it is amazing to me to see the way in which men and women can sit around a table and talk as equals. This was not possible at the beginning of the struggle. We have come a long way."

I spoke to them (and others at different points in my trip) about many things concerning women. Did they feel that there were any innate differences between women and men? No, was the consistently emphatic answer. Women and men are capable of doing the same work, of all kinds, from bringing up children, to doing housework, to becoming engineers. There were biological differences, but this did not mean that there should be difference in political rights, or in work that did not require excessive physical strength.

Did they feel that men treated them as sex objects, that this was something to fight against? I got two slightly different responses to this, from women of different ages which I felt was significant. Teodora Gomes, 17 at the beginning of the struggle, felt that this had been a grave problem, but a diminishing one. "Women are not like shirts," she told me Cabral used to say, "you put on one today, another tomorrow." He insisted that women be treated with respect by the men joining the Party, that if they flirted around casually, he would tell them to get married. "There were many, many marriages in the early days of the Party," told Teodora, with a delighted laugh. But now things were changing, she said. And certainly as I watched her and other women with men cadres, it was quite clear to me that they were being treated with the respect of comrades. I could sense nothing but equality and self-assurance between the two sexes [and I feel that this would have transgressed the language barrier if present]. Coming from a situation where women have to fight constantly against this, I found it a pleasure to watch. While Teodora openly recognized the problem as one to fight against, the younger women of 19 and 20 felt that it did not exist, that it had already been overcome.

They were nine, ten years younger and their experience was almost of a different generation, a generation that had grown up under the PAIGC. Talking to the women at the school, they emphasized the comradeship. They felt free to have lovers if they so wished, could obtain contraceptives from the hospital in Boke and elsewhere, but did not feel that men approached them as if they were sex objects. Fina Crato told me that for four years she had studied filmmaking with three PAIGC men in Cuba. At all times she was treated as an equal comrade. This perception was endorsed by Jacinta da Sousa and Maria da Goia in their work with men teachers. The point was demonstrated. During the discussion Jacinta suddenly stopped and listened to a class being held nearby. She jumped up and walked with firm steps to the class. The teacher was a man, and older than her. He was apparently teaching outdated geometry. She discussed it with him briefly, her authority obviously accepted, and he proceeded with the lesson along a different track.

The number of women in all fields of work has been growing steadily. They receive strong encouragement by the Party to take on more and more responsibility, and in turn are demanding this themselves. There are women nurses (and heads of hospitals), political commissars, regional health responsables, teachers (and directors of schools), radio communications technicians, and women involved in political work among the population, in villages and beyond. I spoke to women in all these fields. Their dedication to the Party and their country, their enthusiasm about their work, and the way in which they articulated the need for the liberation of women was extremely impressive.

Eleven and a half years after the launching of the armed struggle, PAIGC is in the process of achieving independence. But the people do not believe that independence means the end of the revolution. There is a long road to travel yet. There is the emerging new society that must still be fought for. And there is yet the goal of a society free from exploitation, free from sex discrimination to be reached. "Our revolution cannot be successful without the full participation of women." Year by year this participation is growing. That I could see it in process was fortunate. And very, very inspiring.

Many—women and men—expressed the view that it will be a long struggle. That long after the last of the Portuguese soldiers have left their shores, their struggle for a new society, for a new woman will continue. And so it continues. ■

Stephanie Urdang

happy anniversary guinea - bissau

This article is a translation of a speech given Sept. 24 in Toronto (Guinea-Bissau's anniversary of independence) by Francisca Pereira who is an official in the P.A.I.G.C. (African Independence Party of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde). She is also a member of the U.N. delegation to Guinea-Bissau.

For 500 years the state of Guinea-Bissau was under Portuguese Colonial rule. On Sept. 24/73, the PAIGC proudly proclaimed Guinea-Bissau a sovereign state.

The PAIGC was founded by Amikar Cabral in the late forties and began with a membership of six.

In 1950, the Portuguese government sent in soldiers in response to the PAIGC's rising popularity and massacred 50 people. Many were arrested and most of those arrested were not members of the outlawed Party.

In 1961 Cabral asked Portugal for Guinea-Bissau's independence and despite appeals and pressure from the people of Portugal, the request was denied and an intensified massacre ensued. Many were jailed and many suffered torture in Portuguese prisons. It was then that the people knew they must take up arms.

In 1963, the southern front took up arms and in that same year many areas were liberated. In 1964, the north was prepared and they too joined the struggle and took up arms. It is important to note here that before the people took up arms an immense amount of political consciousness raising was going on—a programme instituted in the rural as well as the city areas.

cont'd P. 16

* Gerard Chaliand, *Armed Struggle in Africa*. Monthly Review Press, 1971. Pp. 93-95.

* "Cadre" is used here to mean an active political member of the Party, in training for, or having achieved, leadership

women in so



A wealthy woman posing in her home. Cali, Columbia.



Lima, Peru. A maid with her son on her Sunday afternoons.

by LYNN MURRAY



Step-sisters at home in Belo Horizonte, Brazil.



A grandmother in

outh america



only time off all week,



Lima, Peru. Girl watching religious parade.



her home in Chile.



Every year in Lima, Peru is celebrated the day of the Lord of the Miracles. A gold-encrusted statue from one of the churches is carried around the city. From 6:00 am to 12:00 midnight thousands of people press mournfully around the figure of Christ and pray for deliverance from whatever troubles they have. The majority of the people in the parade are women and children.



cora the traveling bookmobile



Once upon a time.

A huge long bus painted fire engine red with Women's Liberation Bookmobile firmly printed in foot high letters across the side, barrels into a small town, (could be your town if you want it.)

She (Cora) drives up and down the main street far outdoing the local mufflerless convertibles, the farmers in their pick-up trucks and even the local businessmen in their 74 Impalas. On the back of the bus is a large yellow 'Women Working' sign, and beside that a Wages for Housework sign.

[A woman in Stouffville saw the sign "Wages for Housework". She said, "If I believed that, I'd be on strike right now". Her husband took her arm and hurried her away.]

We try to park in the most conspicuous spot in town. Then we haggle with the town clerk or police chief for permission to park. Sometimes we park in the middle of a farmers' market, or in front of a rummage sale, in supermarket parking lots, on university campuses, near libraries, on empty lots or on the main street.

Then comes the work of setting up the bus. This consists of putting up 'OPEN' signs, setting up an outdoor display rack (until we ran over it in Huntsville), with a selection of pamphlets, picking up books that have bounced on the floor while driving, sweeping and dusting, and then going out for breakfast.

We take a flyer about the bus to all the stores, laundromats, newspapers, TV, and radio stations, and public places. We try to find out about any sympathetic individuals or groups and contact them.

Then comes the wait. Sometimes this can be anywhere from a few minutes to a few hours. Ideally we would like to continue leafleting all day, drawing people off the streets and into the bus.

Old women, tiny women, middle-aged women, women who raise pigs, raise children, raise cattle, raise hell. Women who run stores, who are teachers, accountants, engineers, typists, waitresses, students, Women who stay home and work, who work both at home and outside the home, women who are single, women who are lesbians. But in most of Ontario's small towns, the women who came into the bus were married. The teenage women didn't come in very often. The reality of being a woman still hadn't hit them. They are still controlled by their parents, their teachers and the soft and hard sell of boyfriends. Then comes marriage and the mirage disappears, and life is a terrible grind. Boring subjugation to the pretty boyfriend who rapidly turns into a beer-bellied salesman, or manager, who wants to be waited on by a woman who stays at home, or supported by a working wife.

