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Appendices

- Appendix I Tables Referred to in the Document
Appendix II Abortion is Murder : The Attack from the Right
Appendix III The History of the Canadian Women's Movement

To follow:

- Appendix IV White Collar Workers (ACTE, PSA, hospital workers, teachers)

1. GENERAL THESES ON THE OPPRESSION OF WOMEN

A. HISTORICAL

1. A sexual division of labour which is related to the reproductive role of women and the long period of helplessness of human infants, etc. has always existed. The important question in terms of the oppression of women, however, is not the existence of a sexual division of labour based on the biological structures of the human species, but how this biological fact has intersected with and has been interpreted in the context of each specific socio-economic formation.

2. In primitive pre-class societies, the sexual division of labour was a practical division of labour made in the context of the need to obtain the necessities of life and to reproduce the human species, and related to the biological role and capacities of men and women. While in a physical sense there may have been a domination of men over women -- i.e. they were physically stronger, did not play the childbearing, nursing role etc. -- there appears to have been no systematic social, sexual, political or cultural oppression of women based on the sexual division of labour.

3. With the appearance of social surplus and the corresponding emergence of class society based on the appropriation of this surplus by a minority, the sexual division of labour assumed a social character for the ruling class. That is men became dominant within the ruling class given their greater physical strength, control of weapons, etc., and given the role of force in the initial appropriation of the social surplus (in the form of lands, herds, etc.) Questions of inheritance, the legitimacy of children etc., which related to the desire (or need) to preserve the wealth accumulated, meant that women of the ruling class were reduced to performing one function -- reproducing the ruling class. This in turn led to the exclusion of ruling class women from production and social life, the establishment of legal marriage and monogamy (for women) and the development of an ideology to justify and preserve the situation.

4. For the labouring classes, on the other hand, the establishment of class society meant that the sexual division of labour assumed a social meaning while still preserving its practical character. That is, the women of these classes continued to labour productively. The family continued to be a productive unit with all members involved in the production of necessities and social surplus. However, the ideology of the ruling class -- including the concept of the inferiority of women -- permeated the dominated classes of society and the social subordination of women in all classes resulted. Of course, these processes developed unevenly over many centuries.

5. With the advent of capitalism, production was no longer centered on the family unit, but was increasingly socialized and concentrated in large scale industrial units. However, in spite of a period of disintegration during the early stages of capitalism, as its former productive function was superseded and all members were drawn out of the family to labour for capital, the family did not disappear. While the role of the family in production ended, its role in reproduction did not. As capital's need for a healthy educated workforce grew, the labour time required for the maintenance and reproduction of labour power increased. Thus, it developed that the early intensive exploitation, pauperization etc. of the working class and the concurrent breakdown of the working class family were not in the longer term interests of developing capitalism, and the process of reinforcing the family structures began. In short then, the family under capitalism was transformed into the centre of domestic labour separated from social production. Large numbers of women were excluded from the productive process to labour in the family.

6. Capitalism thus altered the nature of the sexual division of labour. Originally the result of practical necessity, the sexual division of labour under capitalism has become almost completely social in character. There remains no material basis for its continuation. Capitalism in fact, created the preconditions for its complete abolition (technological sophistication, and the minimization of the importance of physical strength, development of the productive forces to the point where the socialization of reproduction tasks is materially possible.) It is the maintenance of the family institution and the sexual division of labour in the face of the achievement of the prerequisites for its abolition which has resulted in the extreme oppression of women under capitalism.

7. The locus of the oppression of women then is the family in class society. However, the form and function of the family and with it the role and status of women, have altered with changes in the mode of production. To understand the present oppression of women then, we must investigate the role of the family in capitalist society, and as well, the role of women within that family.

B. THE FAMILY IN CAPITALIST SOCIETY

8. Capitalism inherited a number of institutional forms from feudal society -- the family being one of the more important. However, while the family existed prior to capitalism, it is not simply an institution that has been carried over and no longer serves any real purpose. Its functions have been altered to meet the needs of the capitalist system. That is, although the socially productive role, which was the material basis of the family, was undercut by the establishment of capitalism, the family has been adapted such that it fulfils several important "economic" and

"ideological" functions which facilitate the preservation of capitalism as a system.

9. Domestic labour is responsible for the reproduction of labour power -- an essential component of the forces of production -- both on a generational and a day-to-day level. While domestic labour is necessary, it is not socially productive in the capitalist context, neither being productive of surplus value, nor having a direct relation with capital.

The labour of the domestic worker is only indirectly related to capital, since she does not enter into a wage relation with capital, but is supported by a portion of the wage received by the worker in the industrial unit. In fact, while the wage appears as payment for work performed, it is in reality payment for the reproduction of labour power. That is, it allows for the purchase of the goods and services to be consumed by the family and for the maintenance of the domestic worker, whose labour is necessary to transform these into useable form. This relation is further obscured by the fact that domestic labour is posed ideologically as a "labour of love".

Thus while the benefits of the reproduction of labour power (its utilization in production) accrue to the capitalist class, the costs of the reproduction of labour power are borne by the working class.

10. A related function is the nature of the nuclear family as a basic unit of consumption. Single family dwellings maximize the quantity of goods required to maintain the labour force. The isolation of women within this structure, their divorce from social production and social relationships increases their vulnerability to advertising directed towards them.

11. The family is also a repository of a sector of the reserve army of labour. Women, according to the dominant ideology are primarily wives and mothers; their place is in the home. However, when necessary women are drawn or forced (economically) from this "sanctuary" and into the labour force. The periods during and following the two world wars are the classic examples. In these periods women's participation in the labour force was encouraged, not only by patriotic appeals, but also by such things as state provision of child care. After the wars, following economic slowdown and the return of the men from the armed forces, women workers were no longer as necessary and therefore no longer encouraged. Ideological pressures against women working -- taking jobs away from the men who had "so valiantly defended their country" and who had families to support etc., -- mounted, and most importantly the provision of child care was drastically reduced. While the recent period of economic growth, including the rapid expansion of the public and service sectors, has resulted in a greater proportion of women in the work force on a more permanent basis, the family nonetheless continues to serve this function even if in a more limited way.

ii) Ideological Functions

12. The family's ideological function flows from and reflects back upon its economic functions. The fact that the family is the centre for the reproduction and maintenance of the work force, and that women, as wives and mothers, are responsible for this task, structures their consciousness, and the consciousness of other members of the family. The family, and women's role in it, are in turn maintained and justified by this ideology.

13. The family operates as an ideological institution in various ways. It is the locus of the early socialization of children -- instilling respect for authority (initially in the person of the mother and/or father), acceptance of the existing order and so on. The family serves as a refuge for male workers from the pressures of the "outside" world -- the wife performs the task of tension management.

In both these respects, the family is a conservatizing institution. Furthermore, because of the dependence of wife and children on the wages of the male worker, the family often retards the development of militancy. That is, workers who are compelled to support a family are less willing to engage in industrial action when such action involves risking their jobs. Pressures to settle strikes before they have been won also mount when the family begins to suffer from reduced income.

14. Within the family itself, women's labour is seen as economically non-functional, as of secondary importance; women are regarded as inferior beings. As this labour presents itself as personal service, the products of this labour being husband and children, and as the relation of this labour to capital is indirect and hidden, it is difficult for the housewife to locate the ultimate source of her oppression. Thus, her frustration is directed in a non-political way against her husband, who appears as the cause of her oppression. (This appearance, of course, has a basis in reality, since her subordination to his authority within the family is based on her material dependence on his wage.)

15. At a more general level, the importance of the impact of the traditional wife-mother role with all its implications on the consciousness of women should not be under-emphasized. The ideological justification and mystification of the family and "woman's nature" -- defined by her role in the family -- is so all-pervasive that it influences even the female personality structure. Thus, women are passive, weak, lacking self-confidence, emotional, personalist and so on. These general characteristics cannot be ignored; nor can they be voluntaristically overcome. The structures and prevailing ideology of capitalist society re-inforce these traits on a day-to-day, (hour by hour) basis. One result is a negative influence on women's ability to be instrumental politically -- whether in political organizations, trade unions, protest movements, etc. This aspect of the oppression of women

should influence the mode of work among women -- in all areas.

16. The family and the ideology surrounding it are supported by several bourgeois institutions, including the church and the educational and legal structures. All of these provide ideological props by citing the family as the key civilizing force, by glorifying the wife-mother role, by instilling respect for the social order generally and for the role of the family within that order, etc. As well, the educational system, through sex course streaming and limiting financial support to women students, and the legal system, through discriminatory legislation (against abortion, vagrancy laws, and laws on inheritance and property rights), play a functional role in respect to the maintenance of the family and the subordination of women.

17. However, the bourgeois family is by no means a stable institution. Rather, its stability is marred by a number of fundamental contradictions, which have created a crisis situation. These are contradictions of both an objective and subjective nature. On the one hand, advanced capitalism has required the services of women in the work force in increasing numbers and on a more permanent basis. It has also taken over many of the functions of the family -- schooling for children from the age of five, health care, care for the aged. As well, the development of the productive forces by capitalism means that society is now materially capable of assuming the task of maintaining the labour force -- that is, enough social wealth can now be created to provide nurseries, child care facilities, communal laundries, kitchens, etc. These developments have laid the basis for changes at the subjective level. The growing involvement of women in the labour force, and the reduction in the responsibilities of the family serve to undercut and weaken the ideological myth of the family. The subjective reactions in the past decade have been more or less conscious -- ranging from very high divorce rates, an increasing number of single parent families and unwed mothers, to the growth of a women's liberation movement and the spread of the ideas of this movement to broad layers of the population. The fact -- that the prerequisites for the abolition of the family exist, in conjunction with the crisis of the bourgeois family and the ferment caused by the women's liberation movement indicates that the potential for the radicalization of women continues -- for women in the work force as well as for the diminishing number who remain exclusively in the family. This process is discussed in greater detail later in this document.

C. WOMEN IN THE WORK FORCE

18. In spite of their role within the family and in the reproduction of labour power and an hegemonic ideology that has declared that role as primary and "natural", women have always constituted a section of the working class since the very emergence of the capitalist mode of production. Although historically the numbers

of women in the workforce have varied, (depending on the general level of prosperity, the availability of labour power, whether it was wartime or peacetime, etc.) since World War II there has been a consistent increase in the proportion of the work force that is female. This corresponds both to the general economic factors cited above, and to the enormous expansion of the service sector and the role of the state as well as the technological revolution of the past period. The effect of the above on the employment of women will be discussed again later on, -- at this point what is important to note is that women have been and are an ongoing component and an increasing proportion of the working class. As such, they constitute a significant part of the social power of the working class in their own right.

19. However, we must recognize at the same time that women are not simply on part of the work force but rather that the role of women in the family and in the reproduction of labour power as outlined previously underlies a sexual division of labour in the workplace. It is this role and the mystification surrounding the role which have been used to limit the nature and types of wage work available to women (sex-typing) and the poor conditions -- including low wages and the lack of job security associated with these types. At the same time, the socialization of women and the prevailing social ideology that places their role in the work force as secondary to their role as housewife-mother and their earnings as "auxiliary" has tended to cut across the emergence of an organized and united opposition to their super-exploitation as women workers. In short then, women are traditionally one of the weakest and one of the most exploited sectors of the working class.

20. However while it should be recognized that the ideology regarding their role in the family and their socialization has placed powerful obstacles in the path of organizing women in spite of their poor conditions, women in the workplace are much less isolated and less subject to the ideological limitations posed by the family role than housewives. In addition, the increasing economic pressures, etc. on women to enter and stay in the workforce is more and more putting women in an objective opposition to their historically assigned role and as this contradiction matures, the potential for explosive militancy is great.

21. The super-exploited position of women in the labour force, in combination with the continued existence of family structures and the surrounding ideology, weaken the working class as a whole. Male chauvinism and the acceptance by women of the concept of inferiority, divide the class deeply along sex-lines. Not only are women relegated to unskilled, underpaid, non-unionized sectors of the class, but within the trade union movement itself, great

barriers, both structural and ideological are placed in the way of their full participation. This isolation from the trade unions must be broken down, and to the extent that male workers are themselves perpetrators of the ideology of female inferiority in the workplace and trade unions, they must be educated and fought.

D. SUMMARY

22. The oppression of women is a socially rooted phenomenon, and not the result of the biological make-up of the female sex. Its locus is to be found in the family which fulfils a variety of economic and ideological functions important for the maintenance of capitalism.

23. However, capitalism has developed the prerequisites for the abolition of the oppression of women, just as it has laid the groundwork for its own abolition as a system. Thus, the socialist revolution, the seizure of power by the working class resulting in the destruction of capitalism, lays the basis for the liberation of women. (However, given centuries of socialization and the tenacity of ideological hang-overs, the accomplishment of the socialist revolution neither immediately results in nor guarantees this liberation.

24. Capitalism is presently suffering from a crisis in the institution of the family, in the context of a more general crisis of bourgeois social relations. These developments laid the basis for the rise of the women's liberation movement in the late 1960's and for the continued existence of a women's liberation milieu. They are also in part, a factor in the ongoing molecular radicalization.

25. The oppression of women divides the working class deeply and limits the activity of a sizeable sector of the class (i.e. working women). This fact determines the responsibility of revolutionaries to deal with this oppression in all areas of intervention. Serious propaganda and agitation around this question provide an opportunity for revolutionaries to exacerbate contradictions within the ideological hegemony of the bourgeoisie, emphasize the importance of working class unity in the face of a powerful enemy, and release the energies of an historically and potentially combative sector of the working class.

26. While such work is directed towards all members of the class, work with women around the question is of specific importance. The women to whom we give our attention in this period are women outside the family -- in the educational system and in the work force. Since these women have a social existence outside the confines of the family, they are less subject to ideological pressures than are housewives who remain in an atomized, isolated position. Their

situation outside the family in fact increases the impact of the contradiction between the predominant ideology of wife-mother role, and the reality of their situation as workers. As well, women workers as members of the class have a direct share in the social power of the class. In the present period this factor is especially important given the concentration of women in the public service sector and the analysis which ~~saa~~ indicates the rapid radicalization and militancy of this sector making it one of the most advanced of the Canadian working class.

27. While the argument advanced in this document is an anti-sectoralist approach to the question, we are not advocating ignoring the women's liberation milieu. Rather, in accord with the analysis of this milieu (detailed in the section "The Women's Liberation Milieu"), we are proposing a general propagandistic and limited action orientation to women in the milieu. Such work is important for two reasons:

- 1) a sizeable sector of the milieu can be characterised as having a more general anti-capitalist consciousness -- as a component of the left vanguard which we attempt to structure and hegemonize;
- 2) consciousness of the oppression of women is an aspect of the more general molecular radicalization. This factor means that an orientation to the milieu will allow us to influence newly radicalized women who are attracted to women's liberation activities; as well, in our more general approach to the radicalization, a sensible presentation of our positions on women will increase our credibility as a revolutionary organization which takes this question seriously.

II. THE OPPRESSION OF WOMEN AS A THEME OF INTERVENTION

A. WOMEN AND THE WORK FORCE

28. In the introductory section of this document the position of women in the workforce was discussed on a very general level in order to situate the role that the oppression of women plays in terms of the working class and its politics. However, to actually intervene in the areas in which women are concentrated and/or on the basis of the "woman question" generally, a more detailed understanding of the situation is necessary. What follows then is a

somewhat lengthy and statistical look at women in the work force -- where they are located, what unions, etc. As well, some of the conclusions which may and should be drawn from this information are set out in what at this point can only be the beginnings of our tasks and perspectives in this area.

i) Trends in the Participation of Women in the Labour Force

29. Prior to World War II, the percentage of women workers who were married was very low, (10% in 1931). The fact was that women were expected to and usually did leave the labour force when they got married. This stemmed from the heavily traditional socialization and expectations of women as well as from the objective fact that many places refused to hire married women and/or forced their female employees to resign when they married. This objective and ideological pressure to force/keep married women out of the labour market was intensified during the Depression when the already scarce jobs went to men who "had families to support".

30. During the fifties and early sixties and the post-war boom, the participation of women in the labour force increased progressively over the years, and with it the percentage of married women who worked. By 1961, it had risen as high as 47%. Most of these women, however, left the labour force with the birth of their first child and only returned to work when their last child entered school or left home.

Again this was the product of objective and subjective factors. Not only did the mystification of motherhood reach on of its all-time highs during this period, there was also the fact that those mothers who were prepared to risk "severely traumatizing" their children by returning to work, faced the problem of extremely limited and expensive childcare facilities. Women who wanted and/or needed to work had to depend on relatives or husbands to look after the children since only those women in the higher income brackets could afford to pay for childcare arrangements. (See Appendix, Tables 1 and 2.)

31. Since the late sixties, more and more women with young children have remained in or returned to the work force which among other things, has greatly increased the need and demand for government-sponsored childcare. They have been joined by growing numbers of middle-aged women making a "second entry" into the work force after a long period of absence while their children grew up. Thus by 1972, 56.9% of all working women were married and the percentage is rising. (See Appendix, Table 3.)

This development is primarily the result of the growing economic crisis and attack on the standard of living of the working class as well as the increasing costs of reproducing the next generation of labour power (especially in relation to higher education -- see next section). This economic pressure for women to return to work is re-inforced by and in turn re-inforces the decreased influence of the "mother-wife" socialization that so dominated the fifties, generation.

ii) How Many Women Work?

32. By 1972, according to official statistics, (See appendix, Table 4) 37.1% of all women worked and they constituted one third (33.6%) of the labour force. Many of these women work part-time (one quarter of the female labour force works fewer than 24 hours per week) and others are only hired on a temporary basis (casuals). Since these jobs usually require fewer skills and since daycare is rarely available, this type of employment is often the only possibility for a woman who has children and/or who has never worked or is returning to work after a long absence. These jobs are usually associated with low rates of pay, minimal job security and generally poor conditions. The willingness (need) of women to accept jobs on these terms not only allows capital to superexploit them, but also undermines the working class as a whole. This becomes even more clear when it is recognized that many companies -- such as Canada Packers -- and even the government, are busy turning what were permanent jobs into casual employment precisely because this makes the workers in those jobs ineligible not only for many of the benefits won by the unions but also for union membership itself.

