

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 6075
St. John's, Nfld.
A1C 5X8

Newfoundland Status of Women Council

709-753-0220

Volume VI, No. 4
May, 1979



TOWARDS EQUALITY FOR WOMEN



Women's Development Centre
15 Birch Avenue
Toronto, Ontario.



Return to:
Newfoundland Status of Women Council
P.O. 6072
St. John's, Newfoundland
A1C 5X8



USE A CORRECT
POSTAL ADDRESS
INDICATE LA
THE ADDRESS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- On the go--St. John's 2
- On the go--Corner Brook 3
- A letter from Corner Brook 4
- The Liberal government's 5
- plan of action 6
- Discussion 7
- NSWC's telegram to Trudeau 8
- Reponses 9
- Readers' forum 10
- NAC struggles onward 11
- Feminist historian sneaks
on birth control

Application for membership
NEWFOUNDLAND STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCIL
P.O.Box 6072, St. John's, Nfld A1C 5X8

Name

Address

Phone #

Membership dues \$5 (suggested minimum)

Renewal () New member ()

Subscription to NEWSLETTER *

Free to members

Non-members \$5/year -50¢/copy

Libraries \$10/year

Organizations--donation or
exchange of publications

The general membership meeting in April was well attended. Many people heard Jane Lewis' talk on the History and Politics of Birth Control. Ms Lewis concentrated on birth control as a moral, political and medical issue. It is evident that for many reasons women have never controlled conception and are not much closer in the struggle to do so.

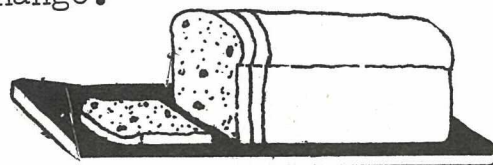
The NSWC Grant from Health and Welfare finished up on 13 April with some good results. The council learned that it would be receiving a grant from the Promotion and Prevention Directorate of that same department. A joint submission of NSWC and the Newfoundland Association of Social Workers, it is hoped to research all aspects of a house for battered wives and have a working document for all concerned parties. Applications from students are being sought for summer employment.

The Women's Centre has a chance of some solid staffing when we get a Youth Jobs Corps Project off the ground. We are slow starting and a rather low wage for the Co-ordinator is not helping the issue one bit. Other factors have contributed to a slow start as well.

On April 23rd, NSWC, the St. John's Business and Professional Women's Club and the National Secre-

taries Association sponsored a talk by Patricia Burns from the Bank of Montreal. "Money - What Every Woman Should Know." It was rather basic but a good introduction to the world of finance, one away from which Ms Burns feels women have been conditioned.

A few dates worthy of note: May 7th at the Women's Centre to hear the National Election candidates from St. John's East and West; May 12th for the famous bake sales; and a rather important June membership meeting to vote on the name change.



BULLETIN

The Ways and Means Committee is delighted to report that four of the women who originally supplied \$100.00 each towards the down-payment for our house have written to say they forgive the loans. It is this kind of generosity by our members which makes the women's movement strong and puts our organization on its feet financially.

Don't forget the bake sale at the Avalon Mall on May 12th from 10:00 a.m. Contributions may be dropped off at the Women's Centre on Friday, May 11th.

The NSWC Newsletter has as its aim to promote an understanding of the changing role of women in society.

The views expressed are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect NSWC policy. All unsigned items are the responsibility of the Newsletter staff.

Those working on this issue were Susan Lucy, Catherine Patey and Barbara Roberts.

NEXT DEADLINE for submissions is May 15. A type-written, double-spaced format is preferred. We reserve the right to edit in the interest of clarity, brevity and taste.

In February the Corner Brook Status of Women Council made a submission to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation on the portrayal of women in programming and advertising and also the employment of women by the corporation. President Ann Bell presented the submission at a "mini-forum" held in Corner Brook, one of a series of public meetings in Western Newfoundland to gather public opinion on the CBC. Corner Brook Status of Women Council members were among the Western Newfoundland residents who attended the "main forum" on March 10, where they were able to communicate directly with some CBC brass.