If you step out of line in a small Ontario town, the cold freeze hits

you. First your friends stop seeing you, because they are afraid for their entrenched lives. Then you hear people gossiping about you and you hear how you have been sleeping with all the men in town. You find that the clubs, activity groups are closed to you unless you have a man. Many women leave town, some stay and go crazy, other women try to find women like themselves. Wherever Cora went women came to us and said "This is the most conservative town in all of Ontario, and I'm the only one who believes in Women's Liberation." Women were eager to meet other women. Women were eager to change their lives.

In some towns we were able to help women find each other. Everywhere we went, women were quietly starting to change things. Through working on local papers, and slipping in pro-women's liberation articles, through working in libraries and ordering women's books, through working in YWCA and women's organizations, and calling discussions on women's liberation, or through slowly changing their lives, and talking about it with their friends.

The Women's Movement is alive and well in rural Ontario.

HOW DID WE GET STARTED?

We have had the idea for two years. Judith and Ellen started saving money in September, 1973. The bus was bought in the spring of 1974, after a winter of hard work, advance publicity, and fund raising. We painted Cora (named after E Cora Hind, pioneer suffragist, grain grower, typist, and journalist), put in shelves, display racks, and a children's corner. On the first of May, Cora was on the road (at least 35 miles per hour-with a tailwind). We received an OFY grant at the end of June, and four more women joined us-Wanda, Marcia, Scamp and Boo. The bookmobile has been going steadily since May, and will continue year-round except during the cold winter months.

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

We have been to Waterloo, Kitchener, Cambridge, Sarnia, Hamilton, York, Aurora, Stouffville, Stratford, Barrie, Orillia, Huntsville, Gravenhurst, Go Home Lake, Parry Sound, Midland, Oshawa, Peterborough, Belleville, Kingston, Mississauga, Bidland, Owen Sound, Walkerton, Clinton, Wingham, St. Mary's, London, Scarborough, Ottawa. We stayed at least two days in each town.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

To disseminate and make people aware of existing material, available only in wealthy centres. To help women in isolated situations find each other, to facilitate communication between different groups, to learn how city and rural women can support each other,

to help break down media mystification of what Women's Liberation really is, to encourage Canadian women to write, to encourage schools, libraries and community centres to teach and display more women-oriented and women-supportive materials, to create more dialogue about existing problems, and old and new solutions, and to try to activate action and support groups in every small town.

WHO CAME ON THE BUS?

Most of the women who came on the bus were married and had children. There were very few teenagers. About a 1/3 of our visitors were men, and a 1/4 were under fourteen. They came from all classes and backgrounds.

WHAT DO WE CARRY?

We carry material on: Wages for housework, daycare, birth control and abortion, herstory, autobiographies, novels and poetry, feminist analysis, lesbianism, legal rights, working women, non-sexist children's books, third world women, stickers, posters, T-shirts. We have a large supply of free materials (send us anything you have that we could distribute). We try to stress Canadian materials. We want to print our own articles and reprint Canadian women's articles over the winter for distribution in the spring of 1975.

WHERE DO WE GET OUR MATERIALS?

Most of our stock is from the Toronto Women's Bookstore*
12 Kensington Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 862-0414

Also: Glad Day Bookstore*
139 Seaton Street
Toronto, Ontario

Third World Bookstore,
Great Wall Bookstore, Longhouse Bookshop, The United Church Bookstore, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Before We Are Six*.

* bibliographies available.

We also carry local material from Women's Centres across Ontario, and anything free that we can get our hands on.

Adventures Escapades

Clinton: Boo and Ellen got thrown out of a pool hall, because "there was no women's washroom".

St. Mary's: A gang of Grade 5 women took a Women Working sign and marched all over town with it, displaying it proudly above their heads.

Wingham: Most of the women who came on the bus were over 60. One



octagenarian woman, to an older man: "I've worked all my life, and now I haven't a penny. You worked all your life and have 3 pensions. You're retired - I'm just tired."

A middle-aged woman had been running a pig farm for 5 years. She said that women make the best pig-farmers: "It's like running a giant maternity ward."

Another visitor wanted to know if we had anything for a woman who is "just old and lonely."

A woman, with thick horn-rimmed glasses and coveralls, in Grade 5, bought "Women United" stickers to put on her lunch pail, to "show the boys-'cause it's true."

Kitchener: A woman saw the Women Working sign and said: "When have women NOT worked?"

A policeman, directing traffic, blushed when he saw our Women's Liberation Bookmobile sign.

We went to a meeting of women's centres on a farm outside of Kitchener.

St. Mary's: "Wages for Housework-That would be ideal."

Two Jehovah Witnesses came on and told us that "Homosexuality causes VD."

Here we created the Bookmobile Game (a sort of travelling Monopoly) and Feminist snakes and ladders.

Orillia: Women in the town tried to organize a strike of waitresses and cleaning women over the long weekend (they get 1.65/hr.). The bosses found out about it and bought them off by raising their wages by 5¢.

Camp counsellors came and talked. One said: "This night might change my whole life." But her friend said that she wanted to get married so she could love her children-she had known an unmarried mother in school, and it made her sick.

Owen Sound: A women's centre is starting. One woman said that we must hate our fathers. Two young women asked if they needed membership cards to belong to women's liberation.

London: A gay club is starting.

Stouffville: On a cold, rainy, day, we offered free tea to all visitors.

Barrie: Met 2 women who had decided to start a CR group the night before.

Midland: We were part of a sidewalk sale, and a friendly lesbian brought us a picnic lunch.

An older woman stood outside the bus and kept men off by telling them: "You can't come in-this is for us." She never came in herself.

The librarian didn't like women's liberation-she was into Bahai - "If you love a man, you will be happy to serve him."

Wingham: The local doctor prescribed prayer for planter warts.

Walkerton: Met Birth-Right (again). Everywhere we went Birth-Right was extremely organized-using regular women's groups to spread their propaganda.

Waterloo: Went to a YWCA conference, and ended up having a Sat. night session on lesbianism. Most of the women were sympathetic.

Also went to a gay conference here-met straight people organizing gays, men organizing women, a butch becoming a feminist and a lot of sensitivity training. Also a gay cripple-who was into cripple power. There was a transvestite whom everyone put down in the discussions-during the dance all the men there tried to pick him up.

Sarnia: When we arrived at the Women's Fair, the IODE left in disgust. The rest of the groups were extremely friendly.

York University: Met a mixture of 'career feminists' and some fine women from across Canada from universities-Lethbridge, Simon Fraser, New Brunswick.

Kingston: Got a standing invitation to visit the Women's Penitentiary. Hope to get there before the snow falls.

Huntsville: The OPP gave us their parking space. Women there had tried to start a day care centre, and the mayor had written to the government to say that it wasn't necessary. We sat in the lounge of the Empire Hotel and watched the elections. This was Conservative Country.

Parry Sound: Went to a girls' camp and sold out our stock of Come Out Buttons. One young girl asked us for a "Go Away" button. Spent the night there after talking about lesbianism and feminism until 3 am.

Go Home Lake: Originally a holiday, we met a woman who is interested in writing a book about her experiences running a marina; and Boo's grandmother: "You really got yourself into something, now, Boo."

Oshawa: Met a creative woman who believed in Women's Liberation, but wondered what was in it for her.

Belleville: Two good women working on the newspaper. Heard Lisa Garber-a great singer. Met a woman ex-mental patient who wanted to start a women's group.

Peterborough: Got drunk and met a lot of friendly feminists at the Women's Place.

Generally, every town we went to women were excited that we had come. Many said that they didn't believe that we had arrived in their town.

Young boys were openly hostile. Older men were either sarcastic or cowed. Women said they supported particular issues rather than the movement as a whole. We talked with them about the importance of supporting each other's struggles, even if they didn't affect us personally. A lot of women said that they had expected when they came on the bus that we would be frighteningly aggressive-but found out that we were "just like them". Most women had learned all they knew about women's liberation from the newspapers-Thompson Chain papers are notoriously conservative.