33. What the above statistics do not indicate, is the numbers of women who want to be employed, who have searched for jobs but not found them. These women are not included in the official unemployment statistics since they have not entered the "official labour force". Their unemployment remains hidden in the "bosom of the nuclear family" that is used to justify not hiring them in the first place.

34. The statistics also do not show the female labour force that is hidden in the family farm or the family business, since in these cases the labour is unpaid. At present we know nothing about such women, although in the West the Waffle has apparently attempted to

do some work with farm women.

iii) What Do Women Earn?

35. Canada is presently experiencing an inflationary rate that has brought the living standards of the entire working class under attack. But inflation hits certain sections of the class even harder than it does others -- that is, those people on fixed incomes and those workers who are on the lower end of the wage scale who have no savings, are often unorganized, etc. This of course, is common knowledge, but what is important to note is that women workers make up a large section of these lower income workers. This is not only because they fill the lowest paying industrial and service jobs, but also because they receive far less than a man for performing similar jobs.

36. The official statistics for 1971 (see appendix, Table 5), reveal the situation quite clearly. In terms of the overall picture, in all occupational categories, full-time male workers make at least 50% more than full-time female workers. The differential is highest in sales (167.9%) and lowest in the clerical (56.7%) and the professional and technical (66.4%) categories. In all categories the differential increases when part-time and casual work is included.

The situation is the same for similarly described blue collar jobs -- men consistently make more than women workers, sometimes by as much as 100%, (see Appendix, Table 6). The fact is that in blue collar, white collar and professional jobs, the official statistics show only one occupation in which women earn more than men -- this was in hotels with fewer than 200 employees. Women hotel workers earned \$1.79 per hour while male workers earned \$1.75 per hour.

37. The reasons given to justify this situation are varied. They range from the excuse that men are more skilled to the excuse that they are more likely to stay on the job and less likely to be absent than women who have "their" children to look after, and so on. They all boil down to the fact that the oppression of women perpetuated by capitalism is used to superexploit women as wage workers and/or exclude them from the work force altogether.

iv) Where Do Women Work?

38. Women have been concentrated in a relatively small number of jobs and this concentration has continued to rise. These are sex-typed jobs which are extensions of women's role in the family. The professions in which women are concentrated are extensions of the mother role -- teacher, nurse and social worker. Many service and manufacturing jobs are extensions of the housewife role -- food preparation and service, the canning industry, cooks, waitresses, domestics, cleaners of offices, laundry workers, etc. A lot of

clerical jobs, particularly receptionists, and service jobs like waitresses, bunny girls and stewardesses are extensions of women's role as sex object.

39. Since 1921, the most rapidly expanding part of the workforce has been the white collar and service sectors. This stems from not only the technological revolution and the rationalization of industry, but also from the growth of the administrative apparatus -- including the public service -- which is increasingly necessary to the maintenance of the capitalist system. This development has obviously the most significant impact on the situation of women workers since the menial/clerical jobs connected with these sectors have been sex-typed for women as outlined above.

40. Given this development it is not surprising then to find that in 1972 the occupational categories in which women are concentrated are clerical (32.9%) and service and recreation (21.4% of all women workers). The next highest categories are professional and technical (17.4%) and craft production and related workers (10.9%). (See Appendix, Tables 4 & 7). These last correspond on the one hand to the trend towards more highly educated women who remain in the work force longer and on the other, to the tendency for sweat shop industries such as the craft industries to employ women.

41. In terms of employment in the "blue-collar" industrial-manufacturing sector as a whole, women constitute almost one-quarter of the total (23.6%) labour force employed in that sector. The majority of these women are concentrated into specific small, labour intensive industries such as textiles, dressmaking, tobacco products, etc. However, a growing percentage of the women included in the figures are clerical workers, working in the office and administration sections of the larger manufacturing plants.

v) Women Workers and Unions

42. Since statistics on women's union membership have been available, THE UNIONIZATION OF WOMEN HAS BEEN INCREASING AT A FASTER PACE THAN FOR MEN EMPLOYEES.

Nationally, between 1962 and 1970 although the number of women workers only increased by 51.4%, from 248,884 to 513,203 -- an increase of 106.2%! Over the same period, men's union membership increased by only 38.4% -- from 1,267,526 to 1,754,323 members. (See Table 8 in Appendix).

Correspondingly, women's share ~~of~~ of total union membership increased from 16.4% to 22.6% between 1962 and 1970. However, women's representation in labour unions is still lower than their share of the total work force, which was 34.7% in 1970, i.e. ONE OUT OF EVERY THREE WORKERS IS A WOMAN; BUT LESS THAN ONE OUT OF EVERY FOUR UNION MEMBERS IS A WOMAN.

Thus the fact remains that not only do the majority of Canadian workers not belong to unions, but also, PROPORTIONATELY FEWER WOMEN THAN MEN ARE UNIONIZED. In 1970, 21.9% of women in the work force, and 39.9% of men were union members. However, the gap between men and women appears to be closing, since female union members' share of the work force increased by 5.8 percentage points between 1962 and 1970, compared to only 3.0 points for men (see Appendix, Table 9).

43. WOMEN'S UNION MEMBERSHIP IS CONCENTRATED INTO A FEW UNIONS. Out of a total of 173 reporting labour organizations in Canada, 26 (15.0%) had no women members, and women formed the minority of members in all but 30 (17.4%) reporting organizations. 57.6% of women union members belong to labour organizations where they are in the minority, while 42.4% belong to unions where women make up more than half of the membership.

Labour organizations with 10,000 or more women members in 1970 included:

Quebec Teachers' Corporation	(53,378)
Canadian Union of Public Employees	(49,983)
National Federation of Services	(38,389)
Public Service Alliance of Canada	(26,620)
Service Employees' International Union	(23,983)
International Ladies Garment Workers Union	(16,995)
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America	(15,739)
Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America	(13,603)
Registered Nurses Association of British Columbia	(13,241)
Civil Service Association of Ontario	(11,981)
Alberta Association of Registered Nurses	(11,875)
Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America	(11,372)

Women are also well represented in unions connected with manufacturing of electrical goods, textiles, clothing and in the retail trade, hospitality and communications industries.

44. National data for 1969, shows that women's share of union membership parallels their share of employment in each industry, although at a consistently lower level. For instance, 61.8% of all service employees are women, and 56.0% of all union members in this industry are women.

However, the distribution of women union members by industry

does not parallel their employment distribution consistently. In relation to their industrial distribution women are "over-unionized" in manufacturing, communications, and public administration. For example, only 17.6% of women paid workers are in the manufacturing industry, but 31.5% of women union members work in manufacturing. Women are relatively "under-unionized" in the trade, service and finance industries. Although 7.3% of all women paid workers are employed in the finance, insurance and real estate industry, less than one percent of all women union members work in this industry.

These distributions are not surprising, however, given that the most heavily unionized sector of the work force is in the manufacturing industry and that the trade, service and finance industries ~~are~~ are barely unionized at all. In other words, the percentage of women union members corresponds to the level of unionization of the particular industry not to the concentration of women workers.

vi) Unionizing Women Workers and the Role of Women in Unions

45. As was noted above, the percentage of women workers in unions is increasing and, at a faster rate than for male workers. This is related to the fact that the traditionally unorganized "service" occupations in which women are concentrated -- government employees, hospital workers, clerical positions in financial institutions, etc are becoming more militant and conscious of themselves as workers as they see their already low standards of living eroded still further. The ideas of the women's liberation movement and the radicalization of other sectors has also had an impact.

46. However, it is important to note that although the number of unionized women workers is increasing, many women workers are casuals or part-time workers. This has limited the degree of unionization that is possible among women workers, since, in most cases, part-time and casual workers are ineligible for union membership. The previously mentioned trend towards hiring only on a "casual" basis will only reinforce this problem since it is not only easier to turn the classically "female" jobs into casual work because of their very character -- unskilled, clerical, etc -- but it is also easier to "attract women to such jobs because they have little or no choice.

47. In any case, the "older" industrial and craft unions have shown little interest in organizing the emerging radicalized white collar and service sector employees or in taking up the problems of women workers (especially casuals) -- although the CLC did finance the largely unsuccessful ACTE campaign. (See Appendix for more details) Rather, it has been the newer unions such as CUPE that have been doing this work.

This does not mean however that these unions have been specifically oriented towards unionizing women or that women's demands have occupied a particularly important role in their platforms or at the negotiating table. It must be recognized that CUPE and other unionization drives stem largely from the need of a new union to increase its membership and weight and to enlarge its dues base. The new membership is heavily female simply because they are organizing in the sectors in which there is a concentration of female workers.

48. The lack of orientation to women is reflected in the role played by women who are inside the unions. Not only is there an under-representation of women in the leadership (see Appendix, Table 11) there is also a low rate of participation in union functions generally. It is not adequate to explain this phenomenon solely in terms of the low level of consciousness of female workers. While it is true that this is a problem, the increasing degree of permanency of women workers in the work force has tended to result in a higher level of consciousness regarding union issues, seeing themselves as workers, etc., than in the past. What we must now consider is the objective barriers placed in the way of female participation in unions. These things include the fact that that union meetings are held during the off-work hours which makes it impossible for women with children and no childcare to attend.

49. Finally it is important to note that while union bureaucracies may not be initiating or putting any muscle behind demands such as equal ~~pay~~ pay, equal classification, day care, etc., they are increasingly being pressured to take up these issues by women workers and women's liberationists generally.

vii) Housewives and Strikes

50. The role of housewives in regard to strikes is a complex one. Housewives tend to be conservative because it is not easy for a woman who depends upon her husband's wage for both her and her children's survival to accept a drop or cutting off of that wage for a strike which victory and gains are uncertain. However, women and housewives have a proud history in the labour movement in terms of such things as strike support committees. While the current level of workers' struggles in North America has not yet promoted many such committees, the support group in the Quebec Firestone strike is a forerunner of the type of organization possible.

Unless housewives are drawn into strike support, the danger that they can be organized into pressuring for going back to work is an increasing one as the bourgeoisie tries to utilize every available means to cool out economic unrest. This has already been tried in Britain where the IMG was able to intervene successfully and counter-organize strike support.

If housewives have not yet picked up this mode of struggle, neither have their husbands. One of our tasks is to attempt to combat any negative actions and sentiments on the part of striking workers. We must encourage housewives active self-organized strike support, and, needless to say, we must also encourage active support by men when their wives are striking. Successful implementation of these tasks can go a long way towards forging working class unity and cutting across the divisiveness of the nuclear family.

viii) Themes of Intervention

a) General

51. The oppression of women is not a moral question but one which divides and weakens the working class as a whole. On the one hand, this is a result of the way in which capital uses the oppression of women within the family to pay women less money, to limit the kinds of work available to them, to deprive them of job security and benefits, - in short, to superexploit them as workers. This situation undermines the working conditions and living standards of all workers. On the other hand, however, it is the sexism within the class itself that divides it and hinders it from reaching its full fighting strength. This sexism manifests itself in the failure of the organized workers' movement - i.e. the unions - to take up and fight for the rights of women workers (including the right to unionize) and in their failure to deal with the role of women in the internal life of the unions. The result of this is not only to isolate those women workers who are prepared to or who are engaged in struggle - thereby ensuring their defeat and dealing a blow to the working class as a whole - it also leaves themselves open to the possibility of counter mobilizations and strike-breaking, etc. by women workers whose consciousness is limited by their socialization as women.

52. Given the above then, it is clear that we must begin to integrate work on the 'woman question' into all our interventions into the working class. We must push for the working class to take up the situation for women workers and, as well, the role that women do and could play within the labour movement itself. The general themes for our intervention will be 'For the Unity of the Working Class' and 'For Democracy in the Trade Unions - For Rank and File Control' and we particularly want to raise demands and do propaganda work around the following.

Equality for Women Workers - An End to the Oppression of Women

-- Equal pay, equal access to all jobs and to all available job training. This may be combined with a demand for equal increases in pay rather than percentage increases which work against women in the lowest pay levels. When the situation arises we should engage in struggles around the failure to hire qualified women for certain sex-typed positions, generalizing these struggles and pointing out the role of the state (Women's Bureau) and the union bureaucracies who supposedly protect women workers against this kind of discrimination. When struggles around equal pay and equal access arise in the class, it should also be possible to build

support for the struggle among women students and women in the women's liberation milieu.

-- Maternity and paternity leave with no loss in pay or seniority.

-- One classification for all - the highest. This demand will become increasingly relevant with rationalization, both with the threats of further divisions in pay scales and as workers begin to realize that each job is necessary to the whole. It is particularly relevant to women workers who tend to be hit hardest by rationalizations. They are either released altogether or turned into casual workers.

-- End unemployment through a sliding scale of wages and hours. The right to work for all who want, a shorter work week with no loss in pay. Again this is applicable to rationalization and in the case of general unemployment which hit women disproportionately.

-- End ranking (paying secretaries according to boss' level and tying their promotions to his)... End all restrictions on appearance. Women in many clerical jobs are hired not just for their skilled labour but as sex objects. They have to spend a large percentage of their meagre salaries on their wardrobe, hair and cosmetics. The necessity of being a sex object is not only oppressive and demeaning it is expensive and time consuming. In addition to this, secretaries are expected to play a 'wife' role in relation to their bosses - to be faithful and advancing (or leaving) as he does.

-- Free quality health care for all. This demand has obvious relevance for women workers concentrated in the hospitals.

-- In addition to demands that immediately relate to the work situation we want to call for working class support for demands related to the oppression of women generally. These would include demands and struggles around childcare, abortion on demand, etc. We also want to struggle against sexist attitudes in the workplace which divide male workers from female workers and prevent them from viewing them as militants and fellow workers. This is particularly true when the women workers are concentrated in to the office-clerical jobs within an industry.

-- Finally we want to struggle against the division of male wage workers from domestic workers in the home. In this context we would raise, in a propagandistic way demands around such things as free laundries and free, hot, quality meals for workers on all shifts.

Organizing the Unorganized

-- Non-unionized workers are divided from unionized workers and the majority of women workers are not unionized. Rank and file trade unionists must be mobilized to support organizing drives among women workers. In connection with this, we call for full union benefits and participation for part-time and casual workers since the use of this type of labour undermines the strength of unions and, in fact, many industries have turned to using this kind of labour for this reason. Since women workers are often hired on this basis, the non-unionization of part-time and casual workers particularly affects them.

-- Although we always call for support for striking workers, it is particularly important in relation to striking women workers since they are often concentrated in small, labour intensive industries in which struggles can be lost and unionizing or negotiating attempts washed unless they are supported by other unionists and defended against the police and strike-breakers (Dare, Texpack, Quebec garment workers).

Democracy in the Unions - Involvement of Women Workers

- Union meetings during working hours so those with family responsibilities can attend. Union paid childcare for meetings and educational sessions not held during work hours.
- An end to sex-typing in union publications and educational materials, tell the history of women union militants in educational series.
- An end to limiting the role of women members to typing, coffee-making and tension managing.
- Encourage the self-organization of spouses in support of strikes.

B) Women Workers

53. While it is necessary for the organization to integrate work on the oppression of women into all our interventions into the working class as a whole, it is also necessary to begin to address ourselves specifically to women workers. This should be done not only in the context of attempting to integrate them into the working class movement and struggles so they will not act in a reactionary fashion as was mentioned earlier, but also in the context of understanding the potential for militant and explosive - indeed exemplary - actions taken by women workers. In other words, we can no longer take the 'paternalistic' view that all women workers are essentially and always backward elements that must be 'brought along and developed' but must recognize that in certain instances - and this we must examine more carefully - they are to be counted as among the most advanced elements, as among the sector that offer the best possibilities for our work.

54. As revolutionary strategists, we recognize the importance of concentrating our forces on the 'weak links' in the bourgeois armour. Women workers constitute one of those 'weak links' precisely because their economic exploitation intersects with their oppression as women. The result is that the situation of women workers exhibits all the objective characteristics of 'permanent revolution'.

55. At present, our perspectives on work with women workers could only be tentative. This is because our analysis itself has only been begun and because it is necessary to discuss and prioritize this work within the framework of the overall perspectives and resources of the organization. The following should be noted, however, and the perspective of developing and rounding out our understanding of and tasks in relation to this area should be adopted.

1. There is a relationship between upsurges in the public sector - teachers, hospitals, CUPE and where women workers and militants are concentrated. At the very best, this upsurge is directly related to the concentration of women workers; at the very least, it necessitates taking a relationship to the 'woman question' since women workers are concentrated in these areas.
2. Our work among teachers although important, is limited by the lack of comrades who can work in the area. We remain at a disadvantage to the LSA. The problem of developing an internal intervention in the hospitals is similarly limited.

3. In the rest of the public sector, CUPE is the most fruitful area for intervention.
4. The PSAC and CSAO because of the position of government workers (the restrictions in some areas of political activity, the large number of casuals) and the union structures which practically forbid rank and file participation are not as useful. We should watch for any moves to break out of this and become more militant, however, in view of such recent events as the secretary's picket and the recent activity of the CSAO over the right to strike.
5. We have - in Toronto at least - no women comrades in blue collar jobs or industry. Our male comrade in Packers, however, has consistently and in an exemplary fashion raised the 'woman question' in his job situation and in his union. Consideration must eventually be given to these areas.

56. Since we want to make interventions aimed specifically at women workers, the RMG should hold forums on women workers which are broadly advertised at work places where women are concentrated, and held at times and places convenient to workers, preferably not on campus. Our experience in the last year has shown that working women will be attracted to such meetings (the women's conference in Kitchener, the election meeting in Peterborough, and the Toronto women workers' educational series). The press must continue to have polemical articles directed at the women's milieu but we must also begin to use the press to address women workers and their problems.

B. WOMEN AND EDUCATION

i) High School Women

57. On a formal level all children and young people have equal access to primary and secondary education - in fact, they are normally required by law to attend school until they are sixteen. This, however, is only on a formal level since there is not only a streaming of students according to their class there is also a streaming according to sex.

58. Sex streaming occurs on a number of levels. Concretely it can be seen in such things as the facilities available for each of the sexes, in course timetabling (e.g. counterposing home economics and industrial arts) and guidance counselling. On a more subtle but nonetheless fundamental, level, there is the general socialization of the sexes that occurs before and continues throughout the school years. In any case, the end result is to consistently limit the opportunities available to women and to structure the consciousness of women around seeing their future role as that of wife and mother first and anything else second.