The Corner Brook Status of Women Council celebrated International Women's Day, March 8, by paying tribute to Florence Cousins. The Women's Council gave Florence its 1979 Women's Day Award for outstanding community service at a reception held in her honor.

Florence has resided at Curling since the 1920s, having moved there from the east coast of Newfoundland. She worked for several years as a midwife, assisting doctors and, in some cases, handling deliveries on her own. She has lost count of the number of mothers and babies she cared for, but estimates the number of deliveries at 400 to 500.

Florence is an active member of the Corner Brook Status of Women Council and the Salvation Army Home League.

The Corner Brook Status of Women Council plans to make the presentation of an International Women's Day Award for outstanding community service an annual event.

The Corner Brook Status of Women Council has contracted with Health and Welfare Canada to employ three part-time workers for a six-week period in March and April to assist parents in completing Child Tax Credit forms. The workers have visited communities from Deer Lake to Stephenville and have met the public in shopping centres, grocery stores, and doctors' offices.

"Focus on Child Abuse" is the topic of a seminar being held by the Corner Brook

Status of Women Council in conjunction with the Department of Social Services on April 24. Western Newfoundland professionals who work with children and families, including social workers, medical doctors, nurses, educators, child care workers, clergy, police officers and lawyers have been invited to attend.

The keynote address will be given by Dr. Austin R. Cooper, a pediatrician with the Janeway Child Health Centre in St. John's. A lawyer will deal with the law on child abuse, and a case presentation will be given by a three-member team comprising a medical doctor, a social worker and a magistrate. Workshops are planned on four subjects: (1) recognizing signs of abuse and the high-risk family; (2) sexual abuse; (3) social worker intervention; (4) courtroom procedures. Joanie Vance, National Co-ordinator of Rape Crisis Centres, will conduct the workshops on sexual abuse.

The seminar is the first of its kind to be held in Western Newfoundland.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, May 7 - 8:15 p.m. - Women's Centre: Regular monthly business meeting.

Monday, May 24 - 8:15 p.m. - Women's Centre: Annual meeting and election of officers.

First week of June - Corner Brook Curling Club: Dinner with guest speaker.



A LETTER FROM CORNER BROOK

Dear Editor:

The article in your March/April, 1979 edition entitled "What's in a Name?" gives an incomplete account of the discussion among our province's Status of Women Councils on the subject of name change.

It is helpful to review our history and place the name change issue in context. There are now four autonomous Status of Women Councils in the province: (1) Newfoundland Status of Women Council, established in 1972; (2) Corner Brook Status of Women Council, formed in 1974; (3) Central Newfoundland Status of Women Council, founded in 1976; and (4) Labrador West Status of Women Council, begun in about 1977.

Each group grew independently, inspired by the national women's movement and responding to local needs. We recall that in May, 1977 the Corner Brook Council knew very little about the Newfoundland Status of Women Council and did not even have a name or an address of a contact person in the Central Newfoundland or Labrador West groups.

Within the past year and a half a communications network among the four groups has developed. Now we are in touch on a fairly frequent, although irregular, basis by telephone and mail. Best of all, members from the different organizations have met one another face to face.

The first Provincial Conference of Status of Women Councils was held in Corner Brook in October, 1978, and was attended by about 40 representatives of the four groups. The subjects of organizational structure and name change were addressed. There was a consensus of conference delegates that the time had not come for a provincial organizational stratum, but that communications among local groups should be improved to facilitate sharing of information and co-ordination of efforts.

The topic of name change was placed on the conference agenda by the Corner Brook Status of Women Council. Corner Brook delegates, as well as some others, stated their view that the use of the name "Newfoundland Status of Women Council" by what they regard as a St. John's-based organization is inappropriate and misleading, and that the name should be changed accordingly. It was alleged that the name is inappropriate because the group does not represent or serve all of Newfoundland, any more than the Corner Brook group.

The more important objection was that the name is misleading in that it connotes a provincial organization, of which the other groups are branches. It was suggested that some people who deal with the Newfoundland Status of Women Council assume they are reaching all Status of Women Councils in the province. Correspondence, invitations, and funding intended for all groups in the province may get no farther than St. John's, because of this misunderstanding.