We learned a lot this summer-about women's lives that are different from ours. We learned how to talk with women from many different backgrounds. We learned how little organizing has been done in small towns-and how much women are doing it for themselves. We learned how to keep smiling, and still be firm about our beliefs. We learned that it wasn't as exciting as we had imagined-mostly hard work. We found that the problem of rural women is finding the strength to reach out to each other when faced with incredible social pressures to conform. We will be on the road again by next April. If you want us to visit you, or have money or books to donate, write to us at: 195 Seaton St., Toronto.

and revolution**India:
Women
taking
over**

MAHRASHTRA STATE INDIA - A crowd of housewives in saris storms a village store whose owner has been charging black market prices for grain. Angry, shouting, they tell him to stick to the government set "fair price" or else.

The shopkeeper gives in. Later a group of rich farmers visits him, and pressures him to have the women arrested. But the shopkeeper sticks to his bargain. Apparently he fears the women more than he does the farmers.

In the Indian version of a sit-in, a district official is gheraoed -- surrounded in his office by a group of peasants and kept there until he grants their request. The hungry crowd is demanding emergency employment.

The official explains, cajoles, makes excuses. Finally, he agrees to pass their request on up to the next level. "Don't worry," he tells them. "Something will be done." The men are ready to leave. But the women stay put. "We don't leave without a promise in writing."

A year of famine has heaped fuel on the smoldering discontent of Maharashtra's poor. And in popular action all over the state, women are taking the lead.

"The women astonished us," says a longtime union organizer who worked among poor peasants in drought struck Maharashtra this year. "They can't read or write, they've hardly been outside their villages, they are slaves in their homes and in the fields. Yet wherever we go, the women are the most militant."

Before autumn rains finally ended the drought, 20 million of the state's 50 million people were left desolate, unable to scratch a living from their scorched fields. As crops dried up agricultural work vanished, and food prices soared. The struggling peasants union movement exploded in a series of marches, demonstrations, gheraos, and strikes. Everywhere, women led the ranks, their long-suppressed discontent erupting in actions men were too cautious, or too discouraged to risk.

In one district largely populated by tribal people, a male organizer told me what happened when his group decided to hold a women's conference. "We expected 25 women; 125 showed up. None of us organizers were women and we really didn't know what to do -- so we let the women take over."

"One by one, every woman stood up and told of the experiences in her village. At the end, one gave a summary. She said: 'We need organization. But the men won't organize. What is stopping them? Daru!' (Daru, bootleg liquor, is a potent force in lower caste village life.)"

"At that point a woman stood up and said that in her village, 12 miles away, she knew all the stills and liquor shops, and she knew the village policeman was taking bribes to let them stay open. 'Let's go and destroy them,' she said.

"It was nine o'clock at night. But the women couldn't be stopped. They marched 12 miles to that village, smashed every bottle of liquor, and made the village policeman apologize to every woman in the group. And then in the early hours of the morning, they marched back to continue their conference."

The astonished male organizer's memories are short: female militancy is not a new force in Indian history. In the early, terrorist days of the independence movement, women as well as men made bombs and attempted to assassinate British officials. When the movement took on a non-violent character during the time of Ghandi, women took to the streets in mass demonstrations and helped fill the jails.

The wives of nationalist leaders like Nehru took over major organizing jobs when their husbands were jailed. Women were active in the peasant leagues that sprang up during the 30's. The movement took up the demands of women along with those of the workers, peasants, and untouchables; and women gained full legal rights, though not social

or economic equality, when India won independence.

Today, a small feminist movement is developing among educated younger women. In some cities this year the famine provoked violent demonstrations by housewives. But the strongest women's movement at present is among the poor peasants and landless field workers.

Like poor women everywhere, poor women in India carry a double burden: doing all the family's work as well as working to feed the family. They are up at dawn, bringing water from the well or river in big brass pots. Morning chores done, they work all day in the fields -- where their wage rate is half what men earn; keeping one eye on their children left in shelters nearby.

If there is food for an evening meal, the women leave the fields early to cook it. Their working day is not over until the meal has been cleared away and the floor of the mud hut swept.

It is the women who meet the famine head on, in the food shops. Over and over again, the women told me how with each trip to the store, the bare necessities were getting scarcer and harder to pay for.

After one village meeting, two women drew me into a windowless hut. They wanted to show me the food they had in the house: a couple of inches of murky oil in a bottle, a few chilies, a potful of limp vegetables -- nothing else.

"How can we live on this? We need more than a few cents extra in wages. Even when our wages are doubled they don't keep up with the prices. We need more. We need land and revolution."

In their toughness and militancy, these poor women provide a striking contrast to the soft-spoken, traditionally feminine women of the middle and upper classes. Hard as their life is, women who work in fields, accustomed to daily confrontations with landlords and officials are more "liberated" than the secluded higher-caste housewife.



"Mommy, is it easier to die from smallpox or starvation?"

In a village in Dhulia district, composed mainly of the mud and thatch huts of landless agricultural workers, I attended a mass meeting where the women were taking part equally with the men -- and speaking up with greater fury. Two women shared the place of leadership with two men on the only cot. (In rural India, the issue of who sits on a chair or cot at a meeting and who sits on the ground has great symbolic importance.) From the back doors of their brick houses, landlords' wives stared with amazement at this invasion of the traditionally male realm of politics.

In another village, a group of women in faded cotton saris poured forth their grievances as we all sat in one woman's jut. Attracted by the crowd, perhaps by the rumour of a foreign woman visitor, a higher caste woman in a bright nylon sari entered and sat quietly at the edge of the group.

She was a well-to-do peasant whose family was able to hoard grain and sell it during the famine at black market prices. Landlords and richer peasants from families like hers have profited widely from the famine situation.

The other women pointedly ignored her. They knew that their misery was paying for her new clothes and her husband's new motorcycle.

"Sisterhood" was not powerful enough to save her from their anger, nor is it powerful enough to save the nation's first woman premier, Indira Ghandi.

"Indira Ghandi is a hypocrite! Indira Ghandi is a liar," exploded one labourer, a tall haggard woman of forty. She was one of a group of workers on a government relief project. The government was supposed to pay them for breaking rocks. They had been sitting at the jobsite for three days waiting to collect their wages that were three weeks late. When the money finally came, it one week's pay, not three, and for most of the women it amounted to 5 or 6 rupees a day (1 rupee is equal to 13 cents).

"I sent my three sons to school -- they have no jobs," she said. "I had six acres of land -- the government ministers ate up the land. She must give jobs to my sons, she must give us work, she must give us land. Then we will give credit to Indira

Ghandi."

Another woman nodded agreement. "Indira Ghandi gave us work, she gave us pay. But we had to demonstrate to get the work, then demonstrate again to get the pay."

"What is the remedy?" I asked.

"We must organize," she said. "We must have unity."

Like young girls everywhere, the daughters of these women get together and sing. But their songs are political. Sometimes to traditional melodies, sometimes to tunes from popular films, these girls and women compose songs about their demonstrations, their times in jail, their victories in getting prices lowered.

One song widely sung in famine areas this year is called "Questions of a Woman Agricultural Labourer." It begins:

All our life is on fire,
All the prices are rising,
Answer our questions,
Oh rulers of the country!"

reprinted from *The Portland Scribe*

by Gail Omvedt

GUINEA - BISSAU CONT'D

Soon the people had the Portuguese army surrounded on land. The only defense left for the Portuguese was air bombardment. When it was evident to Portugal's army that there was no hope they attempted to corrupt the people politically through massive fascist propagandizing programmes. They didn't get very far -- in fact they didn't have a chance. For in the past, there were no hospitals or schools in existence, and the people now saw them in the liberated zones, they worked in them, learned in them and encouraged others to participate.