59. Although sex streaming occurs in all classes, the relationship between sex streaming and working class females is particularly severe. This is shown by such things as the fact that the heaviest sex streaming occurs in the four- and two-year "end of the road" courses which are overwhelmingly working class in their composition. Working class women streamed into commercial classes are taught appropriate work attitudes, to be charming, self-less sex objects that are able to anticipate the needs of their male employers (like efficient wives performing a labour of love) and to always keep the interests of the company foremost in their minds. They and the women who graduate from vocational courses as waitresses, service help, etc. (if they can find work at all after this training) will be among the most exploited, poorly paid non-unionized members of the labour force.

60. The general sex-streaming that occurs in relation to courses of study, counselling regarding future vocations, etc. is re-inforced on the personal and social levels. High school activities such as cheerleading, the formal Queen contest, etc. reinforce the views that both male and female students have about women's role and re-inforce the sexual objectification of women which is a part of that role. Teachers - and particularly male teachers - also do their part by treating female students as intellectually

incapable (especially in the maths, sciences and technical subjects), by sexual games-playing, by talking about female students in terms of their physical attractiveness, etc.

ii) Women in Post-Secondary Education

61. Women make up 35% of the total enrollment at universities, but a disproportionate number of these women are located in the humanities and social sciences. This situation is a result of the fact that these courses and the jobs they (used to) lead to are "service" oriented and therefore a suitable extension of the role women are socialized to assume. In addition to this more general socialization, of course, female high school are heavily counselled to enter these fields - that is, when they are not actively discouraged from continuing their education at all.

In some fields - e.g. law and medicine - the barriers are more than ideological. By limiting the number of positions available for females, by the awarding of grants, etc., female students are actively and objectively barred from entrance. While law and medicine are the star examples of this kind of discrimination, they are not alone. The subtle use of grants - coupled with the fact that working class families are more likely to support a son who is attending university - effectively limits females in a whole number of fields, if not from university altogether.

It is also interesting (although not surprising) to note that a greater percentage of women than men enroll in evening and extension courses. This stems from the lack of childcare and housekeeping facilities as well as the fact that the schooling and careers of males are put first.

The fact that the proportion of women doing graduate studies is lower now than it was in 1930 is also a reflection of the barriers that still face women in spite of the increase in post-secondary education generally. In 1930, the women and men who went to university were part of the bourgeoisie. Money and childcare have never been problems for them.

62. Thus the university community is no more a shining example of sexual equality than the high school. And, as in the high school, this is reflected in the social life and attitudes that prevail. Discrepancies in facilities, cheerleading, campus queen contests, sexist professors -- all these and many more examples exist and are an integral part of university life.

63. Sex streaming and the limitation of the opportunities available to women is even more pronounced in community colleges than in universities. Like the two- and four-year high school courses previously mentioned, the community colleges are oriented to vocational training and they are overwhelmingly working class in composition. Their course structures and content much more heavily anticipate the sexual division of labour in the workforce than university courses and structures do. In fact, although they are post-secondary educational institutions, they are more like high schools than universities in terms of the degree of repression, overt sex-streaming, etc. that exists there.

iii) The Oppression of Young People in the Family

64. Children and young people, as well as women are oppressed under capitalism. Like women, they lost their role in social production with the development of capitalism and became increasingly economically dependent on the wage-earning father-husband. In fact, the stages of "childhood" and the "teen-age" years were creations of capitalism.

65. Although children as well as their parents were part of the labouring masses during the earliest stages of capitalism, the increasing need for a healthy, well-educated workforce resulted in the creation of an educational system and the growth of restrictions on the use of child labour. More and more, job training was shifted from the workplace to the public schools. This meant the expense shifted from the capitalist who paid for on-the-job training to the working class families whose taxes paid for the schools and whose wages would have to pay for the maintenance of the "worker" being trained. On the one hand, the result of this shift was to increase the oppression of women who had to spend an increasing number of years in the reproduction of labour power. On the other, it increased the oppression of young people who lost the wage they received for learning on the job and who consequently were forced to spend an increasing number of years as financial dependents of their parents.

66. With the third industrial revolution the time required to reproduce labour power (of the next generation) increased even more as more young people entered post secondary education (including, in Canada, many working class youth). This lengthened the period of dependence for young people as well putting an additional financial strain on the nuclear family which continued to bear the cost of reproducing the next generation of workers. One of the financial factors driving many married women into the labour force

during this period was the rising cost of reproducing the labour power of the next generation. In many cases, they replaced young people as the second income earner in the family thereby increasing the labour time of women in the family still further and intensifying their oppression in their dual role.

67. Thus as the time required to reproduce labour power lengthened the period of economic dependence of children increased and with it their oppression and the related oppression of women. Under capitalism, individuals who have passed puberty are no longer considered mature adults, but rather immature teenagers. This extended period of immaturity structured by capitalism is reinforced by the state. A complex web of laws and practices exist to deprive juveniles of their legal rights and guarantee their oppression in the family.

68. However, while all young people are oppressed, the oppression experienced by young women is particularly severe. The general situation of economic dependency, repressive laws, etc. that affect her as a young person intersect with her oppression and socialization as a woman with the result that her freedom and her possibilities are even more constrained than those of a young male. In fact, it is precisely her economic dependence on the family that makes the family such a strong agent of socialization under capitalism. And it is in the family that the locus of the oppression of women is to be found and that the primary sex-role socialization is to be found. The fact that laws exist which allow parents to charge their daughter with vagrancy and confine her to a home for juvenile offenders if they suspect she is having sexual relations and she spends a night away from home, that require doctors to obtain parental consent before giving a young women contraceptive devices or an abortion, and so on merely re-inforce this oppression.

69 For women who are in university, the repression - particularly in terms of sexual gratification - is less pronounced than it once was. Not only are university women often living away from home and hence an immediately repressive situation, they are also less subject to the "in loco parentis" role that universities used to play. Moreover, particularly since the late sixties, the university is a much more intellectually stimulating/free environment and this too has its effect in providing the potential for university women to radicalize around and rebel against their oppression.

However, while it is important to note the possibilities for university As distinct from high school students in general and women in particular it is equally important not to overemphasize the degree of independence they possess either ideologically - from their socialization- or economically - from their parents.

iv) Workers and the Educational System

70. The situation of female workers within the educational system is analogous to - indeed it is an extension of - that of female students. In other words, they experience a consistent limiting of opportunity and devaluation of their abilities.

71. In the high schools, women teachers number fewer than male teachers - although in primary schools they predominate. They are concentrated into the social science and language as well as business courses. Few become department heads and even fewer principals.

The situation is hardly better in universities - in fact, it is probably worse. Very few women teach at the university level and in the higher ranks there are even fewer. This, as with secondary school teachers, reflects an earlier sex-streaming and limitation in educational opportunities as well as the prejudices of hiring boards, etc. In some universities, regulations exist that forbid the hiring of female professors if their husbands are also to be on staff. Those women who do make it on staff are generally paid less than male professors at every level and are often hired only on a part-time or sessional basis. This, of course, makes them ineligible for benefits such as pension rights, insurance, research and summer stipends, compensation for travel to meetings and secretarial services for research work.

72. A majority of the non-academic staff employed by universities are women in secretarial/clerical positions who are often unorganized, and at the very lowest end of the pay scale. The second largest set of women hired on campuses are those who work on the maintenance staff as cleaners and cafeteria workers. Invariably they receive lower wages than men hired to do the same work, although they frequently earn more than the secretarial/clerical staff. Even in areas where women have predominated, such as computer centre staffing, administration and librarianship, it is men who hold a majority of the high ranking positions.

v) Themes of Intervention

73. On a general level, the educational system serves to perpetuate capitalism by providing the necessary vocational training for the future labour force and by ideologically preparing that labour force to accept their role and capitalism as a system. Thus it comes as no surprise that the oppression of women is firmly entrenched within the educational system and that, in fact, the educational system plays a key role in objectively and subjectively

limiting the possibilities for women as a sex and, inter-related with that, as workers and militants. At all levels and in every possible, we must integrate work on the "woman question" into all our interventions in the high school and post-secondary institutions.

The following are themes of intervention we would raise of particular relevance to high school and/or post secondary school women.

Sexuality

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- Repeal all laws denying sexual freedom, abortion and birth control
- Free abortion and contraception on demand to women of all ages and marital status with complete confidentiality between doctor and patient
- Sex education, including birth control, abortion, venereal disease homosexuality, masturbation, female and male orgasm, etc. End the censorship of discussion and materials.
- Stop discrimination against pregnant high school women who decide to have their children
- Unity of teachers and students against sexual repression
- No restrictions, sexual or otherwise, on women who live in residences.

Streaming and Sex-typing

- Abolish cheerleading (women should not be encouraged to be sex object observers of male competitive team sports). Equal funds and equal facilities for any sports women choose to play. Self-defense training for women.
- Equal opportunity for girls and women to study any subject they choose. End sex-typing.
- In vocational and commercial courses include lessons on how to form a trade union and remove any reference to charm and sexual role-playing from the curriculum.
- Include women's studies as a subject option to counter women's socialization.

Access to Social Production

- Free 24 hour parent-worker controlled public childcare.
- Equal pay for women and equal access to all jobs.
- Equal rights under labour laws for young workers, including students and part-timers; union rates and organization. Organization into trade unions is particularly important to cut across the use of student labour as scab labour, not only within universities but also in summer jobs in industry.
- An annual salary for all high school and post-secondary school students with free food service and cleaning and laundry.

74. While the benefits of the training of young people at this time clearly go to capital, the costs of training and maintaining the next generation of workers has fallen on the nuclear family. This cost has increased as the educational requirements of capital have increased. The result has been an intensification of the related oppression of women and young people under capitalism as outlined previously.

In addition to interventions around the oppression of young women in and by the educational system, then, we want to do propaganda work around the relationship between the oppression of women and young people. Demands would include such things as "an annual salary for all high school and post-secondary students" (as mentioned above) since this type of demand would remove the economic dependence of young people on the family as well as the burden on the family itself. As well we would want to do work related to freeing women from their oppression in the home - ie. around socialized housework.

75. Finally, of course, we want to intervene around student/teacher/support staff unity. In this context, we want to raise the question of the oppression of women in relation to the situations of women teachers and support staff as well as in relation to the role of teachers in the oppression of young women.

C. INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY WORK AND WORK WITH IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

i). General

76. A central theme of this document is that the question of women should become a integrated part of all our interventions. This holds true for international solidarity work and for work in the immigrant communities. However, at this time the Women's Commission is not in a position to provide detailed proposals for this area. Such will be possible after a serious collaboration with the International Solidarity Commission. What follows then, are some general guidelines and motivations for the integration of the "woman question" into solidarity work.

77. In the context of international solidarity work the question of the situation of women in a particular country and/or the role of women in the revolutionary movements should be raised whenever possible. Integrating an analysis of women into our propaganda will not only allow us to attract women who have radicalized around this question, it will also extend the consciousness of those who are primarily concerned with international solidarity work. In order to accomplish this, however, it will be necessary to deepen our own understanding of the process of permanent revolution, of the position of women in the "third world" and the USSR, of the

women's liberation movements in Europe, etc. We will also have to learn how to pose this question so that it is not understood as a fabrication or artificial adaptation to feminism on our part.

78. We will continue to develop contacts in emigré and immigrant communities through our international solidarity work. Many of these contacts are products of extremely sexist cultures. It is important that the RMG not adapt to the sexism of these contacts - we should continue to raise women's issues in our propaganda in this milieu and also be prepared to struggle with these contacts around sexism in the individual conversations we have with them.

79. When we are attempting to build international solidarity actions we should address the women's liberation milieu. As outlined in the section on the women's milieu, there is a sector of the milieu which can be mobilized in solidarity actions. We should approach these women as part of the radical left and not specifically as women. However, we should also make special appeals to them (e.g. a "Women in Chile" forum, as held by the BC comrades, or by suggesting that they organize women's contingents in solidarity demonstrations) since they are more likely to become involved on that basis. The participation of these women in international solidarity work is important in beginning a common practice with them and developing them politically from their single focus on women.

ii) East Europe Work

80. Although the general motivation for the integration of women's liberation into our interventions applies as well to work in the Eastern Europe milieu, there are (obviously) specific questions to be dealt with here. We must begin to elaborate our analysis of the degeneration of the position of women under Stalin and the situation of women in the USSR at present. Such work, especially if carried on in collaboration with East European contacts will allow us to draw them closer to our political positions. Some of the women with whom we have contact are developing an understanding of the oppression of women (in capitalist and post-capitalist societies) and there is some possibility of involving them in such activities as the International Socialist Women's Conference.

81. An elaboration of our positions on women in the degenerated and deformed workers states is also important for work in the women's milieu itself, insofar as there are still many women who argue against revolution by pointing to the fact that women did not achieve liberation in the Russian Revolution.

3. THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MILIEU

A. THE CONTEXT

82. The context for the emergence of the Women's Liberation Movement in the late sixties was one of mounting contradiction surrounding the traditional role of women and threatening the stability of the family unit. In the boom period following the Second World War and in connection with both the increased role of the state and the technological revolution, there was a demand for women to return to or enter the work force. They were needed both because there was a general shortage of labour and because there was an enormous expansion in the clerical/service jobs normally sex-typed for females. At the same time, the rise in the standard of living as well as in expectations regarding the "necessities of life", - (the consumer mentality, aspirations to be upwardly mobile, etc. all encouraged greatly by the development of mass advertising, t.v., etc.) - encouraged women to remain in or return to the workforce even if married or once the children were at school.

Since the late sixties, of course, the rising inflation rate, the decline in real wages and the increase in unemployment has made the return to work much more clearly an economic necessity.

83. The movement of married women into the workforce, however, did not release them from their traditional tasks as wife and mother - it merely doubled their load. At the same time, the possibility for a certain economic independence, social contact and development, put them in an objective contradiction with their traditional role. This general contradiction was heightened by the continuing development of mass produced "prepared" foods, labour-saving devices, and services such as laundries, daycare centres, etc. These developments by no means eliminated housework or its private character....in fact, they barely reduced the overall number of hours required and, of course, the costs were prohibitive to large numbers of working class families. At the same time though they did clearly indicate the potential that exists to do away with individualized household drudgery.

84. The technological revolution and post-war expansion did not just demand more workers, however, it demanded a much more highly educated workforce. Thus, the number of people finishing high school and going on to post-secondary education or training increased enormously. This trend toward longer schooling and higher job expectations included women who were increasingly conscious of the possibilities of remaining in the workforce even after marriage.

85. For women students and graduates, the contradictions were compounded. On one level, they experienced the frustration of being highly educated yet still largely restricted to low status, low paying clerical types of jobs. This was partly because as women they had been directed towards the more 'female' liberal arts courses rather than the 'male' dominated fields of technology and science - which is where many of the job openings were being created. But it was largely the result of the sexist attitudes which still predominated around the hiring of female staff.

86. The second level of contradiction was between the growing job expectation and educational level of women and the social pressures to "get a husband, have children", etc., and all that that implied. To the extent that these social expectations had general implications for their job/life (by restricting the types of work available, keeping the wage level low, etc.) or personal implications (such as denying one's intellectual capacity, sexual objectification, etc.), the frustration was deepened.

B. THE RISE AND FALL OF THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT

86. It was women in the universities and working women with some university education who formed the base of the women's liberation movement in the late sixties. But the radicalization of these women around their oppression occurred not simply as a direct result of the above factors, but was also a component of the generalized youth radicalization of these years.

87. The youth radicalization, centered in the universities in North America, was characterized by an anti-imperialist (Vietnam), anti-racist (black movement), and anti-authoritarian (student as nigger) consciousness. The women who were active in the various groups and movements which developed around these issues became increasingly conscious of yet another contradiction - that of the disjuncture between the rhetoric of their organizations about equality for the oppressed and their own subordinate position within these organizations. It was these women who spearheaded the women's liberation movement and were its early leadership. Their early analyses of sexism reflect quite heavily their political origins in that they were by and large analogies with racism.

88. As the women's movement developed, many of these new left feminists began to examine Marxism and the history of the workers' movement. However, this process of politicization was limited by two inter-related factors: 1) the absence of any revolutionary organization which could give leadership to the advanced elements of the women's movement: (The CP and CPL defend the family; as well, CPL's position is that raising women's issues splits the working class; the LSA did not pose itself as a revolutionary

current, especially given their reformist practice of tail-ending liberal elements in the abortion campaign): 2) the continued quiescence of the North American working class. This situation made it difficult for these women to understand the relationship between their occasional strike work; their practice around abortion, day care, etc., and their revolutionary objectives.

90. The fact that the working class remained quiescent and could not be seen as a revolutionary pole of attraction resulted in the political confusion of the leadership of the women's movement and led to the decline of the women's movement as an organized force. That is, as with the other peripheral movements of the 1960's, the women's liberation movement reached its strategic impasse and a process of fragmentation set in. (A comparison with the development of the women's movement in some European countries is useful in this regard. In France, for example, the women's movement developed in the course of a general advance of the class struggle. As a result, large sections of the women's movement are clearly class conscious, and able to link up with the working class struggle and will respond to the leadership of revolutionaries, (eg. the influence of the FCR in the French abortion movement.))

91. After the collapse of the Canadian women's movement, many revolutionary women continued to work around specific projects (such as daycare centres, abortion counselling, women's courses, the Canadian Women's Educational Press, etc.), although they could not see any relationship between this work and their revolutionary aims; and without the women's movement to hold these collectives together, they became isolated from each other as the movement fragmented. Others followed the leadership of groups that were growing as the women's movement fragmented. Some of these women joined the ultra-leftist groups which focused on organizing youth. Their politics were third-worldist and rather vague, supporting the Black Panthers as the vanguard of the North American revolution, and dismissing the revolutionary potential of the working class. Other women were attracted to the Waffle which included in its programme a list of demands which addressed the concerns of the women's movement. In the fall of 1971, the Ontario Waffle was heavily involved in the Texpack strike where the majority of workers were women. In B.C., there were women's liberationists who followed the leadership of Jean Rands and worked to establish a Canadian union for unorganized women.