Newfoundland Status of Women Council delegates at the conference suggest resolving the name problem by having all four groups change their names to "Newfoundland and Labrador Status of Women Action Council-location." Subsequent to the conference, general meetings of the Central Newfoundland and Corner Brook Councils rejected this alternative for several reasons:

1. The suggested name is cumbersome.
2. The Central Newfoundland and Corner Brook Councils are now generally known in their own communities by their present names and do not wish to undertake the necessary work to acquaint the public with new names.
3. A desire to have their independence indicated in their names, because of variation in approaches to some issues among the different groups.

The Labrador West Council decided that it would change its name to the suggested alternative if all the other groups decided to do so, but that, in any case, the

(Continued on page 12)

THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT'S Plan of Action

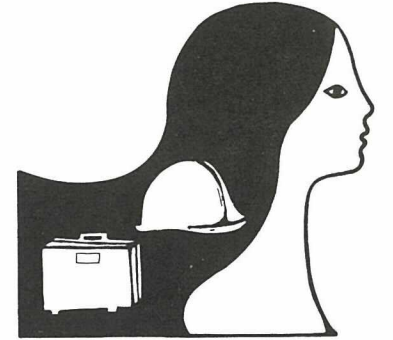
TOWARDS EQUALITY FOR WOMEN

This Plan of Action on the Status of Women is the federal government's commitment to the women of Canada to equalize opportunities and ensure progress through a series of specific changes to government legislation, policies and programs.

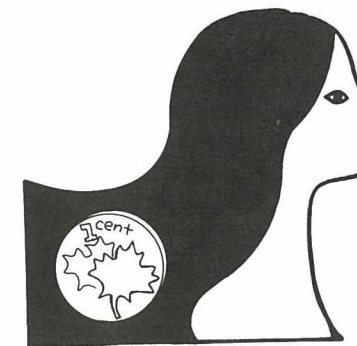
To realize the equality between women and men, the government of Canada endorses these three basic principles:

- a. All persons should enjoy equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities, without regard to differences of sex and marital status, and these rights should be protected by law.
- b. Both women and men should have the opportunity to make free and informed choices about how they live. Therefore, neither laws, nor society should impose sex-stereotyped roles on women or men.
- c. There shall be no special treatment on the basis of sex, with two exceptions: measures relating to maternity, and short-term measures to reduce or eliminate disadvantages suffered by women due to past discrimination.

The Plan of Action emphasizes the importance of women's economic contribution to society. It sets out the proposals for change in many areas where realistic progress towards women's equality can be made by 1985. Changes will take place in federal legislation, policy, research and programs.



Reprinted from Towards Equality for Women, Supply and Services Canada, 1979



Women have not achieved economic equality despite the fact that 45.7% of women are now in the labour force. In 1976, women who were the sole supporters of families had an average income of \$6,462, while men with the same responsibilities earned \$14,214, 120% more. Furthermore, the incidence of poverty is five times higher in female, than in male-headed families. Of male-headed families, 8.2% are under the 1977 poverty line of \$7,300 for a couple, while 44.7% of female-headed families, live on less than \$7,000 annually. Of unattached people, 44.9% of women and 25.9% of the men live below the poverty line. In 1976, 67% of elderly women in Canada lived on less than \$5,000.¹

1. Statistics Canada, *Income Distributions by Size in Canada, 1976*, Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1978, p. 25, p. 103.

1. LEGISLATIVE CHANGES:

The legislative process is already under way in the following areas:

- maternity benefits section of the Unemployment Insurance Act (now under study);
- sexual offences in the Criminal Code;
- child care benefits under the Income Tax Act.

In addition, the government will immediately begin or where relevant undertake further, study and amend legislation in these areas:

- the Divorce Act;
- the Veteran's Land Act with regard to the contribution of spouses to a marriage;
- War Veterans' Allowance Act;
- the Civilian War Allowance Act;
- the Public Service Superannuation Act, especially as it concerns part-time work.