Portugal, in the meantime, emphatically denied to the bourgeois press that such liberated zones existed. But they had witnesses -- the colonization committee of the U.N. visited and found that 16 areas did, in fact, exist.

Women played a very major part in the revolution. We were used as instruments for obtaining food and crossing ports to gain supplies. But, when it came down to making important decisions, we were called upon last. Still, when choosing a husband the woman's opinion is sometimes last.

Our participation in the struggle was in some ways incomprehensible to the men, but there was great participation. Women, in many ways took the vanguard by raising men's consciousness and stated: "You take up arms or we will do it."

Women were responsible for the great victories for liberation in the Verde Islands. For 72 days fire was exchanged between Portugal and the people. The islands were surrounded by gun boats and airplanes. At night, women would go out in canoes and return with food, supplies and ammunition. Without their great courage, we may have fallen to our aggressors.

Women mobilized themselves quickly for they understood the burdens of colonialism. They understood that they were the highest percentage of those who were illiterate.

Today, women defend liberated zones, teach and administer schools, work as medics, are members of the armed forces and hold high positions long struggled for in the PAIGC.

NATIVE WOMEN

'AMERICA .. U.S. & CANADA .. IS INDIAN COUNTRY.
WE ARE THE LANDOWNERS.
THE RENT IS OVERDUE.'

MARIA CAMPBELL'S SPEECH

Maria Campbell is the author of HALF-BREED, the first edition of which has been sold out some time ago. HALF-BREED is the story of her life from bad times in Vancouver to a gradual growth of political awareness in Edmonton. This book was a sensation when first released due to critical comments on the R.C.M.P.

I must apologize if this is found to be incomplete. My shorthand is rusty. But these are her own words.

SEPT 28 RALLY

NATIVE PEOPLE'S CARAVAN

It is wonderful to see all of you again. I want to tell you about my purpose in joining the caravan in Edmonton and my feelings about the whole thing. I am a mother and a grandmother and a native woman.

For the last 4 years, I have been on a real downer. The work I watched my father do and native people do during the 40's, I thought would never happen. All we ever were going to accomplish was organizing more bureaucratic offices and something happened about a year ago - Wounded Knee. Things started happening all over the country.

GENEISH

GENEISH - by Jane Willis

(New Press, \$8.50)

Sold at the Toronto Women's Bookstore

The story of Jane Willis up until she left high school is the second book to come from a native woman. Jane Willis, unlike Maria Campbell, was saved from the dope and prostitution of big Canadian cities, cities in which native women learn the hard way all about the white man's "civilized" world. But the form of oppression she, herself, faced was just as real. Oppression of native women exists wherever they live, whether it be Vancouver, Toronto, etc. or the distant isolation of a reserve on James Bay.

A Cree Indian, she grew up on an island where the Fort George River meets the eastern shore of James Bay. Jane's mother had refused to marry the white man working at the Hudson Bay store for fear of subjecting the innocent baby to such a depraved society as that of the white man.

I am a writer, I went to a residential school and a white public school, and no history that has been written about us was made by my kind. The most important role I can play in the movement is to tell our people in Canada of our history. Our leaders did not give up, our leaders in the early 1900's were condemned by their own communities and government officials, but did not give up. By telling that we have heroes, heroes in the 70's, i.e., Louis Cameron, I can take a part.



For 500 years, they have tried to kill us but have never destroyed the spirit in each of us to fight. Very important to native women is genocide. During some of my re-

WE HAVE LOTS OF MOTHERS AND GRANDMOTHERS
BUT THE EARTH IS OUR TRUE MOTHER.

Rose Yellowfeet at the First National Native Women's Conference on March 22nd, 1971 in Edmonton, Alberta: "I do not say 'Ladies and Gentlemen'. That is not the Indian way - it is the white man's way."

Later in the Conference, Noella Dumont says this: "We are not 'Indians', but natives of Canada-Columbus referred to us as 'Indians'. I think we should refer to ourselves as being 'Native'."



NATIVE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

On August 26th, 1974 a Conference was held at Thunder Bay, Ontario of the Native Women's Association of Canada. A quote was read from the report of an anthropologist who found native women were more independent in North America before the coming of the white man.

While white society considered the native as savages, little more than children who had to be cared for and shown the true way, the native people living in northern isolated areas also considered the white man no less a savage. This was a deliberate act by the white man who educated, governed and baptized them. The more the native people saw white society as immoral (i.e., "all white men drank, robbed, raped, murdered"), there would be less contact and inter-marriage, keeping the races pure - "mainly the white race, I suspect".

search I came across a diary from the 1500's of a priest which said, "Only way to destroy these people is to destroy their unity, to break the mother." They almost did that. Sisters are very important in the movement and the caravan recognizes that.

The other thing I am interested in is prison reform. A lot of my early life was spent in prison. I am not ashamed of it but something has to be done about them. People are dying and being beaten. 3 weeks ago, something happened to me. I was considered an unfit mother to adopt a 15 year old girl and she died in prison.

There are all sorts of movements in Canada, happening with women, poor people, etc. But we are leading it. There is no reason to be afraid of violence when you live with it. Go back and together we will fight our common enemy.

Note: Louis Cameron, busy giving a speech before the money hat was passed around, almost forgot to introduce her. Once Maria started speaking, her voice, trembling with emotion, became strong and we, the women in the audience, responded to her words with a standing ovation.



Geneish, is Willis' native name. From her first day at the Anglican missionary school for Status Indians to the last day of high school, she recounts the many prejudices encountered from her reserve school and the school at Sault Ste. Marie. Geneish never knew independence during her school years, continually under the thumb of, first, the Church and then the Dept. of Indian Affairs. This is a personal account of one woman's herstory in her fight for independence from both the hierarchy that controlled her life and the narrow limits of her Cree village on James Bay. It is also a personal story of the native movement in Canada to loosen government controls and begin to govern their own lives as a people.

women's health centre

For many months now the Women's Health Centre has been struggling with the question of how best to reach women through health issues. We wanted (and still do) to provide for women a positive contact with the women's movement and help them become aware of their strength and power as individuals and as part of an oppressed class.

One of the major ways we saw this oppression manifesting itself was through the medical system, in the way that women, as the major consumers, are treated by the doctors, who are usually sexist males, and in the poor quality of medical care many women receive. Not only is going to the doctor a humiliating and dehumanizing experience, but half the time you don't even get well! One of the reasons the quality of medical care is so poor is that many doctors are in medicine for the money, not because they like people and are interested in keeping them healthy. Medicine being part of a capitalist, male dominated system is geared to keep women down, in our places, and the power in the hands of the doctors, male or male-oriented.

To challenge this we saw our first step as getting some of the power away from the doctors and into our hands so that we could distribute it more evenly. We started learning about our bodies with an emphasis on gynecology because this area of medicine, having to do only with women and their reproductive organs, is the most oppressive and least researched. We had an idea of how we would like a visit to a doctor to be and decided to implement it by doing medical clinics where we could hopefully make it an informative and healing experience. We thought that by providing an alternative to sexist doctors and by sharing our knowledge with many other women, through the clinic experience, self-help demonstrations, training other women as paramedics like us, to start more clinics, we could turn other women on to feminism and help them become and stay healthy at the same time.