92. The sector of the women's movement which was less politically conscious also fragmented in a number of directions. While many left politics entirely to seek individual solutions to their oppression, some continued to work with women, holding to some form of feminist politics. In fact, given the weakness of the politics of the working class and the changing political orientation of the political women, feminism became the dominant current within what remained of the women's movement.

93. After the women's movement fragmented there were no national campaigns which had the potential to bring it together. The LSA tried and failed to build the abortion movement on a national scale. They quickly alienated the revolutionary women, who had participated in the Abortion Caravan, from the campaign by their appeals to liberal feminists. And they failed to maintain the coalition with the liberals who split in 1973 to form their own group, which would include ment

94. Although there were no national campaigns that brought the women from the women's movement together, many of these women were mobilized when local struggles around women workers were generalized (in BC and Ontario around the Dare strike).

C. THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MILIEU

95. The disintegration of the women's liberation movement as an organized movement left a residue of small groupings and collectives centered around consciousness raising, providing services for women, developing "alternative life styles", etc. While feminism remains the dominant current in what can now be referred to as the women's liberation milieu, several different streams exist which must be examined separately.

i) Liberal/Bourgeois Feminists

96. This current which developed early in the history of the women's movement did not suffer from the strategic dilemma of the movement insofar as its perspective was (and is) gradual change within the present order. The orientation of the groups and individuals that make up this current is towards changing laws and attitudes either through individual action or lobbying. The analysis is that the "second class status" of women is simply an historic hangover which can be legislated or educated away. Groups such as Women for Political Action, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Status of Women, CWCRA (or rather portions of it) are included in this category.

97. This current has received and continues to receive active support from the Liberal government. In 1972, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women held a delegate conference with 600 women from across Canada subsidized by a \$15,000 government grant. In 1975, many conferences of this kind are being organized regionally and nationally for International Women's Year (which has been declared by the United Nations). However, this support of the Liberals for liberal feminists is contradictory at a time when some leading Liberals are openly threatening to restrict access to abortion even further. In order to curry government favour, many Liberal women try to prevent discussion of the issue at their conferences, even though most liberal feminists support repealing the abortion laws.

ii) Radical Feminism

98. Although Radical Feminism was never a strong organized current in Canada, many women were attracted by the theories of Shulamith Firestone. She was able to appeal to some of the subjectively revolutionary women because she saw the socialist revolution as a revolutionary stage to follow the sexual revolution. She also laid the groundwork for the eager acceptance of James and Della Costa's theories by many women in the radical feminist camp. That is, their acceptance of the primacy of the oppression of women and the strategic void (Firestone posed no clear strategy) created fertile ground for James' positions. Her ideas on organizing housewives, ignoring the male dominated trade unions etc., (couched as they are in revolutionary rhetoric) met two qualifications for these women: 1) they were (ie. appeared to be) eminently political, presenting a clear strategy; 2) they centered our work with women as of primary importance.

iii) "Feminist-Socialist"

99. Within the women's milieu there is a sizeable number of women who have an understanding of the oppression of women and a political practice different from that of either the liberal or radical feminists. This grouping is characterized by an understanding (however vague) that the oppression of women is rooted in capitalist society, that men are the agents, not the cause of this oppression, and that it requires more than a concerted effort on the part of women to accomplish their liberation. At the same time, such women take a primary orientation towards working with women through women's places, social services for women, etc.

100. However, some of these women are also prepared to support and/or become involved in working class struggles (especially if women workers are involved), and in anti-imperialist actions. This does not mean that they necessarily have an understanding of how these activities are related to their work with women. Quite often this activity is an extension of a new left political background or a vague expression of solidarity by one oppressed sector to another.

101. Another shared characteristic of this sector is an aversion to left groups, which they regard as male dominated and concerned only with the white male industrial working class. Some women, who have had some experience with the left, have more specific criticisms, relating to the positions of the various tendencies or their practice in the women's movement (for example, they criticize the LSA/LSO for reformism, for organizational domination of the groups they work in, etc.). More recently radicalized women who have little knowledge of the history of the Canadian women's movement and the practice of left groups in relation to it, merely take on vague ideas about left groups held by others in the milieu.

102. Women within this grouping refer to themselves as feminist-socialist/socialist-feminists. This self-categorization reflects, on the one hand, their understanding of the necessity for a socialist society to provide the basis for the liberation of women. On the other, it indicates a lack of clarity in relation to the task of integrating the struggle of women into the class struggle. However, there is as yet no organized feminist-socialist current or tendency. The difficulty of creating such a formation flows from the confusion around strategy implied by the name. Given that women alone cannot make the revolution and solve their problems, how can a strategy for women as women be developed? And if the struggle for women's liberation is part of a broader social struggle, how can working only with women fit in, how are women to relate to this broader struggle without becoming subordinate to it since it necessarily involves men? There are obviously difficulties in attempting to answer these questions from within a socialist-feminist framework, and the result is that, although discussions have been going on, no organized grouping has yet emerged. If such a formation does coalesce it will be unable to develop beyond the level achieved by the women's movement of the 1960's. That is, a strategy based on socialist-feminist premises will lead only to the same strategic impasse which resulted in the decline of the women's movement originally. The fact that this sector of the milieu continues to discuss a strategy for the women's movement from within this framework indicates that they have not drawn any lessons from the recent history of the women's movement.

103. The influence of James and Della Costa's ideas on this sector of the milieu relates directly to the strategic dilemma it faces. The attendance at the meetings Selma James held showed the high level of interest in Marxist theory (in Montreal extra time was scheduled to allow her to explain how her ideas fit into Marxist theory). They also showed that many women in the milieu, (who are not prepared to join any of the existing groups), are nonetheless looking for leadership and a revolutionary practice among women. James seemed to have the answer with her strategy of organizing around the demand "Wages for Housework". Unfortunately for these women, James strategy is dead-end given the objective position of housewives (see Old Mole, numbers 5 and 6 for full critiques). Although some collectives have attempted this strategy and gone nowhere with it, others are still discussing its implementation.

However, the openness to Marxist theory and the search for leadership and revolutionary practice indicate that this sector of the milieu can be influenced by a serious revolutionary intervention. The strategic impasse and vacuum of revolutionary leadership remain in the women's milieu.

iv) Marxist Women

104. There are also a number of Marxist women who were in the women's movement at one time, and who continue to be politically active.

Some of these women operate as independents in the women's milieu or trade union movement. Others are involved in the anti-imperialist committees, the Right to Strike group in Toronto, the Waffle and in what's left of the maoist and spontaneist collectives. While their level of political consciousness is such that they understand that the social power of the working class is the key factor in the revolutionary process; they are also conscious of the oppression of women and the necessity of political work with women.

105. While the women's liberation movement has become a milieu, this does not mean that the influence of the ideas and concepts it introduced, not the general context underlying its emergence have ended. Rather, its continued influence is reflected in the current molecular radicalization - including the radicalization within the working class, and the radicalization of men as well as of women. This process is occurring both as an aspect of a generalized awareness of the crisis of capitalist society, and as a radicalizing factor in its own right. Radicalization specifically around the question of the oppression of women can occur either in a generalized way or around specific issues such as abortion or day care.

D. INTERVENTION

106. Our intervention into the women's liberation milieu is determined through consideration of the nature of the milieu, an assessment of the gains to be made there, and the capacity of the RMG to carry such an intervention given the priorities of the organization.

107. Within the women's milieu we should direct our intervention to the Marxist and the 'Feminist-Socialist' women. Many of the women within this stream can be situated within the small left vanguard and the regroupment of these elements has been one of the stated foci of our activity. Even for those who are part of the left vanguard, but not close to the women's milieu, our ability to deal with the questions of women's oppression will be important.

108. A consistent propagandistic orientation to the women's milieu is called for, given its size and nature and the kinds of questions being raised and discussed by radicalized women. Such propaganda should be conducted through the press. (Such work is essential not only for this milieu, but also for our interventions into the working class and student milieu, as explained earlier.) We will also organize forums and educational series on women and participate propagandistically in the conferences, meetings and actions around the 'woman question' - that is, through leaflets, press and literature sales, interventions in important meetings, and so on.

109. Although our propaganda in the women's milieu is primarily directed at revolutionary women, we must explain in many instances why a socialist revolution is the necessary precondition for the liberation of women and attack liberal and radical feminism. This is

important since the women's milieu continues to attract newly radicalized women, including working women. We can present a revolutionary pole for these women through such an approach.

110. The content of our propaganda will be determined partly by conjunctural events, but, especially for the "feminist-socialist" current and Marxist women, should centre around the following themes;

a) the family: how historically changes in the family have resulted from developments in the mode of production; the need for the overthrow of capitalism to abolish the family as a necessary but not sufficient condition, including a critique of the position of women in the workers' states; the socializing and conservatizing role of the family; the psychological, sexual, cultural impact of the oppression of women on both men and women, and so on.

b) Marxism, Leninism and women's liberation: explaining the acquisitions of the Marxist movement in relation to the 'woman question', while not overlooking their inadequacies; the position of the Bolsheviks during the revolution; the practice of other sections of the FI (when warranted); a critique of sectoralism and spontaneism; etc.

c) women in the three sectors of world revolution: permanent revolution and the role of women in third world struggles; political revolution and the position of women in the workers' states; the importance of international solidarity, and so on.

111. We will try to participate with women from the milieu in the campaigns around 'women's issues' which develop. The abortion issue, for example, may well become a more important area for intervention than it has been for the past few years. In response to strong pressure from the right (see Appendix on Abortion) the provincial and federal governments are moving towards a harder line on abortion. The numbers of abortions allowed in certain hospitals is being reduced; financial and residential restrictions are being used to prevent women from receiving abortions. Morgentaler has lost his appeal in Quebec and his final appeal before the Supreme Court is pending. In reaction to the decision of the Quebec Supreme Court, and to statements by Trudeau and Otto Lang which suggest that the final decision will go against Morgentaler, many women in the Milieu (and outside of it) are becoming self-critical of their inactivity on the abortion issue. In large part, their abstention from work around abortion was a result of the manoeuvres of the LSA in the abortion coalitions.

Our orientation to women in the milieu around this issue should be to involve them in actions of the campaign under the slogan "Free Abortion on Demand". There are valid criticisms which these women make of the LSA which should be expanded, and differentiated from their anti-leninist views. (For full detail on the abortion campaign and our projected orientation, see section on Abortion).

112. Working with contacts from the milieu, particularly those who have children, we will participate in campaigns around child care, (for example, the march on Queen's Park which is likely to occur this fall in Toronto), raising as our central slogan, "free, public, 24-hour, parent and worker controlled childcare". (see the full position on childcare)

113. When in our trade union work, we are involved in generalizing workers' struggles, particularly those involving women, we will appeal to all elements in the women's milieu to join in these struggles.

114. Marxist and "feminist-socialist" women should be drawn into other areas of our practice such as international solidarity and anti-facist mobilizations. Special propagandist work may be useful in drawing such women into such actions - by explaining, for example, the role of women in third world struggles, or the position of facists on women and the family.

115. A major RMG intervention in the women's milieu across Canada this year will be the International Socialist Women's Conference. This conference is projected for the spring of 1975 and is currently being planned with representatives of the LSA, the Socialist League, CP, Spartacist League, Waffle, Women's Press, Latin American Working Group, Development Education Centre and several independents. The conference has some potential for drawing both radicalizing women and men, and for involving socialist women from the milieu.

Our participation is required in the organization of this conference for several reasons. First, this is to be an explicitly socialist conference with some participation by women from Europe and the US. (There is some possibility for helping to finance a tour by a leading member of the FI). Secondly, there are a number of close and useful contacts of the RMG on the committee with whom it is important to develop and strengthen our relationship. Thirdly, by participating fully in the organizing committee we will be able to demonstrate our seriousness to the women involved on the committee already, to the women with whom we make contact, and to women who are doubtful about the seriousness of organized left tendencies around this question. As well, the women who come to the conference itself are precisely those women we are attempting to reach, ie. women who consider themselves socialists and who are prepared to listen to the positions put forward by revolutionary groups.

IV. POSITIONSA. FEMINISM

116. Feminists see the oppression of women as the primary oppression in all societies regardless of their mode of production. Feminism is defined by Marxists as the belief any women's oppression is first foremost and separate from any particular historical context. In spite of ideological differences claimed, the mode of organization and demands for social change are implicitly formed and limited by this analysis, which believes a fundamental change in the power relationship between the sexes can and must come before other forms of oppression can be eradicated.

117. Feminists turn Marxism on its head and explain society by forms of sexual oppression rather than by class. The sexual division of society is seen to be the model for all others, rather than the family and sexual oppression reflecting the contradictions of class society. To justify this in Marxist terms, they often quote Engels:

"... The first class opposition that occurs in history coincides with the development of antagonism between man and women in monogamous marriage, and the first class oppression coincides with that of the female sex by the male.... It (monogamous family) is the cellular form of civilized society in which the nature of the oppositions and contradictions fully acting in that society can be already studied..."

Engels means not that the first class antagonism was between men and women nor that the family is a precursor of oppression in class society, but that the subjugation of women by men through the monogamous family rose at the same time and as a result of private property and class antagonism. Biological differences and the sexual division of labour provide a potentially divisive issue in any society. But where the mode of production allows satisfactory social experience for both men and women, sexual division of labour (to the extent that it exists at all) is not an issue of oppression of one sex by the other. Anthropological evidence shows that women have not always been less powerful as a result of their childbearing function. Shared childcare made possible by communal living enabled women to engage in socially productive activities. Thus the patriarchal monogamous, nuclear family is a response to, not a forerunner of the socio-economic organization of a particular mode of production.

118. Feminism, though it puts the locus of women's oppression in the family, does not understand its relationship to the development of the productive forces, either historically, as outlined above, not under advanced capitalism. It misunderstands the way in which the division of labour and the private character of work in the home is essential for the reproduction of classes both ideologically and materially and, in fact, allows the boss to pay a lower wage

through speed-up and increasing the work load at home. We're all familiar with the labour intensifying suggestions of the bourgeois media to make your own soups, spend hours shopping for bargains, etc. This utility of the family to compensate for lower purchasing power by increased labour time on the part of the women is convenient to capital. Feminism is unable to see a connection between the oppression of women in the family and its relation to capitalism and is thus unable to see a way out of it.

119. The contemporary small nuclear family described by sociologists as 'functional' (read 'profitable') for a 'mobile, urban, industrial society' reflects and feeds into class oppression. The mode of production, not reproduction, is the determining factor in women's oppression.

120. Feminist consciousness is typical of the 'new left' and civil rights movements of the early 60's which rejected theoretical analysis for the 'politics of experience'. Some emphasized individuals and groups organizing around their own oppression in an attempt to create a better life for themselves within the existing system and saw their particular sector as able to make its own revolution or to spark the revolution in other sectors. Like these movements, the feminist concept of liberation is often cultural and idealist rather than social and economic. It ignores the concept of class and class struggle and postulates that all women share the same interests and the same oppression.

121. This similarity to the civil rights movement is not accidental - both are offspring of the bourgeois revolutions' inability to live up to its ideals of 'liberty, equality, fraternity' for any but the private property -owning ruling class. Even in the 19th century, the status of women represented the most acute contradiction between the ideals and reality of capitalism. Out of this contradiction came the feminists and utopian socialists - those who thought that the inequalities need only be recognized to be done away with. The defeats of 1848 put an end to the utility of such ideas and the birth of Marxism provided a new way forward for the abolition of inequalities. In the epoch of world wars and revolutionary movements, we know that the leftover tasks of the bourgeois revolution can only be fully solved through class struggle leading to a victorious socialist revolution. This is what the feminists have not yet understood. Mitchell asks and never answers: 'Is the feminist concept of women as the most fundamentally oppressed people and hence potentially the most revolutionary to be counterposed to the Marxist position of the working class as the revolutionary class under capitalism?' Revolutionary marxists would have to answer yes.

i) Liberal Feminists

122. Liberal feminists are idealists. They believe that women are oppressed by

sexist attitudes and want to build a women's movement that will fight for reforms and change the attitudes of those that discriminate against women. These liberals would like to reform the laws that discriminate against women as well as change the minds of male employers so they will give women the chance at male sex-typed jobs. Liberal feminists hope that women will be put in positions of responsibility to prove that women are as capable as men.

Radical Feminists

122. Radical feminists claim to be historical materialists. They say that women's oppression is rooted in women's biology. Women as the reproducers and socialisers of children constitute a sexual class.

They believe that women must build a strong woman's movement to fight for a sexual revolution. During the sexual revolution women will seize control of the means of reproduction?

'the elimination of sexual classes requires the revolt of the underclass (women) and the seizure of the control of reproduction; the restoration to women of ownership of their own bodies, as well as feminine control of human fertility, including both the new technology and all the social institutions of childbearing and childrearing.... The reproduction of the species by one sex for the benefit of both would be replaced by (at least the option of) artificial reproduction? children would be born to both sexes equally or independently of either, however one chooses to look at it...' (Shulamith Firestone, The Dialectic of Sex)

'Socialist Feminists'

123. These feminists believe that women are oppressed in capitalist society with a few men owning the means of production. They want to unite women to fight for a socialist revolution.

Like the New Left which in many ways is their historical predecessor they reject Stalinism and social democracy but they never deal concretely with the socialist revolution and the seizure of state power. Socialist feminists tend to be ahistorical, refusing to learn from the historical acquisitions of the workers' movement because they do not see any socialist countries in which women have been liberated. Those who develop an historical analysis do so very undialectically, isolating the condition of women in the family from other social and economic factors in the solutions to women's problems in the workers' states. They attribute the changes in the Soviet Union's policy on the family to the absence of an autonomous women's movement in the Russian Revolution.

The New Left following Marcuse and others dismissed the revolutionary potential of the working class and therefore rejected the centrality of the working class in making the revolution. Socialist feminists follow in the footsteps of this theoretical tradition.

'Participatory Democracy' in the New Left meant that male super stars who had all the advantages in terms of their class and sex socialization, emerged as the leaders and dominated the groups in a very undemocratic way.

The present groups and collectives reject this kind of male leadership and fewer female superstars have emerged. However, the process is similarly undemocratic since the leadership of the most articulate and politically developed does not have to be responsible to the groups since it was never elected. These anti-leadership sentiments involve a rejection of democratic centralism and the role of the vanguard party.

124. There are two positions on the oppression of women (not mutually exclusive).

1. Women in the family under capitalism (as housewives) have the same relation to the means of production. They can unite on this basis as a class to destroy the family. The existence of capitalism depends on the oppression of women in the family so women's attack on the family will be destructive of the very foundations of capitalism.

2. Women are oppressed in different ways as third world women including blacks, Quebecois, and Indians, as lesbians and as workers. All oppressed groups must organise around their specific oppression including women as women, lesbian women as lesbian women, fighting their oppression. Because women (especially certain kinds of women) are so oppressed, they will be in the vanguard and are likely to spark the revolution. At some point all oppressed groups will spontaneously unite to make the revolution. How that union will occur and how the socialist revolution will take place is never dealt with concretely.

B. CHILDCARE

125. In a world historic sense, socialist revolutionaries have always realized that free, socialized childcare is an important demand especially for working women-- allowing them to enter social production without spending the whole of their pay on their families and loosening their oppression in the family by challenging their 'natural' role as mothers.

126. In spite of the existence of women's liberation consciousness in Canada for the last 5 years, however, there has been no major upsurge around this issue. What has occurred has been sporadic and isolated from the worker's movement. In Toronto the struggles have been campus based around cooperative centres, which do not meet the needs of workers because of the labour time required by parents to maintain the centres. In Winnipeg struggles have also been sporadic. The government has made promises, but when the promises haven't been implemented the struggle has been renewed.

127. Because there has not been a sustained struggle around day care our predecessors' analysis and demands around this issue have not been well developed, in fact, virtually non existent. Two years of LSA convention documents confine themselves to the sentence 'a far-reaching system of government financed facilities...controlled by those who use them'. The YS did concretize this to 'full' and '24 hour'. The RCT document on women added nothing to this, nor was there Red Circle or Old Mole work on the question.

128. There is now some motion both in Quebec and Ontario around childcare. in opposition to the provincial governments. It is therefore important for us

to make some assessment of the question, its pitfalls and potential. In Ontario, 5,300 people signed a petition against M. Birch Secretary for Social Development's proposed changes in the Ontario Daycare Act. These changes would double the staff-child ratio, lower the requirements for staff, and rely more heavily on volunteer-parent and high school students help, thus turning what appears on the surface to be a broadening of available child care resources into a plum for the private sector without any increase in their costs -- more children, less staff, lower pay (Mini-Schools Ltd., a chain owned by the Great West Life Insurance Corp. is an example of a benefactor of such a policy.) Approximately 1 percent of children between 0- 13 of working mothers are in child care centres in Ontario. Child care workers are badly paid as it is, some of them earning lower than 2.50 per hour. Metro centres are organized by CUPE so presumably their pay is higher, but very little parent involvement is apparent in Metro Centres.

In Toronto, 500 people called by the Group for Daycare Reform met on July 2 to protest this. While most participants were on a low political level, anger and militancy ran high. While it is not at all clear where this is going, the meeting clearly posed the necessity of some ad hoc organization to continue the struggle and the GDR' which represents about 25 nonprofit parent controlled centres, is preparing to take this on. While it is a new formation and its leadership potential unclear, it seems to understand the need for total government funding; availability to all children; accessibility beyond working hours, and the necessity for creating a protest movement, not relying government pressure tactics. Pat Schultz, a member of the Socialist League, is one of the leaders of this group.

129. In Quebec, on May 31, 500 people led by the Comité de liaison des gardiens demonstrated to retain government assisted child care in Quebec. Child care had been funded by LIP grants until cut off this May. The CLG demands:

1. withdrawal of the Bacon Project (Birch's counterpart) which offers partial subsidies to parents and none to centres, benefitting the private sector like the Ontario legislation.
2. seven dollars per day per child to be paid to the centres, maximum 10 percent borne by the parents.
3. parent worker control.
4. provision of funds for cooperatives.

130. From these brief descriptions of the state of the child care question several issues emerge. First, the problems:

1. Parents, those who are most involved, have an instant practical orientation and see it only secondarily as a political question. Radicals without children are by and large not involved. In other words, in the absence of a connection with a broader working class movement, motion around the issue can have a tendency to be service oriented. An intervention around the child care issue can best be made by parents. We have very few parents in the RMG although we have some in our periphery.
2. The variety of forms and sizes of concerns -- public, private and cooperative all present different problems in terms of organizing and politicizing workers and parents. For example, cooperative care is time consuming and is being recognized by the state as a way to throw the burden back on the working

class and save money.

On the positive side:

- 1) The current struggle involves both parents and child care workers.
- 2) While not taking place in conjunction with the workers movement, the childcare question is a direct issue for working class families and, in particular, working class women who are working in the white collar sector.

131. The RMG should intervene in the Ontario child care campaign if it develops. We should make the best possible use of RMG sympathizers when we do get involved. Should similar struggles arise in BC and Manitoba over the failure of the NDP governments to establish adequate child care we should also intervene there. In each particular case, however, we must carefully evaluate the campaign, its support and potential in order to determine the depth of the intervention. In general however we will argue for the need to broaden the struggle by calling on trade unionists, particularly women to participate. There is already considerable motion in the CSAO on this question as the militancy in that union rises. Women in the student milieu and women in the women's liberation milieu could also be called upon. Our own central demand would be for free public 24-hour, parent-worker controlled child care. This does not preclude principled participation in campaigns not organized at this level.

132. Free Public 24-hour, Parent-Worker Controlled Child care.

--Free so it's available to all

--Public as opposed to private or cooperative. Nor do we favour child care linked to the school system, an apparatus designed to train docile, conveniently skilled future workers. It is also important that it is available to all children, not just those of working mothers or welfare recipients, as is now the case.

24-hour so as to accommodate those on shift work, and those who need time for political, recreational and other concerns.

--Parent-worker controlled because of the role of the state and the employer as socializers and the necessity to remain independent from both.

Child care is a social, not an individual or family concern. Child care is necessary for the liberation of the future members of the working class--children who are trapped in the involuntary, economically dependent and repressive relationships of the nuclear family. This also means that the quality of child care, an argument often neglected by revolutionaries without children, is critical. As Trotsky said, 'a child care centre in which the child feels worse than he does at home is not a child care centre but a bad orphan asylum.'

Lack of public socialized child care laces on the proletariat the responsibility not only for its own maintenance, but also for that of the next generation. The profoundly conservatizing effect of that responsibility has been frequently analysed. Socialized child care lessens the oppression of women within the nuclear family and challenges the myth of their 'natural role' as mothers.

The increased time required to reproduce the labor power of the next generation has kept domestic labour time high, in spite of advances in the forces of production and increasing services. The forces of production have developed to a point where it is increasingly obvious that domestic labour could be socialized if it was not privatized in the interests of capital. This

contradiction is the most acute for women with a dual role -- women who have been driven into the labour force out of economic necessity (including the rising costs involved in reproducing the labour power of the next generation.) Demands for socialized housework and taking the burden of reproducing labour power off the backs of women and the working class family, address this contradiction directly. Free 24 hour child care is such a demand, which should be raised in conjunction with other demands which further reduce the burden of reproducing the next generation of workers. Demands such as free laundry service at child care centres for children's clothes and babies' diapers, and child care for children over 5 years old, free meals for school children and recreational programs for children during lunch hour and after school could also be raised.

133. For child care workers, we would propose, in conjunction with the parent-worker control; organizing the unorganized (though this is difficult because of their fragmentation); higher pay and cost of living escalators, lower staff-child ratios; and other relevant work force demands. There have been disagreements between 'professional' (teachers trained in teachers colleges and university faculties of education), and 'paraprofessionals' (educated in community colleges) and non-professionals (child care workers who have not taken any recognized form of child care training). By cutting back the ratio of trained workers and allowing for untrained help, the Ontario legislature cuts costs and divides child care workers against each other. Our work around child care must try to undermine these differences through demands for higher pay for all child care workers regardless of training, adequate funds to pay all workers, (without exploiting unpaid volunteer labour which is usually female), and time off with pay and job security to take up-grading training.

134.. Comrades from time to time have stated that child care is a 'more revolutionary' issue than abortion. This is an error. Capitalism has a lot of co-optation power left. In World War II child care was made available to allow women into social production without damaging the role of the family at all. We want to avoid this trap by continually making clear that child care is only one demand in a full revolutionary program; --no revolutionary program is complete without the demand for child care, but it too, is only fully realizable as part of a victorious working class struggle for power.

C. ABORTION

135.. Since 1970, when the Abortion Caravan brought 500 women to Ottawa with the demands 'Free Abortion on Demand', 'No Forced Sterilization', 'Safe Effective Birth Control Available to All' and '24-hour Community-Controlled Childcare' the abortion campaign has been the main ongoing organized struggle of women making demands directly on the state. The numbers of those who have been mobilized against the reactionary and oppressive abortion laws have never been more than a few hundred at a time, despite a widespread sentiment in favour of further liberalization and even repeal of the laws.

136. The response of anti-abortion elements has been massive and well-organized. We have seen the growth over the past few years of a very sizeable and strong political lobby in favour of even heavier restrictions on access to abortions.

These proponents of the 'right to life' have the support of the Catholic Church with its substantial resources and its ability to influence Catholic voters. The Federal Government has felt the weight of this lobby and has made its attack on the abortion campaign through its indictments of Drs. Morgentaler, Tanguay and Macchabee and Nurse Conax. Justice Minister Otto Lang has made statements against abortion on demand, moving against the relatively easy access in some hospitals. In addition to these moves by the government to cut back the number of abortions there have been other moves to make obtaining an abortion more difficult, (e.g. a \$150. fee was imposed on top of Saskatchewan medicare, a 6 month residency requirement was placed on abortions at the Vancouver General Hospital, and in Alberta a private members bill was introduced to prohibit women having abortions on medicare.)

137. The Liberal government's sentencing of Morgentaler to 18 months in prison, immediately after winning a solid majority government is no accident. Morgentaler is being persecuted as an example -- not only to those who want to get rid of abortion laws -- but to all anti-government protesters. This crackdown is occurring at a time when the state thinks it can get away with it at low social cost.

The decision of this case can determine the future of abortion laws in Canada for some time to come, and thus, the lives of many thousands of women. If the state is successful in railroading Morgentaler and others to jail we could face a significant reversal of the liberalization that has been won to date, with even the limited access now available to abortion further restricted. The state has already been making threatening noises in that direction. It is for this reason that Dr. Morgentaler and all others charged must be defended. We therefore support the campaign to defend Dr. Morgentaler and the others charged.

138. . The denial of abortion is directly tied to the class interests of the international bourgeoisie. In every country where there is a struggle for abortion reform there is a significant element organized against abortion, and the class line is clearly drawn. The denial of abortion benefits the capitalist class in several ways:

- it keeps women (and men) tied to the nuclear family
- it reinforces women's 'natural role' which serves to rationalize her oppression in many areas of society-- It justifies unequal job and educational opportunities, unequal pay, her use as a sex object, and as part of the reserve labour force, to be thrown back on the family when the economy is in difficulty.
- psychologically the denial of sexuality enforced by the nuclear family, produces submissiveness and a feeling of powerlessness to change things.

139. The abortion campaign therefore must be fought on class lines, given both the nature of its opponents and its content, if it hopes to be more than a reformist lobby. We have no illusions that women as women have unified, classless interests. Therefore, we are opposed to the misleading slogans put forward by the LSA such as:

'A Woman's Right to Choose'

Under capitalism there is very little choice for most women as to whether or not they will have children. Most women who 'choose' to have abortions in this society do so because they are financially or otherwise unable to ensure that their children will be brought up in conditions other than those of poverty, deprivation, oppression and repression. Women's choices are limited because they are held responsible for reproducing the labour power of the next generation with all the labour time that involves.

Those who do 'choose' to have children often make this choice because they are caught up in the mystification of the nuclear family and motherhood. To talk of 'choice' under these circumstances is to provide no answer at all for the overwhelming majority of women in this society, who will only be able to make a real choice to have children or not when the burden of providing for the economic and psychological well-being of all children is shared by society as a whole.

'Control of Our Bodies, Control of Our Lives'

'Women Must Decide their Fate, Not the Church and Not the State'

The idea of 'a woman's right to control her own body' put forward in slogans such as 'Control of our Bodies Control of our Lives' and 'Women must decide Their Fate, Not the Church and not the State' is equally deceptive. Working class men, who have control over their reproductive apparatuses, do not have control over their lives. In fact, the ruling class in whose interests the church and state operate, do have control over our lives. And women, contrary to the implications of the slogan, do not have the social power to abolish state, church control (i.e. capitalist control). In other words, these slogans are misleading and based on a feminist conception of change.

140. New left women and marxist women led the Abortion Caravan for 'Free Abortion on Demand,' 'No Forced Sterilization', 'Safe Effective Birth Control Available to All', and '24 hour Community-Controlled Childcare'. The LSA-LSO was never able to lead revolutionary women such as those who led the Abortion Caravan. They wanted organizational control of a mass campaign so they appealed to liberal feminists around this single issue. Not wanting to alienate the liberals and women from any class background, they changed the demand from 'Free Abortion on Demand' to 'Repeal the Abortion Laws'. Most revolutionary women refused to come behind the LSA-LSO campaign, accusing them of reformism.

As has been explained in the section on the women's liberation milieu, many 'socialist-feminists' and marxist women are hostile to Trotskyism and Leninism in general. This can to a significant degree be attributed to their experience with the LSA's reformist and (more important in this instance) practice of organizational domination. Our work on the abortion question can be important as a means of showing in practice that Leninism is not synonymous with organizational manipulation. If their criticisms of the LSA's

practice cannot be applied to ourselves as a Leninist organization, some may be forced to either change their attitude towards Leninism in general, or be somewhat more honest about the reasons for their hostility.

141. October 4 is the date the Supreme Court has set to hear Morgentaler's appeal. Given the offensive around women's right to abortion on demand by the state and anti-abortion groups, the appeal is likely to be lost. The LSA-dominated committees may grow this fall, particularly if Morgentaler is jailed. We can expect a response to such an attack on the abortion campaign to elicit a response from marxist and 'socialist-feminist' women who are in the process of re-evaluating their policy of abstention towards the abortion movement. Local areas should keep a close watch for such developments and be prepared to participate in the abortion campaign. The form this participation takes should be determined by the situation. For example, in Winnipeg, our comrades worked in the committee at the U. of Winnipeg carrying our demands in this committee where the LSA was not involved. Our comrades in Saskatchewan call for 'Free Abortion on Demand' and helped to organize a conference on abortion in May 1974. They suggest that 'a campaign be launched in which the current rollback in abortion facilities is utilized to bring to the fore the central questions of women's liberation: free abortion on demand, free 24-hour worker-parent controlled childcare centres, free contraception devices and information available to all, no forced sterilization, no repression against sexual minorities. Such a campaign extending to the workplace, university, neighbourhood and high school.' The extent to which we involve ourselves will be determined by the local areas on the basis of an assessment of the political potential existing.

142. The central slogans in this work will be:

- 1) Drop the Charges
- 2) Free Abortion on Demand
- 3) Free Contraception on Demand
- 4) No Forced Sterilization

We will also raise 'Socialist Revolution, the Only Road to Women's Liberation' in our own propaganda. However, this will be raised propagandistically when we are explaining our own position. It will never be a condition for united practice on abortion work.

143. We will argue against the LSA-LSO's slogans on abortion counterposing 'Free abortion on Demand'. While we support 'Repeal of the Abortion Laws', it is not far-reaching enough. We must fight for abortion to be available on demand to all women without charge. Repeal of the laws does not ensure that the facilities for abortion procedures will be available for all women who need them, and we can be sure that the anti-abortion forces will go to great lengths to make sure that the situation does not improve. This lesson has been made clear in recent months by the example of what has happened in the United States. We must call for 'Free Abortion on Demand' regardless of woman's age, marital status, or ability to pay. (With complete confidentiality between the woman and her doctor even for young women.)

144. We will raise other demands in relation to women's right to have children such as 'Free Public 24-hour Parent-Worker controlled Childcare'. We will also raise slogans such as 'Free Quality Health Care Under Workers' Control -- a demand we also raise in relation to health workers' struggles, bringing in the experience of the Quebec Common Front of 1972.

IV. THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE ORGANIZATION

145.. The RMG has yet to develop a well rounded and comprehensive position on the oppression of women that integrates all the various aspects of that oppression and situates them historically and in capitalist society. We have just begun to examine questions such as where women and the "woman's question" fit into the Canadian political scene, what relationship they will have to the revolutionary process, etc. This lack on the theoretical plane is reflected in our practice which has been ghettoized, non existent, or chaotic, depending on the time and location. In other words, because there is not a generalized understanding of the relationship of the oppression of women, to the rest of capitalist oppression and exploitation. The organization as a whole does not, and in fact, is not able to consistently integrate work on this question into our general political thrust and day-to-day activity.

146.. The reasons why work on the "woman's question" in general, and work with women in the work force and education in particular, are important is implicitly or explicitly stated in the previous sections of the document and it is not necessary to repeat them here.

However, the lack of theoretical understanding and the resulting lack of practice also has had an important impact on the position of women within the organization itself. For some time comrades have been coasting along on the assumption that because the RMG is "the best thing going" on the Canadian political scene, there could be no cause for alarm on the "woman's question". After all, we have always had women on the PC who are important leaders of the RMG. What we seem to have ignored, however, is not only that these comrades have faced and continue to face specific problems and obstacles in carrying out their responsibilities, but also that the situation of the majority of women is not dealt with by referring to those who are part of the leadership.

In fact, all too often women who came into the organization at a disadvantage in terms of confidence, political skills, etc. have seen the gap between themselves and male comrades increase. Even those who entered the RMG as experienced comrades or as leadership elements in the predecessor organizations have often seen themselves remain at the same level or even regress. The result has been a growing cynicism, demoralization, and inactivity beyond performing some organizational tasks on the part of some female comrades, and frustration on the part of almost all.

147. The fact is that the failure to develop a position and external practice on the "woman's question" has its reflection internally in a lack of understanding of and corresponding lack of ability to deal with the debilitating situation which faces all women, including our comrades. Moreover this lack of position on the "woman's question" (and especially in relation to women workers) has limited the political roles open to female comrades.

For example, to date the trend in the organization has been to prioritize areas such as rail and the post office which are more open to males with very little attention being paid to prioritizing the

political possibilities and value of the different kinds of work normally available to women. The result is that female comrades have been left almost completely without political direction as to where they should seek employment and have generally ended up in politically isolated or in politically dead end jobs. Admittedly there has been a general lack of political direction on these questions which has affected all comrades and there is a need to establish priorities throughout the organization. The point is that as we develop these priorities we must become conscious of whether or not these priorities end up limiting the political roles of our women comrades.

148. In terms of RMG cadre then, our ability to deal with the "woman's question" both internally and in relation to the revolutionary process is clearly important. A continuation of the present situation means a consistent undermining of the ability of one whole section of the organization to operate effectively and at their optimal level. The RMG cannot afford that at any time, but especially not now during the critical early stages of the organization's development.

149. Our ability to deal with women as an important factor in the revolution, our understanding as to where they fit in, their special problems, etc, will also be decisive in our ability to win more women to the organization. It should be clear by now that our capacity to intervene in the class struggle is hampered if we continue to ignore women, by either writing them off as peripheral, or by working on the assumption that we can address them as workers and ignore the fact that they are women. Those members of the vanguard who are women will not be won to an organization which can not in its theory and practice come to terms with the oppression of women. Nor will they join an organization which can not integrate its women cadre fully into its political life. If things are as bad on the inside as they are on the outside, no woman who is aware of her own oppression will find the organization attractive or useful.

150. There are reasons why our work around the "women's question" and the internal situation of female comrades has developed to the level they are presently at. During the 1960's the Women's Liberation Movement had a very strong and direct impact on the development of the radicalizing layers and the organized grouplets coming out of that. It developed out of this radicalization and reacted back upon it, as many of the women who were part of the radicalization came to understand their own oppression and began to force the left and left organizations to come to grips with sexism in their own practice and structures. The Women's Liberation Movement developed as a real force and it was not possible for most left organizations to avoid dealing with the questions it raised. However, the past few years have seen a downturn in the large scale radicalization of women around their oppression and the Women's Liberation Movement has fragmented in the manner discussed previously. With this fragmentation two things have occurred. The first is that the revolutionary organizations, including the RMG, have experienced a decline in the objective pressure to develop its theoretical understanding of an d external practice in

relation to the "woman's question" since there is no longer a widespread radicalization to orient to. The send is that precisely because there is no longer any objective pressure created by the existence of a Women's Liberation Movement, the questions raised and the criticisms made by the Women's Liberation Movement no longer intrude with the same intensity into the internal life of the organization.

151. At the same time as we look at the context created by the decline of the Women's Liberation Movement, however, we must also recognize that much of the problem stems from the fact that the RMG is itself in the "toddler stage" of development. In the past year, we have constantly been faced with new possibilities and demands in areas and on questions with which comrades have not previously had to deal. Moreover, the organization has had to deal with the exigencies of the international faction fight as well as the legacies (one of these legacies being revulsion to the LSA's feminism) of being produced out of that faction fight. In this context it is understandable that the energies of comrades have been directed to areas other than the "woman's question" and the implications for external work now that the Women's Liberation Movement has disintegrated. Internally of course the tendency struggle coupled with the more general problems of turning the RMG into a cohesive organization have tended to militate against any concentration on the specific situation of female comrades.

152. To date the ongoing theoretical and practical inadequacies regarding the "woman's question" and the related impact on female comrades are primarily the result of the circumstances outlined above. However, the situation has threatened to become one in which the lack of work on and around the question would no longer be regarded as an "inadequacy" but as an actual position of the RMG. This possibility of legitimizing the present relationship to the "woman's question" in both its external and internal form stems from several tendencies in the thinking of RMG comrades which should be briefly noted.

i) For historical reasons, comrades have tended to view work on the "woman's question" solely as a sectoral intervention into the Women's Liberation Movement. Thus the disintegration of the Women's Liberation Movement has meant a corresponding tendency to downgrade the priority of this intervention "at least at this time". In fact women are not just a sector, but a part of every social struggle, and work on the "woman's question" should constitute an integrated part of all our interventions.

ii) The second tendency comrades have is to see the relationship of the periphery and the centre as a progression of events over time. Related to this the tendency to equate the decline of the peripheral movements with a disappearance of peripheral radicalization. In fact there continues to be molecular radicalization (around questions of international solidarity, women's oppression, etc.) and the relationship between this peripheral radicalization and the working class is an ongoing and intensifying one. While comrades appear to have made the distinction and oriented to the molecular radicalization in the area of international solidarity (in spite of the disappearance of the anti-war movement, etc.) there seems to be no such assessment in relation to the women's liberation milieu, which has led to the downplaying of this work.

111) Voluntarism--The third tendency that should be noted is that of "voluntarism". By this, we refer to the tendency of the leadership--and now of course, most comrades--to lay the problems of inactivity, etc. experienced by one or more comrades back on the doorstep of the comrade(s) involved. The implication is that the problem stems solely from some personal inadequacy and if the comrade would just try harder....

The fact is, however, that many of the various problems that comrades would like to blame on the individual have taken on a "mass character"--that is, they are problems that are experienced by large numbers of comrades. This suggests not a "personal problem" but a crisis in the organization--a crisis which the leadership must attempt to understand and take concrete measures to overcome, not simply expect comrades to solve on an individual basis. There is no such thing as a "crisis of the base"--the problems of inactivity, confusion, unwillingness to debate, etc. are a crisis within the base that stems from a crisis of leadership.

The tendency towards "voluntarism" affects all comrades in the base of the organization but it particularly affects women who have been socialized to be non-aggressive, etc.

V. ORGANIZATIONAL PROPOSALS

153. It is obvious that as long as we live in a class society we will never be able to fully eradicate sexism within our ranks or overcome all the handicaps of female socialization experienced by female comrades. There are, however steps that can and must be taken in order to minimize the problems outlined above. The primary one, of course, is the ongoing development and elaboration of a position of the woman's question" since only this will provide the basis for the fullest understanding and consciousness of the question on the part of all comrades. This understanding is an absolute prerequisite not only to the development of perspectives that do not constrain the external political roles that may be played by female comrades, but also to the way in which the RMG must develop its internal life in relation to female comrades.

154. To accomplish the above however, the RMG must develop functioning structures that will facilitate the necessary discussion and development of a position on the "woman's question" as well as the interventions of comrades on that question. So far the Women's Commission has been unable to fulfill this role.

The problems of the Women's Commission exemplify the problems of the organization both regarding the lack of internalization of the importance of the "woman's question" and the political/organizational problems of the function of commissions and the Group generally. The commission and commission work have been cut off from the rest of the organization. The interdependence of the work the commission has been doing and the political practice and development of the Group has not been understood. Because of the lack of generalized awareness of this work, the work of the commission has fallen to that group of women in the organization who for whatever reasons are most familiar/concerned with women's politics. The commission has functioned autonomously. What we have been doing has not been integrated or flowed from the work of the rest of the organization. While many of our problems are the problems of the commissions in general it is useful to note that the only other functioning commission has been the international commission. They have functioned because they are a priority, we have functioned because of a collective determination to do so. The commissions are subcommittees of the CC. However, the CC has not been a real body, and therefore it is understandable that the commissions would not be clearly defined or real working bodies in most instances. Instead those functioning are simply working

groups of comrades interested in specialized areas. For the women's commission there has been no real relationship to the PC. Only one real discussion of commission work ever took place with the PC. That was on the eve of a questioned intervention. The only circular ever produced by the commission was stopped by the PC (one on abortion work), however the discussion was then put off and never taken up again. We have still had no discussion of the abortion movement, and therefore no line, yet we have produced two leaflets, had a free abortion contingent in the Toronto demonstration, and a comrade spoke to the Morgantaler rally.

The role of the commission has never been clearly defined vis a vis national and local work. Because the commission has been stymied in its national work by a lack of national perspectives and direction, a lack of information, etc., it has not been able to function as a national body. Our work has been very Toronto-centric. It has been easy and necessary under these circumstances for the commission to fall into the position of substituting for a Toronto committee in the absence of such a committee. Because there are so few comrades familiar with "women's work" and these comrades are concentrated in the commission, interventions that have been made have generally been directed by the commission, either officially or indirectly. This has tended to mean that Toronto interventions have also been outside the direction of the local leadership as well, and thereby ghettoized within a certain group of women comrades. This only feeds into the continuation of an undesirable situation.

155. Although the Women's Commission is not as familiar with the situation in the areas outside Toronto (this being one of the problems), it appears that the same ghettoization of work on the "woman's question" is also true in the local areas. Here as well the work that is done tends to be done outside the context of general perspectives and tends to be done on the basis of the individual interest and initiatives taken by certain comrades.

156. To cut across these tendencies and to begin a consistent practice on a national level we propose the following:

i) that a prioritization of assignments to the women's commission be made so that this work can be given the resources it requires.
 ii) that regular discussions be held with the PC so that work is in line with the rest of the organization's activities. This should include, but not be restricted to, the discussion of document preparation. The problems in the past that were caused by the failure to have such discussions are exemplified by the production of this document, which has taken place outside the auspices of the leadership, and the example of the commission's decision to do a national abortion intervention which was disagreed with by the PC.

iii) that a PC comrade be assigned to the commission either as a full member or to act as a serious liaison between the commission and the PC.

iv) that regular women's documents and reports be given to plenums and conventions. While it is obviously critical to overcome the problem of sectoralization, given the general lack of consciousness that exists, we are not convinced that this will happen by ending the practice of separate reports. It is unrealistic to believe that these questions can be dealt with adequately within the framework of other reports and discussions.

v) that extended women's commission meetings be scheduled for all plenums and conventions, to include comrades from outlying areas. This would bring to light problems outside Toronto, help the commission overcome its Toronto-centricity and facilitate a coordinated practice nationally.

vi) that the Women's Commission develop a liaison with other commissions, especially the trade union commission. This will provide other commissions with information they require and will facilitate coordination and integration of commissions.

work and prevent duplication of activities, research, etc. When suitable the commission itself might be composed of comrades with experience in the various areas most closely associated with work on the "woman's question" and areas that we want to develop an association with (eg. white collar, education, trade unions)

vii) that all branches/units submit regular reports on their activities to the women's commission. Information from outside Toronto is critical if we are to develop national perspectives. Otherwise comrades outside Toronto can expect to receive directives which are contradictory to their situations and capacities. Likewise the commission has to begin to get reports out to the areas.

viii) that each local appoint a permanent women's coordinator who will be responsible for being aware of the possibilities for intervention, is in touch with the cells and fractions or committees to make sure that they are raising "women's issues" and who will function as a liaison with the commission.

ix) that conjunctural committees be set up locally when necessary. This will probably be required in most areas with the onset of events around the Socialist Women's Conference and the beginning of International Women's Year. If there is the possibility of ongoing activity in a given area, such as a women's group, etc., then the branch or cell should have an ongoing committee.

157. In addition to the above organizational proposals we recommend that local executives and other appropriate bodies be instructed to begin an examination of the situation of their female comrades immediately after the convention and if necessary take compensatory measures. At present the situation in the various branches varies so widely that it is impossible to make specific recommendations in this document. However, these measures might range from structuring special educational discussions for female comrades to having a special educational series on the "woman's question" for the branch and so on. The attempts of the GMR in this regard might be helpful.

TABLE 1

(From a 1967 Sample)

**Percentage distribution of children of working mothers by care arrangements,
for classes of working mothers' annual earnings**

Care arrangement	Annual earnings of working mothers*					
	All earnings classes	Under \$1,000	\$1,000 - 2,999	\$3,000 - 3,999	\$4,000 and over	Not Stated
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total children:						
(Number)	(908)	(311)	(306)	(117)	(97)	(77)
Per cent	100	100	100	100	100	100
Mainly unpaid care:						
Total	73	81	72	62	64	75
By father	22	28	23	15	17	11
With working mother	5	6	2	2	4	13
By a relative under 18	3	4	3	2	3	2
By other relative or household member (in home)	20	18	19	20	20	28
By a relative outside the home	4	4	5	6	4	4
Combination of "in home" arrangements	9	10	10	7	8	5
No regular arrangements	10	11	10	10	8	12
Mainly paid care:						
Total	27	20	28	37	36	25
By a non-relative, in or outside the home	19	13	19	27	29	20
Day nursery/nursery school	1	1	1	2	1	1
Combination "outside home" or "other" arrangements	7	6	9	8	6	4

Note: the footnotes of Table 24 apply to this table also.

*For the calendar year 1966.

TABLE 2

(From a 1967 Sample)

**Percentage distribution of working mothers by cost of child care
for classes of mothers' weekly earnings**

Cost of child care in reference week	Earnings of working mother in reference week					
	All earnings classes	Under \$25	\$25.00 to \$4.99	\$55.00 to \$9.99	\$100 and over	Not Stated
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total working mothers:						
(Number)	(540)	(79)	(166)	(182)	(46)	(68)
Per cent	100	100	100	100	100	100
Nil	69	91	72	55	56	82
Less than \$10	10	8	14	9	4	4
\$10.00 - \$14.99	10	—	8	17	9	4
\$15.00 - \$19.99	6	—	4	10	9	6
\$20.00 and over	6	—	2	8	22	3

TABLE 3

Female population and female labour force, by marital status, showing women as percentage of the total population and as percentage of the total labour force, and participation rates of women in the labour force, Canada, 1962, 1967 and 1972

Marital Status	Female population		Female labour force		Participation rate of women in the labour force
	Number	Percentage of the total population ^a	Number	Percentage of the total labour force ^b	
	'000	%	'000	%	%
			1962		
Single	1,488	12.1	749	11.3	50.3
Married	4,035	32.9	870	13.2	21.6
Other ^c	663	5.4	178	2.7	26.8
Total	6,186	50.4	1,797	27.2	29.0
			1967		
Single	1,788	12.9	886	11.5	49.6
Married	4,449	32.1	1,260	16.4	28.3
Other	761	5.5	220	2.9	28.9
Total	6,997	50.4	2,365	30.7	33.8
			1972		
Single	2,057	13.1	1,006	11.3	48.9
Married	4,955	31.5	1,681	18.9	33.9
Other	940	6.0	266	3.0	28.3
Total	7,952	50.5	2,953	33.2	37.1

^aThe total population figures used here were (in thousands): 1962: 12,280; 1967: 13,874; 1972: 15,747. These figures are given in Table 1.

^bThe total labour force figures used here were (in thousands): 1962: 6,615; 1967: 7,894; 1972: 8,891. These figures are given in Table 1.

^cWidowed, divorced or separated.

Sources: D.B.S., Labour Division, Labour Force Survey Section, *Special Tables - 12 Month Averages* (Mimeographed), Table 2 in the Special Tables for 1962, 1967 and 1972.

TABLE 4

Employed labour force in industries,^a by sex, women as percentage of the total employed labour force, and the percentage distribution of women and men by industry, Canada, 1962 and 1972

Industry	Women	Men	Women as percentage of the total employed labour force	Percentage distribution	
				Women	Men
	'000	'000	%	%	%
			<u>1962</u>		
Agriculture	62	598	9.4	3.6	13.3
Manufacturing	317	1,186	21.1	18.2	26.4
Construction	12	381	3.1	0.7	8.5
Transportation, communication and other utilities	84	504	14.3	4.8	11.2
Trade	327	722	31.2	18.8	16.1
Finance, insurance, real estate	114	134	46.0	6.6	3.0
Community, business, personal services	735	509	59.1	42.3	11.3
Public administration	81	280	22.4	4.7	6.2
Other	*	174	*	*	3.9
All industries ^b	1,737	4,488	27.9	100.0	100.0
			<u>1972</u>		
Agriculture	75	406	15.8	2.7	7.3
Manufacturing	439	1,420	23.6	15.7	25.7
Construction	24	477	4.8	0.9	8.6
Transportation, communication and other utilities	112	518	15.3	4.0	11.2
Trade	511	899	36.2	18.3	16.2
Finance, insurance, real estate	200	185	51.9	7.2	3.3
Community, business, personal services	1,286	908	58.6	46.0	16.4
Public administration	141	412	25.5	5.0	7.4
Other	*	208	*	0.3	3.8
All industries ^b	2,796	5,533	33.6	100.0	100.0

*Figures too small to be reliable.

^aSee technical note 5, page 53.

Sources: 1962: D.B.S., Labour Division, Labour Force Survey Section, *Special Tables - 12 Month Averages* (Mimeographed), Table 3 (c) in the Special Tables for 1962. 1972: Same as for Table 4.

TABLE 5

Average annual earnings^a of women and men^b — all individuals and full-year workers — by occupation,^c showing percentage difference in earnings of men over those of women, Canada, 1971

Occupation	All individuals ^b			Full-year workers ^d		
	Women	Men	Men/women: as percentage ^e	Women	Men	Men/women: as percentage ^e
	\$	\$	%	\$	\$	%
Managerial	4,941	10,711	116.8	5,366	11,128	107.4
Professional and technical	6,120	11,095	81.3	7,270	12,104	66.4
Clerical	3,859	6,504	68.5	4,610	7,226	56.7
Sales	2,262	6,755	198.6	2,947	7,896	167.9
Services and recreation	2,163	5,326	146.2	3,000	6,379	112.6
Transportation, communication and utilities	3,333	6,775	103.3	4,672	7,571	62.1
Farmers, loggers and fishermen	e	3,609	—	e	3,819	—
Miners, craftsmen, etc. ^f	3,223	7,171	122.5	3,966	8,077	103.7
Labourers	e	4,306	—	e	6,111	—

^aEarnings comprise wages and salaries and net income from self-employment.

^bIndividual earnings recipients aged 14 years or over. Excluded are all individuals who were not in the labour force at the time of the survey in April 1972.

^cIndividuals were classified according to their job at the time of the survey in April 1972, but the earnings data relate to the year 1971.

^dThese are workers who reported having worked 50-52 weeks in 1971, either full-time or part-time.

^eSample too small for reliable estimate.

^fIncludes quarrymen and related workers, and production process and related workers.

^gThe percentage difference in men's earnings over those of women.

Source: Statistics Canada, Consumer Income and Expenditure Division, *Income Distributions by Size in Canada 1971*, Cat. No. 13-207 (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1973), pp. 12 and 102.

TABLE 6

Average wage rates per hour for women and men in similarly described occupations,^a Canada, October 1, 1972

Industry ^b and occupation	Average wage rates per hour ^c	
	Women	Men
	\$	\$
Fish products:		
Packer (weigher)	1.60	1.73
Biscuits:		
General helper	2.85	3.02
Bakeries:		
General bakery helper	2.22	2.85
Wrapping machine operator	2.85	3.11
Tobacco products:		
Cigarette-making machine operator	4.11	4.70
Labourer (unskilled worker)	3.62	3.96
Other rubber products: (other than footwear, tires and tubes)		
Inspector, finished goods	2.17	3.20
Leather tanneries:		
Finisher (doper,seasoner)	2.79	2.84
Woolen, yarn and cloth:		
Twister	2.14	2.22
Warper and beamer	2.06	2.50
Wet and dry operator	2.28	2.48
Synthetic textiles:		
Grader (cloth room)	2.74	2.35
Spinner	2.45	3.41
Thrower	2.69	3.08
Warper tender	2.88	3.08
Hosiery and other knitted goods:		
Knitter	2.06	2.39
Circular knitter	2.01	2.48
Cutter	2.07	2.76
Hand operator	1.84	2.29
Men's clothing:		
Fitter	1.90	2.48
Joiner	1.99	2.46
Lining sewer	2.09	2.61
Pocket maker	2.05	2.81
Tailor	2.20	2.91
Women's clothing:		
Finish presser (top presser)	2.81	3.67
Sewing machine operator	2.11	3.11
Fur goods:		
Fur operator (sewing machine operator)	3.41	4.00
Veneer and plywood mills:		
Veneer grader	2.31	3.30
Veneer patcher	3.78	4.02
Paper boxes and bags:		
Bundler (packer; tier)	2.60	2.97
Stitcher operator, automatic	2.89	3.31

TABLE 6 (CONT.)

Industry and occupation	Average wage rates per hour ^c	
	Women	Men
	\$	\$
Wire and wire products:		
Assembler	2.22	3.16
Motor vehicle parts and accessories:		
Machine operator	2.42	3.56
Small electrical appliances:		
Assembler	2.21	2.59
Punch press operator, light press	2.49	2.45
Household radio and television receivers:		
Aligner	2.88	3.19
Assembler, simple	2.41	2.58
Inspector, receiving	3.18	3.23
Communications equipment:		
Assembler, simple	2.23	2.93
Assembly-fitter	2.89	3.48
Assembly-wirer	2.37	3.06
Inspector, electrical	2.38	3.53
Inspector, receiving	2.60	3.66
Packer	2.39	3.37
Electrical industrial equipment:		
Assembler	2.29	2.98
Coil winder, universal machinery	2.84	3.21
Glass products:		
Selector	3.08	3.42
Pharmaceuticals, medicines and toilet preparations:		
Filler and packager	2.39	2.77
Paint and varnish:		
Labeller, machine	2.82	3.46
Laundries, cleaners and pressers:		
Presser (press operator)	1.83	2.51
Hotels (200 or more employees): ^d		
Waitress/waiter	1.81	1.80
Dish washer, hand and machine	2.06	1.96
Hotels (less than 200 employees): ^e		
Dish washer, hand and machine	1.79	1.75

^aThis table includes all the similarly-described occupations for which average industrial hourly wage rates for Canada were given in the source.

^bThe complete survey covers more than 38,000 establishments throughout Canada. This represents substantially complete coverage of all establishments having 20 or more employees in any month of the year in the industries surveyed.

^c"Average wage rates" means the weighted average of straight-time rates paid on a time basis in an occupation. To obtain these averages, the wage rates or earnings in an occupation are multiplied (weighted) by the number of employees receiving each rate, the sum of these products then being divided by the total number of employees reported in the occupation.

^dRailway hotels included.

^eRailway hotels excluded.

Source: Canada Department of Labour, Economics and Research Branch, Surveys Division, *Wage Rates, Salaries and Hours of Labour* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1973), Tables 9 - 89.

TABLE 7

Employed labour force in occupational categories,^a by sex, women as percentage of the total employed labour force, and percentage distribution of women and men by occupation, Canada, 1962 and 1972

Occupation	Women	Men	Women as percentage of the total employed labour force	Percentage distribution	
				Women	Men
	'000	'000	%	%	%
			<u>1962</u>		
Managerial	65	516	11.2	3.7	11.5
Professional and technical	274	385	41.6	15.8	8.6
Clerical	520	310	62.7	29.9	6.9
Sales	161	293	35.5	9.3	6.5
Service and recreation	392	204	55.5	22.0	6.5
Communication	31	25	55.4	1.8	0.6
Farmers and farm workers	60	602	9.1	3.5	13.4
Craft, production and related workers	223	1,312	14.5	12.8	29.2
Labourers and unskilled workers	16	281	5.4	0.9	6.3
Other	*	470	*	*	10.5
All occupational categories ^b	1,737	4,468	27.9	100.0	100.0
			<u>1972</u>		
Managerial	117	700	14.3	4.2	12.6
Professional and technical	485	695	41.2	17.4	12.6
Clerical	921	358	72.0	32.9	6.5
Sales	226	357	38.8	8.1	6.4
Services and recreation	597	413	59.1	21.4	7.5
Communication	35	35	49.3	1.2	0.6
Farmers and farm workers	69	419	14.1	2.5	7.6
Craft, production and related workers	305	1,749	14.9	10.9	31.6
Labourers and unskilled workers	31	321	8.8	1.1	5.8
Other	*	486	*	*	8.8
All Occupational categories ^b	2,796	5,533	33.6	100.0	100.0

*Figures too small to be reliable.

^bSee technical note 7, page 53.

Sources: Same as for Table 23.

TABLE 8Labour Union Membership by Sex, Canada, 1962 and 1970

	1962	1970	Percentage Change - 1970 Over 1962
Male Membership	1,267,526	1,754,323	38.4
Female Membership	248,884	513,203	106.2
Total Membership	1,514,905	2,267,526	49.7
Female Membership as % of Total Membership	16.4	22.6	-
Male Work Force (Thousands)	3,431	4,399	28.2
Female Work Force (Thousands)	1,546	2,341	51.4
Total Work Force (Thousands)	4,978	6,740	35.4
Female Work Force as % of Total Work Force	31.1	34.7	-

TABLE 9Union Members as a Percentage of the Work Force by Sex, Canada,
1962 and 1970

	1962	1970
<u>Male</u>		
Work Force	3,431,000	4,399,000
Union Members	1,267,526	1,754,323
%	36.9	39.9
<u>Female</u>		
Work Force	1,546,000	2,341,000
Union Members	248,884	513,203
%	16.1	21.9

Source: Ministry of Industry, Trade and Commerce....
op. cit. page 45

TABLE 10

Paid workers^a and union members in selected industries,^b and union members as percentage of paid workers, by sex, and women union members as percentage of total union members, Canada, 1971

Industry	Women			Men			Total union members	Women union members as percentage of total union members	Total workers in industry	All Union Members as % of All Worker
	Paid workers	Union members	Union members as percentage of paid workers	Paid workers	Union members	Union members as percentage of paid workers				
Agriculture	16,000	116	0.7	86,000	418	0.5	534	21.7	102,000	0.5
Manufacturing	403,000	142,638	35.0	1,348,000	632,780	46.9	775,448	18.4	1,756,000	14.2
Construction	20,000	1,078	5.4	392,000	244,234	62.5	245,962	0.4	412,000	59.7
Trade	413,000	27,086	6.7	706,000	68,870	9.8	96,653	23.7	1,119,000	8.6
Services	1,166,000	243,477	20.9	728,000	174,976	24.0	410,453	58.2	1,894,000	22.1
Transportation, communications and other utilities	104,000	52,981	50.9	530,000	301,820	53.9	354,801	14.9	664,000	53.4
Public administration	137,000	84,363	61.6	234,000	263,572	59.9	352,935	23.9	521,000	67.7
Finance, insurance, real estate	196,000	1,644	0.8	167,000	1,319	0.8	2,963	65.5	363,000	0.8
All industries ^c	2,468,000	550,132	22.6	4,561,000	1,817,044	39.8	2,375,162	23.5	7,029,000	33.8

^aIncludes any person who worked for salary, wages, tips, piece rates, commission or payment in kind. Working owners, working shareholders, or executive of an incorporated business are paid workers.

^bExcluded are certain industries with very few women workers: forestry, fishing and trapping, and mines, quarries and oil wells.

^cIncluding those categories not shown separately in the table.

Source: Paid workers: D. B. S. Labour Division, Labour Force Survey Section, *Special Tables - 12 month Averages 1971* (mimeographed), Table 3 (cl. Union members: Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, *Annual Report of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce under the Corporations and Labour Unions Returns Act 1971*, Part II, Labour Unions, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1973), p. 71.

TABLE 11

Women Executive Board Members as Percentage of Total Executive Board Members, by Type of Union, Canada, 1970

Type of Union	Total Executive Board Members	Women	Women As % of Total
International	109	3	2.8
National	489	64	13.1
Government	247	16	6.5
TOTAL	845	83	9.8

APPENDIX II

The following statement is taken from the document An Analysis and Strategy for the Abortion Struggle written by Red Barn comrades in Regina, for their abortion work. We felt that it was important for comrades to read their analysis although we have questions about some aspects of it.

"Abortion Is Murder" : The Threat From the Right

United action by the left and women's groups on abortion is important for several reasons. Firstly, there is need to respond to the increasing restrictions on abortions as an act of elementary solidarity in defense of the women's movement. A return to the status quo ante would mean a severe setback to the struggle for women's liberation. The present system of granting abortions gives rise to innumerable humiliations, physical and psychological suffering, and even death for Canadian women. It does not eliminate the trade in illegal abortions and it creates an arbitrary and intolerable male authority to sit in arrogant judgement over the self-expressed needs of women. These and other fundamental violations to women's rights must be fought vigorously.

But there are other reasons for organizing around this issue, reasons which go beyond defining the significance of abortion from the standpoint of the women's movement alone. As the capitalist order approaches a period of protracted social crisis, the bourgeoisie desperately tries to regain its balance. More and more it abandons its vision of free and uninterrupted progress and tries to reconstitute its crumbling ideological edifice around resurrected values and notions from the 'golden' past. This is obviously the significance of the anti-abortion groups--their penchant for self-righteous moralizing, the mystification of human life abstracted from its concrete social existence in a world of growing economic crisis, imperialist war and class conflict, the revival of latent sexual puritanism, misogyny, and longing for a revitalized patriarchal family.

The ideological roots of this movement are fundamentally conservative. Yet it is able to utilize propensities for religious and moral piety to appear in a guise of social reform--abortion must be opposed because it violates an ultimate moral principle (the 'sanctity' of human life), and because it is indicative of the moral laxity and selfish materialism which is seen as responsible for so many of our social ills--racial hatred, pollution, wasteful consumption, etc. The anti-abortion movement wants a rebirth of the sacred, of those timeless moral values upon which western civilization was founded and which we see disintegrating all around us.

And it is precisely because capitalist society is in crisis, manifested particularly in North America by the disintegration of the family and the dominant ideology, that the anti-abortion crusade can so successfully pose as a movement for profound reform and social regeneration. Never mind that in their obsession with the absolute value of each individualized unit of human protoplasm, the killing of several dozen Vietnamese peasants is seen as the lesser atrocity when compared with the destruction of several thousand human fetuses. Thus, Lt. William Calley becomes the 'much-maligned innocent' when compared to a 'butcher' like Dr. Henry Morgentaler. To many confused youth, and not necessarily just those enmeshed in Catholic dogma, such warped appeals seem to make sense out of a world gone wrong. For where can the problems of a violent, crisis-torn social order ultimately reside

but in ourselves that we should permit the wholesale slaughter of innocent fetuses? Abortion must be the original crime under which all other evils are subsumed and take accordingly a lesser place.

In political terms what we are seeing is a conservative reaction to the wave of youth radicalism of the late sixties, and in particular to the spectre of women's liberation which grew out of that radicalism. The decline of the new left, and the current lull before a new upsurge, have opened the way for a resurgence of the right, visible on a number of fronts. The anti-abortion crusade is but one manifestation of this overall conservative mood. To the generation of The Exorcist, surrounded by a plethora of religious and mystical sects and a culture pre-occupied with romantic, anti-technological themes, the fight against abortion appears as one of the saner and more sensible options to take up.

The function of this movement is clearly to divert attention away from the crimes of imperialism (Chile, Vietnam, Indonesia), and in an overall sense, to negate a material, political response to the everyday reality of exploitation and oppression under capitalism, by positing an idealist solution on the plane of abstract morality and religious doctrine (essence before existence, original sin, non-interference with what nature or fate hath decreed, etc.).

There is much in this analysis which suggests an analogy with the rise of fascism--the appeal to past values, the contempt for socially experienced misery, a social base among the frightened petit-bourgeoisie. Of course this analogy cannot be taken too far. At the moment, the anti-abortion movement takes the form of a single-issue pressure campaign whose major impetus comes from organized religion, especially the Roman Catholic Church, and whose political spokesmen extend to the highest echelons of the Liberal Party. But it would be a mistake to characterize the movement as just another carefully orchestrated conspiracy of the Catholic Church and its reactionary hangers-on. On the contrary, what is significant about the campaign is its capacity to generate a response among sections of the population outside of this traditional base--particularly among petit-bourgeois youth and housewives. In an atmosphere of continued social instability and ideological uncertainty, the possibility of a coalescence of reactionary forces with more serious political objectives cannot be ruled out.

Regardless of the specific weight we attach to it vis a vis the potentiality of fascism, Marxists must regard the anti-abortion crusade as the embryo of a powerful movement of conservative retrenchment and social reaction. However, we must be wary of overestimating the threat it presently represents. Quite evidently, the movement does not have the support of the bourgeoisie as a whole, nor is it likely to gain the explicit support of more than a fraction of bourgeois politicians. But the experience of the last few months has shown us that even a social democratic government like the Blakeney regime in Saskatchewan will pedal backwards very fast on the abortion question rather than face the wrath of the anti-abortion bigots.

What goes for the NDP applies also for the bourgeois parties. The bourgeoisie has long since lost the capacity to defend and extend its own cherished political ideals of freedom of choice, freedom from ecclesiastical interference, and the primacy of the individual conscience. Its preference is for a strong right flank since this gives it a margin to manoeuvre in its dealings with the left and the workers' movement.

We have introduced this analysis of the anti-abortion movement to show why it is crucial for the left to support the struggle for abortion reform. Even in the absence of right-wing pressure, it would be important to fight for the right of all women to decide whether and under what circumstances they will bear children. Socialists who refused to support this elementary right would be incapable of leading any kind of general social emancipation. Obviously, in this context, abortion reform is but one part of a whole complex of demands aimed at ending sexual oppression which must be advanced and fought for. These demands revolve around the concepts of general social responsibility for childrearing and housework, free and safe birth control from puberty onwards, free abortion on demand and no forced sterilization, and full rights for sexual minorities.

As we have seen, however, the abortion issue holds a strategic place in this ensemble at the present time in Canada. The current conjuncture holds the possibility of a serious defeat for the women's movement. This is not only in the sense that women will be denied access to abortions. Obviously this development in itself would have an immediate and deleterious effect on the lives of Canadian women, particularly poor and working-class women. But more significantly, and in a larger sense, a victory for the anti-abortionists would alter the relationship of class forces in Canadian society to the detriment of the left, the workers' movement and the struggle for socialism, with which the prospect of any real emancipation of women's condition is indissolubly linked.

APPENDIX III

The following was written for a previous discussion of the Women's Commission and is reproduced here to provide a more detailed background to the section on the women's liberation milieu.

The History of the Canadian Women's Movement

During the post war boom in the Canadian economy there was a rapid increase in the demand for clerical and service workers. Largely because of the wages offered and the availability of male labour there was a demand for women workers. For a number of reasons older (35 plus) married women with families were drawn into the labour force during this period. Firstly, higher education was rapidly increasing during this same period, so many younger men and women were kept off the labour market. Secondly, the wages of many men were falling below the means of 'subsistence' (considering historical factors particularly the increasing costs of reproducing the labour power of the next generation, many of whom were attending post secondary educational institutions). That is to say that economic necessity was driving many wives and mothers into the labour force. The fact that women work out of economic necessity is shown clearly with primary and secondary data (women's labour force participation is negatively correlated with husbands's income and working wives give economic reasons for working).

With the numbers of older married women entering social production contradictions were created with their role in the home (reproduction of labour power). The labour time required for the reproduction of labour power was reduced with changes in the forces of production and the increase of services. Changes occurred with the production of goods (e.g. food---canning and freezing: clothing ---garment-industry) and later with the production of labour saving devices from small electrical appliances to washers, dryers and dish washers. Secondly, changes occurred with the introduction of services by the state (education health) and by the private sector (laundries, restaurants, day care centres). The availability of goods and services potentially decrease the labour time required to reproduce labour power but the price of course restricts their consumption by working class families. Another factor reducing the years women spend reproducing the labour power of the next generation is the decline in the fertility rate, but this trend is more than compensated for by the increasing number of years young people remain as economic dependents in the nuclear family while they attend post secondary educational institutions. In spite of the changes in the forces of production the number of hours required to reproduce labour power remains high, as seen in a number of time budget studies of women. Contradictions developed around the family and privatized housework as the forces of production developed the potential to socialize housework.

This context of contradictions is important although the base of the women's movement was more educated in the universities during the sixties. The female population of universities increased 300 percent during the sixties and the contradictions these women experienced were related to the contradictions mentioned above. These women were being prepared for their contradictory roles in production and reproduction. Their high school and university education was preparing them for their role production. While they were in grade school in

the fifties many of their mothers had gone to work. With many mothers working there was an increasing awareness that these women students would probably work after marriage. The women who continued their education at universities were streamed through high school with academic subjects i.e. streamed above the clericals (taking business subjects and typing) and the service workers (studying vocational courses like hardressing). They developed expectations for 'professional careers' (i.e. poorly paid but greatly mystified service jobs) although there were contradictions such as studying typing 'just in case they need a skill to fall back on'.

The job expectations of these women although focussed on being 'professionals' were sometimes vague. Some said they wanted to work with people. Counsellors and sex biased aptitude tests pushed them in the direction of liberal arts or more concretely towards social service work. Many of these women who came from working class backgrounds could not afford to go to university so they became elementary school teachers (formerly a one year course) or nurses (at that time nurses in training were given free room and board and a minimal salary).

Tripling the university enrollment of women, mainly in liberal arts was a brilliant exercise in the anarchy of capitalist planning. With the third industrial revolution there was an increasing need for more highly educated people but a large part of the demand was in areas sex-typed as male occupations, such as engineering. (I think it would be useful to extend Sandy Lockhart's work to show how the expansion of university enrollment was linked to bourgeois false consciousness about human capital). Thousands of female graduates in the late sixties expected 'professional' jobs and their experience of some equality at university had not prepared them for the sexual division of labour they encountered when they went to work.

They were competing for 'professional' jobs with educated women returning to the labour force after their children had entered school. These were women with job experience. They were also entering the labour force at a time when the percentage of female workers in 'professional' jobs was declining. There had been absolute increases during the sixties with the expansion of service occupations (90 percent of which were in 'community service'). Teaching, nursing, and social work accounted for most of the absolute increase (all areas depending on government expenditure and therefore to be severely affected in the '70's by the fiscal crisis of the state). There were not jobs for all the women with liberal arts educations.

All women in the society were being prepared for their role in the family through the school system, television, magazines, books, etc. The goal of every woman's life was to find a man. Finding a husband for a happy nuclear family meant looking pretty and not being too intelligent (to protect his ego) i.e. the beautiful brainless body with two tits and no head.

There was an obvious contradiction for university women between the role of finding a husband to enter their role in reproduction and getting an education to fulfill their expectations in the labour force. When they were finished university many of them could only find jobs as clerical sex objects where they were treated as though they had no intellectual ability. Their expectations had been raised through high school streaming and at university, but there they were bringing the boss coffee, making on the average less than

than male high school graduates and less than the men working beside them who did the same work. With the job expectations of university women they reacted against the social roles which seemed to prevent them from fulfilling these expectations-- firstly, women's sexual objectification to find a husband. Secondly, they reacted against being drawn immediately into the contradictions faced by older, married women (that is reproducing labour power in the nuclear family while working outside the home). The second thrust of the women's movement was for contraception information. (birth control pills became generally available in the mid-sixties as did abortions).

The Rise of Women's Liberation and the Student Movement

The student movement began in the universities during the sixties. The membership was concentrated in liberal arts faculties where the percentage of women was rising. In Quebec female students were also influenced by Quebecois nationalism.

Women involved in the New Left were increasingly disturbed by the rhetoric of equality in contradiction to their place in those organizations. As part of the student radicalization the framework had been set by challenging similar contradictions in relation to other oppressed groups -- e.g. Quebecois, Indians, and blacks. Given the level of analysis in many left groups at the time, the first theoretical attempts at analysing sexism were analogies with racism. Women in NewLeft groups were the first to understand women's oppression. They were the initiators and the leaders of the women's movement.

The Ideas and Campaigns of the Women's Movement

Some of the first actions of women were around the most blatant inequity, the exclusion of women from places they wanted to go. In Toronto, university women were excluded from activities in Hart House, one of the only social-recreational facilities on campus. In Montreal the first women's action (organized by the LSO) was the entry of women into one of the city's male-only pubs.

The campaigns which followed were a rejection of women's preparation for their role in the family. The beautiful brainless body looking for a husband was rejected in actions against beauty contests and trade shows of beauty products. As mentioned above this contradicted the role university women saw for themselves as intellectuals preparing for jobs. The rejection of women's sex object status in these actions included the assertion of women's intellectual capacity--such as a sign on a beauty contest applicant announcing that women also had brains.

An extremely important issue for women pursuing careers was the postponement of their role in reproduction. On the one hand women were socialized to enticing sex objects and birth control pills had come onto the market, yet women were still expected to repress their sexuality until they were ready to reproduce in the nuclear family. Women demanded birth control information. The Birth Control Handbook was written by new leftists and the women's movement distributed thousands of copies creating incidents at some high schools where it was handed out. The only national campaign undertaken by the movement was centred around the issue of abortion, followed by actions at hospitals.

Women demanded the right to prevent child birth on the basis that capitalist society made it almost impossible for women to be mothers and workers:

'Women do not even have the possibility of control of their lives without access to birth control... Our training for jobs is irrelevant when we can not plan when and how we will be able to work' (from Abortion Caravan Demands)

One of the main speakers, a pregnant woman on welfare, talked about forced sterilization. Free abortion on demand is required by the material conditions of Canadian women she said, but birth control is not a substitute for social change and women should also have the right to have children

The Abortion Caravan also made demands in relation to women's contradictory role in production and reproduction, such as day care and maternity leave:

'Besides the right to have our children when we want them we demand the means to bear and raise them as they deserve. If it is our responsibility to reproduce this society, then the society has a responsibility to us... As long as we must assume the full care of children we have basic needs that must be met. We demand laws from this government that give us the right to maternity leave with pay, security of our jobs during childbirth, and equal pay. If the government wants us to work which it obviously does since it employs large numbers of women at half-wage, it must take equal responsibility with us for child care centres right across the country!'

Women who first reacted against the restrictions of women's role in reproduction also questioned women's role in production. Women wanted the right to train for any occupation--an end to sex-typed streaming, the right to be trained for any trade, admission to graduate school and admission to predominantly male faculties in the university.

The ultimate goal was to end the sexotyping of jobs. The women's movement, which was dominated by women from the new left, understood that this objective could not be achieved within the capitalist system. Some were moving closer toward a marxist analysis, understanding that the working class had an important role to play in the socialist revolution. Although there was some understanding that women's liberationists should engage in practice with working class women, there was no clear perspective on how work with the class should be done, what attitude to take to the union bureaucracy, how this work was related to the destruction of capitalism and how an independent women's movement could link up with other anti-capitalist forces. In a few situations picket line support was given to women on strike.

An Organizational and Political History of the Women's Movement

In the late sixties, the women's movement was most active in major population centres-- Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Ottawa. When the impact was felt from women's groups in these larger centres, groups started in the major cities of other provinces such as Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton and Halifax. In Ontario, groups developed in London, Windsor, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, St. Catharines, Kitchener, Hamilton, Kingston, and Peterborough. There was a similar process in other provinces. Many of these groups developed after the women's movement in larger cities had declined and fragmented. In some cases, their development was similar

to the rise of the Woman's Place in Toronto with little continuity with the women's movement. The history of women's liberation groups in smaller locations, their social composition and the absence of competing political tendencies affects our work in such cities.

There were different left influences on the women's movement which varied from city to city. Toronto and Vancouver had a stronger new left influence although this was true of all the groups. Montreal women's liberation was affected by Quebecois nationalism and the Ottawa group was dominated by Waffle women.

The first expression of women's liberation in Canada came from the women in the Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA), the national organization of the Canadian new left. SUPA took a turn in the mid-sixties from student activity to community organizing. In the summer of 1966, there were projects in Toronto, Halifax, Kingston and on an Indian reservation in northern Saskatchewan. Given their socialization, women's skills were much more apparent in community organizing than in the kind of work done in the student milieu under the leadership of male super stars. Contradictions arose around their leadership in the projects and their position in the organization.

In 1967, women from these SUPA projects wrote a position paper, Sisters, Brothers, Lovers,...Listen...

"They (women in SUPA) are the typists, fundraisers and community organizers. The vast majority of community organizers were women and we must ask why community organizing was considered tedious. It requires patience, sensitivity, understanding and more patience...Every so often one of these workers would try, through her efforts and work to attain a position of leadership. As we all know too well, they were labelled 'castrating females' and not 'real women'. In other words they were not longer 'good niggers'. These women were forced out of the organization by various unconscious means, or accepted their subservient roles."

SUPA disintegrated after the convention where this position paper was presented. After a debate in SUPA about government funding of community organizing, a more reformist group joined the Company of Young Canadians (CYC). Individuals with a nationalist position in SUPA remained organizationally inactive for a time, but later moved into the Waffle and CLM. Women's liberation continued in the part of the organization which went into the student milieu and in the Canadian University Students (CUS). During the school year 1967-68, the women who had been in SUPA met in Toronto, which has been a centre of left politics in English Canada. On campus women were involved in a struggle to open Hart House to women. The first women's group on the west coast started in the spring of 1968 out of student politics at Simon Fraser University.

The Toronto Women's Liberation Movement and the Vancouver Women's Caucus began in the fall of 1968. The first action of the Toronto Women's movement was at a bikini contest. Splits developed from the beginning of the Toronto Women's movement. In the first few months liberal feminists left the rest of the organization which was dominated by the new left women (See the document 'Is Feminism Necessary for Women's Liberation'). The liberal feminists looked to Bonnie Kreps, a radical feminist from the American movement, for leadership but she supported the revolutionary majority. A few months later radical feminists withdrew from the group to form the New Feminists. When the LSA finally

began its participation in the women's movement, they argued against a socialist women's group. Women's Liberation which remained a socialist group, was characterized as ultra left by the LSA. They therefore withdrew in the spring of 1969 to join the New Feminists. The following summer they broke from the New Feminists to initiate the Toronto Women's Caucus.

During the summer of 1969, the ideas of the women's movement spread rapidly. At a national conference of CUS there were confrontations around the women's question. It was that summer that independent leftists (on campus, in the NDP, and women working in the media) in Ottawa formed the first women's group in that City.

In Montreal, the first women's action, entering a male-only tavern, was led by the LSO but they did not initiate a women's group. The leadership for Montreal Women's Liberation came out of the nationalist struggles of 68-69. English revolutionaries at McGill university had engaged in student struggles and in the spring of 1969 they participated in a united front for the McGill Francais demonstration. The strongest leaders in Montreal Women's Liberation were a few bilingual women who also participated in the Front Liberation des Femmes (FLF) and had connections with the Front Liberation Populaire (FLP). The core of Montreal Women's Liberation participated in general struggles occurring that fall-- against Murray Hill, against a language bill and for the freeing of political prisoners Hallieres and Gagnon. The majority were feminists out of the new left who supported an independent socialist Quebec.

These actions led to the banning of demonstrations. Women in the CSN (including Mme. Chartrand) and the FLF planned a women's demonstration to test the ban. English women's liberationists were drawn into the planning, to the extent that they were bilingual, but nationalism presented barriers to cooperation in spite of fluency in French. (Nationalism soon led to the expulsion of English women from the FLF although they were fluently bilingual and supported an independent socialist Quebec. English women were considered the colonizers, including the left. Later abortion counselling was refused by bilingual nationalist women to pregnant English women) The demonstration of 400 was quite militant with no slogans, only the high pitched cry of the Algerian women, used in their struggle. A contradictory note was added to the militancy because the united front had accepted the leadership of Mme. Chartrand and the CSN who wanted a peaceful demonstration, so no placards were carried, only flowers to give to the police. The ban was upheld, resulting in the arrest of 150 women.

The Year of the Barricade conference in the fall of 1969 brought together the Canadian left for a discussion of the international student movement. There were speakers from the German SDS, the FLP in Quebec, as well as student new leftists with a number of years experience and Juliet Mitchell from Britain whose article 'Women, the Longest Revolution' had been an important ideological influence on the women's movement in Canada.

Although new left feminists thought it was important to build an independent women's movement around women's oppression they were not opposed to working with other groups. At the time the women's movement was gaining momentum and reaching its highest point during 1969-70 the student movement was

declining. Many new left feminists in Quebec and English Canada worked exclusively in women's groups because there were no organizations which could provide them with leadership.

Like other new leftists they rejected Stalinism. The Communist Party was more interested in working with liberal feminists for peace and reform. The one or two young Stalinist women working with women revolutionaries could not provide a pole of attraction given the CP's line on the family. CPL also had a Stalinist line on the family and they dismissed the issues raised by the women's movement as petty bourgeois concerns that would divide the working class.

The LSA-LSO differentiated itself from the new left feminists on the basis that they did not want to participate in groups that considered themselves socialist. They adapted to new left feminism in the sense that they wanted to organize women as a sector which would unite with other sectors sometime in the dim, undefined future. While new left feminists saw these links in a more spontaneous way, the LSA-LSO thought that the Leninist party would be useful for making the links between the sectors when the time came.

With this adaption to sectoralism and feminism why did the LSA-LSO not recruit new left feminists... The LSA-LSO adapted to the right of new left feminism. They were incapable of providing leadership for revolutionary women because they were too preoccupied with their adaption to liberal feminism. They failed to differentiate between the various feminist currents which is not surprising given their inability to distinguish vanguard elements in any situation. They wanted to build a broadly based liberal feminist movement where they could work with feminists and take them through the social democratic stage of consciousness in the NDP and out the other side with revolutionary consciousness into the LSA-LSO. The fact that many feminists were already revolutionaries reading Marx, Engels and Lenin, trying to develop a strategy, and looking for revolutionary leadership seems to have escaped their notice.

When the women's movement was gathering momentum in 1969-70 women in Toronto and Vancouver were involved in activities with working class women. There was an understanding that an involvement with the working class was important in making a socialist revolution but there was no understanding of how their immediate practice could lead to a complete transformation of society. Trying to develop a revolutionary practice at a time when the Canadian working class was relatively quiescent led to frustrations which resulted in opportunism and ultraleftism.

The women's movement like the student movement soon reached a strategic impasse. The abortion caravan served as a temporary unifying focus in the spring of 1970, but in the critical evaluation that followed, it became increasingly clear that the women's movement could not develop a unified strategic perspective.

The Abortion Caravan was the peak of the organized women's movement. The caravan began in Vancouver, holding meetings across the west. A militant action demonstration in Ottawa broke police lines at Trudeau's home, followed by an action which disrupted the activity of the House of Commons. After the caravan there were local actions, mainly focussed at hospitals which were not performing abortions.

The LSA-LSO and the Women's Movement

The LSA-LSO argued against women's groups calling themselves socialist. In Quebec the LSO women (supported by the tendency that became the GMR) were the only ones opposed to the Montreal Women's Liberation group supporting an independent socialist Quebec. They split from Montreal Women's Liberation to implement their mass movement perspective. The LSO front, Montreal Women's Caucus, attracted fewer than a dozen women to its mass movement and recruited no one in its brief history, nor did they recruit from the Montreal Women's Liberation Movement. The openings were numerous for a Leninist organization. For example, there were marxist study groups where Mandel pamphlets and Lenin were studied. The LSO when they were open about their organizational affiliation (which was infrequent) never mentioned Lenin, the need for a Leninist party or the Fourth International. The content of their interventions was almost exclusively around the issue of abortion and they addressed revolutionary women and liberal feminists in the same manner.

In Ottawa they argued unsuccessfully against a socialist women's group. In Vancouver, the debate with the LSA was in opposition to their single issue orientation for repeal of the abortion laws. There were centres where the practice of the LSA was not denounced by women as reformist, centres where there were no independent leftist to polemicize with them.

The LSA's work in Toronto was unique in a number of ways. Firstly, the women's movement started earlier in Toronto than in other cities and the LSA's internal struggle around whether to orient to the women's movement was waged in Toronto. Secondly the LSA started its own women's group, the Toronto Women's Caucus, during the rise of the women's movement (1969-69). In other centres they did not start their own groups in opposition to the socialist groupings until the movement was declining. Because the LSA was never able to respond to the advanced elements of the women's movement or their theoretical positions they were much more effective working in groups that weren't socialist.

There was often conflict in TWC over the organizational control of the LSA. At first, positions were developed by the LSA on even the most minor questions in the TWC but after an internal debate, only more general positions were taken. To conceal the organization control of TWC the LSA comrades were not open about their membership except for those who sold the press. In spite of these efforts, two struggles developed against the organizational control of the LSA one in 1970 and the other in 1972.

The major crises in Toronto and Vancouver came only after the SWP turn to single issue campaigns that would not alienate women from any class background. That was their motivation for changing the slogan of the Abortion Caravan 'Free Abortion on Demand' to 'Repeal the Abortion Laws'. Their reformist practice in building the single issue campaign around abortion always meant that they addressed the lowest common denominator in the women's movement, alienating the revolutionary women and failing to recruit the most politically advanced women in the movement.

Women's Liberation and the Left of Social Democracy

The history of women's activity in the NDP is somewhat separate from the women's liberation movement. Because of their involvement in the movement left social democrats and revolutionaries raised women's issue in the NDP.

Early in 1969, Toronto women within the Socialist Caucus started to meet around women's issues. LSA women became involved in this work about the time they entered the Toronto Women's Liberation Movement. Most of the women in the caucus were LSA members. In the fall of 1969, the Waffle began to grow after presenting a manifesto to the NDP's federal convention. A women's caucus was initiated by the Waffle at that convention, around the question of women on the Federal Council.

The Waffle's work on the women's question (especially outside Toronto) was largely confined to convention debate. At the ONDP convention in the fall of 1970 the issues were parity for women in the leadership and a long resolution on women. The chair blocked debate on this lengthy resolution, calling the question after 10 minutes. Out of sympathy for the women, who had not been given a platform for their views, the delegates passed the resolution.

An ongoing NDP women's caucus, dominated by Waffle women, met in Toronto following the 1970 convention. Educationals with a class analysis were given at the meetings, and literature was distributed in the riding associations. There was always tension in the group between the LSA and Waffle. Conflict also developed between Waffle women and NDP women not in the Waffle, particularly during the Waffle leadership race at the 1971 federal convention. The Toronto NDP women's caucus was active at the convention but it dissolved shortly thereafter.

Following that convention Waffle women took no initiative around Women's issues until the spring of 1972. By that time the contradictions which led to the Left Caucus-MISC split in the summer of '72 had already developed to the point where unity around women's issues was impossible.

This history leads up to a discussion of the Red Circle's work and should be included in a discussion of women's activity, or lack of it, and positions taken on the women's question during the development of the Red Circle, the Old Mole, and the RCT.