6. 2. POLICY INITIATIVES:

The government has agreed to:

- increase trades training for women in non-traditional occupations;
- produce guidelines for the elimination of sex role stereotyping both in government publications and in the media;
- examine ways to end sexual harassment in the work place;
- examine the role of women in economic development;
- increase the accessibility of language and orientation programs for immigrant women;
- re-evaluate government support for women's voluntary organizations;
- require management accountability for equal opportunities in the public service.

3. RESEARCH INITIATIVES

The government will research the following areas of vital concern so that new policies can be developed:

- Women in the Canadian Economy by an independent body such as the Economic Council of Canada in 1979;
- Social Security programs and their impact on the economic status of older women by a Task Force composed of Health and Welfare Canada, the Department of Finance and other relevant federal departments and agencies.
- Violence against women by the Departments of Justice, the Solicitor General, Health and Welfare Canada and in conjunction with provincial governments and women's organizations who have expertise on the subject.

4. PROGRAM CHANGES

The federal government will:

- direct more research and program support toward health promotion in areas of vital concern to women such as, the safety of contraceptives, occupational and health hazards, alcohol, drug addiction and nutrition, and the parental roles of women and men;
- examine the possibility of a national clearing house for legal, research and service information for victims of family violence and rape;
- improve data systems to facilitate the collection, anywhere in Canada, of alimony and child-support payments awarded by the courts;
- attempt, through existing grants, to encourage labour organizations to develop educational programs aimed at women;
- publicize sections of the Income Tax Act as they relate to women.

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FAMILY AND CRIMINAL LAW AND THEIR ADMINISTRATION

THE TAXATION SYSTEM

NATIVE WOMEN



Discussion...

The Women's Centre Discussion Group's meetings for May will be held on May 9 and 24 at the Women's Centre at 7:30 p.m.

We will continue our discussion on the Branching Out art-

icle which deals with oppression in the Vol. VI, No. 1 issue.

Guest speakers will deal with the relationship of working-class women to the women's movement.

NSWC's telegram to Trudeau

In a telegram to Prime Minister Trudeau, Joe Clark, and Ed Broadbent, dated 8 March, International Women's Day, the Newfoundland Status of Women Council stated:

Prior to the 1974 election the Liberal Party of Canada made similar promises as contained in the recently announced Lalonde plan for equality. The announcements then were a ploy to get women's votes. Once the Liberal Party got our vote and was elected they forgot their promises and went about their business of ignoring the oppressive legislation that they had created and continue to create against women, i.e., the recent UIC regulations.

The Status of Women in Newfoundland reject this present sop from the Liberal government and advise all women of Canada to see it for what it is.

Status of Women Council—St. John's

Trudeau's response

Prime Minister Trudeau replied in a letter dated March 19, 1979, thanking NSWC for the telegram and saying:

"While I can well understand your feelings of discouragement about the speed at which change takes place, it is not correct to say that no progress has been made over the last five years. The government has, by legislation, removed many emcumberances to equality of women."

The letter then mentioned changes in

What Can You Do About It?

This, briefly, is the "plan of action" presented in a glossy 42-page booklet.

The booklet and the replies, as well as copies of questions and debate raised in the House by Ed Broadbent and Winnipeg North MP Stanley Knowles on May 7 and 8, are available at the Women's Centre.

The plan is, of course, in the balance pending the outcome of the general election.

What do you think?

Your opinion counts. Make your vote count on May 22.

the Citizenship Act, Criminal Code, Labour Code, and Canada Pension Plan, the establishment of the Human Rights Commission, Child Tax Credit Plan, funding for citizen's organizations, and the appointment of women to various boards.

In conclusion the letter said, "Change is a slow and sometimes painful process, but I can assure you that the government intends to live up to its commitment to women."

NDP response

The federal women's organizer of the New Democratic Party, Judy Wasylycia-Leis, replied to the telegram on behalf of party leader Ed Broadbent, March 26, 1979.

Citing cutbacks and stringent UIC regulations, Ms. Wasylycia-Leis said the government seems determined to drive women from the workforce.