It worked, up to a certain point. We saw lots of women every week the majority of whom were turned on to the fact that we don't have to depend entirely on doctors, that we can take care of our bodies and keep ourselves healthy, and that doctors aren't the know-it-all gods that society makes them out to be. But the problem was that we, a collective of 12 women, were spending 6 days a week doing medical clinics, keeping the centre going businesswise, doing lab reports OHIP or other shit work, and struggling with each other

about how we weren't doing what we wanted to do and how what we were doing wasn't being done the way we wanted anyhow. Here we were all of a sudden (but not really) a bandaid service organization doing the job that the medical system is getting paid incredible amounts to do, and having all our energy be drained by keeping it going. It left very little energy for making contact with women outside the centre, keeping our collective struggle together, raising our political consciousness and trying to change. All our energy was being put into perpetuating the very system we were trying to destroy.

We as a group of women working together in collective form were trying to work out our differences and deal with our personal growth. Some people felt that being a service organization was good and helping women individually was the way to change things. But many people felt we were being ripped-off and were questioning the validity of service and even the validity of western medicine as a healthy way of treating disease.

Working together put us all through some heavy personal changes. Our lifestyles and political ideas varied a lot within the framework of all being into women's issues. Some of us are lesbians and that affected the way we related to each other. Some people felt that traditional family roles and marriage perpetuates a system that keeps us all down, which made it difficult for the women who were married and in nuclear families or believe in it. We were also trying to deal with the power distribution within the group which was usually pretty unbalanced and led to friction. We were trying to deal in a healthy way with the hassles of working together daily under pressure and trying to learn from and respect each other even though we disagreed on some things. The extreme personal involvement sometimes scared people away from working with us which made it even heavier; not getting any new energy.

In the summer people started going away and trying to figure out exactly what we wanted the health centre to be or if we wanted a health centre at all. Some of us ended up agreeing on what we wanted to happen, others dropped out or changed their focus. At this point we decided to stop doing medical clinics, and to move.

So we have moved to 134 Darcy Street and have changed our direction to an educational one instead of a service. We are still trying to work out the question of the validity of doing medical

clinics and we may end up doing some at a later date. We would like to get away from working on such an individualized basis as much as we have been. It's important that we use our power as a group for political action. This is a direction we have been trying to move in for a while but being unclear about what specific things to do has stopped us. We need feedback from the women's community about ways we could act as a group to bring political change and raise women's consciousnesses.

One of our focuses will be to find alternatives to western medicine; another way to take the power away from the medical system. Some of the women involved feel that the idea behind western medicine that germs cause disease which manifests itself in symptoms that should be treated with germ-killing drugs or surgery to cut out the infected part, is wrong. It is an unnatural way of healing invented by men who had little insight into the natural cycles of life and who wanted to control nature and kill that part of it that caused him problems. We feel that western medicine can be used in many ways to heal and save peoples' lives, but should be balanced with other ways of healing. We feel that the concept of germ killing goes hand in hand with that of war, rape and oppression. We aren't advocating germ pacifism but are exploring our new attitude towards disease, its causes and cures.

There are many ways of healing other than allopathy (western medicine), many of which have been learned and used mainly by women, and have been suppressed through the ages by men. We are trying to learn about and make use of these alternatives at the centre, but it's hard because the medical system has made sure that the information and use of it is either illegal or very difficult to get and also because we are so well socialized (for their benefit) into believing that allopathy is the only way.

We feel that people can't have healthy bodies unless they have healthy minds and vice versa. So in healing we try to help the whole person by using yoga, massage, psycho therapy, or just helping someone work out their problems as well as teaching women to deal with vaginitis, birth control and many other gynecological problems. We also feel that people can't be healthy in an unhealthy society where everyone is oppressed by either dirty air, sexism, racism, or professionalism, and that it's necessary to make society healthy as well as ourselves. **cont'd p.20**

OUR BODIES AND OUR CREATIVE POTENTIAL

The theory that women are biologically and creatively superior to men is a new one, and if it is to conform to scientific method, it still requires concrete data to back it up. So far the patriarchy has controlled the funding for scientific research, and has decided what will be studied and how; therefore, adequate empirical data regarding the unique biology and creativity of women has not yet been collected. I would like to hear from women who have ideas on how to move towards setting up feminist-oriented research. --Renee

Many headaches seem to be caused when there is inadequate opportunity for creative expression. Other tension symptoms seem also to be caused in the same way.

The natural tendency of the human being is to create. When this tendency is inhibited, when unnatural boundaries are placed in the way of creative expression, the body protests.

Women's bodies protest a lot because we are oppressed a lot. We are even oppressed into believing that our bodies protest for other reasons, or we are not given any reasons. Doctors often prescribe drugs which slow down our thought processes, thereby removing our creative potential from our awareness.

Freedom from oppression means freedom to be natural, freedom to create.

I feel more oppressed than usual just before or during my menstrual period. This is when my creative potential is at its peak. This is when I am a greater threat to the patriarchal order. Then I am told I am irrational or temporarily insane.

Menstrual headaches, cramps and other tensions could be transferred into positive natural forces, if nature were not tampered with by those who wish to oppress us. Since men don't have menstrual periods at all, women would then emerge as biologically and creatively superior to men.

It is very significant that the major tranquilizers forced upon women in psychiatric jails cause menstrual irregularities and amenorrhea (absence of menstrual period). How convenient for the patriarchy!

THE TORONTO STAR was picketed Fri., Nov. 8 and the private home of its publisher on Sunday. The Star has been recently attacking Gay Liberation and the subsequent bad publicity affects both women and men.

Such tranquilizers include the commonly-prescribed phenothiazines (Stelazine, Trilafon, etc.). The adverse effects of these drugs are described in the Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties (CPS). Effects listed include those related to the disruption of the natural menstrual cycle. (CPS is that big blue book you see in doctors' offices. The Women's and Children's Health Centre has a copy, and women wishing to learn more about prescribed drugs can phone the Centre at 366-0325; they will look up the drug for you and read you the information.)

If the tension of creative potential becomes too painful when oppression prevents you from expressing it naturally, how can you reduce this pain without doing something which would reduce your awareness and put you out of touch with your natural creativity?

One quite effective way is to take dolomite, a combination of calcium (which Adelle Davis called a "natural tranquilizer") and magnesium. The calcium relaxes your nerves while the magnesium facilitates the functioning of your brain. (Incidentally, calcium and magnesium work together naturally in the body, each aiding in the absorption of the other.)

Dolomite is available in health food stores. Caution: Generally, do not exceed the dosage recommended on the bottle, as an excess can cause such symptoms as lethargy, muscular weakness, poor coordination, nausea, speech difficulties, slow heartbeat, and even coma. (Know the symptoms of overdose!) Personal experience has led me to believe that point of overdose may be reached with even smaller quantities than the recommended six tablets per day (each tablet containing 158 mgs. calcium and 75 mgs. magnesium). After taking amounts considerably smaller than this, I had all of the above symptoms, except for coma. As is the case with most nutrients, individual requirements vary, and it is important to find the best amounts for your own body.

Another technique for relaxing the body while increasing the alertness of the mind is meditation. There are various forms of meditation, and some have advantages over others. Of the methods which I have tried, I have found that transcendental meditation (as taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi)

However, I have this question: *Who* in G.A.T.E. has allowed the infiltration of Trotskyist groups? See Pamphlet called "Infiltration of The Women's Movement" for further info. on subversion of independent movements.

is the most satisfactory for my individual personality. Hatha yoga, which eventually leads into meditation requires more discipline, effort and repetition, and it takes much longer for the results to become noticeable. Kundalini yoga, on the other hand, unleashes a lot of life energy very quickly, and some personalities can handle this sudden change more easily than others. There are several other branches of yoga and other kinds of meditation as well. They vary according to the cost of the available courses, the time investment required to learn the techniques, and the time which must be spent practising them each day once they are learned.