The new Plan of Action, she said, "promises only inaction in the form of recommendations and further studies. The plan is an election ploy on the part of the Liberals, designed to dupe women and cover up for past misdeeds."

PC response

NOTHING!!!

READER'S FORUM

Dear Sisters,

I look forward to receiving the Newsletter to get some news from "home." I was particularly glad to see the report from Labrador West as that is the group that I was associated with. They seem firmly established in the community there now.

In the area of employment Alberta is certainly far ahead of Newfoundland, but I do feel that it is mainly because of the supply/demand situation with the labor market. There are many women in non-traditional jobs and companies such as Syncrude are training significant numbers of women in the plant operations and the trades. As usual, the number of women gets thinner at the top, but the possibilities are certainly greater here.

Good luck to you, and keep up the good work.

Yours truly,
Heather Duggan
Fort McMurray, Alta.

Dear Editor:

I can't help but take on Shirley Goundry once again after reading her answer in the March/April Newsletter to my letter appearing in the February issue. The point Shirley makes, getting "any" women into power positions as the solution to sexism is, to my mind, a misleading concept and a damaging one to our movement. Shirley seems to be steering without a rudder or, in other words, Shirley is ignoring history as well as economic and political theory.

Historically speaking, one point that is clearly exposed in studies on the lives of prehistoric women is that these women, along with the men, proved it possible to live communally, sharing the work according to abilities. There was no exploitation of one sex by the other as is the case today. If women and men could find it possible to live on an equal footing long ago, what happened to change that relationship to what we have today? Further reading shows that this relationship became eroded with the development of the phenomenon of private

property. Monogamous marriages were instituted to make sure who were the heirs. Women were valued for their role as producers of heirs, losing out on the equal status they had once enjoyed.

Also at this time it was the beginning of the division of the people into the rich and poor classes. In the upper classes women helped their men in the "building of their empires," but in the process all women lost their independence. Thus, it is to this day, with the exception of a few token women. For the sake of maintaining an economic system whereby the wealthy can stay in power, women as a whole have had their equal rights taken from them.

I suggest that women in the movement must know the past in order to understand the present and chart the future. One source is Capitalism, the family and personal life by Eli Zaretsky, available from Canadian Dimension. Another is an article by Dorothy Smith appearing in Vol. VI, No. 1, 1979 of Branching Out magazine entitled "Where there is oppression there is resistance."

Women are resisting in increasing numbers. The question is: What part is the women's movement willing to play in this process? Are we going to recognize the fundamental problem and plan accordingly, or are we going to maintain that replacing men with "any" woman in the present power structure is the solution?

Not just "any" woman, Shirley, but any woman or man who knows the score.

-Sally Davis
St. John's

C-R
Consciousness-Raising Groups
are now being formed by
N.S.W.C. - St. John's
call 753-0220
for information
Women's Centre
83 Military Road

NAC struggles onward

The 1979 National Action Committee Conference was a continuous series of experiences from my arrival on Thursday night to my departure on Monday. The first anxious moments were put in as I waited with the other "wait-listed" people in Halifax airport to learn if I would join Jill Schooley on the plane. Luckily I did. Upon my arrival, I met Ann Bell and Lynn Verge from Corner Brook and we joined Mary, Loretta, and Betty Burt (not sisters)-representatives from the women of Carter's Cove, New World Island who are trying to get unemployment insurance benefits based on earnings they made catching and drying squid last summer-for a meeting with Bud Cullen, Minister of Employment and Immigration on Friday morning.

Carol Swan (NAC Executive) had made appointments with Mr. Cullen, Tony Abbot, Minister of National Revenue, and the Human Rights Commission for the Burts. Since the Burts had only about five minutes to present their problem to Mr. Cullen, little was accomplished. He refused to acknowledge the possibility of discrimination and it was difficult to determine if he had been given misleading information or was just being stubborn. George Baker, MP for Gander-Twillingate, arrived in the Burts' room Thursday night and accompanied them, Lynn, Ann, and me to the meetings with Abbot and Cullen. He could best be described as a "politician" through and through. It is worth noting that he never raised a question in the House on this issue and, as far as we know, had never intervened; however, he was certainly making every effort to be visible and to speak for them on these occasions. He referred to himself as the "person who knows more about this than anyone" in the meeting with Abbot, to which I replied, "Humph."