Some kinds of meditation demand accompanying changes in lifestyle, such as changing your diet or regularly practising certain physical postures and breathing exercises. Proponents of different methods often claim that their own is *the* path to enlightenment, enrichment, etc.; however, I know of no one in a position to compare the end results or benefits of different methods.

The main thing is to use whatever method seems to work best to achieve maximal comfort and strength in the face of oppressive barriers.

And to know that if these barriers were not there, we would have unlimited access to that potential which is based in our very biological make-up, and which is the essence of our ultimate creative superiority.

by Renee

GODERICH LETTER

We never strive to be doctors or writers or executives; we slip into nursing or typing or being a clerk. We never tried to shape our futures, but let ourselves fall into our places. We don't realize that there is a world outside our town; our life is so pleasant, so deadeningly simple, so monotonous. And the greatest tragedy is that we seldom see the worlds within ourselves.

I was one of the lucky ones in Goderich; I spent the last 2 years of high school in a private school far away, cut off from the town and its people. Cut off from my friends and unhappy, in the midst of the loneliness, I grew to know myself, away from the influence of my friends and my habits. And you know? I like myself. While not exactly freeing me, my self-realization was a gift of independence- a gift of myself. No one can ever take that from me; I am my own.

The problem is giving women back to themselves. You are trying to do that and this fall, when I start my university education in Toronto, I want to help too.

Shine on!!

Love, Deb MacDonald
Goderich, Ontario

women's health cont'd

At this point we are trying to see where best to focus our energies according to the response we get from what we are starting to do. We are making times where we will be at the centre for women to come and learn self-help or get information or just talk. We will be going out and doing self-help demonstrations wherever women gather, clubs, schools or factories etc. We are looking for people who can teach us about healing so we can teach other women. There is a yoga class, and there will be a massage class starting Oct. 28. There is an older woman's discussion group which started Oct. 19 and there will be health groups where we will talk about subjects of common interest using the centre and outside resources, as soon as enough women are interested.

Another project we have been working on is the Birth Centre. Some of us are learning to be midwives in order to challenge the medical professions' monopoly on birth. Many women want to birth their children at home and very few doctors are willing to assist. We have one doctor working with us who will do a very limited number of deliveries

and we have to find other doctors if the birth centre is to continue. It is possible to take our birth experiences into our own hands and provide ourselves with safe, beautiful home deliveries. We also would like to help women who want to deliver in a hospital, have a better hospital experience. We are going to provide pre-natal and post-natal care that is really care, not just a monthly medical check.

The centre has no money right now. We have had government funding and are hoping for another grant in December or January. We have serious questions about the grant syndrome but hope that we can use the government money as it should be used and not get co-opted.

Our collective now consists of 6 women and we need more energy. We've had a hard time finding a good way to incorporate people into an already set collective with a generally set goal. We need women who want to put time and energy into women and we are open to new ideas and ways of doing this. Our telephone number is 366-0325 and we are at the centre most of the weekdays but answer phones regularly between 12 and 3.



Our temporary schedule is:
 Monday: Kundalini Yoga class.
 1.00 suggested donation
 11:30 massage class (start Oct. 28)
 Afternoon: general health counselling, and self-help taught but please make an appointment.
 Tuesday: 2-5:30 pre-natal and post-natal clinic with doctor by app't.
 Wednesday: 1-5 general health information, and mental health counselling by app't. Self-help taught by app't.
 Thursday: 12-5 general health and self-help taught by app't.
 Saturday: Discussion group for older women (start Oct. 19)

handicapped cont'd

I had the fortunate opportunity to interview one couple who are living at Main Square. They ran an apartment completely by themselves with assistance from their parents in heavy household chores. Both had taken courses at the Toronto Rehabilitation Centre in order to learn how to cook and other activities of Daily Living, such as coping with problems of personal hygiene. They both go out together frequently to baseball games and music concerts and take part in community recreational activities in Main Square.

Before coming to Main Square the greatest difficulty was finding a place to live, where they were able to be completely socially integrated with others. At Belwoods they were flatly told they could not get married. It was felt that they would be unable to look after themselves and Belwoods did not have the accommodation for a married couple. Even at Main Square they are frequently gossiped about by elderly people who have the attitude that they should not be married because they are handicapped. Many people regard the handicapped as children who are unable to make independent decisions or do not have the same sexual needs as anyone else. The best example of this paternalistic attitude towards the handicapped is best illustrated by a married couple who tried to get a ride to Brampton

to visit a parent. The couple were refused access to the bus because they did not have an attendant with them which the bus driver claimed would jeopardize his insurance were something to happen. In protest, the wife sat in front of the bus while the husband stood behind the bus so that it couldn't move. Eventually the police came and the couple had to pay \$34 to take a taxi to Brampton.

Marilyn Collins



(TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT ISSUE. MARILYN COLLINS ADDRESSES HERSELF TO THE PROBLEMS OF INDIVIDUALS AND COUPLES WHO FACE THE DILEMMA OF EXISTING IN A WORLD WHERE THE RIGHTS OF SPECIAL GROUPS ARE GIVEN FAR TOO LITTLE CONSIDERATION. T.O.W. HOPES ORGANIZATIONS, LIKE CRIPPLE POWER, WILL RESPOND TO MARILYN'S ARTICLE WITH TACTICS BASED ON UNITED ACTION BY HANDICAPPED GROUPS.)

Successful Women cont'd.

Fifth. When you say that you do not support women's liberation, you are standing in the way of these important advances, and negating the advances that have already been made. You are taking advantage of a good thing and forgetting to give credit where it is due. You are not really a self-made woman. Remember this.

Sixth. As a woman who has "made it" you are in a position to do a lot of good. You have money that could go to help the women's movement. You have a hungry press waiting for your pronouncements on anything and everything. This is a plea to you to understand the importance of the women's movement. To read some books and look at it objectively before you pass judgement publicly. To speak with women who work for women's liberation and consider what they are saying. Times are changing and nothing we can do can hold them back. So instead we must start taking control of some of the changes, and do so responsibly by thinking beyond our own lives and our own small circles and our own selfish needs. Women will move ahead with or without your help. History has shown that this is inevitable. But how much smoother, how much less violent, how much easier these changes would be if you would help them. Think about it.

Sincerely,
 Judy Rain

ANNE FRANCIS/FLORENCE BIRD: an autobiography

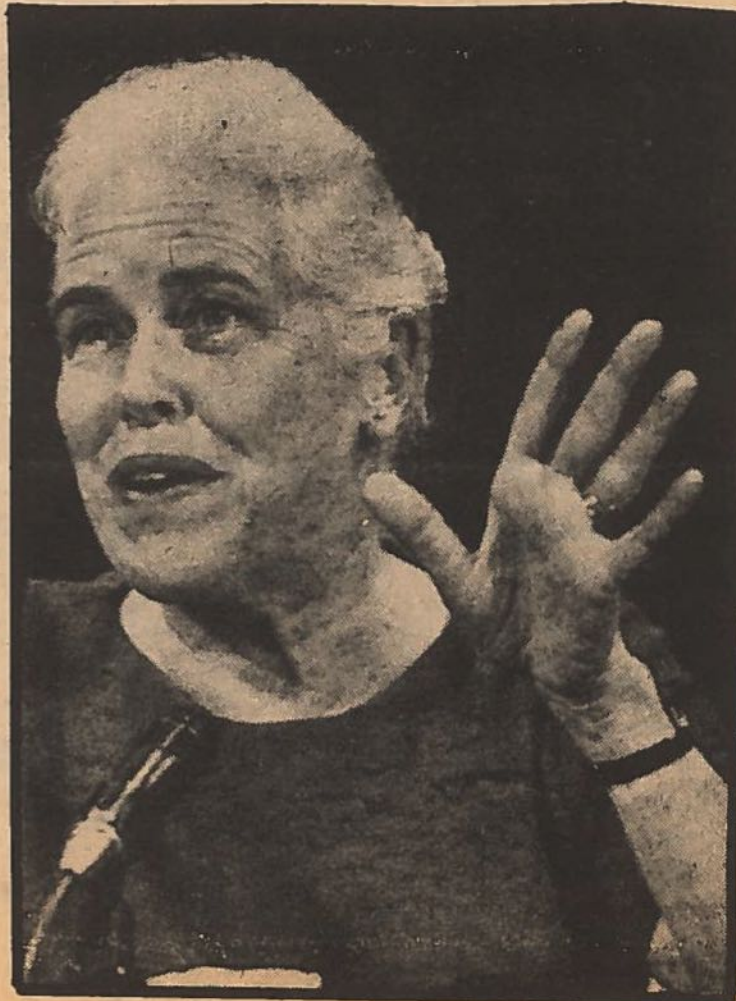
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A REVIEW OF ANNE FRANCIS
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY FLORENCE
BIRD