Abbot was very receptive, seemed believing of the women's stories and promised some action. He promised that all of their claims would be investigated by April 30 and letters would be sent to them. Also, the head of appeals agreed to come to St. John's to look into the situation. There was also general acknowledgement that the questionnaires that had been sent to the women were ridiculous. These had been "developed" in Ottawa.

Next we went to the Human Rights Commission where the three women laid complaints against the Unemployment Insurance Commission and National Revenue. The intake worker seemed to feel there was a strong case of sex discrimination, but she was not permitted to make an commitment about this.

We met, after this, with James McGrath, MP for St. John's East, who agreed to raise a question about this situation in the House on the following Monday.

During the afternoon I was fortunate to have time to return to the conference in time to hear the yearly report from the Atlantic Provinces. Erica Furlong from Labrador West outshone the other people I heard in actual presentation. She deserves "Brownie points" for a great job in representing Newfoundland. We received loud applause on the opening of the Women's Centre and on the report as a whole. Many individuals were impressed at the establishment of a self-supporting centre and had questions for us over the weekend.

Our display was a small piece of a table and was somewhat subsumed by others around it, however, many Newsletters were taken and there were several positive comments (and sales) on the CARAL buttons. In future we might consider sending our flag or wall hanging as a focal point.

Friday evening we got together for a wine and cheese reception. The Persons Year design was unveiled and the designer introduced. Two young women who won essay contests on the subjects "Persons Year" and "International Year of the Child" were also introduced. They participated in the whole conference and their interest was encouraging.

The panel presentation on Saturday morning was excellent. Each speaker was articulate, vibrant, and full of enthusiasm for feminism. The common theme running through the speeches was that things haven't improved much for women and we'd better get together in the fight. If we can get them, copies of these speeches would be interest-

(Continued on page 10)

ing for everyone.

Monica Townsend pointed out that women's average incomes dropped seven per cent in comparison to men's according to 1976 figures. There were close to ½ million single-parent families in 1976 and 90 per cent were headed by women. Forty-three per cent of these had incomes below the poverty line, which was an increase of three per cent from 1974 figures. Ms. Townsend also discussed the infamous "Plan of Action." She pointed out that it promised 21 studies, 15 researches, 10 examinations, six reviews, and little else. The government is implementing legislation that effectively retards gaining of economic independence by women, e.g., UI cutbacks. She also stated that the National Chamber of Commerce intends to recommend to government that all maternity benefits be rescinded. I feel we should take action on this.

Dorothy O'Connell from the Ottawa Tenants Council for Public Housing spoke on the plight of poor women in Canada. She illustrated the evasive technique of governments with a pointed story: Four countries set out to study the elephant. France produced a paper on Sex and the Elephant, Britain wrote on the Elephant and the Empire, America produced Elephants—Bigger and Better, while the Canadians summed up with Elephants—Federal or Provincial Responsibility?

Simone Chatrand filled in for Dorothy O'Connell who would have represented the Canadian Chemical and Textile Union. Hers was a passionate call to action en français.

The rest of the day was taken up with workshops and voting for the executive. We chose one of eight workshops in the morning and afternoon. I attended "Counselling Services." The subjects covered included feminist counselling, a program for immigrant women who find themselves isolated in suburban communities, a feminist referral centre in Toronto, and group career counselling. The afternoon workshop was a disappointment. I feel we never addressed the topics, wife battering and crisis centres, to any satisfactory degree. The chair did not fulfill a chairperson's responsibilities.

The banquet speaker, Sheila Arnopoulos, addressed the situation of working immigrant women in Canada. She experienced many places herself where women work under deplorable conditions and don't make minimum wage, while she was researching a documentary report. The entertainment was provided by a trio women called The Red Light Singers (I believe.) They were excellent.