(Clarke, Irwin and Company
Limited, 791 St. Clair Ave.
W., Toronto, Ontario, Canada,
\$8.95)

It is certainly unusual for the subject of an autobiography to have a different name from the author. However, as Florence Bird explains, "Anne Francis" is the pen name she worked under as a journalist, news commentator, social reformer and Chairman of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada. In fact, she tells some rather amusing anecdotes which arose with people who did not know about her double identity.

Ms. Bird writes, on the last page of her book, "...I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth and it almost choked me." This is the theme that runs through her autobiography. She describes her life from the days when she was a "pampered, conceited girl" leading



a whirlwind social life in Philadelphia to her slow and painful growth to become a woman with a strong social conscience.

It was when she and her new husband, John Bird, moved to Montreal that Florence became aware of the discrimination against women in Quebec laws. She also became active in working with victims of the Depression.

When the Birds moved to Winnipeg, Ms. Bird worked organizing women volunteers and wrote a weekly column for The Winnipeg Tribune about their war effort. Around this time she also began to broadcast on national and international affairs, thus beginning a new career for Florence Bird.

After the war, in Ottawa this time, Ms. Bird continued her broadcasting career, specializing in the problems of working women and in international affairs. This brought her many opportunities for travel throughout the world, making documentaries for radio.

In 1967, Florence Bird was asked to be Chairman of the RCSW. She discusses the challenging and arduous years working on the Commission and what is being done to implement the recommendations.

I liked Ms. Bird's book, but sometimes I felt she was writing about her life as if it were a news story. I suppose this is the result of years of working in journalism and leading a relatively "public" life. A little more about her feelings and convictions would have given more personality to an otherwise interesting and readable book.

Cindy Wright

POETRY

POEM FOR A LOYALIST LADY, ON LEAVING
ST. JOHN'S, N.B. ON THE FERRY

*It couldn't have looked easy, the cold grey water and
the wooded hills
The dark shoulders of a new land
Maybe you cried for what you'd left and
Turned your back on your new life,
Knitting your fine lace furiously, drowned in a torrent
of memories.*

*Well you did allright lady
I can see on the places where you dug your heels in
I can see your kids on the streets
I can see your eyes in them
You dug in your heels, and small as you were
- I can see you -*

*Lilliputian warrior, yours was the steel and fire
That tied the giant down*

*With winding ropes of asphalt on the hills
Pegged down with salt-box houses
Where your children live
As guards on the giant you tamed.*

Deb MacDonald/74

PORTRAIT

*Girl that I was,
You stare at me with your sepia eyes
Like a stranger.
More than a world apart, I am no longer you
For the dreams have died.
You were such a wise child;
But time has taught me
That knowledge only illuminates
The depths of my ignorance
And shows me new paths for the following.*

Deb MacDonald/74



PLAYBOY MAGAZINE

Erotic?

*What's so erotic
about two sullen legs
waiting to be cornered
in the middle?*

Alexa DeWiel



LADIES' ROOM

*Who makes you
scratch
your bubble mouth
with lipstick sample
drooling wet?*

*What hands will touch
that breast encased
or feel those fingers
ten red spiked?*

*and that twitching of your
right eyelid
and that nylon run polished over,
what beauty is this,
what prince outside
expecting a farce so real?*

Alexa DeWiel

ads



WOMEN AS ARTISTS

That want to work together with other women, sharing skills and knowledge (whether you're "professional", "amateur" or simply interested), we are creating this project. The basic idea behind it is expanding beyond the horizons of male-defined "culture", as we now know it, to the birth of a female aesthetic. With your sisters! Contact: Women's Art Project, c/o 31 Dupont St. Toronto, Ontario.

OR: Phone Helen at 925-1997
Ilona at 537-4930

(Don't be afraid to leave messages)

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922-6517 Heather

921-9353 Chris

THE TORONTO WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENCE CENTRE offers an 8 week course in basic self-defence. This course has been developed specifically to teach women how to deal with the attacks to which they may be exposed. The Centre is open 4 nights and 2 days a week as a drop-in and for classes. Our next 8 week course begins in January. There will be a demonstration before the course to give you a chance to sign up.

Phone 862-0414/5 or visit us (and the Bookstore in the same building) on 12 Kensington Ave., N. of Dundas and W. of Spadina)

WOMEN'S DEFENSE COMMITTEE

The Women's Defense Committee is a new organization that arose from the Brunswick 4 minus one Defense Committee.

This Committee is designed to: provide funds for prostitutes, paid working women, housewives, Lesbians, Lesbian mothers, mothers, welfare recipients who would be willing to contest cases that they have before the courts. e.g. 8 out of 10 women charged with prostitution have been illegally solicited by the police. These cases are a clear example of police entrapment.

The board of directors will be an all women board which will review all cases to decide who most needs financial assistance.

Our advertising will come through personal contact—i.e. talking with women on the street and leafleting, leafleting women in the courtroom and if the women involved have no objections, exposing their cases to the news media.

There will be two lawyers (women) who will act as advisors.

Our money will come from you through donations and dances which we hope to hold bi-monthly. We need more energy and participation. Call Adrienne at 868-1141/862-0414 for information and the time and place of the next meeting.

Please make cheques payable to the Women's Defense Committee and mail them to 12 Kensington Ave., Toronto 2B.

THE BALDWIN STREET GALLERY needs your help.

We have been evicted from our home.

A move at this time was neither planned nor expected. We have been completely unable to find another space and we can't afford high rent. Anyone who has space, possibly to share or any information that could help us out please contact us. (364-2630)

We have a gallery, library, bookstore, printing press, and dark-rooms with no place to put them. We were the first privately run photography gallery in Canada and managed to continue for the past 5 years. Now, due to the landlord's decision to sell the house and the difference in rent between our present location and any other we may go out of existence. Can you help?

Get the Lesbian Issue—Send 25¢ to T.O.W.!

A FEMINIST PHONEBOOK! SOON!

The Toronto Women's Yellow Pages is finally at the printers.

Do you need a dentist? A carpenter to remodel your house? An astrologer to chart your future? Or a clown to liven it up if it doesn't look too bright? Why not hire a woman! Toronto Women's Yellow Pages lists women in all these categories and more. Plus there's a section on women's services—health care, education, pressure groups—it goes on.

So if you need emergency housing right now, and a realtor to help you find a permanent place, we can help you on both counts. All this for only \$1.

The directory will be on sale in mid-November. To place orders now, write:

Toronto Women's Yellow Pages
Box 153, Station Q
Toronto, Ontario
or call Carolyn at 484-4788

It's a woman-made book.

WOMEN'S COUNSELLING COLLECTIVE

Invites you to attend "Women & Therapy" a series of talks and demonstrations running from September through March at the MacPhail Residence, 389 Church St. at 8 pm. Donations: Workingwomen \$2 - Nonworking \$1.

Nov. 15: Women as therapists
by Tina Mandel
Dec. 9 : Sexuality & Intimacy
by Barbara Silverberg & Lynn Pearl
Jan. 13: Unlearning Helplessness
by Pauline Bart
Feb. 10: Women In Primal Therapy
by Marcia Weiner
March 10: Therapeutic Questions In Feminist Counselling,
a panel discussion

for more information call:
Sandy Steinecker 961-8100

SPREADING ACROSS THE LAND

WOMEN'S PLACE **
P.O. Box 5021
St. John's, NFLD. 722-4533

THE WOMEN'S CENTRE **
P.O. Box 5052
Armdale, Nova Scotia

Hilary Prince
Women's Info. & Referral Centre
27 Wellington Row
St. John, N.B.

NEW WOMAN CENTRE **
1210 Greene Avenue
Westmount, Quebec
514-931-3807

LA CENTRE DES FEMMES
4319 St. Denis
Montreal, Quebec
514-288-4325

WOMEN'S INFO. & REFERRAL CENTRE
3595 St. Urbain
Montreal, Quebec H2X 2N6
514-842-4781

UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CLUB
25 Shareview Drive
Barrie, Ontario

WOMEN'S CENTRE
P.O. BOX 1162 or 35 Priory St.
Guelph, Ontario 823-5450

WOMEN'S CENTRE
110 Queen St.
Kingston, Ontario

WOMEN'S PLACE
25 Dupont St.
Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario

WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE **
322 Queens Avenue
London, Ontario N6B 1X4
519-432-8693

WOMEN'S CENTRE
581 O'Connor
Ottawa, Ontario

NORTHERN WOMAN'S CENTRE **
P.O. Box 314, Stn. F. or
Fort William YMCA, 2nd Floor
132 N. Archibald St.
Thunder Bay, Ontario 623-3107

WOMEN'S PLACE
262 Rubidge St.
Peterborough, Ontario

AMAZON WORKSHOP
12 Kensington Ave.
Toronto, Ontario 862-0414/5

CENTRO FEMMINILE
75 Stanley Road
Downsview, Ontario M3N 1C2
745-6363

THE WOMAN'S PLACE **
327 Ouellette
Windsor, Ontario

THE WOMEN'S CENTRE
c/o YWCA
476 Peel Street
Woodstock, Ontario

WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE
56 Queen St., Box 310
St. Catharines, Ont.
L2R 6V3

A WOMAN'S PLACE **
143 Walnut St.
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 1P2
204-786-4581

COMMUNITY WOMEN'S CENTRE
2070 Angus St.
Regina, Sask.
WOMEN'S CENTRE
Students' Union Bldg.
University of Regina
Regina, Sask.

U.S.S.U. WOMEN'S DIRECTORATE
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
SASKATOON, SASK.

WOMEN'S CENTRE **
124A 2nd Ave. N.
Saskatoon, Sask.
306-242-5830

WOMEN'S PLACE
P.O. Box 4391
South Edmonton P.O.
Edmonton, Alberta

WOMEN'S CENTRE
YWCA
320 5th Ave.
Calgary, Alberta

WOMEN'S PLACE **
605 10th St. South
Lethbridge, Alberta

WOMEN'S CENTRE AND BOOKSTORE
804 Richards St.
Vancouver, B.C. 684-0523

WOMEN'S CENTRE
P.O. Box 521
Nelson, B.C.

WOMEN'S CENTRE
2961 Jackman Road
Aldergrove, B.C. 856-4204

WOMEN'S CENTRE
523 Trutch Street
Victoria, B.C. 385-3843

NORTH SHORE WOMEN'S CENTRE
c/o CAPILANO COLLEGE
2055 Purcell Way
North Vancouver, B.C.

WOMEN'S CENTRE
4051 - 4th Ave.
Whitehorse, Y.T.

WOMEN'S PERIODICALS

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
1386 Henry Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia

A WOMAN'S NEWSLETTER
Box 1816
Charlottetown, P.E.I.

QUEBECOISES DEBOUTTE!
4319 St. Denis
Montreal, Quebec
\$3 per year

LONG TIME COMING
Gay Woman's Paper
Box 161, Stn. E.
Montreal, Quebec
\$5 per year
\$7 for institutions

FEMINIST COMMUNICATION
COLLECTIVE
P.O. Box 1238, Place D'Armes
Montreal, Quebec H2Y 3K2
\$4 per year
\$5 for institutions

TIGHTWIRE
(Women's Penitentiary
Newspaper)
Box 515
Kingston, Ontario
\$2 per year

THE NATIVE SISTERHOOD
P.O. Box 515
Kingston, Ontario

LESBIAN CONTACTS OR GROUPS

HALIFAX GAY ALLIANCE FOR EQUALITY
#207, 1585 Barrington St.
Halifax, Nova Scotia
7 pm - 10 pm Thurs-Sat.

MONTREAL GAY WOMEN
3664 Ste. Famille
Montreal, Quebec
843-6431 or Gay Line: 843-8849
Thurs. 8.30 pm.

OTTAWA WOMEN'S CENTRE
Lesbian Drop-In
Fri. 8pm

COMMUNITY HOMOPHILE ASSOCIATION
OF TORONTO
201 Church St.
Thurs. 8pm (862-1544)

WINNIPEG WOMEN'S CENTRE
LESBIAN RESOURCE CENTRE
786-4581

LESBIAN-FEMINIST COLLECTIVE
10130 118 St.
Edmonton, Alberta 488-6348

VANCOUVER WOMEN'S CENTRE
Lesbian Drop-In
Mon. 8pm

PLUS
P.O. Box 2816, Stn. D.
Ottawa, Ontario

STATUS OF WOMEN NEWS
P.O. Box 927, Adelaide St.
Toronto, Ontario
\$3 per year

THE OTHER WOMAN
P.O. Box 928, Stn. Q
Toronto, Ontario
\$2 per year

CLEARING HOUSE FOR FEMINIST MEDIA
P.O. Box 207
Ancaster, Ontario

BEFORE WE ARE SIX
12 Bridgeport Road East
Waterloo, Ontario

THE WITCH AND THE CHAMELEON
2 Paisley Avenue South, Apt. 6
Hamilton, Ontario
\$3 per year

VIRAGO
P.O. Box 1162
Guelph, Ontario

EMERGENCY LIBRARIAN!
c/o Barbara Clubb
32 - 351 River Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba

ON OUR WAY
P.O. Box 4508
Edmonton, Alberta
\$2 per year

BRANCHING OUT
Box 4098
Edmonton, Alberta
T6E 4T1
PEDESTAL
804 Richards St.
Vancouver, BC.
\$3 per year

PRIORITIES
c/o 2803 Wall St.
Vancouver 6, B.C.
\$2 per year

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Artists: send sketches and illustrations (pen & black ink)

Poets: send poetry

Writers: send letters to the editor, essays, editorials, articles, analysis. Be a reporter for your area.

Researchers: check your local libraries and museums for photos, pamphlets, etc., that should be reprinted.



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Insight Books	2225 Erin Mills Pky-Clarkson
Lichtman's News	11 St. Clair W.
Longhouse Bookshop	630 Yonge
Minnie Price's Health Foods	555 Parliamnet
Olympia Books	587 Yonge
Reid's Bookstore	329 Yonge
SCM Bookstore	333 Bloor W.
Shadow Cabinet Books	600 Parliament
Spadina Market	Spadina & Sussex
Times Square Books	369 Yonge
U of T Bookstore	Campus
Vanguard Bookstore	334 Queen W.
Varsity Books	324 Bloor W.
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