A list of the resolutions presented at the conference (and whether they were passed) is available at the Women's Centre. They were divided into the categories of: employment, income support, family law (native women's rights and divorce), counselling services (immigration, supportive material), criminal code amendments (prostitution, pornography), International Year of the Child, violence, Persons Year.

One of the resolutions underemployment concerned the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and suspension of the right to strike. This was voted on and rejected by one vote. A recount was requested and the resolution passed 33 to 29. Oddly, this resolution raised more emotion than any of the others. Since we had never discussed, I felt I should vote by my own conscience. I voted "Yes," my reason being that I did not see the wording of the resolution as supporting the union in totality. I saw the issue as support of collective bargaining, and I felt that lack of support would indicate that we, like the government believed unions were fine while weak.

The new NAC executive was elected as follows: president, Lynn McDonald; vice-presidents, Lorenne Clark, Marjorie Cohen, Carole Swan; treasurer, Anne Hill; secretary, Betsy Carr; members at large: Susan Ashley, N.S.; Margaret Eyans, Ont.; Jeanne Gariepy, Que.; Lee Grills, B.C.; Lynn Kaye, Ont.; Annette Legault, Que.; Jean MacKenzie, Sask.; Pat Preston, Alta.; Laurelle Ritchie, Ont.; Fareda Shaikh, Ont.; Lynn Verge, Nfld.

This promises to be an interesting year for all.

The Parliament lobby was very enlightening. The numbers were larger this year and the mood was one of frustration. The politicians did little to alleviate this. NAC intends to distribute the responses to our questions so I won't go into them at this time. Overall, the responses of the parties were discouraging, patronizing, and lacking in comprehension of the unjust position women find themselves in.

—Billie Thurston (Vice-Chair, NSWC)

Feminist historian SPEAKS ON BIRTH CONTROL ^{11.}

As early as the 19th century there were those who felt that women should have control over their own fertility.

The pamphleteers of the time were free thinkers rather than medical persons. They were radicals, unionists, feminists, etc. They pioneered the fight to allow free access to birth control, initially the fight for respectability rather than for medical reasons said Jane Lewis who spoke to the members of the Newfoundland Status of Womens Council on Monday, Mar. 26.

The first pamphleteers were laymen rather than doctors she said. The indications they gave for the use of contraceptives were always social and economic, rarely medical. The arguments for and against birth control have always been politically and morally charged Jane said. Birth control can be used as a means to greater individual freedom or as a means of social control, and when we talk about the latter we are talking about population control.

Jane spoke of the importance of the politics of this control illustrated by the debates and arguments that went on in the Western countries after refusals from Third World countries to take wholesale birth control.

In the 18th century and early

19th century the use of pessaries and the safe period were used but quite often incorrectly. As late as as 1918 the safe period was used back to front, being confused with the heat period in animals.

Jane described in her talk the pre-industrial and industrial methods of birth control. The pre-industrial methods, withdrawal, abstinence and the early condom, were used primarily before WWI. Douching, the cap or diaphragm were then included. Female pills were sold widely in Britain, and in the U.S. and Canada, though in Canada advertising birth control was illegal until 1967. These female pills were sold to abort but were in reality nothing stronger than tonics. Yet were sold for as long as forty years indicating how many women chose this method of birth control. This was the late 19th to early 20th century. Other abortative methods tried were lead pellets, slippery elm and other herbs.

Abortion was not considered immoral as long as a third party was not involved. This was used mainly by the working class as they middle class often called in a third party.

Jane went on to describe the early methods of douching and how the condom was developed, both to expensive to be used by the working class.

Letter (continued from page 4)

Newfoundland Status of Women Council should change its name.

The Corner Brook Status of Women Council is of the opinion that the onus is now on the Newfoundland Status of Women Council to change its name. A provincial Status of Women Council and common names are topics for future discussion by all groups.

It is hoped that the considerations outlined in this letter will be borne in mind by the members of the Newfoundland Status of Women Council when they meet and vote on a change of name on June 4. Whatever the outcome of that meeting, we look forward to future co-operation in our efforts to improve the quality of life for women in our province.

Yours sincerely,

CORNER BROOK STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCIL