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Photo: Mary Winder. Woman is 100 years of age

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Published 10 times a year by Vancouver Status of Women
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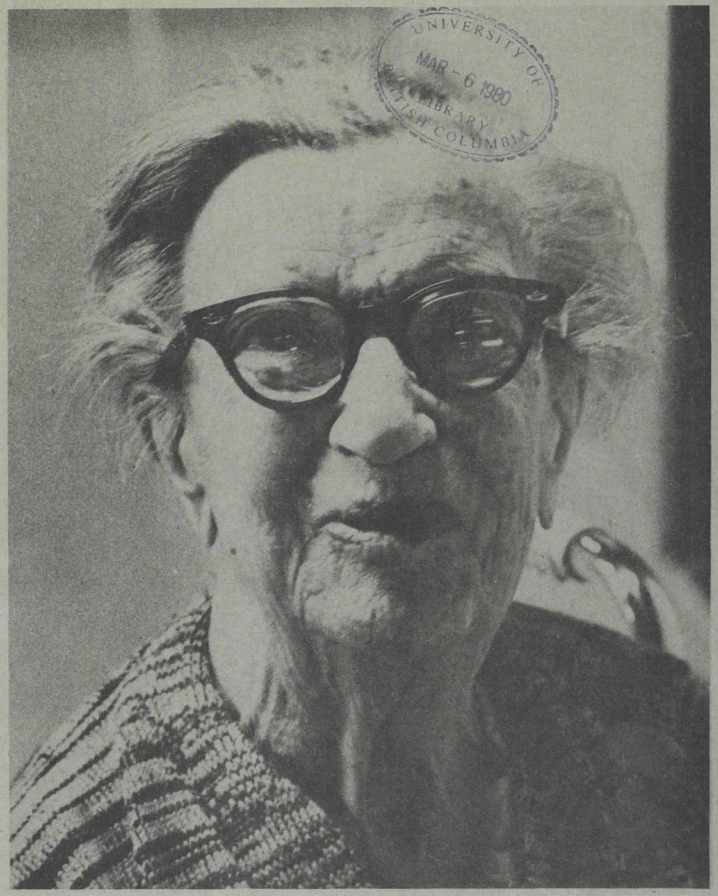

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RIGHT TO CHOOSE

Mair is not a choice health minister, and he's been mouthing off

By Kinesis staff writers

Rafe Mair is personally opposed to abortions. Rafe Mair is the new minister of health in British Columbia.

Therefore (political logic) abortions will become more and more difficult to obtain in B.C.

Government by personal prejudice? No, says Mair, *I think as health minister, I have a responsibility to voice my point of view ... and to act on it as far as able.*

Well, we think we have a responsibility to express our point of view, too. And to act on it.

When Statistics Canada released its annual figures on legal abortions last November, Rafe Mair had just become the health minister. As usual, B.C. had the highest rates in the country - 33.6 abortions for every 100 live births in 1978. B.C. has consistently led the country since 1972, when the "liberalized" abortion laws went into effect.

The figures upset fledgling health minister Mair. He was more than upset. He was shocked, alarmed.

He felt that the number was ten times above what he would consider a "normal" rate. Reducing the figure ten times would bring B.C. down to about 3 abortions for every 100 live births. Canada's national figure is 17.4 (compare, for interest, the national U.S. figure of 38.5).

Abortion only in *exceptional* cases?

Mair has gone on to say that he favours abortion only in "exceptional" circumstances. He hasn't bothered to fill us in on what he means by "exceptional." And who decides whose case in an exception?

Rafe Mair's line on abortion is a can of worms. But then, so's the federal abortion law. That law permits "therapeutic abortions" when there is a "threat to the life or health of a woman." The law does not recommend how "threat to life" should be interpreted. The law does not insist that all hospitals establish therapeutic abortion committees. The result, as the 1977 Badgley report demonstrated, is that there are enormous disparities from region to region, and from province to province. The law, in short, does not work.

Only about 20% of eligible hospitals in Canada perform abortions. In B.C., only about half of the province's 103 public general hospitals have therapeutic abortion committees.

Every hospital has different rules and regulations. Residency requirements, and the need for consent (from a teenager's parents, or from a woman's husband) vary wildly.

Anti-choice strategy is this: concentrate on disrupting access to abortions at the smaller hospitals. Eventually, the major hospitals will be swamped, unable to meet demand, and will cut back, too. Here's how this is happening in British Columbia:

* In 1979, 15% fewer abortions were performed at Burnaby General Hospital than in 1978. That hospital will now take referrals only from doctors with admitting privileges. A six-month residency requirement has recently been imposed. Parent consent for women under 19 needing abortions has become mandatory.

* Since Mair announced in December that abortion upset him, the Royal Columbia Hospital in New Westminster has tightened up. An average of three or four cases a month, which previously would have been accepted with no problems, are now being challenged and rejected.

* The anti-choice faction in Powell River controls six of the hospital board's 13 seats. The number of abortions there in 1979 dropped by 25%. We can predict that the number of abortions will also go down at Lions' Gate Hospital, which serves North and West Vancouver. Four of the 12 member board of that hospital are anti-choice.

* The therapeutic abortion committee at Victoria General has approved only four of the 31 applications received so far this year. Last year, 99% of all applications went through without hassles.

The means that women wanting abortions have to go to the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria, where demand is increasing dramatically. When the Victoria General recently approved only two out of 15 applications, the rest went to Royal Jubilee where they all went through.

Last minute news is that the hospital board of Victoria General will now accept referrals from the abortion committee of Royal Jubilee. This means the hospital will be doing abortions again, and will circumvent its own anti-abortion abortion committee.

* Vancouver General Hospital is now receiving more and more applications for abortions from women who have come down from Kamloops and Kelowna. Vancouver General has liberal policy on abortion, with no residency requirement, and no parental consent needed for women between the ages of 16 and 19.

* About 1000 Canadian women, almost all of them from B.C., are going to Washington state each year for a same-day abortion. It costs about $130 and no parent consent is needed for teenage women. (In the Maritimes, where access to abortion is appallingly difficult, it's always been New York or bust.)

Howls of protest scare Mair

In response to the howls of protest from pro-choice groups, Rafe Mair appeared to back down. Sex education, not abortions, should be used to prevent the birth of unwanted children, announced Mair. He didn't have any definite plans, Mair admitted, but teenagers in high school should have birth control information.

Surely there is no health problem more easily prevented than the unwanted pregnancy, said Mair. He could do with a refresher course on birth control himself.

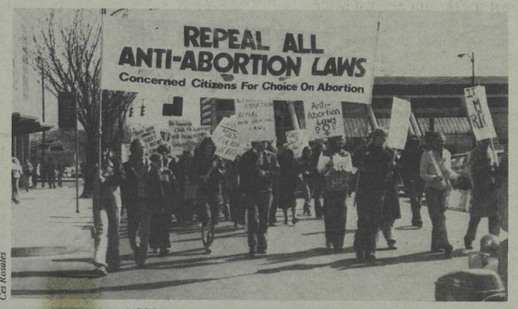
Don't be deceived. Mair also said that he had sent a letter to all B.C. hospitals, telling them to follow the letter of the law. But as Mair must know, you simply can not follow the letter of the law with the abortion legislation. The law is, in itself, deliberately imprecise. Through a strict interpretation of the word "health", you can wipe out access to legal abortion. No problem.

Just as soon as Mair had announced that sex education in the schools is his heart's desire, the B.C. education minister, Brian Smith comes out and says: not in my schools, it isn't.

We don't, as a ministry of education, promote sex education, or the extent of it, or anything else, Smith told reporters. *There are a few things that we feel should not have to come down from on high,* he added.

So much for that.

Meanwhile Mair, having dodged the media storm with a smokescreen about sex education, can push ahead with his anti-choice biases. ○



Cos Rosales

A CCCA pro-choice march last March. More to come.

Campaign Anti-Choice targets Mitchell, Robinson

Campaign Life Canada (misnomer for an anti-choice group) has come out with its hit-list for the February elections.

Spokesperson Kathleen Tóth speaks in favourable terms of Joe Clark, who has promised that he will bring the abortion issue to a vote in the commons.

The anti-choicers are actively campaigning against Margaret Mitchell (NDP Vancouver East) and Sven Robinson (NDP Burnaby). Robinson and Mitchell were successful in blocking a motion on abortion in the Commons last November.○

Mitchell defends us in the Commons

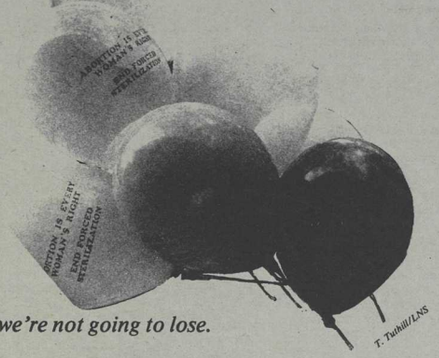
Margaret Mitchell (NDP Vancouver East) was outspoken in her opposition to moves within the House of Commons to introduce the anti-abortion bill, Bill C-206.

As I read the aims of this bill, said Mitchell, *it is to restrict the option of legal abortions to only very limited, narrowly-defined situations involving actual physical or acute mental danger. This seems to go completely in the reverse trend to what happened in Canada in the last ten or 15 years. Before 1967, all abortions were a criminal offence, but this did not stop abortions. There were abortions, deaths, and very inhumane practices. Abortions have been with us always...*

Not one of us in a democracy has the right to impose our views on others. We have no right to tell a woman who is pressured by many problems...and maybe in a situation in which she would damange an unwanted child, or the child would be neglected and perhaps abused, that she cannot consider an abortion, or that it is not her right to make the decision...

It is really impossible for a man, for whom it is impossible to be in the situation, to really see it from a woman's point of view. That is why I am concerned that there are not more women in this House to speak about this from a woman's point of view... How would you really feel if your young daughter was pregnant and was told she could not have an abortion? ...Would you force her and her boyfriend to go to the backstreets of Toronto or Vancouver to some quack? That is what you are saying if you support this bill.○

But we're going to fight for our right to choose



and we're not going to lose.

T. Tuthill/LNS

Pro-choicers respond immediately

In Vancouver, a public service bulletin "from women who want the right to choose" went up at bus stops and on telephone poles. Under the caption, "Health Minister Gets Carried Away", it explained the frightening implications of Mair's comment that he favours abortion only in "exceptional" situations.

This information was illustrated with a graphic of a pregnant man (looking quite Rafe-ish with a bushy beard). Caption: *Is this exceptional?*

The bulletin also pointed to the hopelessly vague nature of Section 251 of the Criminal Code, which makes abortion legal if the pregnancy *would or would likely endanger her (the woman's) life or health.* Since the word "health" is nowhere defined, the poster points out, abortion committees are free to interpret this as narrowly as they chose.

The World Health Organization defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

Federal abortion laws, the poster stresses, need to incorporate this, or a comparable, definition in order to safeguard a woman's total well-being.

During the Mair controversy, establishment media was in hot pursuit of pro-choice spokespeople. Feminist groups repeatedly stressed that women must have a right to choose on abortion, and condemned Mair's attempts to interfere with that right of choice.

Majority opinion appears to be on the pro-choice side. As BCFW representatives pointed out, 87% of Canadians (surveyed March '78) agreed that a woman should have a right to legal abortion when her life or health is in danger.

A Vancouver Sun editorial came out for choice on abortion, asking if Rafe Mair would be less upset about leading the country in the number of *illegal* abortions.

The fact that most Canadians do favour a woman's right to choose on abortion is no reason for complacency. A small bunch of zealots could push through legislation to make abortion illegal, despite the wishes of the majority. (This has just happened in Israel, see p. 20.) And remember: Rafe Mair, as health minister, directly appoints the board of Vancouver General Hospital. He can control hospital policy through those appointments.

Yvette Perreault, as representative for the Coalition of B.C. Rape Crisis Centres puts our case succinctly: *Let's be clear that the Minister of Health is not talking about cutting back on actual abortions performed. He simply wants to reduce statistics that reflect the number of legal abortions.*○

Brown speaks out against Mair

Rosemary Brown (NDP Burnaby-Edmonds) has pointed out that Rafe Mair's anti-choice statements are political grandstanding. Brown said he would be very surprised if the health minister took any action to back his statements because *arbitrary interference with hospital abortions will place the lives of pregnant women at risk.*

Brown also stressed that in countries where abortions are illegal, abortions are almost as frequent as in countries where they are available through legal channels.

Mair's time, Brown suggested, would be better spent supporting Planned Parenthood, an organization which his government has actively opposed. *Last year the Planned Parenthood educational services in Vancouver were closed because of lack of provincial support,* said Brown.○

North Shore pro-choicers organize for Lions Gate

The North Shore Association for Choice on Abortion is now staging an urgent drive for increased pro-choice membership in the Lions Gate Hospital, which serves North and West Vancouver.

At the September '79 annual general meeting of the hospital, anti-choice supporters defeated all pro-choice nominees and incumbents. The hospital board, which controls decisions on abortion, has 19 members. Of the 12 elected members of the board, five are now known to be anti-choice.

Just prior to the September elections, an item stating that abortion was not be to an issue appeared in the North Shore News. The item, which was not issued by the hospital administration, had the effect of keeping pro-choice members away from the meeting. They were misled into thinking that their vote was not needed to defeat the anti-choice supporters.

The North Shore Association for Choice on Abortion has been advised that the anti-choice members of the hospital board are currently investigating the hospital's abortion procedures and are considering a call for a special meeting to force a vote on the issue.

As a result of stepped-up anti-choice efforts to draw people into the hospital society, it is now feared that they may have a majority.

If, in fact, they do hold a majority, a special vote at this time could bring an end to choice on abortion at Lions Gate.

All residents of North and West Vancouver are eligible to join the hospital society.

Since members must have been registered as such for 30 days prior to any election to vote, it is *imperative* that you sign up *now.*

For further information on the North Shore Association for Choice on Abortion, a community-wide group of interested people of both sexes, please contact Bruce or Carol at 988-3649, Delphine at 987-4822 or Maureen at 987-6858.○

Sleazy ad campaign hits B.C. airwaves

An anti-choice group calling itself the "Babies Ransom Fund" is running advertisements on B.C. broadcast media. The ads single out the NDP. Here's an excerpt from one of them:

...in 1969, abortion was legalized. Ever since then abortion killing of innocent babies has been carried out on a massive scale. That party (the NDP) adopted a policy...that it is simply a matter between a woman and her doctor... imagine a wife having the right to end the life of that pre-born child.

Before voting NDP, carefully consider their hidden left-wing policies on abortion and homosexuality. Already these perversions are destroying families endangering societies.

Prince George businessman Louis Matte, one director of the anti-choice group, says that three other directors wish to remain anonymous.○

Planned Parenthood slammed: anti-choicers gleeful

And now: a perfect opportunity for Rafe Mair to put his money where his mouth has so recently been.

The Planned Parenthood Association of B.C. learned January 30 that it will be forced to cut its family planning services by more than 50%.

It's something we've been hoping for years would happen, gloated a Pro-life Society spokeswoman.

The federal government has denied Planned Parenthood the last $50,000 of a three-year $150,000 grant for educational services.

Planned Parenthood educator Katherine Mooney points out that this is just the chance Mair's been waiting for. He can step in - provide the funding the federal government has cut off. Mair's on holidays right now, but you can deluge him with mail to read on his return. Tell him that Planned Parenthood's educational services must continue. Hon. Rafe Mair, Health Minister, Parliament Buildings, Victoria B.C. ○

CCCA is busy—get involved

The Vancouver-based pro-choice group, Concerned Citizens for Choice on Abortion (CCCA) is planning a series of pro-choice actions.

On March 22, CCCA is sponsoring a strategy conference on the issue of abortion. Individuals and women's groups from all over B.C. are invited to attend a day of workshops on how to organize a pro-choice hospital board and how to fight anti-choice tactics. Attend the conference; bring your energy and experience. Call CCCA at 294 0565 or WSW at 736 1313 for more information about what's happening. ○

LABOUR

HRC hosts fancy conference

The current B.C. Human Rights Commission is best known for nasty, sexist jokes. Mandated to educate B.C. citizens about their human rights, the commissioners are the folks who brought you the "take-a-fag to lunch day ha ha" routine. And last December, in a belated bid for credibility, they brought you a fancy conference.

Human Rights for British Columbians, they called it. It was sponsored by the commission, along with the Secretary of State and the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews.

The British Columbia Federation of Women (BCFW) chose to take part in the conference. Not to lend it some semblance of credibility, but to expose it. BCFW was there, a strong, visible presence, to point to the commissioners' non-efforts to educate the public.

Federation member-groups taking part included the Vancouver Status of Women, Women in Focus, Status of Women Action Group, Feminist Lesbian Action Group, Women Against Violence Against Women, and the sub-committees of BCFW on human rights and the rights of lesbians.

Groups prepared presentations about human rights in the areas of media, employment, education and lesbian rights. We attended as many workshops as possible, handing out our presentations, and speaking persistently to the issues.

BCFW demands for amendments to the B.C. Human Rights Code were accepted in full by the workshop on women. Those demands would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, parental status, source of income, or choice of living arrangements.

BCFW amendments also call for equal pay for work of equal value provisions. And advocate the addition of sexual harassment to the code: *no person shall inflict sexual harassment, intimidate, threaten or coerce, expel, suspend, impose any penalty upon, or otherwise discriminate against, any person because that person refuses to engage in sexually-related interaction while in a work-related situation.*□

Victory for fisherwomen over UIC

The Unemployment Insurance Commission has no power to take a married woman's earnings and give them to her husband for the purposes of his unemployment insurance.

So ruled UIC umpire Justice P.H. Maguire recently. The struggle began when five west coast women protested that the current regulations were discriminatory.

Stupid, arbitrary, capricious, said lawyer Allan McLean of that section of the UIC code which pronounces, *where his wife shares as a member of the same crew, her share shall be added to his earnings.* No more. East coast women squid jiggers who process fish caught by husbands are still denied UI.□

Harasser has to pay for employees' AT

When the B.C. Human Rights Branch discovered recently that an employer had patted and pinched a number of his female employees, it made him pay for assertiveness training courses for his staff.

Confronted with the women's complaint, the employer evidenced total ignorance about the dynamics of sexual harassment. He simply could not understand why his employees had not rebuffed him forcefully. "The employer said these women should have said they didn't like having their breasts grabbed," commented Hanne Jensen, an officer with the B.C. Human Rights Branch.□

Major groups confront Williams over SFU 18 inaction

By Diana Smith

An attempt was made recently to end the long, expensive ordeal for the 18 persons arrested for picketting at Simon Fraser University during the AUCE 2 strike last March. A five-person delegation met with Attorney General Allan Williams on Monday, January 12. All presented statements urging Williams to drop all charges.

Confronting Williams were Tom Fawkes, from the B.C. Federation of Labour; Judy McManus, Federal NDP candidate in Vancouver South; Sheila Perret, of AUCE's provincial office; Prabha Khosla, from BCFW; Billie Carroll from the SFU 18, and a representative from the B.C. Federation (who could not appear in person but whose message was read).

Unfortunately the delegation got little-to-no response from Williams who said he would look at the material presented to him and get back to them later. So far there has been no word from the Attorney General's Department.

The individual trials of the SFU 18 continue to drain time, energy, and money, and to set dangerous legal precedent that could threaten the right to strike. Of the 18 individuals charged 10 have gone to court, 7 are pending trial, and one has had all charges dropped. The SFU 18 were originally charged with "obstructing a police officer in the execution of his duty." One month later a second charge of "blocking a highway" was added. The first charge carries a maximum sentence of two years imprisonment while the second carries a maximum sentence of six months and a $1,000 fine.

What is being revealed in the course of the trials is that the prosecution has no grounds for the original charge of obstructing a police officer. On this charge the 10 picketters who have already gone to court have either been acquitted, the proceedings stayed (i.e. the court does not proceed with charge but has the option for a re-trial at any time within a year), or the charge dropped altogether.

However, for the other charge of obstructing a highway three people have been convicted and the other 7 cases stayed.

Spokesperson Billie Carroll, a member of the SFU 18 Open Defence Committee and one of the 18 arrested, said the courts are trying to set a precedence with which to refute labour rights. Though the three persons convicted were given a sentence which was parallel to a strong slap on the wrist ($250 fine and two conditional discharges) it is the verdict of guilty that represents a threat to the success of future collective bargaining processes.

A press release by the defense committee states that "the criminal prosecution of the SFU 18 is an alarming precedent against fundamental democratic rights. The picketers at SFU faced deliberate intimidation in the form of police camera surveillance and the use of excessive force. They were advised by B.C. union leaders and a lawyer that they were within their rights. At no time were they warned by the police that the picketing activity was considered illegal during the three hours of mass picketing preceeding the arrests. Rather, the police blocked off traffic below the picket line and picketers were informed a court order to cease picketing was being sought. Traffic was then allowed back and suddenly the RCMP physically forced back the line, arresting eighteen picketers.

"Police intervention and criminal proceedings are increasingly being used in place of collective bargaining process and civil jurisdictions appropriate to labour disputes. The convictions on charges of obstructing a highway have set dangerous precedents against workers right to picket everywhere. Even slowing cars by picketing the public road entering the employer's place of business has been deemed criminal obstruction by the courts.

Unequal pay for work of equal value

"The strike of AUCE 2 clerical and technical workers at SFU followed over ten months of negotiations without a contract and three months of limited job action. The University's final monetary offer was a 6% increase over a two year contract, representing a 15-20% decline in real wages during the two year term. Rejecting the union's offer of unconditional binding arbitration, the University proposed that AUCE 2 accept conditional binding arbitration, namely acceptance of the principle that AUCE 2 wages be set by comparison with largely unorganized women workers in the private sector clerical job ghetto.

"Like 80% of the AUCE 2 bargaining unit, most of these workers are women and paid less than men holding comparable jobs, despite the Canadian Human Rights Act provision of equal pay for work of equal value. AUCE 2 won important gains for all women workers by approaching a realization of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value in its first contract in 1974. However, since then the union has been faced with a hard-line stance by an employer determined to reverse its original commitment to ending wage discrimination against women workers. Led by SFU Board of Governors members Bill Hamilton and C.B. MacDonald (also president and vice-president respectively of the anti-union Employers Council of B.C.), the University initially offered a bonus rather than a percentage wage increase; rejected unconditional binding arbitration; ignored the official requests of students, the Committee of Concerned Faculty, and University administrators to settle the dispute; and, escalated a strategy of rotating lock-outs which finally precipitated the all-out strike vote by locking out hundreds of employees.

"After six weeks of strike action, AUCE 2 and the University agreed to accept the terms of reference of an Industrial Inquiry Commission under the offices of the Minister of Labour. Its binding settlement, an endorsement of the University's position, was finally handed down at the end of August 1979. The union received 6% in the first year and 1% in the second year of a two year contract term."

Meanwhile the trials continue. The cases of Peter Armitage, Judy Cavanagh, and Robbie Clarke, the three people so far convicted, are being appealed. The Defence Committee points out that it was not only organized to defend the SFU 18 but also to defend the right to strike. Many organizations and individuals are supporting their efforts and donating to the defence fund.

Donations can be mailed to SFU 18 Open Defence Committee, c/o AUCE Provincial, 901 - 207 W. Hastings St., Vancouver, B.C. Phone 684-2457.□

CONFERENCE

Alternative Therapy and Social Change conference

Take care of each other while working for social change

By Kinesis staff writers

For a long time people have been depending on professional therapists and psychiatrists to solve their problems and change their lives.

We are taught that only the expert doctor can tell us what's wrong with our body, only the expert politician can fix our society, only the expert teacher can teach us anything of value, only the expert man can be strong and smart.

But there is a new movement - towards self help. This was the major theme of the recent conference in Vancouver, Alternative Therapy and Social Change: we can learn how to look after ourselves and each other, emotionally, as we try to change the world.

What exactly is alternative therapy? And what's it got to do with social change?

Kristen Penn, one of the conference organizers, outlined the answers clearly. Here's some of what she said:

"The title of this conference is alternative therapy and social change. That's not to say that we believe that therapy will bring about social change, but that if therapy is to have a meaningful impact on people's lives, it has to take into consideration the social, economic and political issues that affect us and realize the need for people to change and not adjust to our present society. In addition, we recognize that fundamental changes must be made in order to create a just society before we can live truly whole and integrated lives.

The institution of traditional therapy serves the interest of those in power and seeks to maintain the status quo. Traditional therapy persuades people to accept and adjust to the conditions of their oppression rather than to change those conditions. And it lays the blame for emotional problems on the individual.

Traditional therapy views emotional problems in a personal context. This conference realizes that we must view people's problems in a societal context -- we must take into consideration that we live in a dehumanizing society where racism, sexism, poverty, discrimination against gay people and other groups are a constant reality in our daily lives.

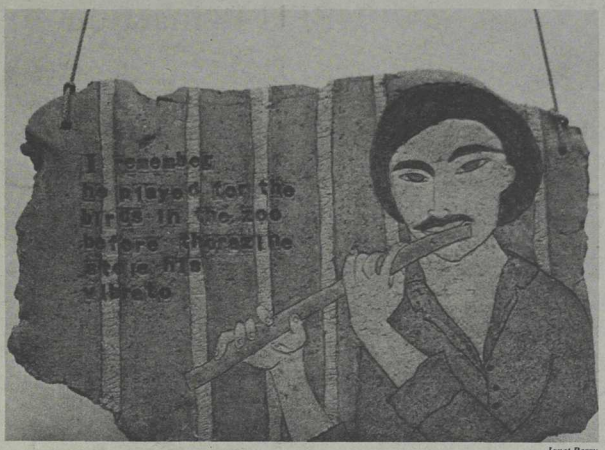
We see that we must strive to change existing power relationships -- on an institutional, political, economic and personal level. We must break down the hierarchical power structures that oppress us on all levels. Traditional therapy reinforces that hierarchy of power, so we must create alternatives and seek to change the very nature of society itself.

Many of us are actively working to eliminate sexism and racism, and to try to change the capitalist and imperalist structure of our society, but we must also recognize that we have to develop a means of taking care of ourselves and each other at the same time. Sometimes we can become so immersed in our organization of the masses that we forget to listen to the friend beside us who says -- 'I'm hurting and I need help and support.'

One of the objectives of this conference is to extend the network of support and communication that we have started to create and to share the skills that we are developing within the women's movement, the mental patients liberation movement and the radical therapy movement.

It is up to us to reclaim and affirm our strengths.

We have already started doing this in a variety of ways, by forming co-operatives, by working collectively and by actively fighting against the institutions that oppress us. It is our hope that this conference will be a part of this continuing process and that it will be an impetus to create further alternatives, to create change and to take back our power."



Janet Berry

Ceramic wall plaque by Persimmon Blackbridge. Her friend is a victim of Thorazine treatment

Workshop topics ranged from feminist therapy, through mental patients' liberation, to a discussion, by Vancouver Men Against Rape, linking men, misogyny, rape and feminism. The objective of the workshops was to present various forms of radical therapy which individuals can learn to do, with friends and in groups.

Helping each other help ourselves

Peer counselling is one way we have of looking after ourselves. Dorrie Brannock and Paullette Roscoe presented a workshop introducing techniques of counselling with a partner.

The emphasis is on equal exchange. Two people get together as counsellor and counsellee. For one hour of attention to her needs, the counsellee exchanges one hour of attention to her partner's needs. During the hour the counsellee can do anything she wants, from talking and screaming, to a massage, to a walk in the park. The role of the counsellor in this situation is to pay attention totally.

Various techniques include: News and Goods - where you list off the good things that have happened to you in the past few weeks; Self-validation - where you list with pride all the things you like about yourself, with no qualifications; and Listening - where your partner listens as the counsellee discharges worries, fears and upsets.

Another workshop was about problem-solving groups. These groups use a leaderless, self-help format to work towards personal change and mutual support. Each participant in the group makes a contract with herself and the group to work on changing an aspect of her behavior she doesn't like.

The group helps formulate the contract in a positive form, and everyone has to agree to work on it. Then the group sets small steps for the person to make within the next week. She comes back, reports on her efforts, and sets herself a new task, with the group's help. If she is not able to accomplish the task, the group works to discover what the difficulty is.

Another kind of counselling group was presented in the Fat is a Feminist Issue workshop. A group of women involved in a fat support group presented their experiences in supporting each other in their leaderless group. Organizing for counselling around similar problems is a technique which could turn out to be very useful.

The constructive criticism workshop added to the theme. Learning how to deliver a criticism without hurting the person we are criticizing is an invaluable skill. The workshop practised giving and receiving criticisms and appreciations. Using role playing, everyone had a chance to deliver a criticism. And to learn how phrasing in clear terms what is wrong and how it could be helped prevents a defensive reaction.

A women's counselling centre is now being organized to promote self-help and share such skills as problem solving, peer counselling and support groups.

"A pill for every ill" was the lead-off for the superb workshop on "Drugs as Social Control." A well-organized and informative discussion of the drug industry followed.

In Canada, we pay some of the highest prices in the world for drugs. The drug industry, based in the U.S., and international in scope, is viewed as a stable investment for people who are into buying stock.

Up to 70% of all drugs sold in Canada are bought by prescription. The drug industry relies on the medical profession to write the prescriptions that sell the drugs.

A major proportion of prescription drugs sold are psychoactive drugs, including tranquillizers, sedatives and anti-depressants.

Drug companies spend 25% of their budget on advertising, focussing on medical journals. The close relationship between the drug industry and psychiatrists is not to be underestimated.

Thorazine, which is very widely used in mental hospitals, is produced by Smith-Kline, which sold $68 millions worth of heavy-duty drugs in 1978. Side-effects of Thorazine include: muscle spasm, slurred speech, and involuntary movement of lips, tongue and mouth. And those side-effects are permanent. A useful, informative workshop.

It was an excellent conference, from our participants point of view. Conference organizers would like to express their appreciation to everyone who made it happen. □

B.C. NEWS

Prince Rupert women protest sexist ad. and win

When a jewellery distributor used a background of a woman's buttocks to sell school rings recently, Prince Rupert feminists protested.

The buttocks provided the background for a hand displaying a ring, and was a promotional poster for the Winnipeg-based Jostens National School Services Ltd, who were offering the rings to Prince Rupert secondary school students.

As Stephanie Hudson, spokesperson for the Prince Rupert Options for Women pointed out, the poster, "reinforces the sex stereotypes, degrades women and has absolutely no place in the school."

Trustee Kathy Booth, also a member of Options for Women, won the support of the two other female trustees. Together, they outvoted the two male trustees at the board meeting, and had the poster removed from the school.

Bad Billy's violence wiped out

"Bad Billy rapes our young girl but Violet gives willingly."

This violent little sentence is a memory aid for electricians which has been in use across the world for at least 30 years. It is designed to help students remember the international colour code for resistors.

When Shirley Peters learned that her daughter was being subjected to this casual acceptance of rape in her Grade 8 class at Cariboo High, in Burnaby, she went into action.

She protested in writing to the Burnaby school board, the parent teacher association, the school principal and the B.C. Teachers' Association.

Said school board chairperson Gary Began, "I think the parent has a justified complaint." Teacher Oliver Dailey admitted that he had used the Bad Billy memory aid in his class.

Reg Risdale, head of electronics department at the B.C. Institute of Technology told Sun reporter Ros Oberlyn that they don't use the memory aid any more at BCIT, "because you've got to be so damned careful these days."

Transition House Society gathering information

The newly-formed Society of Transition Houses of British Columbia met in Victoria on January 12 and 13, 1980. The group, composed of staff and board members from the Transition Houses in B.C., has been meeting as an independent body for over a year. Previous to this, Transition Houses met as a sub-committee of BCFW. At the last two meetings we have discussed a constitution and by-laws for the society and have been working on legislative and policy changes concerning abused women. These will be forwarded to the Advisory Council on the Status of Women in Ottawa. Other projects the group has or is undertaking include the following:

* Each house is compiling an information packet containing material on all Transition Houses. This packet is for the use of newly forming houses.

* A pamphlet has been prepared listing suggested steps in forming a new Transition House. All houses have these pamphlets.

* All houses will be keeping uniform statistics on why women come to Transition Houses and from where. These will be compiled by the Women's Research Centre in Vancouver.

Pat Feindel

More than a few lies in paradise

"Paradise Packaged From $454"

This billboard is degrading to the dignity of both women and men for the following reasons:

- The woman is portrayed in a defenseless position of surrender, re-inforcing in the minds of those who view it the myth that women are helpless and willing victims.
- The man is portrayed in an aggressive, dominant stance, his hand clenched into a fist, implying that men are by nature violent.
- No agency is named on the poster, implying that for the price of the plane fare the man "gets" the woman.

For these reasons, Women Hating Advertising Tactics (WHAT) took it upon themselves to censor this billboard. They said, "we take this action on behalf of all women, because sexist advertising such as in this billboard promotes violence against all women. We take this action on behalf of all the battered and sexually assaulted women whose realities are lied about in advertising."

Fort St James chambermaids are organizing

FORT ST. JAMES: Three employees at the Chundoo Motor Inn in Ft. St. James were fired recently for joining Local 40 of the Hotel, Restaurant, Culinary, and Bartender's Employees Union. According to Marilyn Johnson, a spokesperson for the chambermaids, the manager John Polluck, fired them after they had signed union cards.

Management has been charged with unfair labour practices under the Labour Relations Act.

The chambermaids decided to join the union in order to guarantee they would not be fired when ownership of the motel changed hands. New management had plans to fire any of the chambermaids who would not accept schedule changes which involved working weekends. Formerly, high school students were hired to work weekends so that the other women could spend that time with their families.

The chambermaids are also unhappy with their wages of $3.00 to $4.00 per hour, which remained unchanged even after being there for as long as two years. With the union, they would be making from $5.08 to $5.48 per hour at the current rate. There are other problems over scheduling, typical to the industry, where they never know what hours they will be working on any given day. There also is no recognition of seniority rights nor extra pay for holidays or weekends. New employees are required to work everyday for as long as two months in some cases, and then have been fired for finally taking one day off.

Charges of racism

In addition, there are serious charges that the management is discriminating against East Indian employees in delegating job duties and in granting raises. One East Indian woman employed as a chambermaid, had worked at the motel for two years before she received the same increase in wages (from $3.50 to $4.00) that a white woman in the same position received in nine months.

She was also required to clean the washrooms as her special job for those two years. Another East Indian woman, a high school student, was also delegated to this task.

Currently, new staff has been hired to replace those fired. Marilyn Johnson says of those hired, "the less they will speak, the more likely he will hire them." Among them is one immigrant woman who speaks no English at all.

The three fired employees are becoming increasingly impatient as they await the decision of the LRB. Although they do not want to take other jobs, the financial strain is making life difficult.

Marilyn Johnson says that jobs for women are hard to come by in Fort St. James. Other than the type of work she was doing, jobs are only available through the mill, piling lumber or cleaning up, if you are lucky enough to get hired. Aspen

Is killing a woman less of a crime?

Both cases involved alcohol, both involved wife-beating, and both of the accused said that they had not realized they had killed the other person.

Garry Smarch, of Whitehorse, recently got three years in prison for beating his common-law wife to death with his fists.

Early in 1979, Christine Linklater, of Old Crow, was sentenced to life in prison for shooting her husband, who had repeatedly beaten her.

Linklater faced a second-degree murder charge. Smarch's second-degree was reduced to manslaughter. The difference cannot entirely be attributed to the racism of all-white juries. Both Smarch and Linklater are native people.

The obvious question: is killing a woman less of a crime? Optimist info

B.C. NEWS

Funding for Terrace Women's Centre cut back

The Terrace Women's Centre is a vital and necessary service. It does not deserve to be swept away. Here, Marilyn Crombie from the Terrace women's centre outlines their dilemma:

By Marilyn Crombie

Minimal funding for the Terrace Women's Centre has been granted us through Canada Works for the 1980 calendar year. It will allow us to keep our doors open and one or two people on staff. The Women's Centre can't function at that level of funding and maintain the same range of services and programmes offered in the past. There will be a definite cutback in our effectiveness.

In a northern community like Terrace, which is primarily male-oriented, the options open to women are limited at best, not to mention the compounding factors of isolation, alcoholism and family violence.

Skeena is one of the few areas west of the Maritimes receiving Canada Works funding. Next year, there will be none. The monies have to be distributed equitably within this riding -- so, while we can consider ourselves one of the "lucky" few to receive a grant, the amount of money is so slight that it presents major operational problems.

We refuse to accept this crippling blow. We aim to continue the same level of service to our clients and friends. It *is* a vital service. There are a number of other funding applications out and we are currently awaiting word on those. More applications are "in the works". We do, however, resent this scrambling for funds activity, the competition that exists amongst necessary services desperately trying to locate a source of funds in order to continue a viable operation.

One thing we adamantly refuse to do, is charge for our services to women. "Want to talk to us? $10. please, in advance." That is simply not the concept behind a support service for women which offers counselling and programmes that encourage personal growth.

At this point, we're primarily concerned about meeting our overhead expenses in the new year and bringing at least one more person on staff to enable us to stay open.

We and our clients are angry and highly perturbed at the various levels of government that say that they recognize the particular needs of women, and then proceed to effectively eliminate services that address those special needs.

Even though we strongly believe that the onus for the provision of the services offered through the Women's Centre belongs squarely on the doorstep of government bodies, we are making an appeal to the public for financial support. Any and all donations, large or small, will be gratefully accepted. We want to keep our doors open and our programmes going strong!

The Terrace Women's Centre staff can be reached by calling 635-5145

Yukon Transition House becoming a reality

The long awaited shelter for homeless women in distress has itself finally found a home in a federal public works department house somewhere in Whitehorse.

The house is being provided by the federal department to the territory for a nominal fee and the local government in turn, will hand it over to the management committee.

Women needing the shelter will be able to make arrangements through the RCMP, social agencies, women's groups, or by calling a crisis line.

The home will be not only catering to women who had been physically abused by husbands or others but also unwed mothers, women from rural areas who feel lost in the city and other women who need shelter.

The Yukon Indian Women's Association (YIWA) originated the idea for the home four years ago.

Since then, the YIWA has gained support of other local organizations and both territorial and federal government departments.

The private groups on the committee include other native organizations, the Yukon Status of Women Council, and the Women's Centre in Whitehorse.

Government agencies include the Yukon's Health and Human Resources Dept., the Federal Health and Welfare Dept., Indian and Northern Affairs and Canada Employment Commission.

Staff are being sought, including a director and up to five other full timers.

Funds for setting up the home and operating it will come mainly from a three-year grant from the Federal Health and Welfare Dept. which views the Whitehorse home as a pilot project for similar interagency efforts elsewhere.

Optimist

Northern Woman Journal

Prince Rupert women get runaround instead of a transition house

Services for women never come easy. The recent scramblings for a transition house in Prince Rupert are a case in point.

Kathy Booth, spokesperson for Prince Rupert Options for Women, outlines the history of her group's attempts to get funding for a transition house in that town.

* In November 1978, Prince Rupert Options for Women reported that the feasibility study for a transition house was completed. Because of the recommendations in the study, and because of the demonstrated need for some sort of emergency service, the group decided to start a volunteer service offering emergency shelter. Four women agreed to open their homes, and a referral number was given to the RCMP.

* In the spring of 1979, the study was published. At that time letters of support were solicited from community organizations. More than 50 letters were received, from church groups, unions, women's auxiliaries, and others.

* Options for Women approached the Prince Rupert city council, which endorsed the project wholeheartedly. The group prepared and mailed a package which included the brief, the letters of support, petitions with more than 500 signatures, and the budget proposal. Copies went to the local office of the ministry of human resources, to the regional manager for the MHR in Terrace, to Grace McCarthy, Minister of Human Resources. It was July, 1979.

* Two weeks after these submissions were made, the regional manager for the MHR refused the request for funding.

* Options for Women then compiled the statistics from their emergency service shelter and took them in person to the regional manager. They went back to the Prince Rupert city council for assistance in lobbying the regional manager. The city council wrote to her, requesting her reasons for refusal. She answered that the budget for the area was already committed and that the region had other priorities.

* Efforts came to a standstill. But in October 1979, Prince Rupert Options for Women learned that Grace McCarthy would be visiting the town. Arrangements were made for Options women to be in the reception line to speak with her. McCarthy agreed to meet with the group in November.

* November 10, 1979. The Prince Rupert women met with Grace McCarthy in Vancouver. She was sympathetic, non-committal.

* Since then, the Ministry of Human Resources has again refused funding. Instead, the ministry has offered to cover the cost of hotel rooms for women in various kinds of crisis: women who have been raped, beaten, women who are in emotional distress, women who are just out of prison...

* Options for Women have refused this token gesture. They see the MHR using them as a dumping ground for women in crisis. The ministry's offer to cover [illegible]ats makes it impossible to provide the kind of facilities and services which women in crisis need.

Options for Women sees an hotel room as simply further isolation for women in crisis. Since the MHR has refused funding for a transition house, the group is trying other solutions.

Prince Rupert Options wants a solution for women that will break the pattern of family violence and will serve as an instrument for change in women's lives.

* Donations are needed and would be much appreciated. Send them to Prince Rupert Options for Women, 820 3rd Ave West, Prince Rupert, B.C.

Kate Booth info

Castlegar push for transition house

From the Kootenays, the news is more encouraging. Four Castlegar women are developing plans for a transition house in their town.

They have met with representatives from the ministry of human resources in the area, and they report that the MHR response has been extremely positive.

As the organizing builds for the province-wide day of action against violence against women on May 11, we'll bring you details about what the Castlegar women are doing.

WOMEN AND WORK

Keeping 'em down on the farm, in the kitchen. It's got to stop

By Diana Smith

These days you'll often year 'farm and domestic workers' said in one breath. There are reasons these two sectors of the workforce are often discussed together, their similarities being more predominant than their differences.

In B.C. both groups of workers are not protected by the basic labour standards legislation that covers all other workers and which most of us take for granted. For farm and domestic work there are no laws which say how much or how often they are paid, how many hours they work, when or if they get holidays, what happens if they get hurt on the job, or, if they are women and get pregnant, that there is job security.

Both types of work are characterized by low pay, long hours, low status and horror stories of exploitation. Given these factors it is not surprising that those who make up this workforce are predominantly women and/or non-white. Recently the Labour Advocacy and Research Association(LARA) has completed a slide-tape production and a collection of background material which documents the history, the current working conditions, and the ways in which people are organizing to improve the situation of farm and domestic workers. Following is a summary of the current position of farm and domestic workers and information on the slide-tape show.

Slim pickins for farm workers

Farm work is usually characterized as casual labour. Most workers are from minority groups; East Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Native Indians, and Quebecois. The majority are also women. Before 1975 farm workers were legally denied the right to unionize and today they are still not covered by any of the existing labour laws. They can collect Unemployment Insurance benefits in the off season if they can pass the labyrinth of UIC qualifications.

Workers usually leave home around 5 a.m. and return around 9 at night. Several hours of this time is spent in travelling to and from the farm, in overcrowded vans, for no pay. Farm workers earn between $14 and $30 per day, depending on the crop and which part of the season it is. The working conditions are generally rough. Often there will be inadequate, or no, toilet facilities or drinking water.

Children have to go along

Since the pay is so low, parents cannot afford child care, which means bringing children to the farms if there is no one at home to look after them. The work is long and hard on the body. It can also be unhealthy and dangerous with workers developing rashes and allergies from the pesticides used on the crops, getting cuts from working quickly with sharp knives, or risking accidents such as the one where a woman was thrown from a tractor into a barbed wire fence. Most workers are paid by the piece-rate system. Instead of an hourly wage they get paid by the amount they pick (e.g. in 1979 workers earned $2 per flat for strawberries -- a worker could pick between 10-20 flats in 12 hours depending on their skill and time in the season). If the crop is poor, or as it dwindles, it takes longer to fill the flats. In order that the crops get picked, even though the workers are working longer but earning less, the farmers withhold paying wages until the end of the season.

Farm workers are usually not hired directly by farmers but by contractors; middle-men who supply the farmer with a steady flow of labourers, taking 25-40 per cent of the wages earned as their fee. Not uncommon is the practice of contractors transferring their assets to a third party, declaring bankcrupcy, and leaving their employees, at the end of the season, without wages. Most of the contractors are of similar ethnic and linguistic backgrounds as the farm workers and, since many of the workers have difficulty communicating in English, they can see the contractor as a benefactor upon whom they depend, instead of an exploiter.

Last year in B.C. the Farm Workers Organizing Committee (FWOC) was formed. Its long-term objective is the formation of a union that would protect the rights of farm workers. They want to end the contract labour and piece-rate wage systems and make sure wages are protected from fraud and paid in regular two week periods. As part of the work of building a union the FWOC is helping farm workers with their problems, particularly those related to recovery of wages and difficulties with Unemployment Insurance, and putting pressure on the government to extend existing labour legislation to include farmworkers.

Labour Advocacy and Research Kit

No life of bliss for domestics

Domestic work, like farm work, is characterized by long hours, low pay and exploitation. Like farm workers, domestic workers are not covered by labour standards legislation. Their only legal protection is under the Human Rights Code of B.C. which, at least on paper, gives some protection against discrimination and the Labour Code of B.C. which gives both groups of workers the right to unionize.

Most domestic workers are women and many of those women are either immigrants or in Canada on temporary work visas. As a booklet written by the FWOC states, both domestic and farm work traditionally depend on immigrant labour which means on the labour of people who are insecure in this society, and who are kept insecure, so that they can be exploited to work under conditions which would not be accepted by the established sections of the Canadian working class. This situation is most clearly illustrated in the case of domestic workers who are in Canada on temporary work visas, and documented in a recent article by Rachel Epstein, "I Thought There Was No More Slavery in Canada".

Before 1970 women could come to Canada as landed immigrants to work as domestics but would often leave the job as soon as they found better employment. "As a result," Epstein explains, "the government stopped bringing people in as landed immigrants and instigated a special system to provide a source of domestic labour which could be relied upon to remain doing domestic labour. The government now meets the demand for live-in domestics by bringing people in on Employment Visas."

In 1978, 12,483 visas were issued for domestic work in Canada. Most of these visas were for Eastern Canada; in B.C. in that year 626 were issued. Many of these visas were for women from the West Indies. The visa entitles the worker to be in Canada for a limited period of time, with a specific employer. Wages vary from $100 to $400 per month plus room and board, with most women getting around $250 to $300. Legally Unemployment Insurance and Canada Pension Plan deductions should be taken from the domestics' wages even though a person on a temporary work visa is not eligible to collect any of these benefits. Epstein states that in almost every case the women work in excess of a 40 hour week. Some work regular 15-16 hour days and are virtually on call 24 hours a day.

Standards must be set

The Employment and Immigration Commission has set some minimum standards which an employer must abide by. These include a wage of at least $350 per month plus room and board and the domestic working not more than eight hours a day, five days a week. However in many, many cases, according to Epstein, the employers do not adhere to the salaries and working conditions agreed upon. Since the woman's legal status in the country depends on her having the job for which her visa was issued she might decide she has no choice but to accept what is offered. Without the job her visa is invalid and she can be deported at any time. If she finds another job as a domestic a new visa may be issued. If her employer has violated the contract he/she made with the Immigration Department the worker can inform ▸

ELECTIONS

Only a few candidates deign to answer VSW questionnaire

Fed candidates shy away from responding on women's issues

Response to an election questionnaire distributed by Vancouver Status of Women to all known federal election candidates in Vancouver city ridings was less than overwhelming.

We think that this says a great deal about the willingness of political representatives to be responsive to women's interests and community concern in general. Perhaps they are worried that they and their parties cannot deliver in areas of vital concern to us as women. Maybe they are backing off from "controversial" issues such as abortion, sexual orientation, equal employment opportunities and access to unemployment insurance.

Here's who took the time to respond: Judy McManus (NDP Vancouver South), Ron Johnson (NDP Vancouver Centre), Margaret Mitchell (NDP Vancouver East), Alan Bush (NDP Quadra) and the Communist Party of Canada (CPC). The three CPC candidates - Jack Phillips (Centre), Bert Ogden (Kingsway) and Fred Wilson (Vancouver East) made a joint response.

Three candidates who did reply: Margaret Mitchell, July McManus, Ron Johnson. All are New Democrats

Candidates were given a check-list of the following issues. They were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed, and to state whether their party agreed or disagreed with the following:

* Abortion should be a decision made by a woman and her doctor

* Federal pension levels should be raised to ensure that all seniors maintain income levels above the poverty line.

* Unemployment Insurance benefits should be available to part-time workers

* Legislation dealing with sexual offenses such as rape should be amended to treat these offences as assault

* Prostitution should be decriminalized

* Federal funds available to women's organizations and projects should be increased

* Sexual orientation should be included in the Human Rights Act

* Affirmative action programmes should be initiated in the federal civil service

* Women should be reinstated as a target group in Manpower outreach programmes, and projects funded to this end

The NDP has, as a party, endorsed all these points, except for the decriminalization of prostitution, on which they have no policy. All NDP candidates expressed their personal approval of all points. The CPC said that the prostitution statement was too simplistic, but concurred with the others.

They were also asked to outline briefly their response to the following questions:

* What would you do to ensure that Unemployment Insurance regulations do not discriminate against women?

* A recent report of the National Council of Welfare, Women and Poverty, indicated that one in six Canadian women are poor. What steps would you and your party take to deal with this situation?

* The quality and quantity of child care has actually declined in recent years. What role, if any, do you feel the federal government should have in insuring that every child has a right to adequate care facilities?

* There is currently an acute shortage of affordable housing in the lower mainland area. Women, and especially single parent women and those in low-income two-parent families, are especially hard hit by this situation. What would your party do to encourage the development of adequate, low-cost housing?

"Continue fight against UI cutbacks"

On Unemployment Insurance

McManus: Remove all restrictions as to number of hours worked per week, also stop any attempts to have benefits tied to status as dependent.

Johnson: We would continue the fight against the Liberal-Conservative cuts in U.I. benefits and changes in regulations. I would speak in these problems and raise the issue of a continuous overhaul of practices and procedures until the women's movement is satisfied that discrimination has been eliminated.

Mitchell: I have already opposed Liberal-Tory cutbacks to UIC and will continue this on the Employment and Immigration Committee and in the House.

On October 17, '79, Mitchell questioned Employment Minister Ron Atkey as to "when can the women of Canada who have worked on part-time on part-time or seasonal jobs collect their rightful unemployment insurance benefits?"

Bush: I would rescind all UIC laws that discriminate against women, particularly the new rules regarding hours of work and part-time work which are particularly discriminatory against working mothers.

Communist Party of Canada (all candidates response): "Recent UIC cutbacks in coverage of part-time workers, length of coverage, and benefits particularly affect women workers. The Communist Party of Canada (CPC) calls for increased maternity benefits, and UIC benefits at 90% of earnings, starting on the first day of unemployment and continuing until a job is found.

On Poverty

McManus: Work towards Guaranteed Annual Income, improve pension benefits for women, work towards full employment for all Canadians who wish to work, equal pay for women, quality child-care - enough for all children who wish it.

Johnson: We would enact legislation enforcing equal pay for work of equal value in federal jurisdiction and in contracts between the federal government and the private sector, establish affirmative action programs and work to eliminate wage discrepancies through collective bargaining.

Mitchell: As a result of my efforts, funds were approved for FAPG-NAPO for self-help and advocacy. I will continue to advocate a policy of income insurance (guaranteed income) above the poverty line and employment, affirmative action and training for women.

Mitchell spoke at length on women and poverty in the House October 22.

Bush: Poverty among women is the result

more on p.11, over

FARM AND DOMESTIC WORKERS

the Department who may then help her find another job as a domestic. Since a domestic worker has few legal rights this whole process is quite arbitrary and some domestics will put up with rotten working conditions rather than risk deportation. Epstein lists several organizations in Canada working to improve the lives of domestic workers. There are two groups in Toronto, Cleaner's Action and Labour Rights for Domestic Servants; there's LARA in Vancouver; and the Household Worker's Association in Montreal.

The above information is a brief summary of the situation faced by farm and domestic workers. The three sources where this information has been gathered from offer a much more in-depth description and analysis. They are:

* The slide-tape production, "Taken For Granted", and information kit, produced by LARA. The slide show can be borrowed from either Legal Services Commission (744 W. Hastings, Vancouver), IDERA (2524 Cypress, Vancouver) or LARA, c/o Rachel Epstein (2520 Triumph, Vancouver). The information kits can be purchased for $2 each. Each kit contains articles on the History and Conditions of Farm and Domestic Work; Legal Rights of Farm and Domestic Workers: magazine and newspaper articles on current organizing attempts; etc. The slide and tape show can be purchased from LARA for $50, $60 with two carosels. There is also a ten-activity curriculum unit available for teachers and students. All this material can be purchased from LARA at the above address. Their phone number is 251-3872.

* A booklet, "Support B.C. Farm Workers", produced by the FWOC, 7705 6th Street, Burnaby, B.C. Each booklet costs $1.

*An article on West Indian domestic workers on employment visas, "I Thought There Was No More Slavery in Canada" by Rachel Epstein. It's in the fall/winter '79 issue of Canadian Women's Studies, Centennial College, Room 1090, P.O. Box 631, Station "A", Scarborough, Ontario, M1K 5E9.

Don't forget to write those letters of support for VSW's annual funding bid!

PRISONS

Tensions reach breaking point at Oakalla Women's Unit

By Yvonne Chesimard

Tensions have flared high to the breaking point once again at the Oakalla Women's Prison. It had been heavy in that way since September '79 with numerous incidents (assaults, lock-ups, basic legal rights denied, etc.) escalated over the months until it all culminated in a riot on New Year's Eve. It's not that it is a rare or unheard-of occurence. But it has been extreme enough to come to our attentions out here.

On the priority list of the Corrections Service, provincially or federally, the women prisoners come notoriously last. So we can all assume that the women locked down in these places contain a constant level of tension, which the majority of us aren't clued into until they explode either from the intensity of prison pressure (which is obviously going to happen sooner or later) or from a newer aggravation.

This time, it seems the women prisoners have risen up angry in response to both the buildup of everyday prison tension and the more recent hassles thrown their way.

Since September, the situation at Oakalla has worsened. The women had put together a list of complaints to present to the director -- about the use of male staff, extreme disciplinary measures, inadequate medical care, inadequate educational and visiting programs, and lack of communication with administrative staff.

Similar complaints have echoed down the years there. They include the case of the Oakalla doctor fired after complaints were received that he used toothpaste in vaginal examinations but who was later rehired. Then there was the era of the Royal Commission on the Incarceration of Female Offenders in B.C. (Proudfoot Inquiry) launched by the B.C. Supreme Court in spring '78. That commission investigated such recurring complaints and made recommendations which, if even a few were actually implemented, have amounted to nothing. The situation has either remained the same or conditions have been slightly improved and then regressed to the same intolerable point.

An example of this is the issue of male guards -- a focus of the Proudfoot Inquiry. As a result of the commission, male guards are prohibited from the living units. So now the male staff (there are no longer male guards but instead, male nurses, kitchen workers, and garden workers) have taken over the habit of wandering in the living unit area and coming in as "assault forces" in any "emergency" situation. Therefore, has the scenario really changed?

The women attempted repeatedly to talk about their grievances with Ms. Marie Peacock, the director, during those months. They were unsuccessful in getting any of her time. The result was to heighten conflict between those in direct contact -- the women prisoners and the staff.

Numerous incidents of assaults on staff happened, resulting in unpleasant discipline on the prisoners...resulting in further attacks on staff...snowballing until what many saw as the last straw.

In early December, three women were thrown in the digger (solitary) for fifteen days.

Handcuffed, naked, and without water

For much of that time they were kept handcuffed, naked and without water. One of these women was assaulted and forcibly stripped by three male staff before being thrown in. No explanations given to the prisoners and every action on each side merely adding fuel to the other's fire.

Since a major cause of the problem had been the unresponsiveness of the director to demands for time for the airing of grievances, the women locked down there had little patience or faith remaining that any official would give their complaints even a listening ear.

When an inspector came in early December to investigate the incidents just mentioned regarding the plight of the women in the digger as well as methods of discipline and other issues, the only result of that was a report and recommendation which will wait through a lengthy review....And Peacock was still unavailable to deal with matters that needed immediate recourse.

Accordingly, the women staged a New Year's Eve peaceful sit-in which quickly escalated into a smashing spree. Obviously, when they have had to wait through months of stalling and repressive measures from administration, the women are going to take what powers of coercion they have into their own hands and force things to a head -- in the only manner that ever seems to get them the attention they are asking from the prison and the public.

The riot was broken up by guards from the men's unit of the prison. Subsequently, the twenty women involved were removed to the "cow barns" -- the isolation units beneath the barn on the men's side, which were condemned and ordered closed five years ago even though they continue to use them on occasion.

LNS

When the women locked down there realized they were being separated to sort out the initiators and be individually punished, the fourteen remaining barricaded themselves in their cells until the director agreed to have their first meeting.

It is a really superb show of solidarity when the women band together at a time when they are the ones getting the repurcussions. And when they insist upon pushing forward through it and holding on until their demands are met.

It is the ultimate revolutionary act to stay as a unit when the administration is attempting to divide them, and to stay together when it seems like everything is so harsh and all the odds are against them.

The women eventually got the meeting they were demanding, even though it was held in a disrespectful way to the prisoners, who were not allowed to leave their cells and remained in their pyjamas as they had for the seven days they were kept in that isolation unit.

After the meeting, the women were all taken to the digger at the women's part of the prison, receiving fifteen days each on charges of causing a disturbance and destroying government property. Several of the women face additional fifteen day sentences for the charge of assaulting staff.

The plan of the women, at this stage, was to sit out the fifteen days and start on getting a prisoner's committee organized the moment they got out of the digger. The entire progress of the women struggling to get some changes inside had been heading in the direction of a committee, the existence of which forces the administrators to give both respective and a receptive ear to the prisoners.

The women's actions grew from the stage of frustrated individual deeds through the stage of realization that they were all in the same position and they all had the same things to say -- so the strongest way to do it was through the powerful voice of a committee. In other words, a union of the women prisoners.

It's always easier to deal with insurgents when they act alone and can be punished alone. But the moment the women started getting organized was when they formed the real threat to the prison system, which is bound by its own laws to recognize the prisoners' organizations. And it can't be said enough how courageous and right-on it is of the women at Oakalla to have been more persistent and together than the "bullies"!!

Everything is flying apart at Oakalla Women's Unit right now...and everyone involved knows it. It is obvious that the women locked down are speaking out about what's going on but the authorities are attempting to keep it all quite secret.

There is an explosive rift within the staff there. This can be substantiated by numerous anonymous phone calls to people on the outside, all with their complaints particular to whichever side of the issue they are on.

The director has been empowered with the right to hire whom she wills. There has been speculation from the staff members that, in order to hire, Peacock has subtly

forced resignations by creating a situation that has brought mental breakdowns and a general resistance on the part of some matrons to enforcing the discipline she demands.

A situation is then set up where some staff are unwillingly in the middle between the director and the prisoners. This makes for tension between staff and director. As the old staff resigns, Peacock has the opportunity to hire new staff that are in line with her policies and may even be her personal friends or allies. A dictatorial form of hiring policy sets the scene for bitterness within the staff as well, and can contribute to the instability of the atmosphere in Oakalla. This is an unusual situation in many ways because we have statements from matrons giving their opinion that the discipline policies of the director are too harsh on the prisoners and that they regret their job of having to enforce them. The power of the authorities is being criticized here directly by the line workers -- those matrons who have immediate contact with the prisoners and in spite of the usual prison codes, have their sympathies lying with the women prisoners rather than with the administrators.

The Corrections Service will have to deal with this somehow. Everything certainly is flying apart -- because they can't tolerate dissension from within. But nor can they allow a regime of people or a specific policy to rule the roost.

The official position has been pretty hazy all along. They must tread the line between disallowing "improper" exertion of power within prison administrations and running a system that consists of nothing but a powerful body keeping people locked and powerless. Concessions have been made by both the Inspector of Standards and the Regional Director of Corrections that *things had gotten out of* hand in some instances as far as the punishment used and that they had spoken with Ms Peacock about their feelings. To get even this much from them verifies that much, much more has gone on.

The essential conflict between the prisoners and the bureaucrats is that the bureaucrats think that the riot is the problem, and that the solution to the problem is to lock the women up and punish them. The women inside know that the riot was merely a sympton of the problem, which is that the situation for them is intolerable and desperate. Why else would they riot in demand of a meeting in which they could air their

Everything is flying apart at Oakalla Women's Unit now... and everyone involved knows it...

grievances?? And they know the solution is not further lock-ups but some positive change. During the minimal meeting between the women and Peacock, the women presented a list of demands -- more programs, work releases, evening entertainment, passes, right to lawyer contact... and specifically that Legal Aid and the Vancouver Status of Women be allowed to bring in regular programs.

Amidst the disintegration at the prison, it's the women prisoners who have been able to use it for positive ends. The efforts to begin a committee must be supported out here by the women's community, anti-prison activists, and all humanitarian-inclined persons. The B.C. Federation of Women had approached Ms Peacock months ago with a program of workshops that various women's groups were interested in taking inside. The suggestion met with a part-positive and part-apprehensive response from the director. But most crucial is that it has been given the brush-off, even though the same program began mid-January at Twin Maples Prison in Haney.

This is the time to do all possible in respect to the prisoner's demands to have feminist programs brought in. The law students at U.B.C. have just begun a Legal Aid Clinic inside the Women's Unit which, now that the women have specifically asked for it, will be getting a more vital response from all concerned. Other community and professional groups are responding positively. The Vancouver Status of Women, Civil Liberties, Solitary Confinement Abolition Project, and B.C.F.W. and others have written the Corrections Service saying where they stand in regards to the situation for the women locked within Oakalla's walls. We shall most likely be seeing civil action cases and criminal court cases over the assaults on prisoners by staff members. As a community group, Civil Liberties is demanding the right to meet with the prisoners' committee.

When you're inside, every ounce of support means a lot so we'd like to see that coming in whatever way you can give it. Letters and visits are important for information and solidarity shared both ways. We may need, at any moment, to be very spontaneous with support pickets and demonstrations for fasting, striking or riot-bound prisoners. We all need to be creative and initiative-taking. Do it. "They're in there for us, we're out here for them." ● *To contact Yvonne, call VSW 736 1313.*

FEDERAL ELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

of the mistaken idea that women can rely on husbands for security. NDP would enforce equal pay for equal work, promote affirmative action, fund child-care centres, increase survivor's benefits under CPP. Bring OAS and GIS above poverty lines.

The CPC: Urgent steps are required: a guaranteed annual income, free medicare, pharmacare and denticare; roll-back prices on foodstuffs, clothing, energy, rents, interest rates and taxes; guaranteed employment for all with substantial wage increases and COLA; massive, low-cost housing programs.

On Child Care

McManus: Federal funding to provinces must be specifically ear-marked for child care, not only to maintain existing facilities but also to create many more centres.

Johnson: The federal government should accept a 50-50 role with the provinces and could provide start-funding for child care centres. As a model employer the federal government should make child care available to its employees.

Mitchell: I spoke in the House of Commons for federal funds for expanded, more flexible child care and will continue to press this issue. On October 24, Mitchell demanded that a model seven-day a week child care centre be set up on Parliament Hill. An Action for Day Care Committee was set up as a result of her pressure.

CPC: The Communist Party calls upon the Federal government to ensure, through iron-clad legislation, the provision of a subsidized 24-hour child care facilities for all working parents in Canada. We have called for a Bill of Rights for Children that would guarantee this basic right.

Bush: A one thousand dollar tax deduction should become a tax credit based on a scale which accurately reflects the real cost of child care. Fund 70% of capital costs of child care centres. Fund centre's operating costs, on a dollar-for-dollar basis under CAP. Promote 24 hour child care."

On housing

McManus: Lower interest rates, federal mortgage funds should be directed to cooperative and other forms of non-profit housing.

Johnson: We propose the creation of a national Building Corporation specifically to build low-cost rental accommodation; provide increased support for co-ops; and land-banking programs in conjunction with municipal and provincial governments.

Bush also pointed to the NDP call for the development of a National Building Corporation, and added: increase federal portion of cost-shared programs with provinces. Provide income supplements where required.

Mitchell: I am pushing for increased non-profit and corp. housing including units for single women and for rent subsidies to reduce cost of housing to 25% of income. Mitchell has worked closely with local housing groups, including DERA, SPOTA and CMHC. In the House of Commons, Mitchell opposed PC proposals for mortgage tax credits "which benefit so few people" and spoke of the housing needs of tenants.

CPC: "In order to meet the chronic shortage of affordable housing, the following steps must be taken: roll-back interest rates; public ownership of land for urban development; turn CMHC into public instrument to build low-cost, public housing with subsidized rent levels; 400,000 units annually.

MERCIA STICKNEY, an executive member of VSW, is running in Richmond South Delta. She's an NDP candidate there.

Other areas

McManus: Our leader Ed Broadbent is the only leader who is campaigning consistently on a platform of equality for women. Personally, I am a committed feminist.

Johnson: I am a constant supporter of the fight against sexism in language, in social behaviour and generally in both organized activity and individual attitude.

Bush said that immigrant women must be protected from discrimination. Mitchell mentioned her filibuster of the anti-abortion bill (see p.2 Kinesis) and her speeches in the House on elderly and immigrant women.●

SURVIVAL

We need your letters of support

This is the time of year that Vancouver Status of Women applies for funding to Provincial Secretary. If we're refused, then we'll be forced to close down our services: consciousness-raising, assertiveness training; information and educational resources; legal advice, referral and advocacy. Kinesis will go, too.

So if you read this, *please write us a letter of support.* Tell Evan Wolfe, the Provincial Secretary, that VSW provides an essential service which you, for one, know *cannot be cutback!*

Address the letter to Provincial Secretary, Parliament Buildings, Victoria. But send the letter to us, so that we can forward it with others. We need every last one of you to do this for us. Thank you! Our address: VSW, 1090 West 7th, Vancouver B.C. V6H 1B3

EQUAL PAY

The complaint of Susan Jorgensen

Enduring the dragged-out Board of Inquiry blues

By Ann C. Schaefer

Some of those traits that used to be considered feminine in pre-liberation days -- patience, endurance, aptitude for details -- may be due for a revival if you're a woman trying to get a crack at a job in a traditional male stronghold. Going to hearings, for example, with long spells of waiting in between, could become a way of life for you.

At least that's what's happened to Susan Jorgensen, 24, an employee at B.C. Ice and Cold Storage's Vancouver harbour plant, a warehouse operation handling mostly fish. It's been nearly three years since she got fed up with being paid less to do the same work as men with about the same seniority, and with being laid off before them. In April 1977 she filed sex discrimination complaints with the Human Rights Branch, which then conducted an investigation and tried to sort things out with the company. When this tack failed, the HRB asked the Labour Minister to appoint a Board of Inquiry. Allan Williams got around to doing that in January 1978, making the proviso that the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union (UFAWU) be named as co-respondent with B.C. Ice.

A year later, the situation's still not resolved. In the meantime, the employees at the plant (members of UFAWU) staged a 16 week strike at B.C. Ice. For six weeks, equal pay for work of equal value was a central contract demand, but the ultimate outcome of collective bargaining was a new contract under which women must wait 1000 hours to get the same wage they would have earned previously after logging only 400 hours -- and it's still 65¢ an hour less than what male co-workers earn.

So, while on the surface things may have improved since 1972 (when wage supplements to the fishing industry master agreement were printed on blue paper for men and pink for women), in reality, discrimination has only been made more subtle and insidious. Now, all women are relegated to the neutral-sounding "Group 2," and paid less than men once they're stuck there. That's what Susan Jorgensen and the Human Rights Branch are trying to prove, but it's taxing in more ways than one.

The three-member Board of Inquiry (lawyers Mr. Jack Bourne, chairperson and Ms. Lynn Smith, and member of the Labour Relations Board Ms. Claire Alcott) met several times last year, was once asked to disqualify itself by UFAWU president Jack Nichol, mulled the request over for awhile and decided it was amply qualified, was postponed once while Ms. Smith gave birth, met in January for five full days, and scheduled further hearings for this month.

Belabouring the obvious—men don't have to prove themselves

In January J.J. Camp, counsel for the HRB and Susan Jorgensen, concluded their case by calling two co-workers of Jorgenson, Jorgensen herself, and Human Rights Officer Valerie Embree, and by recalling another woman who works at the plant, Fay Newman, who testified about an incident which occurred since she first gave evidence before the Board. The union was represented by its president Jack Nichol, who took the stand himself and called no other witnesses. Thomas Roper, lawyer for the employer, called Dr. William Buckler of VGH and B.C. Ice president Stewart Reeder. All witnesses were subject to initial examination, cross-examination by the other parties, possible re-examination, and questions from the Board. (Reeder's cross-examination was deferred until the next meeting of the Board because of a technicality.) Much of the testimony concerned events of three or more years ago.

Warren Hunter, a group 1 employee at B.C. Ice with less seniority than Jorgensen, testified that he had never performed many of the tasks designated group 1 and that he felt he would be incapable of doing at least one of them (heading) because he is left-handed and does not have strong wrists. His evidence is significant because several women at the plant have testified they were told they could not be reclassified into group 1 until they proved they could perform each and every task in that category.

Mrs. Eleanor Gagnebin, a 60 year old group 2 employee, has worked at the plant since 1968, generally washing, racking and packing fish, and often tallying, a job for which she receives a premium. She testified that when she works with men in any of the first three jobs, they receive a higher rate of pay. She also said that she saw Susan working alongside men stripping herring racks in 1977 and that Susan is a good worker who keeps up with the men. (Mrs. Gagnebin tried the work once herself, but found it too hard because of the weight involved.) Camp showed Mrs. Gagnebin the company's seniority list, on which she is sixteenth. She was able to indicate six men below her on the list who work more often than she and said she would prefer to work more if the work were available.

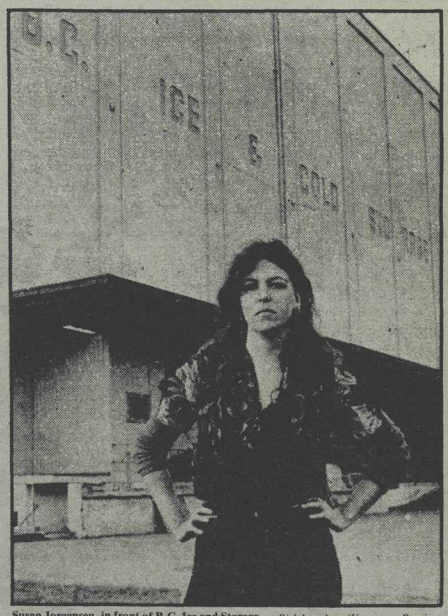
A peculiar seniority list

Jorgensen testified she first worked at B.C. Ice in 1973 and that her seniority dates to 1975. Her brother started working at the plant in 1976, but she was laid off before him when things slowed down. Jorgensen testified she sought more employment by speaking to the foreman. He told her there was none because she couldn't work in the freezer. She proceeded to lay a grievance, which led to her being allowed to work (at group 2 rates) during the herring season (January and March) of 1977. Traditionally, women are laid off at this time. "I complained to the Human Rights Branch in April," she said, "because I was not receiving the same rate of pay as other people with my seniority who were doing the same job; and because I'd lost work in December 1976."

She worked during the summer, again at group 2 tasks, but was laid off once more in the fall when men junior to her were not. Again she laid a grievance about not being allowed to work in jobs she felt she could do. The president of the company, she testified, told her that if she wanted to do group 1 work she'd have to be able to lug 100 pound halibut and stack 150 pound boxes into a boxcar, as well as perform all the tasks specified as group 1. But she was also informed they judged her to be a hazard to herself and, as a company is responsible to the Workers Compensation Board for deciding whether a person is fit to do a job, B.C. Ice judged she was a high risk for injury. Reeder told her that if she were really determined to try the work, she could waive her rights to compensation. (Apparently the company wasn't too clear about the law which forbids this.) In the same meeting, she complained, management told her that the only reason she wanted to come back to work was to pretend, or actually, to hurt herself in order to qualify for compensation benefits. These unfounded allegations offended and infuriated her.

In 1978, Jorgensen continued, new men were hired while she was laid off. Also, all the other women at the plant were invited to try group 1 work, but the foreman told Jorgensen that she could not -- the company would make no decisions on what she could or could not do until the Human Rights hearing reached a decision. During cross-examination the company's lawyer, Tom Roper, referred to this incident by telling Susan, "You were denied group 1 work for a reason you don't understand and the only reason you can think of is that you are a woman." He played up to the fact that all the other women were offered the work and, throughout his cross-examination, made much of sore, tired, weak wrists.

Questioning by Board member Lynn Smith revealed Jorgensen has no objection to working in cold storage and feels she could do the work if she were provided ▸



Susan Jorgensen, in front of B.C. Ice and Storage *Rick Loughran/Vancouver Province*

I was not receiving the same rate of pay as other people with my seniority who were doing the same job

—Susan Jorgensen

EQUAL PAY

the same suitable clothing the men wear.

Probation. Or, every time I think I know where it's at, they move it

The Board allowed Fay Newman to take the stand again (she testified last year) over Roper's objections that the case had become too far-reaching. He contended the company does not take the point of view that no woman can do group 1 work -- just that Susan Jorgensen can't do it. (Naturally. To say otherwise would be to admit to sex discrimination.) Camp said he intended to show, with Newman's new evidence, that the attitude of B.C. Ice is discriminatory.

Newman, like Jorgensen, wanted to join the ranks of group 1. Last summer she was told she'd have to undergo a 400 hour probationary period to determine whether she was qualified. (She's already worked at least 1000 hours, so this is apparently a new rule for women, to keep up with the changing times.) She was told she could begin her probation by helping to load 60-300 pound frozen halibut into a freezer truck.

So Newman -- strong, healthy, and all of 5' tall -- went off to unload what Nichol referred to as "the whale halibut." The man she was supposed to work with, she said, "wasn't pleased when he saw me.

He's a big guy -- about 6' tall, and heavy -- he towers over me. We started but he just didn't want to work with me. I couldn't keep my feet on the ground and reach over into a deep tote to pull fish out of the bottom." Furthermore, her hands were too small for the gloves that make handling frozen fish much easier.

She was under constant supervision for two hours, Newman testified, with two managers, two charges hands, and a couple of truck drivers watching, and her co-worker complaining all the while. "It was a great scene," she said. "So I thought, this fellow doesn't want to work with me, it's making it difficult for me, I don't want to do this -- so I'll go back to racking fish, "Newman explained. The man who took her place finished the day but, she said, told the manager he's never do it again because he was too short and it was too hard for him. But he had been given some pointers to make the work easier, while she'd received no instruction.

"I'm not saying I couldn't do it," Newman emphasized. "I could do it if I had someone else to work with. I believe that, with help, I could fill that truck full of halibut."

Human Rights officer Valerie Embree provided the Board with a study she prepared of three months in late 1977 when Jorgensen was not called in to work but men junior to her were. There were two such days in October, 17 out of 24 working days in November, and 14 out of 21 working days in December, thus substantiating Susan's claim of working time lost. During cross examination, Embree stated, "It's standard for an employer to offer the defence of fear and risk of injury (to the employee who is charging discrimination), so one is prepared for that to arise in a case and to assess the merits of the defence."

UFAWU and sex discrimination: "An educational process within our membership."

UFAWU president Jack Nichol gave the union's case, maintaining, "The complaint doesn't say the union has discriminated -- just that the contract does. Callouts, assignments to jobs, and so forth are management functions. I don't believe that the collective agreement by itself discriminates against women. If there is discrimination, it's the result of application of the collective agreement by management."

Nichol explained that equal pay for work of equal value is a policy of UFAWU, although achieving the principle in contracts has involved "an educational process within our own membership. Nonetheless awareness is growing." He catalogued improvements in fishing industry contracts since 1973, citing the time at which the union won a two-year phaseout of inequality in payrates. "I warned the membership," Nichol said, "that we hadn't necessarily won the battle. We would still have to fight for fair application. I'm not satisfied the agreement has been applied in the way we envisaged it should be." One of the terms of the contract was the abolition of differential rate for male and female workers -- and the establishment of groups 1 and 2, which correspond exactly to the old categories. (The one task which was not assigned to either group is washing fish. Nichol explained that men in one plant might eventually earn the top rate after 1000 hours of washing fish, whereas women in another plant who perform only this task would never progress beyond the 400 hour rate.)

The union's stand in last fall's B.C. Ice and Cold Storage strike, Nichol said, was that all workers, male and female, should receive the same start, 400 hour, and 1000 hour rates; in other words, the distinction between the groups should be abolished. The union clung to this demand for six weeks. Ten weeks later, the strike ended when the union accepted a contract which the company felt would "resolve the human rights issue". The outcome is stranger than fiction. Under the new contract, a group 2 worker must put in 1000 hours to earn the same wage she would have earned previously after 400 hours -- and it's still 65¢ an hour less than what the men earn.

"Anything that we have now is pure tokenism, it's not enlightened management," Nichol commented, promising the question will be in the forefront of industry talks this year.

The company: "It's not sex discrimination; it's industrial engineering"

Mr. Stewart Reeder -- B.Eng; MBA (Harv. Bus. School); President, B.C. Ice and Cold Storage -- took the stand to articulate the company's position. Because the company doesn't own any of the goods it handles, he said, it must deal with the very complex task of keeping track of inventory. Highly perishable fish, he said, have "quite emotional content" for their rightful owners. The company has to deal with all the unpredictability of nature involved in fishing. And if they're not careful, a sense of negativism could pervade the whole company because just about the only feedback they get from customers is negative. A cold storage business, he said, lives and dies on volume, so their motto is "never turn down a sale". They must be flexible and run a lean organization.

What this all adds up to is the company's rationale for the group 1/group 2 distinction. "We lost control if we move senior people around, so we decided to have a swing crew that reacts to changing requirements and moves on." In the summer, he explained, this is usually the new hires, and they can be expected to do any group 1 or group 2 task. Group 2 workers have it easier, though; they are expected to perform fewer tasks and expend "far less effort."

Susan Jorgensen's demands to be allowed to do group 1 work placed the company "between a rock and a hard place as regards to Workers Compensation Board requirements and Human Rights Board requirements," Reeder stated (stated several times, as a matter of fact). He also said it was not the company's intent to accuse Jorgensen of trying to rip the company off (by deliberately hurting herself to qualify for compensation), but he testified he did feel there was a high probability of injury if she continued to do group 1 work.

As for the new collective agreement, Reeder says there is opportunity for workers to transfer between the two groups once hired. He also said the major strike issue was whether B.C. Ice would pay more money than the industry does.

"We don't believe we have a human rights problem," Reeder summarized. "I don't think we've committed any act against the Human Rights Act. The situation we have to deal with is the 1000 hour rate issue. The union is calling it a human rights issue, and using it as a smokescreen and a rallying cry....They were using a smokescreen as a slingshot."

After that, Mr. Nichol's feelings appeared genuinely hurt for the remainder of the day and he commented that he didn't realize there was so much subterfuge involved in collective bargaining. ●

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The hearing will resume Monday, February 18, at 9:30 am, in Room 4 of the Robson Square Media Centre and will continue Tuesday, February 19; Monday, February 25; and Tuesday, February 26 (all in Room 1). The company's case will be concluded and arguments will be presented. Hopefully.

R. Minder, R. Wyler

RAPE RELIEF DEBATE

Should we increase convictions, or lower expectations?

In the debate about the relationship of the criminal justice system to the work of rape crisis centres, this article puts forward yet another point of view. It is reprinted from AEGIS, July--August '79.

By Deb Freidman

The criminal justice system's handling of rape cases has been a primary target for reform by workers in rape crisis centers. Many anti-rape workers support the approach of using criminal convictions to solve crime. The purpose of working with the criminal justice system, accordingly, is to establish reforms that will help increase the rate of criminal convictions for rape.

This article will address the limitations of relying on criminal convictions to prevent rape. Other forms of crime prevention employed by the criminal justice system, including offender rehabilitation, will not be discussed.

Reforms that improve women's lives can, at the same time, also be part of an *overall* strategy to change the underlying conditions of women's oppression. Reform*ism* stops short of fundamental change, however, taking the reforms themselves to be the only goal.

The issue of working with the criminal justice system that arises in anti-rape work has become a classic example of "reforms" versus "reform*ism*." Anti-rape activists talk constantly about the goal of increasing rape convictions. Yet we seldom discuss how this will contribute to our ultimate goal of ending rape.

Getting the system to convict more rapists is a valid reform. Rape convictions are important for a number of reasons:

- a low conviction rate for rape reflects women's status in society; it shows society's tolerance for women's victimization and encourages people to see rape as the woman's own problem.

- a court conviction is one of the only ways a woman who is raped can obtain *any* kind of justice without putting herself in legal jeopardy or physical danger if she attempts to avenge herself.

- taking one's rapist to court is sometimes a way to regain at least some of the feeling of control that was taken away by the act of rape.

- "getting an individual rapist off the street," even for a short while, may prevent at least a few rapes.

We can participate in helping women get their rapists convicted for all of the above reasons, assuming it is the woman's own choice to prosecute. In order to gain convictions, it is necessary to work on reforming the criminal justice system to make it more "just" for women and more responsive to women's needs -- a reasonable short-range objective.

What is intent of increasing convictions?

However, gaining an increase in rape convictions is not a strategy to eliminate rape. What is the intent of increasing convictions? Criminal sanctions do not prevent crimes like rape from occurring. Convicted rapists are kept from raping women only as long as they are incarcerated and the incarceration of a small number of rapists does little to deter other men from committing rape.

Even if the majority of rapists could be caught and imprisoned, rape would not end because the causes of rape would still exist (sexism, pressures on men to perform sexually, socialization of women to be victims, etc.) At best, the prevalence of rape would be substantially reduced if the majority of men who committed rape were imprisoned for a long period of time (at least forever). This is an unlikely prospect and even if not, it would require enormous resources and create a totally repressive society. (If rehabilitation of rapists on a wide scale was instituted along with a high rate of imprisonment, such a strategy might be less repressive but would still be very inefficient. In fact, however, the penal system's efforts at rehabilitation have not been very successful except for a few individuals.)

Aegis/Barbara Schreiber/Women

Relying on the criminal justice system to solve rape is "reform*ist*." It ignores the dynamics that cause rape (rather than destroying them), and it forces us to lower our expectations from the virtual elimination of rape to a mere reduction in its incidence.

Relying on the criminal justice system is problematic for a number of other reasons. Some of the logical outgrowths to seeing convictions as the solution to rape are:

* Blaming women who don't report their rapes to the police for any additional rapes committed by their attackers (rather than blaming the system which encourages rape.)

* Seeing rape as an isolated act rather than a continuum of aggression towards women. Many men express their hatred of women through sexual objectification, domination and verbal aggression. Even though only a few men actually commit physical assaults (although the number of physically assaultive men is increasing daily), many more men must be held responsible for the sexist attitudes that produce rape.

* Becoming absorbed in law reform and in monitoring the criminal justice system to prevent the erosion of newly-won improvements.

* Depending on the courts to solve social problems and to remedy individual situations. It would be impossible to have laws against *all* forms of sexual abuse, no matter how extensively we reform state criminal codes to expand the definition of rape. On the one hand, we want the law to give women as many options as possible and to reflect women's right to not be beaten, raped, sexually harassed, or abused. But we don't necessarily want a society where people must spend all of their time (and theirs and society's resources) redressing grievances through the courts.

* Promoting a system whose purpose has little to do with the protection of women or citizens. The criminal justice system exists to preserve the social order by ensuring obedience to the law. When a crime is committed, the injury is to the state, according to our legal system, and only the state may take action against the offender.

* Seeing rape as an act committed by certain types of men, particularly lower class and minority men. As more and more minority and lower class men are convicted of rape, due to classist and racist attitudes and procedures, rape comes to be identified as a crime committed primarily by these men. Racism and classism, like sexism, are systems of domination of one group of people by another. Supporting racism and classism (by failing to attack either) promotes the idea that any group of people should be dominated which in turn reinforces the existence of sexism -- one of the causes of rape.

Difficult to distinguish our position

If the criminal justice system doesn't offer us a means to eliminate rape, what should be our involvement in its processes and goals? Until there are some alternative means of justice, of crime prevention and of eliminating the causes of rape that we have the power to institute, we will continue to need the criminal justice system and criminal justice reforms for our own purposes. In fact, it will frequently be difficult to distinguish our position from that of the criminal justice system's as we continue our daily attack on rape.

Short of totally ignoring the criminal justice system, there are some things we can do now to distinguish ourselves from its limited and often reactionary goals. Primarily, we should continue to demand the actual elimination of rape, not just its numerical decrease. We can also begin to search beyond higher conviction rates (or locked doors) for a means to alter the dynamics that produce rape. We can actively oppose the racism and classism of the criminal justice system and, finally, we can begin to look at the reactionary functions of our current system of justice and propose a structure that would ensure justice for all people.

Then, and until women have power, it will be possible to select reforms that we can legitimately support without abandoning the struggle to end rape.●

RAPE RELIEF DEBATE

Going to court is *voluntarily* turning over power and control

By Diane Freed, Rape Relief Worker

Wentzell's testimony was interrupted by an outburst from the complainant and his lawyer's address to the jury was punctuated by a Rape Relief representative.

I feel robbed to think that when I stood up in court to protest the blatant lies that the rapist's lawyer was presenting to the jury (which, incidently, consisted of 11 men and one woman) that it was seen as punctuating. I feel somewhat like a question mark.

The details of that trial are unimportant at this point. The players were different; the lines altered somewhat but the charade was the same and you can bet the winner was, too.

In my personal struggle with court accompaniment, my argument was that I must support the woman in court, if that was her choice. The two days I spent in court with Cindy (Wentzell) were far worse for me than my own rape. For, in this instance, I realized that I was *voluntarily* turning over my power and control and that I was completely helpless to change anything that was happening there.

That experience has not changed the basic principle that a woman must make her own choices. But in order for her to do that, it is imperative that she is clear about what her choices are and what each of them mean for her.

To believe that a woman in crisis is too vulnerable and weak to hear the truth is to play into the game; to add to the lies that she has already been told is to add to her pain.

To go to court with a woman; to stand by and watch her be torn apart and, then when they are done, to pick her up and put the pieces back together for her is to acknowledge their victory.

To support institutions which, by their very existence, contribute to our oppression is to negate out criticism of them.

At least 70% of the women who call us have already made the decision not to report to the police. Of the very few cases that are reported to the police, less than 7.1% end in a conviction. So, in fact, 93% of the women who go to court are leaving wondering what has happened to them in a judicial system that is supposedly there for justice and for her protection.

Based on these facts alone, it is clear that we must find another way. We must be working consciously and concretely toward providing alternatives. We must go further to a place that we have not yet been. We must take more than they are willing to give. If we wait for it to happen -- it won't!

I am personally committed to creating those alternatives and at the same time supporting the women who call whether they choose the traditional way or the new way.

It has been stated that we must not confuse work with women who call us with social relations in which we live and I am confused because I can't find any difference. ●

Elderly women are a hidden target for abuse

Sexually abused as girls, battered as wives, then beaten up again by their grown children when they get old and helpless, many women are victims of sexist violence throughout their lives.

A Massachusetts group called Legal Research and Services for the Elderly (LRSE) has issued a report called "Elderly Abuse in Massachusetts." This chronicles the extent to which old people in the state are regularly beaten, starved, forcibly confined and overdrugged by those supposedly taking care of them. The survey, based on interviews with more than 1000 professionals who deal with the elderly, showed that in 86% of the cases the abuse is carried out by relatives, and 80% of the victims are women.

While elderly women are in part victimized because of general sexist ideology which permits violence against women, there are other particular reasons compounding the problem. Women, for example, live longer than men and thus have more years of physical helplessness and dependency. Women are also more likely to live in dire poverty in old age, forced to live with relatives if they are to survive.

The survey points out that much of the abuse is triggered by the frustration and helplessness of relatives trying to care for sick, feeble and confused old people without adequate social or financial support from the rest of the community. Unfortunately, old people who are abused by their relatives are often afraid to speak up, for fear of being removed and forced to live in a bleak "welfare hotel" or in a dreaded state-run old age home.

(Guardian)

Wife has right to husband's future pension

Because a pension is a family asset, a divorced wife is entitled to half the pension her husband may receive in the future.

This is a precedent-setting decision handed down recently in the B.C. Supreme Court by Justice J.C. Bouck. The case concerned the claim of Frances Rutherford against her former husband Raymond Rutherford. He had nominated his children as beneficiaries under the Public Service Superannuation Act. The judge said it seemed clear that the husband intended to deprive his wife of a share in the pension.

Rutherford was directed to file a new election nominating his wife in place of the children.

Justice Bouck said that when the husband retires, he and his former wife will have to work out an arrangement for dividing the pension. If they cannot agree, division of pension proceeds will be made by the court.

"As things stand now, I would be inclined to grant the wife a 50% share in the monthly cheque ($1,800) should the husband, now 53, decide to retire at 55 (when he first becomes eligible for his public service pension), or to work until retirement at the age of 65."

The husband is appealing the decision.

Aging population will no longer tolerate poverty

The aging population, with its increasing political power, will not tolerate indefinitely a life of poverty in retirement.

So says Retirement Without Tears, a report prepared by a Senate committee, chaired by Liberal Senator David Croll.

The study points to the fact that elderly women are among the poorest people in the country. In 1977, 48% of unattached women 65 years and over had annual incomes of less than $3,000.

Although 94 of every 100 women marry, only 26 can expect to live with their husbands until death, 15 will separate or divorce and 53 will become widows.

Wives and husbands, the report urges, must have an equal share in pension benefits that either partner earns during the marriage.

Employee and employer contributions to the government pension plan (Canada Pension Plan) should be more than doubled, the report adds. There are now 3.6%, but they'll have to go up to 8%. These increased contributions could bring pension cheques up to about $450 a month. Compare that with the current maximum of $218.06 a month.

Only with that increase in benefits, and with the 50-50 split between wives and husbands, the report argues, will there be a reasonable and adequate pension for the millions of women who have not done waged work outside the home.

Retirement Without Tears also recommends that private pension plans be forced to provide adequately for widows and widowers.

Mandatory retirement based on age should be abolished, the Croll report emphasizes. At the moment, 65 is the year for compulsory retirement. The report wants to see that phased out over a five-year period, to be replaced with a more flexible plan.

Homeworkers should get pension

Housework is the largest single service industry in world, says Penney Kome, a Homemaker's columnist and author of a forth-coming book on housework. More than 5 million Canadian women do housework as a full-time occupation, and its value has been estimated by Statistics Canada as $77 billion in 1978.

Kome favours the possibility of making women who work in the home eligible for veterans' benefits. They would then be eligible for pensions, educational assistance and preference for government jobs if they decided to rejoin the workforce.

Taskforce on Older Women circulating questionnaire

The NDP TASK FORCE ON OLDER WOMEN is circulating a questionnaire in B.C. to gather data on the status of older women in this province. For copies write Task Force on Older Women, 517 E. Broadway, Vancouver V5T 1X4.

Ed Broadbent, leader of the NDP, says he will increase the Old Age Security Pension by $40. (Do I hear $45, anyone?)

PENSIONS

Now we're all a decade older...

Here's a basic, feminist guide through the pension maze

This material is extracted from the report, WOMEN AND POVERTY, prepared by the National Council of Welfare, and published last fall.

You can obtain a copy of this superb report by writing to the council at: Brooke Claxton Building, Ottawa, K1A 0K9

Even if a woman has married "well" and has been quite comfortably off throughout her life, she is still very likely to face the toughest hurdle of all, widowhood.

As Canadian women marry men who are slightly older than they and whose life expectancy is shorter than their own, most of them are bound to become widows at some point in their lives. When they do, they will become members of the poorest group in Canada. In 1975, 45% of widows aged 55 to 64 were poor, as were 66% of those over the age of 65.

Very few women are well prepared to deal with old age and widowhood. In a house-to-house survey carried out in a well-to-do suburb of Toronto in the spring of 1979, 41% of the women interviewed said they had no idea of the type of pension they could expect to receive at age 65. Of those who thought they were well informed, many indicated in subsequent answers that their knowledge was in fact very sketchy.

Contrary to what many people think, husband's pension plans very seldom provide adequate protection for surviving wives. In fact, less than half of all workers participate in a private pension program through their employers, and of those, half again are in plans that give no continuing benefits whatsoever to surviving spouses. All told, less than one widow in four can expect to get any regular benefits from her deceased husband's employer. Even then, what she receives will in most cases amount to only 50% of her husband's pension entitlement.

If a widow is under the age of 65, the only pension she is likely to get is from the Canada or Quebec Pension Plan (CPP/QPP). As average CPP surviving spouses' benefits amounted to less than $100 a month in 1978, however, a woman with no other income is sure to be destitute. Her only recourse in that case would be welfare, and that would still not bring her income up to the poverty level.

If a woman is counting on her husband's savings or insurance policy, she is also in great danger of being disappointed. A study of middle-aged couples' expenditures and savings patterns concluded that only those among the highest-income 20% were really in a good position to save enough for their old age. As for life insurance, the average amount of death benefits paid out under individual policies in 1977 was about $4000. That would just about cover the cost of a first-class funeral!

Considering that surviving spouses under age 65 still have some chances of finding a job, albeit a lowly and badly paid one in most cases, the situation of widows over the age of 65 is comparatively much worse. Except for the very few who are entitled to a work-related pension in their own right because they were in the labor market, these women are completely dependent on CPP/QPP widow's benefits and on federal and provincial income support programs for senior citizens.□

CPP does not see housework as "real" work

In July 1977, Royal Assent was given to amendments to the Canada Pension Plan. The first of two amendments which provide some measure of recognition for spouses who work in the home is equal splitting of pension credits. Upon divorce or annulment of the marriage, husband and wife split CPP pension credits equally. This credit split which is to be retroactive to 1966 when the Plan began, would be made upon application by either spouse within three years of the marriage dissolution.◇

But women remain financially vulnerable by the traditional division of tasks between spouses. Even if their marriage is stable and the husband's income is adequate, wives who drop out of the labor market to raise children often suffer economically in the long run because of the interruption in their pension coverage and the reduction in value of their marketable skills.

The government's main response to this now, which consists of giving husbands a tax exemption for their "dependent" wives, is totally inappropriate. By giving the benefit to the man instead of the woman, it wrongly assumes that a wife at home is a financial burden who costs more than the value of the services she renders.

The Quebec Status of Women Council has called for the "married" exemption to be abolished and for the sums thereby saved to be reallocated as increases in benefits for the real dependents in families, children.

In order to avoid causing hardships to elderly couples, the married exemption could be temporarily retained for older spouses who have already claimed it.

Phiz Mezey All Of Our Lives

In contrast to the married exemption, a most appropriate way to help homemakers is to provide them with continuous Canada/Quebec Pension Plan coverage when they drop out of the labor force to work in the home. This was a popular issue in the May 1979 federal election, during which all three major political parties expressed support for permitting voluntary participation by housewives in the Canada Pension Plan. Unfortunately, it is not clear what they meant by that.

The stumbling block to voluntary contributions by housewives, which none of the politicians tackled, is the synchronization of the pension entitlements of women at home and women in the labour market. Canada Pension Plan contributions and benefits are based on earnings, with people whose wages in 1979 were $11,700 or more making maximum contributions entitling them to maximum pension credits. Persons working for the minimum wage contribute roughly half as much and get only half the pension entitlement.

At what level would housewives voluntarily contribute? To allow them to contribute at the maximum level would lead to the incongruous result that a woman working full-time at the minimum wage could double her pension entitlement by quitting her job. Conversely, a homemaker's pension limit would fall dramatically when she took part-time employment, even though she would also be doing the same work at home.

The result would be a drastic weakening of the present link between earnings and pension contributions that none of the three main political parties are willing to support at the present time. Their election promises on this subject therefore appear to have been little more than pious wishes.□

Looking at these anomalies, the Advisory Council on the Status of Women (ACSW) comments: *we do not advocate voluntary contributions because they would effectively exclude women with low-income husbands who have no income of their own.*◇

There *is* an alternative

There is an alternative. It has not yet gained much media appeal, but it could prove to be very effective in providing most homemakers with non-stop pension coverage, is the "child-care drop-out period" amendment that came into force in the Quebec Pension Plan in 1978. By dropping from a parent's pension calcuation the years she or he spends at home with children aged less than seven, this measure provides uninterrupted coverage to most women who leave the labor force to take care of young children.

The federal parliament has approved a similar amendment to the Canada Pension Plan. This is the second major amendment to CPP which was given Royal Assent in 1977, and which would recognize the contribution of child-rearing.

Under proposed federal law, contributors would be able to drop out these years of low or zero earnings which are spent in the home with young children. This would mean that when calculating their lifetime average earnings for benefit purposes, their child-rearing years would not mean that their CPP benefits would be less. The provision would protect both the eligibility and the amount of CPP benefits earned by a contributor prior to leaving the labor force for child-rearing.

But here's the snag:

This law cannot come into effect until the

PENSIONS

province of Ontario withdraws its objection to it. Ontario's right of veto stems from the fact that such changes to the CPP require the approval of two-thirds of the participating provinces having two-thirds of the population. And Ontario has more than one-third of the population of Canada minus Quebec.□

British Columbia also does not endorse the drop-out period. But all the other provinces do.

The ACSW comments: *public pressure must be put on the province of Ontario to endorse the proposed drop-out provision in the Canada Pension Plan for women who temporarily leave the labor force to raise children.*◇

OAS, GIS: fancy initials for not enough money

After a lifetime spent taking care of their spouses and children, women who had no opportunity to become financially self-sufficient are now abandoned by a generation that benefitted most from their work.

The federal government operates three programs for senior citizens. The first is the Old Age Security pension (OAS), which is taxable and given to everyone who has reached the age of 65 and meets the residency requirement.

Right now, OAS amounts to the princely sum of $182 a month.

One of the groups that recently suggested abolishing the family allowance for couples with above-average family incomes also recommended that old age pension be taken away from pensioners with family incomes above the national average. This would mean that some well-off elderly people would lose their pension, while others with no income of their own (mainly women) would also be cut off because of the comfortable incomes of their spouses.

On the one hand, it makes a great deal of sense to with-hold the old age pension from people who don't need it. On the other hand, it would not only be illogical to take this pension away from elderly wives on the erroneous assumption that all spouses are financial partners, it would be cruel as well. Because, as we know, some of these women will become poor as soon as their husbands die.

This problem could be avoided by denying the old age pension only to elderly people with high personal (as opposed to family) incomes. Considering that about only 5% of senior citizens have incomes higher than the average wage, however, and that those who do pay tax on the pension they receive, such a move would save so little money that it would not worth the trouble and anxiety it would cause.

The second federal program for senior citizens, the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) for low-income people aged 65 and over, is of crucial importance for older women. It is the specific purpose of the GIS to supplement the income of poor senior citizens. Unfortunately, the old age pension and the supplement together are still insufficient to provide unmarried senior citizens, most of them women, with an income that reaches the poverty line. The federal government should increase the Guaranteed Income Supplement without delay to make it at least equal to Statistics Canada's poverty line for urban areas.

Liberal leader Pierre Trudeau promised January 15 to increase the GIS by $35 a month. The increase would go to 914,000 households - which includes couples as well as single senior citizens.

GIS is now a maximum of $149 for single pensioners and up to $249 for senior citizen couples.□

What Feds give with one hand, Socreds swipe with the other?

Even if Trudeau is elected, and even if he does in fact keep his promise to increase GIS by $35 a month, odds are that the B.C. government will simply dock the sum from its Guaranteed Available Income for Need (GAIN) payments. *I think it's a lovely promise,* says Bruce Eriksen, president of the Downtown Eastside Residents' Association. *The only problem is that the provincial government will deduct it from GAIN.*

GAIN payments now total up to a maxiumum of $38.88 a month. Senior citizens are eligible for the GAIN supplement if their OAS-GIS comes to less than $349 a month, if you're single. GAIN makes up that difference, to bring you up to that level.◇

The third program for senior citizens is the Spouse's Allowance, which was introduced by the federal government a few years ago. The idea in introducing it was to guarantee the same minimum income to couples where only one spouse was over 65 as the couples where both spouses were pensioners. It provides an allowance to low-income spouses aged 60 to 65 whose husbands or wives are already getting the OAS-GIS.

The problem with the Spouse's Allowance is that it is only for spouses. If the older spouse dies and the younger one becomes a widow or widower, s/he is no longer eligible. The previous Liberal government (before its defeat in May 1979) added another patch to this ill-conceived quilt by extending the Spouse's Allowance to six months after the older spouse's death to allow the survivor time to apply for welfare. The six-month Conservative government promised to continue the Allowance until the surviving spouse becomes eligible for the OAS-GIS pension at age 65. That promise was contained in Bill C-6, An Act to Amend the Old Age Security Act, which became effective October 31, 1979.

This proposal is not satisfactory. It gives a federal pension to some widows aged 60 to 65 while other widows and single people just as old and just as poor are not eligible.

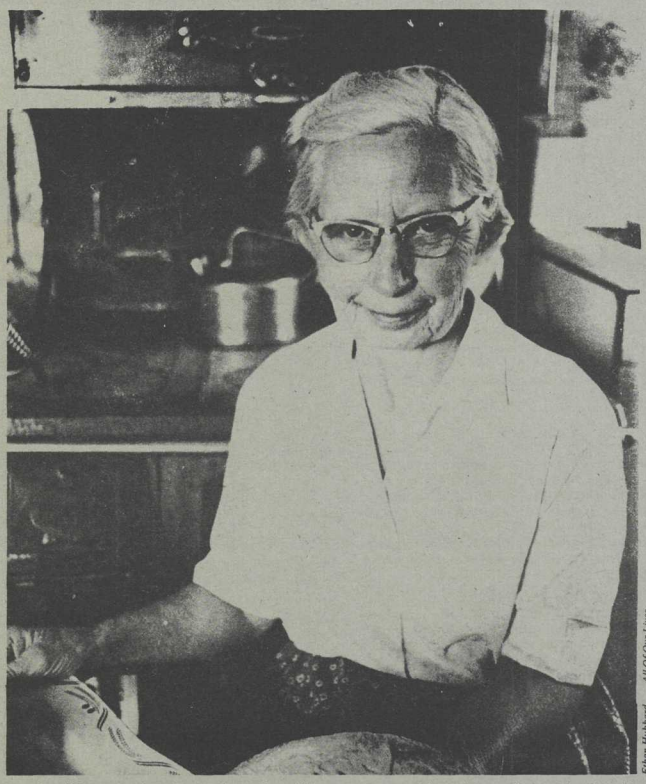
Here is an example of the absurdity which could ensue. Take three penniless widows living next door to each other. One could be entitled to the Spouse's Allowance because she was receiving it before her husband died. One would not be entitled because her husband died when she was 59 and not yet eligible for the Allowance. The third would not be eligible because her husband's income has prevented her from being entitled to the Allowance when he was alive.

Spouse's Allowance causes hopeless muddles

A far better solution would be to extend the present allowance so that an amount equal to the OAS-GIS is provided to all low income women and men between the ages of 60 and 65.□

When the legislation concerning spouse's pension benefits was debated in the House of Commons, Health Minister David Crombie said, *the government has approved the proposal to reinstate all those who have been cut off spouse's allowance since the inception of the program in October 1975, and who still meet eligibility requirements.*

Liberals and New Democrats applauded the government's motives for restoring the benefits to those elderly who are likely to be most in need.



Ethan Hubbard All Of Our Lives

Stanley Knowles, NDP House leader, and a long-time crusader for improved pensions, tempered his enthusiasm by saying that changes were desperately needed for a *poorly conceived bill.*

Recipients between 60 and 65, regardless of need, still must be married in order to receive the benefits. *I don't like means tests and needs tests,* said Knowles, *but it's a thousand times better than having a get-a-man test.*

The basic wrong is still there, he stressed

ACROSS CANADA

Jamaican woman to be deported, husband no longer wants her

Hyacinth Burnett, so, has been ordered to leave Canada because her husband no longer wants her here. She is a frightening example of what happens to an immigrant woman whose husband decides he doesn't want to sponsor her any more.

Ms Burnett married her husband, a landed immigrant, 3 years ago in 1976. They moved to Toronto, and her husband applied to sponsor her as a landed immigrant. Two years later, immigration officials had still not made a decision on the application.

In 1978 the couple separated. Basil Burnett withdrew his sponsorship. Burnett, now eligible for deportation, has not been able to enforce a $45 a week order of support for her two year old child. She may be given a departure notice, which will mean she can reapply for entry at any time, or a deportation order. To get the first, less severe order, Mrs. Burnett must show that she is willing and able to pay her way back to her native Jamaica. The immigration hearing continues.

The Association of Immigrant Lawyers has said that the government should deal with the question of whether sponsorship can be withdrawn.

The case was reviewed on CBC-TV Ombudsman, by Kathleen Ruff, who suggested writing to Ron Atkey then Minister of Employment and Immigration, to ask for:

1) Hyacinth Burnett's case to be reviewed and consideration given to issuing a Ministerial Permit for a 3 to 6 month trial period; and

2) That the sponsorship system be reviewed so sponsor and sponsored individuals understand its significance and revised so it cannot constitute a threat if personal conflict develops.

Write supporting Hyacinth Burnett, c/o her lawyer Barbara Jackman, 165 Spadina Ave. #33, Toronto, Ontario

PC's promise to smarten up...

The Conservatives were full of promises. Ron Atkey, their minister for employment and immigration said that measures were under "active review to alleviate the serious difficulties facing immigrant women employed as domestics in Canada." At present, the women can be fired without notice and paid as little as $50 a week with no overtime, no sick leave and no vacation benefits.

As a first step, Atkey assured us, he would have his ministry insist that the contract a foreign domestic worker signs with her employer and Canada Manpower (sic) spell a few things out: the hours of work, the pay for overtime, vacation pay, and who is going to pay for medical coverage under health insurance plans. A legally binding contract? Well, no, Atkey admitted. But, said he, foreign domestics are "encouraged" to return to the Department and complain if the terms of the agreement are not met.

Most domestics are working under one-year work permits that name their employer. If a domestic is fired or quits, she has two weeks to find a new job as a domestic or she must leave the country. Ottawa Letter info

Ontario refuses to support domestic workers

In the Ontario Legislature, a private member's bill seeking to amend the Employment Standards Act and provide protection to domestic workers in the areas of: hours of work, minimum wage, overtime, and holiday and vacation pay, was recently defeated. Some objections raised by Conservative MPs included the impossibility of regulating such an amendment, that households would not be able to afford to hire domestic workers, and that fewer job opportunities would be available.

Brian Charleton, the NDP member who introduced the bill pointed out that similar arguments were used against the minimum wage itself before its implementation.

Meanwhile, women continue to work from 45 to 80 hours a week for much less than minimum wage and in oppressive conditions. Upstream

Edmonton labelled rape capital of Canada

Edmonton, with its self-proclaimed boast of being the Gateway to the north, now has another slogan to carry: Rape Capital of Canada.

More than 2,000 women have been sexually assaulted -- from violent rape to crude pawing -- in Edmonton in the last five years.

And that figure, even police concede, is just the tip of a horrifying iceberg.

The city's Rape Crisis Centre estimates that for every rape reported, six to nine are not. Police Chief Robert Lunney believes the percentage to be somewhat less, with between four to seven women keeping quiet.

Rapes are on the increase; from 87 reported incidents in 1977, to 135 in 1978, and 146 last year.

Whichever figure is correct, the increasing number of sexual attacks here gives Edmonton the highest incidence of rapes among major Canadian cities.

According to recent police statistics there were 15.3 rapes for every 100,000 citizens last year. Calgary reported 14 rapes per 100,000 people and Regina ranked third with 13.9.

When the number of indecent assaults is included, Edmonton's rate is 68.1 victims per 100,000. Next highest is Vancouver, with a population three times as great at a rate of 58.3.

A Rape Crisis worker attributed the sexual crime to Edmonton's rapid growth.

"Edmonton is a fast growing city where the pressure to succeed is probably greater than in other cities. There is intense competition and the rapist is often just a guy who is not doing so well at the office as the guy at the next desk, and decides to take it out on somebody else.

"There is no sexual gratification in a rape," she said. Sun

Quebec rape crisis centres face closure

Sondra Curry

MONTREAL -- Two of Quebec's rape crisis centres, one in Sherbrooke and the other in Trois Rivieres, is facing closure due to lack of funds.

Two other Quebec rape crisis centres, in Hull and Quebec City, will suffer severe cutbacks of 75 to 80% in staff and services. As well, the opening of two new centres, in Montreal and Chateau Guay, is now in doubt.

The announcement was made at a press conference called by the Regroupement Quebecois des centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à charactère sexual (Quebec Sexual Assault Centres) which is an umbrella group for the existing and proposed centres.

"This is a New Year's gift from the Pequiste government to Quebec women said the Regroupement.

At the press conference, the Regroupement announced they had just received word that its grant request of $200,000 needed to run the four centres had been turned down by Social Affairs minister Denis Lazure.

According to the Regroupement, they had received verbal assurances from several members of the Social Affairs ministry that their request for funds would be approved. The call informing them that their request had been denied came as a shock.

The Regroupement pointed out that the provincial government has spent $100,000 for a series of province-wide workshops studying violence against women but is not prepared to support sexual assault centres already established to deal concretely with this violence. Upstream

LNS

No sickleave, no overtime, no vacation, no job security for foreign domestic workers...

Military dodo finds women a no-no

TORONTO -- A retired colonel has criticized the Canadian Armed Forces for using women in recruiting offices.

"What red-blooded man wants to talk to a woman about joining the army?" asked Lt.-Col. Jim Cameron, a 30-year forces veteran, at a session of the federal study group reviewing Armed Forces unification.

Unification has destroyed the aggressiveness of combat officers, making "hothouse tomatoes" out of soldiers who don't dare risk damaging equipment in manoeuvres for fear of jeopardizing their careers, Cameron said.

Province

ACROSS CANADA

Stelco backing down

Catherine Dery

EDMONTON -- The Edmonton Steel Works (Stelco) has finally agreed to hire women. Changing facilities for women in the plant have been installed, and women will begin working in the plant at the end of November.

How many women will be hired; what jobs they will perform once in; and whether Stelco will hire Lynda Little and Sarah Butson, the two women who launched the Women into Stelco Campaign Committee, are all still unknown.

"The Women into Stelco Campaign Committee regards this new policy as a victory for women and the entire labor movement as well as an important precedent for women getting jobs in other industrial plants," said a press release from the committee.

This victory resulted from the wide support that the committee was able to win in the labor movement. It has received enthusiastic support from the two largest Canadian locals of the United Steel Workers of America, in Hamilton and Sudbury, as well as the Grande Cache local here in Alberta. Support has also come from the Edmonton local of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, the Alberta Union of Public Employees, the Alberta Status of Women's Action Committee, and the Edmonton Women's Coalition.

The campaign has won wide publicity in the media, including coverage on the nationally televised CBC program "Ombudsman." The Alberta Human Rights Commission began an investigation of Stelco's hiring practices.

The success of the campaign to this point gives some indication of what can be won when the power of the unions is brought behind women's rights struggles.

But the fight with Stelco is definitely not over. The Women into Stelco Campaign Committee has expressed concern that the new hiring policy may be "a token accommodation to the present public attention." It has decided, it says, to "monitor developments at Stelco and will continue to press for the hiring of Lynda Little and Sarah Butson, the two women who were refused jobs there several months ago."

Socialist Voice

Radio Shack condemned for labour law violations

Radio Shack has been ordered to compensate the United Steelworkers of America and the firm's employees in Barrie for damages as a result of bad-faith bargaining and other flagrant violations of labor law.

The order by the Ontario Labor Relations Board is a landmark decision, embracing the most comprehensive set of remedies for bad-faith bargaining ever fashioned by a labor board in Canada.

The decision, written by board chairman George Adams, found the big electronics company guilty of a wide range of unfair labor practices, including intimidation and coercion to prevent employees from exercising their rights to join a union and to block formation of a union.

The board majority accepted unchallenged testimony that spies had been hired, that camera surveillance had been used, and that the company's chief security officer had said the Fort Worth headquarters of Radio Shack had told him to "get rid of the union no matter what the cost."

Radio Shack has 400 stores and dealer outlets in Canada. The company, a subsidiary of Texas-based Tandy Corp., has more than 7,000 retail electronic stores throughout the world. The Barrie warehouse is the only one at which a union has been certified as bargaining agent for employees of the company.

The majority of the Barrie workers are women, and the strike has gained the support of women's groups as well as other unions. Organized Working Women, NAC and the International Women's Day Committee from Toronto, joined the picket line for a Women's Solidarity Day in November, and support from women's organizations continues.

The union struck Radio Shack last Aug. 9 after it won bargaining rights in a long and bitter fight only to be stymied in bargaining. The organizing campaign involved labor board citations against the company for unfair labor practices.

The central issue in the strike was the union's demand for compulsory dues check-off for all employees.

Since the strike began, the Steelworkers have launched a campaign aimed at persuading consumers not to buy Radio Shack products.

At the board hearing, the union said its bargaining unit had been demoralized and all but destroyed by the company's tactics before the strike. Of about 180 employees in the unit at the time, about 35 are still on strike.

Despite vindication by the Ontario Labor Relations Board, the Radio Shack workers in Barrie remain without a contract.

Globe & Mail

Nova Scotia pro-choice group organizing

HALIFAX -- This past summer in Halifax a 19 year old woman -- pregnant, unemployed and separated from her husband -- applied to the Victoria General Hospital board for an abortion. Permission was granted. Her husband, in an effort to prevent the abortion, threatened to sue anyone who performed the abortion. The attempt was successful: the abortion did not take place.

At the same time, in family court, Judge Bartlett appointed a member of the Nova Scotians United For Life -- an anti-abortion organization -- as "legal guardian of the foetus." There was no legal precedent.

Both of these actions have grave implications for women in our struggle for control over our own bodies. Shortly after these events took place, a group of women, men and children marched in protest outside the Victoria General Hospital.

As a follow-up to this action, a group of women formed Pro-Choice -- an organization with a feminist socialist perspective.

Plans for action include organizing a speakers' bureau to talk to interested community groups, unions, and high school students; production of an information pamphlet; developing mall displays; and possibly establishing an abortion counselling and referral service in Halifax.

Upstream

EQUAL PAY

Bill 3, which provides for Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value, has passed through its second reading in the Ontario Legislature. Pressure from the Equal Pay Coalition and other members of the women's movement, combined with an unorchestrated campaign of telegrams and phone calls, forced the three party leaders to hold public hearings on this private member's bill.

Bill 3 will compel employers to reevaluate work according to four criteria -- skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions, and to set salaries on the basis of which jobs are assigned most points. The Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Manufacturers Association are lobbying furiously against this bill, claiming it is too complicated and costly. But women in Ontario are planning to articulate loudly and clearly at the hearings that sex discrimination in the economic sphere is costing women dearly and that those employers engaged in the practice must be given responsibility for what can only be called reparations.

Political pressure had enough impact to produce the hearings, and hopefully more of the same will assure final passage of the bill.

Broadside

Joe says no to anti-choicers

Joe Clark, speaking to the National Action Council January 28, said that he was not contemplating any changes to the Criminal Code of Canada regarding the criteria for legal abortions.

He also said that he would welcome legislation to guarantee equal treatment for all women under the abortion law. Many women, Clark has discovered, are denied acces to abortion because of economic and geographic factors. He's been reading his Badgley report.

Where's our landmark ruling?

MONTREAL (CP) -- The Canadian Human Rights Commission is on the verge of winning a landmark decision that would force the federal government to put women's salaries on a par with men's, says chief commissioner Gordon Fairweather.

The commission is currently acting on several complaints from women in the federal civil service who say they are being paid less than men working under the same demands, Fairweather explained.

He said he is confident that a decision on the case by the treasury board will favor the women and eventually have a profound affect on wage practices in both the civil service and private industry.

"The 80s will feel the impact of this if we do our business properly," the commissioner told a meeting of the Daily Newspapers Publishers Association.

"I'm sure one case will be settled in the next couple of months."

The issue is "equal pay for work of equal value."

Well, he said all this last November. So where's our landmark ruling, Gordon?

ACSW releases its report on battered women

About 500,000 women in Canada are beaten up by the men in the their lives each year. That's what the Advisory Council on the Status of Women (ACSW) says in its new report on wife battering. About 31% were beaten weekly or daily; 26% at least once a month.

INTERNATIONAL

Peru cracks down on contraceptives

The Peruvian government has recently closed down all state contraceptive services in response to pressure from the Catholic Church. This move ensures that only wealthy women, who can afford private medical consultations, will have access to contraceptions.

ALIMUPER -- Action for the Liberation of the Peruvian Woman -- calls this move "an infringement of the rights of Peruvian women who are victims, once again, of masculine power." They say the suspended services were "strictly voluntary and low cost", and that they were funded by the United Nations.

The church authorities on the contrary claim that Peruvian women were being "pressurized into using birth control through propaganda." According to the National Institute of Statistics, 37% of deaths in Peru each year are of children under the age of one.

There are over 85,000 abortions a year and many of the women who have them end up in hospital with complications. This situation can only get worse if services are not restored.

ALIMPUR is calling for protests against this restrictive measure be sent to President Francisco Morales Bermudez, Palacio de Gobierno, Plaza de Armas, Lima, Peru.

Spare Rib

T. Tuthill/LNS

From the New York rally during the recent U.S. National Abortion Rights Action Week.

T. Tuthill/LNS

Is Warner Communications really seeing the light?

Women Against Violence Against Women and Warner Communication, Inc. (SCI) have jointly announced the end of a two and a half year dispute regarding the use of violent images in record advertising.

David H. Horowitz, office of the President, Warner Communications, Inc. New York stated: "The WCI record divisions oppose the depiction of violence, against women or men, on album covers and in related promotional material. This policy expresses the WCI record group's opposition to the exploitation of violence sexual or otherwise, in any form." Mr. Horowitz further stated, "Although this policy is subject to prior contractual restrictions where applicable, the WCI record group has chosen to strongly discourage the use of images of physical and sexual violence against women in these cases as well." The WCI record divisions have been implementing this policy internally and today's announcement at the request of WAVAW, formalized that policy.

"We commend the WCI record group for formally announcing this advertising policy," declared Joan Howarth, spokesperson for WAVAW headquarters in Los Angeles, "and we anticipate that it will have an important impact on advertising policy throughout the record industry, as well as in other industries, and on the media industry as a whole.

WAVAW happy to end boycott

"WAVAW, which has been advocating a boycott of WCI's record subsidiaries (Warner Bros., Atlantic and Elecktra/Asylum), now happily calls an end to that boycott," Ms. Howarth stated. "By publicizing this policy, the WCI record group is acknowledging that the commercial use of visual and other images that trivialize women victims is irresponsible in light of the epidemic proportions of real-life violence against women, most particularly rape and domestic battering. Of course, WAVAW's pressure on the record industry will continue, because this is an industry wide problem. We look forward to increased receptivity from other companies as a result of the step taken by the WCI record group, one of the most important leaders in the industry.

WAVAW joined with California NOW in calling for a boycott of all WCI records in December of 1976. In order to counteract the depiction of violence not only in record advertising but throughout the entertainment industry, WAVAW chapters have formed in over 25 cities to educate the public and to work toward policy changes.

LA Chapter WAVAW

Divorce one step closer in Ireland

There is no divorce in Ireland. Only divorce, "Irish style." A husband may leave his wife for weeks, months, or years. Then when he wants to be her husband again, he can return at will.

The problem of permanently deserted wives is now so large that the government has been forced to bring in a special deserted wives allowance (which ceases the moment the husband walks in the door again).

But a man is allowed to sue his wife for loss of her services, sexual or domestic. If someone harbours a woman from a violent husband, that person too can be sued by him.

The Pope thinks it's great, this Irish devotion to marriage. In his recent visit there, he said: "May Ireland always continue to give witness before the modern world to her (sic) traditional commitment to the sanctity and indissolubility of the marriage bond."

But divorce may be one step nearer, now that Jose Airey has won her case against the Irish government in the European Court of Justice in Strazbourg.

Jose Airey had argued that she has been unable to afford the only kind of judicial separation available in Ireland -- an expensive, High Court procedure.

Airey had been fighting for a separation since 1972, when her husband, who had previously been convicted of assaulting her, left the 'matrimonial' home.

She asked six solicitors in Cork to take the case. They all refused. Then she went to the European court. That court decided that Ireland had violated article six of the 1950 Human Rights Convention by depriving Airey of an effective right of access to the High Court to seek a judicial separation.

It is expected that hundreds of Irish women who previously could not afford the legal costs will now seek separation.

Roisin Boyd/Spare Rib

Crazies wipe out liberal abortion laws in Israel

Here's what a small group of crazies can do when they hold the balance of power...

The Israeli parliament voted December 17 to restrict abortions. The ultra-orthodox Agudat Israel party was able to force the vote because their four seats supply the shaky Begin coalition with its narrow majority. (See last month's Kinesis)

The Knesset voted 58-53, with nine abstentions, to repeal a law allowing ▸

INTERNATIONAL

abortions for social or economic reasons.

The first vote on repeal last November resulted in a 54-54 tie. Nine members of Begin's coalition voted against it or abstained, allowing the opposition to block passage.

The new bill, predictably, will hit hardest at the poor, since expensive illegal abortions can be obtained from private doctors.

A poll published the same day as the repeal indicated that 71% of Israeli women and 67% of men opposed the change.

Also on December 17, the French senate voted 113-101 against a law that would have continued the five-year old liberalized abortion laws in that country.

The National Assembly, the lower house of parliament in France, had approved continuation of the liberalized law November 30 and had recommended that the legislation be made permanent.

The law, which the Senate has just tossed out, allowed abortions up to the 10th week of pregnancy, on medical and social grounds.

French government pimping

A prostitute from Strabourg is taking the French government to court, accusing it of pimping.

The dispute began when she was told by the government that she had to pay $100,000 in back taxes.

The government had based its claims on what they think is an average working year for a prostitute: five customers a day at $25 dollars each, 200 days a year.

"If the government says I'm a whore and then takes my money, that's pimping," she said. "I don't even know a pimp who'd demand this much." Reuter

TV screen does not hold the mirror up to life

Suppose we placed a representative sample of television programming into a time capsule.

Future generations would conclude that old age was a rarity, that women mysteriously disappeared before they hit 40, that Hispanics were seldom seen and that men definitely had more fun.

That's Kathleen Nolan, president of the U.S. Screen Actors Guild. She's right. TV is unreal.

Just how unreal was borne out recently in a U.S. study, Women and Minorities in Television Drama, 1969 - 1978. The report confirms what we already know: the white man is king, women are cast in traditional, stereotypical roles and children and old people are under-represented.

More than half the prime-time characters are between the ages of 25 and 45. Men outnumber women three to one. And the gains made in the mid-70's by Blacks and Hispanics have not been sustained.

As the report confirms: *There is a positive relationship between television viewing and responding that women should stay at home, that a woman should not work if her husband can support her, that men are better suited for politics...*

Swedish gays are just sick of it

The struggle for lesbian and gay rights continues in many countries. In Sweden, the government will remove "homosexuality" from its list of illnesses. Thirty lesbians and gay men from the national gay group Riksforbundet for sexuellt likaberattigande (RFSL), phoned employers requesting sick leave on the grounds that they were gay.

Under Swedish government regulations, the employers had to give them sick leave: in October, the government stopped defining lesbianism and homosexuality as diseases. On September 1, a lesbian and gay pride march in Stockholm drew 1,500 people compared with 700 last year and 300 in 1977.

In Helsinki, Finland, (home of the international "human rights treaty"), Finnish, German and Swedish lesbians and gay men demonstrated against a Finnish law that prohibits "public encouragement of lewd behavior between members of the same sex." In practice, this law has prevented the dissemination of any information about lesbianism and homosexuality.

OOB

Miss Piggy is everything we don't want our daughters to be

A woman writing into a Houston feminist paper warns of the dangers of The Muppet Movie: "I was appalled at the blatant sexism of the film. Naturally, the main character/hero was a male figure, Kermit the Frog, who goes through a series of marvelous adventures on his way to seek fame and fortune in Hollywood. Of the 20 characters in the film, three were female. Miss Piggy was the only one of the three who had what could be considered a major role. The audience first meets her as the winner of a beauty contest. She is beautiful (for a pig), but of course, as the stereotype goes -- "you can't be both beautiful and intelligent at the same time" -- therefore, the big-busted, blonde Miss Piggy is an idiot. She is everything we don't want our daughters to be." BMR

Sexual harassment victory in Shelton

It all started with that young lady and she apparently wanted to take on the giant, District Judge Jack Tanner recently told a packed court in the state of Washington. Tanner then ordered the Simpson Timber Company in Shelton to reinstate with full back pay, benefits and seniority Toni Gilbertson. The 29-year-old woman was fired last summer in connection with charges of sexual harassment against the company.

But Gilbertson, who was asked for favors while being interviewed for a job, had considerable help in taking on the "giant." In what was the first major walkout ever over sexual harassment, 1400 woodworkers -- all but 50 of them male -- struck for eight weeks against the company. The leadership of the International Woodworkers of America (IWA) settled with Simpson Dec. 1, the day after Tanner's decision.

According to attorney Chris Mrak, who represents both Gilbertson and the union, Gilbertson would not have had a chance in her sexual harassment grievance against Simpson if she had not received the support of the union. Four other judges have upheld Tanner's ruling, according to Mrak, signaling an eventually victory in the case.

Because the issue involved women, some of the men were initially reluctant to go out, according to Jim Lowery, president of the IWA local at Simpson. *We have some staunch strong male chauvinists in this union and some will always be that way,* he said. But, he added, as a result of the strike *a lot of (the men) have changed their opinion about women in the workplace and feel they should be given a fair shot.*

Simpson, meanwhile, has not yet responded to any of the charges of sexual harassment. Guardian

NOW will oppose Carter

After months of discussion and hesitation, the executive board of the National Organization for Women (NOW) has decided to campaign against President Carter in the upcoming presidential elections.

The board took its stand at a Dec. 8-9 meeting in New York City. NOW has decided that Carter's failure to push for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) coupled with his "implicit approval" of federal legislation severely restricting access to abortions, has made him an unacceptable candidate under any circumstances.

Some NOW members, like Betty Friedan, have expressed the fear that opposition to Carter will lead to the election of an even more reactionary, antifemale Republican candidate like John Connally or Ronald Reagan. Guardian

Solidarity in the struggle against sexual harassment. Strikes at Shelton, Washington.

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West German women defend their abortion rights

FRANKFURT (LNS) -- The increasing anti-abortion campaign of the churches is making it more and more difficult for women in West Germany to obtain legal abortions. Recognition of this threat was the main result of a recent women's Congress held here and attended by over 100 women from women's centers in 30 German cities.

There's nothing new in the fact that not only churches but also doctors set themselves up as protectors of "morality" and refuse to help women. But the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain an abortion even in a large city like Berlin is regarded as an alarming development.

For example, hospitals have been refusing to recognize "Indikationen" -- a document written by a woman's doctor indicating that for health or social reasons an abortion is necessary.

Things are even worse in the conservative south of Germany. The only abortion clinic in Munich which accepts Indikationen will do so only if they are written by the municipal health clinic.

In West Germany as a whole, Indikationen for social reasons (such as poverty or interruption of school or work) are written only rarely. Even when they are written, women often cannot find either free beds in hospitals or doctors to perform the abortions.

In response to this situation, the women attending the Congress in early November formulated a demand for at least one doctor willing to perform abortions at every municipal health clinic. At the same time, the women emphasized that they stand by the right of a woman to control her own body.

To lend weight to these demands, a demonstration of about 3,500 men, women, and children took place in Mainz recently. The demonstration was organized to counter a rally at which Catholic Cardinal Hermann Volk presented himself as a "guardian of the weak." At the rally, Catholics in Sunday clothes scolded the pro-abortion demonstrators, calling the women "whores."

The Women's Congress also decided to hold a tribunal in February, where the experiences of women with doctors, hospitals, health insurance, the pharmaceutical industry, churches and politicians will be made public.

Mormon woman excommunicated for supporting ERA

Sonia Johnson, a fifth generation Mormon, was excommunicated from her church Dec. 5 because of her outspoken advocacy of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).

Johnson greeted the verdict with tears and determination. "I refuse to stop talking about the ERA," she told reporters outside her Sterling, Va., home. She said she would appeal the decision to a higher court in the Mormon church, known officially as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

Bishop Jeffrey H. Willis, the Mormon lay leader who acted as both accuser and judge during the 3-hour Saturday night trial, refused to allow any mention of Johnson's ERA activities during the proceeding. He claimed that Johnson's position on the proposed amendement was "not an issue before us."

Willis, who by day works as a personnel officer at the CIA, instead excommunicated Johnson for undermining the beliefs of the church and its leaders. "You...have publicly stated that our society, specifically including church leaders, has a 'savage misogyny,'" Willis stated in denying the 43-year-old mother of four a place with her family in the celestial everafter. On earth, excommunication means Johnson is barred from participating in church services though she may still attend them.

But over 200 supporters who came from as far away as Pittsburg to rally outside the Oakton church during the trial, agreed with Richard Johnson, Sonia's husband.

"It was clearly the ERA matter all the way through," he stated.

Among the men, women and children who waited in the cold while Johnson was tried in a court which Mormons reserve for women and boys under 18, were Rep. Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.) and Rev. William Callahan, a Jesuit recently disciplined by the Roman Catholic Church for supporting the ordination of women.

Johnson is leader and founder of a loosely organized East Coast body of 500 called Mormons for the ERA. The group claims major responsibility for exposing the Mormon church's political activities against the ERA. "Almost the whole strength of the church is turned against the ERA," Johnson says of the 4.5 million member tax-exempt organization. "What they're doing is very underground," she continued. "They are politically powerful."

The all-male leadership of the Mormon church has opposed the ERA since 1973 because, they say, the proposed amendment threatens the family.

By Nancy Hoch

Marathon women: we're getting better, faster

When Norwegian school teacher Grete Waitz set a women's marathon running record last week in New York for the second straight year, she also helped erode one more myth about male physical superiority.

For years, sports trainers have insisted that women can never compete directly with men because of physical differences which make women weaker and slower. In marathon running particularly, it was thought that no woman -- and few men -- could ever run the 26-mile course in under 2½ hours.

But Waitz crossed the finish line in 2 hours 27 minutes, only 16 minutes behind 4-time winner Bill Rodgers. Twenty-seven other women finished the race in under three hours in a field of 11,532 runners including 1800 women.

In 1970, no women managed to finish the New York marathon, and the woman's world record time was 3 hours 2 minutes.

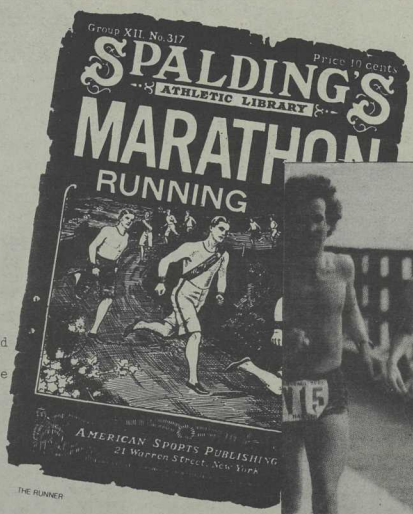
Since then it has become clear that if women are encouraged to be athletic in childhood, train seriously and are allowed to compete, their performance will improve. Waitz, an Olympics 1500 meter runner, only took up marathon running in 1977 and she set her first world record a year later.

Hanna Lessinger — Guardian

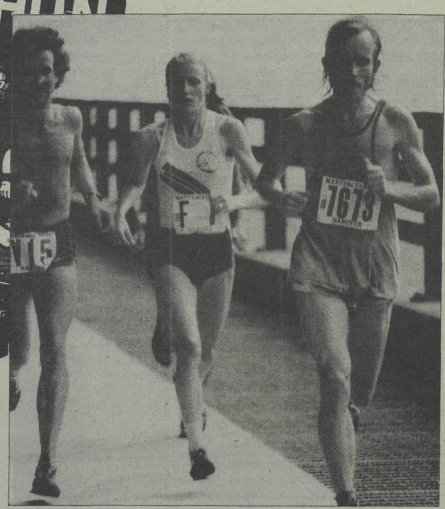
Turkeys in Turkey ban women's group

Turkey's strongest women's organization, the Progressive Women's Organization, has been banned by a government "pledged to defend democratic rights." The Progressive Women's Organization had a membership of 15,000, mostly working women. It was an activist organization, not specifically feminist but concerned with women's immediate problems -- health care, maternity conditions and literacy. It also participated in the trade union movement, trying to raise women's consciousness of their position as women in the working class. Martial Law authorities closed its general headquarters in Istanbul and its branches all over the country. The PWO is banned as an organization though some activities continue and no doubt it will open again under another name.

BMR



THE RUNNER



Marathon running is no longer an all-male club. Here's Grete Waitz looking strong with ten miles to go

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In New Zealand, so many of the issues are the same

By Gillian Marie

Home for Christmas. For me, that means flying to New Zealand.

The Christmas break is a big thing in N.Z. Factories, businesses, government offices all close for two weeks. So it's not easy to make contacts. Everyone is at the beach.

But I was lucky. I did have some names and addresses of women to contact. After three tries, I finally reached Sharon, in Auckland. She invited me to come down with three of her friends to the gay pub in town, and then later to a women's club. From then on, it was an up trip. From these initial contacts, I met women involved in a variety of ways with the women's movement.

When I left New Zealand in 1968, there were no active feminists visible. On one trip back, six years ago, I met women who were in the process of trying to open a centre. Now the centre has just opened in that small, conservative town.

From the talks I had with N.Z. women, I realized how similar so many of our problems are. In N.Z. abortion is next to impossible to obtain, unless you live in Auckland and have access to the Auckland Medical Aid Centre.

This centre was closed down for some months, but despite the very severe restrictions on abortion laid down in the Contraception, Sterilization and Abortion Act (1977), the centre is now able to operate to 90% of its former capacity - for abortions up to 12 weeks.

After that time limit, women are referred to S.O.S. (Sisters Overseas Service), a feminist organization that arranges for women to have abortions in Sydney, Australia. If necessary, S.O.S. will finance the abortion, with donations from concerned women. A nice touch is that a travel agency owned and run by women arranges the Auckland flights to Sydney, and their flight discount is returned to S.O.S. However, for women living outside Auckland, the situation is grim.

Sue, who works as a collective member at the Auckland Women's Health Centre, took a morning off to fill me in on what goes on in the house. At 63 Ponsonby Road, it's the most visible portion of the Auckland movement.

A women's group, the Council for the Single Mother and her Child, has credibility with Auckland City Council, and was able to lease a house from the city at low rental.

Several women's groups have offices in the house, and they all share common space.

I was impressed with this small but functional example of a women's building. S.O.S. and the rape crisis centre work out of the house,the latter on a small grant from the Mental Health Foundation. It is run by volunteers, and has a crisis line and answering service from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The Women's Health Centre operates out of the house, too. It consists of a general meeting and waiting room; a room which is used by a massage therapist one day a week, and also by an iridologist and two naturapaths. A nurse teaches first aid; course are held on assertiveness training, and plans are in the works for a group on grief and loss. Aside from the sharing workshops, two doctors work out of the clinic and provide contraceptives and general health care for women.

Both the health centre and rape crisis centre got their start from labour department programmes for unemployed women and students (sound familiar?). Woman power is via grants or volunteers.

The Auckland Women's Health Centre is one of three women's health centres in N.Z. Two other large cities - Christchurch and Wellington - have centres with different orientations.

The Christchurch one is less medically oriented. It is more educative and psychological in orientation, with emphasis on women learning skills and taking them back to their communities.

The centre in Wellington offers mental health counselling, therapy and workshops. Its emphasis is on mental health.

All groups survive on small grants, and volunteers. The Wellington centre raised money by compiling a calendar.

Sue explained how other groups functioned in the Auckland house. The Council for the Single Mother and her Child provides legal information on paternity, maintenance, social welfare policy and benefits, court procedure and custody. These women do a lot of public speaking, and for many women in Auckland, this council is their first contact with feminism.

The Lesbian Network meets in the house one night a week, and provides much-needed support for women coming out. It is the only meeting place for lesbians outside of the women's club (which is full of smoke, has loud disco music and is not conducive to sharing conversations - sound familiar?) .

How is conflict resolved?

With such a variety of women's groups sharing space, I asked, how is conflict resolved? No regular house meetings are set up. Instead, meetings are called if and when the need for them arises. Each group has regular meetings in their collective, which are open to any woman who is interested. The shared space consists of a kitchen, a meeting place, and a playroom for children (filled with toys). Essentially, each group is autonomous, but shares with the rent payments.

I was very impressed with the spirit of cooperation, the warmth I felt in each office space, the women's art on the walls.

I went away feeling that despite the tensions that do exist in the women's movement down in N.Z., here was a very positive attempt to heal old wounds and build a place to work together.

So many of the issues are the same.

There are eleven refugee houses in N.Z., and the work of feminist groups has led to a greater awareness of wife-battering as an issue. It is well publicised. Work is being done at present on the incidence of incest - all indications are that it is very high.

My family, who live in a rural area, discussed both wife-beating and incest with a feminist consciousness.

Poor women are a convenient scapegoat, particularly single women on the Domestic Purposes Benefit (equivalent of welfare). Despite the fact that their benefits have been cut back, and that there is now a waiting period before a woman can get welfare if she leaves her husband, these women are accused of *bleeding the system*.

Feminists are working on all levels in N.Z. They are active in the Public Services Association, one of the largest unions in N.Z. The Working Women's Council is actively campaigning among trade unions for acceptance of their working women's charter, a charter that sets out the basic rights and support for all women workers in the home and in the labour force.

A large bi-annual conference is held for all women in the country. Last year, over 2000 women attended.

An active feminist magazine, Broadsheet, is published monthly, and distributed throughout N.Z.

The YWCA is working actively with women who live in the depths of suburbia, where they are isolated from friends, and where the bus service is non-existent. (Two car families are a rarity in New Zealand).

The warmth that I was shown while I shared women's houses and spoke about common struggles I will always remember.

It isn't easy being a feminist in "God's Own Country" of the south. And harder to be openly lesbian. But there is a women's community there, excellent women's art and exciting women's music. And lots of work to be done - between the companiable cups of tea, which have always been an essential part of sisterhood in N.Z. ■

Broadsheet, New Zealand's excellent feminist monthly magazine

National Council of Welfare issues new report

Poverty is certainly not in the best interests of the child

By Cole Dudley

The National Council of Welfare has just released its report on Canada's child welfare system, *In the Best Interests of the Child*.

We all know what the best interests of children are. Or do we? While riding home on the bus with a copy of the report on my lap, a fellow-passenger leaned over and, after informing me that he had raised four kids, told me that the best interest of children was money. I disagreed, and told him that it was love and understanding.

Now, after reading the report, I find myself agreeing with the gentleman. It's extremely difficult to administer the right amount of love to a child when you are sick or poor and worried about where the next paycheck is coming from.

The report stated that some 80,000 children live in care and most of these come from poor families.

All families encounter problems at one time or another, but added to the existing burden of inadequate housing and uncertain income, the child-rearing capacity of poor families becomes strained.

Summer camps and housekeepers are often-used resources which relieve the burden of child-rearing for the more affluent. Moreover, the family with a higher income can use preventative measures such as marriage counsellors and child psychiatrists or even winter holidays and boarding schools, to help ease tension. But the low-income family has only the child welfare system to turn to, a system whose only supportive aid is to put the children in foster homes.

This "solution" ignores the all too prevalent problems of over-crowding, job loss and isolation of single parents. The report states that the removal of the child leaves the parents feeling powerless and the kids feeling that they have no say over their lives.

Non-poor families have a wider range of resources to turn to, the report says. When a problem emerges, they can get something done before it worsens into a crisis. When low-income families get around to looking for assistance, the problem is usually so advanced that the only avenue open is the public children's services system -- a system which tends to add more problems rather than helping.

The report goes on to say how our enlightened society stands in judgement on parents who are unable to care for their children. Whether the child stays or goes back to her/his parents, the implication is the same -- the parents have *failed* to perform their roles adequately. The term used by the state, *unable or unwilling to provide care* is an administrative label that lumps together a variety of problems, some of which can't be blamed on their victims.

Family court is a trying experience

Family court is a trying experience for both parents and children. The language and procedures are hard to understand and quite overwhelming for most people. One single parent, who was hospitalized for nervous tension, likened her experience with the child welfare system to an encounter with the police:

The welfare would not help me so I had to put my children into foster care for three months. The workers came and apprehended (which means arrest) my children.

In any Family Court situation, the parents and children deal with a higher authority which decides what "the best interest of the child" is to be. This framework breeds resentment, bitterness and frustration, and rarely lends any true reconciliatory aid to the situation.

The NCW reports that many times parents lose all rights to their children and, whether removal is voluntary or enforced, most parents undergo a painful and traumatic sense of loss. These feelings are described by one mother who relinquished her child for adoption:

I put my son in foster care because I love him. I gave him up for adoption because I love him. Though I gave him up by resorting to reason and logic, I suffer the pain and anguish to the bottom of my guts. Sometime that pain is almost unbearable, for my arms ache to hold and love him.

The system is supposed to exist for the re-unification of families, but seldom achieves that goal. There are no resources available for parents to help them deal with the separation. Nor are the problems that caused the breakdown of the family in the first place, acknowledged or addressed.

The children, too, suffer from this system. They feel homesick, abandoned, unwanted or rejected. One foster child interviewed in the report described her feelings:

Colette French

The only reason that I can think of for my mother not to want me is if there is something terribly wrong with me....or with her. Either way I've had it.

There are happy exceptions where the child ends up well-adjusted and secure in her/his new situation. A lot of children, though, are labelled a "behavioral problem". When a child is moved repeatedly, she/he faces a higher risk of beginning adult life at a disadvantage. A child who is in care for an extended period runs the risk of a lowered educational performance and, through problems with friends, teachers and workers, soon learns how to keep her/his feelings in check -- a trait which irritates the situation further. Besides coping with all this, Indian foster children face the additional problem of adapting to different lifestyle and child-rearing practices.

The underlying cause of the current crisis in the child welfare system is that the system is overloaded. Child care workers are struggling with impossible caseloads and cannot administer adequate time and attention to their clients. There has been an alarming increase in the number of troubled adolescents coming into care and a shortage of foster homes at a time when they are in greater demand.

The financial constraint of the government does nothing to help, either. The children's social services budget does not keep pace with the rising costs of help for families in distress.

The load grows heavier, the help grows scarcer, and the vicious circle continues. What do we do about it?

The social services system has been held up to close scrutiny recently and all governments in Canada agree that reforms should be enacted.

The NCW report suggests that services should be made more family-oriented, helping families to cope with their problems or to keep them at a bearable level. This is a more humane solution than the costly substitute care program.

There is a great need to reorganize the child welfare system so as to cut down on the unnecessary duplication and complexity that exists within the system. The needs of the child and the family must be considered on an individual basis. More time and money devoted to preventative and supplementary services.

The rights of the family *must* be recognized. This means ensuring legal counsel for the child, the parents and even the foster parents. Stricter and more detailed guidelines and regulations are needed to determine when a child should be removed from the family and what subsequent action is to be taken.

Ontario is experimenting with local children's services committees which give the general public a say in the design and operation of children's services in their community.

Quebec has implemented a Youth Protection Committee, to arbitrate when disagreements occur in how a child's care is being handled. It also exists to promote development of more preventative measures.

In addition to legislative and organizational reforms, most provinces have enacted measures to make people aware of child abuse and their responsibility to report it.

Poverty is the overall crisis

All this is not enough, though. These changes may improve the quality and range of care, but they don't cure the problem. Poverty is the overall crisis. The children who end up in the child welfare system, should not be there at all.

Until income security programs (that replace lost earnings and supplement inadequate incomes) are instituted, we will continue to maintain a high level of family problems in poverty-line families. The system will not be effective until it stops being a system serving only children from low-income families and becomes, instead, a supportive system for all Canadian families.

So says the National Council of Welfare in Canada. The report covers the ground in depth and with understanding. The reforms suggested in it are important and very, very necessary. But will they be acted upon? Will the governments listen? It's up to us now to make sure the policy-makers hear us. We have to insist upon these changes that affect all of us.

For a copy of the report, write to:

National Council of Welfare
Brooke Claxton Building
Ottawa, K1A 0K9 ●

How to demand your rights as a human, and survive

By Ann C. Schaefer

"The Human Rights Code is based on the principle that all persons are free and equal in dignity and rights. Under the legislation, every person has the right to equal opportunity and equal access to employment, tenancy and public services, regardless of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, sex or marital status. It is the role of the Human Rights Branch to administer the Code." (Ministry of Labour, 1977 Annual Report)

If you aren't too put off by the continuing saga of Susan Jorgensen, the following information may some day be useful to you. Val Embree, a Human Rights Officer, outlines the major steps in filing a complaint with the Branch, and points to some of the potential pitfalls along the way.

You can get a copy of the Code from the HRB by calling or visiting their office at 4946 Canada Way, Burnaby, 291-7236. The gist of the code is contained in the above quote, but in the areas of public services and employment, its coverage is more far-reaching. A prominent example is Kathleen Ruff's statement last year that the Branch would be prepared to defend a homosexual teacher threatened with losing her/his job. In actual case, the Branch saw to it that a restaurant could no longer discriminate against people the manager considered "hippies". Besides discrimination involving sexual orientation and cultural orientation, the HRB might also take on cases in which people feel they've been discriminated against in public services and employment (but not tenancy) because of physical disability, a criminal charge unrelated to the job, weight, or another group not specifically named by the legislation.

"The most important thing to remember," Embree says, "is that the Branch can't help unless your complaint is related to some group or class you belong to. It can't be an individual matter. If your boss, say, decides he doesn't like you, that's your right -- to be treated as an individual."

Most are about job discrimination

Most complaints deal with job discrimination (about 70%). About 18% are concerned with public services and 9% with tenancy.

You can make a complaint for yourself, perhaps for yourself on behalf of all the other women employees working in a company (what Embree terms a "modified class action"), or a large group of the women involved can file a complaint together. One of the most successful sex discrimination cases the Branch ever handled involved a class action by 373 practical nurses in the province who charged they received less pay than orderlies. Embree recommends this mass tactic because of the mutual support it affords, but also because you're unlikely to receive retroactive pay unless you're one of the complainants. You're more likely just to receive the new pay rate if the case is successful.

There are also two other categories of complaint -- the Director's complaint (in which the injured person may remain anonymous) and the third party complaint. Both present investigative difficulties unless there is co-operation from at least one of the people directly affected.

In any event, if you find yourself in a situation which you feel may be discriminatory, start taking notes. Embree recommends that you record dates, information, names, what was said, etc., as accurately as you can. Try to keep track of every detail that may be of assistance. Remember the investigation may be dragged out for several years (as in Jorgensen's case) and any hard information you have will lend more credibility to your case. Once you have laid a complaint, she says, it's important not to be antagonistic towards your employer for then you could be fired with just cause; but do continue to keep a record of relevant comments. Also, it's just as important to keep track of positive feedback you receive for your work, to have at hand if you are fired, or to use as evidence later on.

Embree also recommends that a woman seek out feedback and counselling on the work she's doing, especially if she's the first woman hired to do a particular job. Be discreet about it, but, again, keep track of it. It will raise your credibility as an employee who wants to do well.

Filing a complaint

Your first contact at the HRB will be with an Intake Officer who assesses your initial information to determine whether it's something the Branch can deal with. If it's a case of unfair dismissal, related only to you as an individual, they may refer you to the Labour Standards Branch. If you are in a union, you may be encouraged to use its grievance procedure first and return if that doesn't pan out. You will be asked for clear information indicating discrimination was involved in your suffering injury. "We must have some kind of hook or lead," Embree states, "such as witnesses, what did he say, what suggests he didn't give you an opportunity because of a class."

You will be asked for clear information indicating discrimination was involved

In the case of sex harassment, you must have already informed the suitable supervisor and given him a chance to tell the harasser his behaviour is unacceptable. "If they laugh at you or threaten you, then come to us," says Embree.

You may be asked to go get more information or documentation, or the Branch may test themselves. This may involve calling a landlord and asking him for housing for a single person (if someone claims he discriminates against single people). Embree says this gives the employer or landlord a bona fide opportunity to demonstrate he doesn't discriminate -- and it often becomes apparent that he doesn't.

But if the Intake Officer decides discrimination may have occurred, she will ask you if you want to lay a complaint. If you do, Embree says, you should be prepared for the consequences. Be prepared to keep in touch with an officer and give her/him information, for as long as is necessary; be willing to answer the investigating officer's questions; and consider that the respondent will know your name and know that you have complained. Weigh whether you can risk that. While the Code provides for protection of complainants, hassling can be quite subtle. In making this decision, you may want to seek out support from other people in the same situation. Their support can be invaluable to your survival.

The care and feeding of your officer

Once you've decided to go ahead with your complaint, you must sign a formal complaint form. A copy of it is forwarded to Victoria requesting the appointment of an investigating officer to your case. You will receive a letter indicating the name of your officer. An important point is that the Human Rights Officer is not an advocate, but rather an impartial investigator at first and then, later on, a negotiator for a settlement, rather like a mediator. "We've been given this information, we tell the respondent, and now tell us your side," Embree explains. "We collect all the evidence we can and weigh the situation."

There may be delays in investigation of your case. Embree urges complainants to show their interest and enthusiasm by keeping in touch with their officer, but not to overdo it. The urgency of your situation may be a factor in the officer's decision to delay or speed up work on your case.

Consider what sort of settlement you feel would be suitable. It must be appropriate to the damage done -- such as getting your job back, being paid lost wages (be able to produce evidence you've looked for another job), a cheque for moving costs and the difference between your old and new rents (save your receipts). It could be damages for injury and humiliation, a letter of apology, a policy statement by the company circulated to all employees, a public apology (in the case of public humiliation). Or it can be a more innovative recompense, limited only by your imagination and appropriateness to the situation. (A donation to your local women's newspaper perhaps?) In one sex harassment case, Embree says, the employer was ordered to place enough money into a trust account for all 20 young women involved to enrol in an assertiveness training course at a community college. The officer proposes the settlement to the respondent, and the resolution is often a compromise.

Getting through the public hearing

If the employer is intransigent and no settlement can be reached, there is the possibility of a Board of Inquiry being appointed by the Labour Minister. (It's at his discretion.) Again, the complainant must judge whether she is willing to go through with it. Up to this stage, the complaint has been confidential (although either the complainant or the respondent can go to the media at any time if they feel publicity would help their case). But once a Board of Inquiry is appointed, the matter becomes public, media coverage is likely, so again the complainant has to decide if it's worth it. Another point should be made here: The complainant can withdraw the complaint at any time during the investigation, if the going gets too rough.

If the injured party decides to go through with a Board of Inquiry, she will be expected to assist in briefing the lawyer (who is provided by the HRB at no cost), will probably testify herself, and will experience all the satisfactions and humiliations of public cross-examination.

There's the possibility you might get nothing out of the Board. They might tell you there's no merit to your case, "or award you a tiny settlement that's more of an insult than a victory," says Embree. Human rights settlements are notoriously small (in terms of money, at least) and there have even been cases in which the Board grants a small settlement because it has taken heed of past settlements.

A decision should be reached by the Board about six weeks after the hearing is finished. Then either side can appeal, but only on a question of fact or of law, e.g., if the Board stepped beyond its jurisdiction, overlooked a fact, or misinterpreted or misapplied the law. Levels of appeal are as follows -- the B.C. Supreme Court, the B.C. Court of Appeal, and the Supreme Court of Canada. The GATE case against the Vancouver Sun went through all these levels. With the permission of the Minister, the Branch still carries the cost of appeal. ●

MOVEMENT REPORTS

BCFW produces four working groups

The BCFW Standing Committee had its first meeting since convention Jan. 12-13 in Vancouver. All member groups will be receiving minutes shortly. This meeting was exhausting but productive - in fact, so productive it produced four working groups. Listed below are the groups, the areas of work and contact persons. We encourage all interested and experienced women to get involved. Women outside the Lower Mainland are encouraged to participate by mail.

Convention Planning: The 1980 convention will be held in Vancouver. Our prime concern right now is the actual physical space. Suggestions are most welcome. Contact Miriam Azrael, 2236 St. George St., Vancouver (876-8283).

Incorporation as a Society?? Yes or No! If people have forgotten what this is about, the convention in Victoria asked the Standing Committee to investigate the Societies Act with respect to BCFW. If you have experience or want to have input, contact Prabha Khosla, 3243 Findlay St, Vancouver (876-1157) OR Ruth Busch, 3817 W. 11th Ave, Vancouver (224-3166).

Government Funding: This group will be addressing funding in the rural areas. We too would like input. Contact Bet Bateman, RR#1, Winlaw BC (226-7603 or w-352-9916) OR Teresa Conrow, #223-10th Ave S, Cranbrook BC (426-2912).

IWD 1980 Provincial Art Poster: BCFW is sponsoring an International Women's Day 1980 Art Poster 'Contest', and are looking for submissions from across the province. Posters should be 17"x11", not more than 3 colours, B&W is okay too, and the deadline is Feb. 10. It is to be an Art Poster commemmorating IWD 1980. Posters and inquiries to: Penny Arrand, #10-1707 E. 4th Ave, Vancouver (251-3241 or w-299-7567).

IWD focus is Control Over Our Bodies

In the midst of the January blues, there is spring fever in the women's movement!

The second and third planning meetings have formulated a theme and program for March 8, International Women's Day.

The theme is Control Over Our Bodies, Ourselves, with explicit focus on the international connection among all women. One slogan suggested is "Our bodies, ourselves, our world", though none has yet been adopted.

The intent is to encourage groups and individuals to tie their particular concerns in to the theme and relate it to the struggle of women the world over. The availability of abortion is currently at extreme risk in B.C., so there will likely be particular focus on this issue.

Program of Events

Saturday, March 1: (day) Decentralized outreach/information day; (evening) Open benefit for fundraising & promo.

Saturday, March 8: (day) IWD March; (evening) All-women's celebration.

The purpose of the decentralized information day is twofold: to extend our support and resources to women outside central Vancouver and outside established, active groups; and to establish more active liaison between women's centres in Vancouver and its surrounding communities, and the women's groups dealing with specific issues.

IWD planning meetings will continued to be held every Tuesday at 7:30, at 45 Kingsway.

Clasina van Bemmel

You can get outdoors with other women

The OUTDOOR CLUB FOR WOMEN is organized and run by volunteers - it's a place to meet people and learn new skills, and a special way to keep fit and share the excitement of outdoor activities. There is no age limit.

The Outdoor Club meets every 2nd Tuesday at the downtown YWCA, at 7:30pm in the boardroom.

Monthly meetings include: program planning, learning new skills, exploring new areas, and films and discussion.

Bi-monthly activities include, for example, hiking, backpacking & outdoor camping, sailing, cave exploration, cross country ski touring, basic rock climbing, and more. Extra costs are sometimes involved for special outtrips. Car pools are used whenever possible.

The membership fee for the Outdoor Club is $45 per year (plus general YWCA fee) and covers: instruction, equipment use, special transportation rates, discounts on outdoor equipment, and a newsletter.

For further information, contact Clasina Van Bemmel, 683-2531 (local 249) downtown YWCA, 580 Burrard, Vancouver.

February media night focussing on women and violence

January's videotape showing on Marge Piercy and Judy Chicago was well attended. If you missed it, see the tapes at the Video Inn Library, open Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, 11am-5pm.

February's Women's Media Night, on Wednesday, Feb. 23 at 8:30pm, will be devoted to the topic of violence against women. Featured is "A Crime Against Women", a video documentary by Martha Gever, of the events follow-the arrest of 4 New York women involved in public protest against a "snuff" film. The tape documents the feminist challenge of traditional female passivity on the streets and in the courts, and stimulates some thought-provoking questions about strategy.

Also showing will be excerpts from a talk by Gene Errington, former provincial co-ordinator on the status of women, and organizer at the Women's Research Centre, whose special area of interest is violence against women.

In March, Women's Media Night will present a retrospective on the women's movement in Vancouver and B.C., including herstorical footage and anecdotes from those who were there. If you have any material - video, slides, anecdotes, photographs, that would contribute to this presentation, contact us (Shawn, Claudia or Pat, 688-4336) or drop by to the Video Inn, 261 Powell St. This event will be on Wednesday, Mar. 19, at 8:30pm.

Video Guide

Covering news and reviews, issues and information on alternate video and media, Video Guide's next issue will focus on feminism and will include local, national and global contributions from women involved in media work.

If you have something to say on any media related topic - feminism and art, reviews, photos, hardware, etc. or just an announcement, now is the time to put pen to paper and send it in. Deadline for copy is March 1.

Lesbian feminist mothers need your support

The Lesbian and Feminist Mothers Political Action Group is a new, very crucial group consisting of a few dedicated women and surviving on energy alone.

We need money to continue. We pay for baby-sitters to go to our own meetings. Donations will be used to start fundraising activities (t-shirts, bumper stickers) and to advertise for our sister group, Lesbian Mothers Drop-In, to pay for childcare, and to finance children's workshops.

Some of our goals:

-- to increase awareness of the needs of feminist and lesbian feminist mothers

- to increase awareness of the value of these women's children in this community
- to develop further the system of ex change we've begun between these children and women without children who want children in their lives

- to provide a support for children who are being raised in an alternative structure as well as for their mothers
- to provide creative, constructive, productive workshops and childcare for these children (ie. self-defense, children's rights, etc.)

Contact: 327 5780

ON CAMPUS

Violence Against Women is the theme for UBC women's week

By Mary Winder

The UBC Women's Centre Committee is again organizing a week of activities at UBC aimed toward exposing the university community to feminist issues and theory. This year, the theme which was chosen for Women's Week is Violence Against Women. We have invited a speaker from AUCE to talk about sexual harassment on the job, WAVAW to give their pornography workshop, a Transition House speaker to talk about family violence, Rape Relief to show their film and to give a talk, and Kate Millett to talk about violence against women and about her latest book, *Basement*. All events are open to the community at large, and tickets for Kate's speech will be available at the women's bookstores for $3.00 each.

The UBC Women's Committee is a standing committee of the student organization of UBC, the Alma Mater Society. As such, we receive a budget and office space, and are subject to the bureaucratic regulations and conservative politics of that organization. We are a new group, each September, consisting of whatever women show up and express an interest in working on feminist issues in this context. Our politics and experience are varied, and for many of us the Women's Centre is our first exposure to feminist activity. The committee's purpose is to maintain a lending library and drop-in centre, to bring speakers, workshops, and musicians to UBC, and to advocate for women students concerns to the AMS and the university administration. UBC also finances two other women's service groups: The Women Students' Office, which is an admistrative counselling and advocacy service, and the Women's Resource Centre on Robson Street, which is part of the Continuing Education Department. We are the only student group, and the only one of the three which is an active member of B.C.F.W.

Questions have been raised in the Vancouver women's community concerning our invitation to Kate Millett to speak during Women's Week. We did indeed invite her in an attempt to reach university students who otherwise ignore our functions and ridicule our existence. I'm not sure how successful we will be in this: I asked each of the women in my physiology class last week if they had heard of Kate

I asked the women in my class if they'd heard of Kate Millett. None of them had.

Millett, and none of them had. In any case, we recognize that the issues which have been raised are important ones: how do we begin to eliminate the discrepancies that exist between well-known American feminists and Canadian women who may have as much to say, but receive less media coverage and usually less money for doing so.

In an attempt to counteract some of the elitism inherent in Kate Millett's speech during Women's Week, there will be a public reception on Friday night, February 15, following the speech. In that context, dialogue arising out of her speech can be continued informally. The Women's Committee is also arranging an open forum for Vancouver women on Saturday afternoon, February 16, at a central location. We will ask Kate and a local feminist to moderate, and hope that any woman who is interested will attend and participate in a discussion of these and other feminist issues. It is important that Canadian and American feminists hear what each of us has to say, and that we not receive from Kate Millett only a speech, from behind an array of microphones. A letter of invitation stating the location and format of the discussion will be sent out to women's groups across the city.

For further information about events at UBC, or for reservations for childcare during Kate Millett's speech, please phone the Women's Centre, at 228-2163. The schedule of events is as follows:

February 9, 9:00 p.m. -- Dance, with music by Contagious

February 11, 12:30 p.m. Women Against Nukes - a workshop

February 11, 8:00 p.m. -- AUCE speaker on Sexual Harassment

February 12, 12:30 p.m. -- WAVAW's pornography workshop

February 13, 12:30 p.m. -- Film: "We Will Not Be Beaten", Faculty of Law, Rooms 101/102

February 13, 8:00 p.m. -- Transition House speaker on Family Violence

February 14, 12:30 p.m. -- Rape Relief film and speech

February 15, 8:00 p.m. -- Kate Millett on Violence Against Women

February 16, 2:00 p.m. -- Open Forum on Feminist Issues, Britannia Centre

When half of us are denied a voice, academic freedom founders

"When the validity of the experience of half the population is being denied, when women are being told, explicitly and implicitly, that their unique perspective, as women, is not a suitable subject to introduce into their academic work, then it is not only these women who suffer, it is the whole spirit of academic freedom which suffers."

Wendy Frost, a member of the SFU Ad Hoc Committee of Women Against Violence Against Women, is speaking. This is a public forum, called to discuss the use of sexist material and the suppression of feminist views within the university community. Over 100 people have shown up.

Frost explains why the committee has been set up. An English professor on campus is teaching a course entitled The Erotic Idiom. As a theoretical text, the professor is using a book by one George Frankl, called The Failure of the Sexual Revolution.

The book, Frost points out, "presents a male-defined view of sexuality, one which is both biologically inaccurate and psychologically demeaning. This book is telling us, as women, that our own knowledge about our sexuality is invalid , that we do not know what we feel and must be told by self-styled male experts both what we feel and what we ought not to feel." It is, as she says, "a sadly familiar story."

There are by now many theoretical works which discuss female sexuality from a feminist perspective, and which would be completely appropriate to study in a course about human sexuality, Frost points out.

The fact that such a text has not been included in The Erotic Idiom course is simply indicative of a deeper problem.

That is the all-pervasive assumption human experience and male experience are one and the same thing.

They're not.

What, asks Frost, can we do about it?

"So much of the exclusion of women happens not maliciously, but unconsciously," she points out. "Simply making the university community aware that such exclusions occurs is a first step towards dispelling the silence. But much more remains to be done. We must work for the inclusion of course material written by women, about women, material which explores genuine alternatives to the current discourse."

The committee has been accused of attacking the academic freedom of professors,

It is no longer acceptable for professors to offer racist or anti-semitic course material

their right to structure a course as they set fit. "There are two answers to that," commented Frost. "The first is that academic freedom must be qualified by experience. It is not longer common - or acceptable - for professors to choose to offer as course content material which is racist or anti-semitic...much of what is written about women is defamatory in a similar fashion...

"The second point is that academic freedom is a right of students as well as of faculty..."

Following this introduction, Ann Bemrose of Vancouver Rape Relief discussed methods of dealing with sexual harassment in the ivory tower.

Linda Grant read excerpts from a paper discussing the difficulties inherent in the use of feminist criticism.

After several responses from the floor focussing on The Erotic Idiom course, Pat Maika succeeded in returning the discussion to the larger issues of academic freedom.

"The things which I know about myself and about other women *no* man *can* know unless I choose to tell him; unless he asks me, listens to me or reads what I write. I can read literature in a way that no man can re i literature ... because I am different from him both as an individual and as a female. But I am equally valuable, and so are my insights and my knowledge...

"Men have long attempted to run my life. I refuse absolutely to allow them to take over my mind; either to force me to adopt their critical stance at the expense of my own, or to exclude me."

The ad hoc committee is planning to hold more discussions in the future on such topics as feminist literary criticism and the female erotic idiom.

Pat Maika info

Stop the Lady Godiva obscenity

Engineering students at the University of British Columbia will organize another "Lady Godiva Ride." During Engineers' Week, March 3 - 18, they will parade a woman, naked and riding a horse, across campus. The original Lady Godiva rode naked through the streets to protest social injustice. Protest the ride by writing to Dr.M.Wedepohl, Dean, Applied Science, University of British Columbia, Vancouver B.C. V6T 1W5

Also protest to the Professional Engineers' Association of B.C., 2210 West 12th Ave, Vancouver B.C.

LETTERS

From Women's Committee of United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union

Sex discrimination is being fought through the union

This letter is in answer to two articles covering a full page in the November issue of Kinesis, written by Ann Schae fer and published by the Vancouver Status of Women.

The articles looked at sex discrimination in the fishing industry. Although there is much accurate information given, the writer totally misses the essence of a union's struggle for equality for its women members. Instead of a positive statement that would rally other women around an important issue, the article reflects a negative anti-union bias that places the union and company in the same category. This only reinforces the establishment's philosophy of making unions appear as bad as employers. This philosophy is not in the interest of workers, whether they are men, women, or a minority but a philosophy, unfortunately, too often supported by middle class and non-working class feminists.

Specifically, the first article states that the "union" deserted Susan Jorgensen when it couldn't attain the universal 1000 hour rate thereby establishing full equal pay for women. Winning that demand would have supported her case before the Human Rights Commission on Sex Discrimination.

The article states further that "...the union has dropped a key contract demand, leaving Susan Jorgensen....to battle it out in the courts....the union is no longer demanding equal pay in contract negotiations but is focusing instead on across the board increases that would leave sex discrimination in wages and job opportunities intact...."

"Management just hasn't upgraded any of its female employees"

First, it must be understood that there is nothing in the previous or present contract that prevents management from upgrading any worker to the Group I - 1000 hour Shed rate. Management just hasn't upgraded any of its female employees although each new male employee knows when he is hired that he will move directly to the 1000 hour rate.

Secondly, the demand for the universal 1000 hour rate came from the leadership, not from the rank and file and no other demand was hung onto so tenaciously or argued so extensively. However such expensive demands are not won by slim strike votes and the demand in the industry negotiations finally had to be set aside (not dropped) for this year, to be raised in subsequent negotiations again and again until won. This is not unusual.

"Employer did not bargain in good faith; held to obnoxious demands"

When the B.C. Ice employees had been on strike for six weeks, and the employer came back to the bargaining table, their negotiating committee had to decide whether to hang tough or negotiate in an attempt to settle. They decided as had the industry negotiating committee, to set aside this demand for now. However, their employer DID NOT BARGAIN IN GOOD FAITH! They held onto their obnoxious proposals instead of dropping them as had the industry negotiators. The B.C. Ice employees negotiating committee had no alternative but to recommend rejection of the company offer to its members.

After the offer was rejected by 95% on Sept. 25th, the employees had to wait another ten weeks before the employer would agree to talk again. During these long ten weeks court orders, picket line crossings and Labour Relations Board Hearings plagued the picketers. The committee had to decide whether anyone would get any work before March 1980. Yes, there were more disappointments for the crew when they finally voted to accept the last offer that did not include elimination of sex discrimination. What were they to do, sit on the picket line indefinitely? It should be made unlawful for employers to propose conditions that contravene Human Rights Codes. Women's groups should demand it. Both men and women working for B.C. Ice were disgusted and shocked at the company's shoddy attitude and tactics in its attempt to break their union. The company didn't succeed. The crew is more united than ever. They will not forget.

The second article informs us that two Prince Rupert women are "pressing the

union to confront management about sex discrimination in rates of pay within the shoreworker section...." If the women pressed the union we are not aware of it. We received a copy of the complaint by a Member of the Legislation Assembly. The MLA was answered effectively by the union's President, Jack Nichol, who had not heard of the women as they had not been active members. Copies were sent to them. The two women certainly identified the problem that the union has known for many years. There is discrimination. Much has been done, more needs to be done and these two new recruits have started to assist tremendously in helping to educate other members now that they, too, have discovered that discrimination exists.

It must be remembered that a union inherits the conditions that exist at the time it gets certified to be the employees' bargaining agent. From that first step the union works continually to improve the wages and working conditions for its members.

In addition to the usual items that make up a contract, the UFAWU has made outstanding gains for its women members. In 1973, through the leadership of the union and the decisive strength and unity of the men and women members, a large measure of equality was advanced in the shore plants.

Equal pay was, in fact, established in the cannery section where the base rate for men and women was equalized and classified job rates were adjusted to reflect the equalization. The fresh fish and cold storage section grew along different lines. There were very few classified jobs. Instead, employees worked towards getting "qualified". They did this in three stages -- beginners, semi-qualified, and qualified with an increase in pay at each level. Before 1973, one wage supplement was negotiated to cover both men and women and do away with sex discrimination. Two labour groups were established. Group 1 was designated as work of a heavier nature. Employees had to work 1000 hours to get qualified and receive the top rate. Group 2 was designated as work of a lighter nature. These employees so designated stopped at the 400 hour rate. Before

It should be unlawful for employers to propose conditions that contravene the Human Rights Code

1973, the rate between men and women was 98 cents per hour. Since then the difference has been reduced to 65 cents. Filleters were upgraded to the 1000 hour rate in the interim. Under the one supplement, management could advance any employee to the Group 1. Unfortunately, they chose not to, but, arbitrarily interpreted the groups to mean men and women. Every man hired went automatically to Group 1 and every woman stayed at Group 2.

It is important that the significance of this be fully understood because Susan Jorgensen's grievance on sex discrimination, now before the Human Rights Board of Inquiry stems from B.C. Ice not advancing her to the Group 1 category as provided for in her Agreement. Her grievance couldn't be won in direct talks with management.

Other very significant facets to remember when we fight for equal pay in the fishing industry is that half the shoreworkers are women, that they have diverse ethnic origins -- most with English as a second language. Add to this the seasonality of the fishing industry then a person should have some comprehension of the magnitude of what the U.F.A.W.U. (the men and women members) has been able to accomplish in its contracts and in particular equal pay for its women members -- which after all uplifts the whole membership.

Helen O'Shaughnessy, Chairperson, UFAWU Women's Rights Committee

Clear, tough, informative, critical...

Dear Kinesis:

The members of Studio D (at the NFB) have been enjoying the September/October issue of your paper. I just wanted to drop you a line and let you know. We started out really appreciating the article on mythology, which is one of the areas we are exploring.

Then the article about women against nuclear power caught our eyes: several of us are involved in the anti-nuclear movement and Ecofeminism. There is going to be a very interesting conference in March near Boston on "Women and Life on Earth: Ecofeminism."

Several other articles were also food for discussion, such as the Rape Crisis one.

So all-in-all, the issue really hit the spot, so we wanted to thank you, and tell you to keep up the good work. Good, clear, tough, informative and critical journalism should be encouraged.

Sincerley,

Dorothy Henaut, Studio D, National Film Board

COMMENTS THIS MONTH ranged from: "I find Kinesis a valuable insight into what's *really* going on," to: "Cancel my sub. You are just a bunch of cranky Nellies who enjoy feeling sore."

VSW auction: mixed feelings analyzed

Dear Kinesis:

In December we went to the Christmas benefit and auction given by VSW. We danced some, talked some, and sat around a lot during the auction. We separately came away from the event feeling an ambiguous mixture of dissatisfaction, anger, and depression. We later talked about our experience together and figured out why we had not enjoyed the auction. We have also talked to a few other people and have found among some of them similar feelings -- ambiguous private feelings of dissatisfaction that had been shoved away, internalized and not questioned.

First we want to make it clear that we support VSW and understand the necessity of fund-raising. This letter is to criticize the use of an auction as a fund-raising event and place it in a larger framework for discussion.

As working class women we are constantly being made aware of, and drawing people's attention to, the fact that not everyone has the same amount of money and economic opportunity to participate equally in society.

We acknowledge the economic inequality within the feminist and left movements. Our purpose in acknowledging it is to combat it. The effect of an auction does not combat the inequality but reinforces it. We don't think we can afford to ignore the weight of public recognition given to the "bidders" at such an event. No matter in what circumstances, the ability to acquire goods and spend money is a function of priviledge. Economic generosity, whether giving money to VSW or giving goods away to friends is also a function of priviledge and no matter where we see public demonstrations of this priviledge we resent it.

An auction can be seen as a game -- a fun way to soak the rich or get people to give money they would otherwise spend elsewhere. However the event is not a game to those who cannot afford to play, and although we all have an equal capacity to desire things (or desire to give) we do not have an equal opportunity to satisfy those desires. (We appreciate the gesture of having a two price entrance fee to the benefit, even those with incomes over $6,000 per year got a much better deal than those on welfare).

There are a couple of specific points about the auction we would like to include. First, though the amount of money donated was publically demonstrated, equal attention was not given to those who donated their time and energy instead. One woman, for example, who had no money to play the game with, spent 12 hours of her labour making one of the items to be auctioned. Second, an auction allows those with more money to force bids up without risk, with the intention of getting more money for VSW. In the larger society this is called inflation. At the auction it's a way to spend excess money and feel good about it.

Cannot transpose capitalist modes of fund-raising

We cannot simply transpose capitalist modes of fund-raising without question, or modification. When we do this we run the risk of transposing capitalist modes of division, and perpetuating the internalized values that go along with them (e.g. I am worthless, you are more generous than me etc. etc.)

People may argue that the money is for a worthy cause, there are no clean ways to raise money -- the ends justify the means. We disagree. It isn't a given that VSW or any other feminist organization is an end for lower-income women. It can be an end only if the economic divisions between us are made conscious and worked against. When a group uses means which serve to increase these divisions it is in fact only serving to oppress those with a background of relative scarcity.

At the same time as we are working to redistribute the wealth equally, on a large scale, we also support endeavours to shift the wealth around on a smaller scale. A few suggestions for a modified auction which would sacrifice the hype and possibly not raise as much money, but which would lessen the public display of inequality, are:

1) having sealed bids

2) have the goods displayed with people writing their bids on a sheet of paper by each item (like the NDP Priorities 'auction')

3) a suggestion courtesy of Nora Randall would be to divide the goods into categories and divide the 'bidders' into categories depending on their incomes. Those of similar incomes would get to bid together. Also the goods would be divided so that the more useful items such as tools, typewriters etc. would be matched with the lower income groups and the more luxury items offered to those who can afford them.

The possibilities stimulate the imagination as well as being essential in the process of raising consciousness and combatting oppression.

The length that we have gone to question the auction was motivated by our experience of general unawareness as to the possible oppressive side of this event and to encourage any of us who had internalized, yet again, self-destructive feelings a chance to put them 'out there' where they belong. (One of us was also motivated by the fact that the auction took up 'prime time' where we could have been dancing instead, for free.)

In solidarity

Diana Smith and Marian Vaughan

Margie Gillis does more than entertain; she engrosses

By Cole Dudley

Margie Gillis does more than entertain her audiences, she engrosses them. The Montreal-based dancer gave a solo performance at the Vancouver East Cultural Center recently. The audience was captivated throughout with her dynamic style of dancing and with the intensity of her energy.

Margie holds conversations with her audience and evokes emotional responses (through her dancing). To do this, she incorporates her whole body, including facial expressions. Here she fell short, however. On some pieces she broke out showing strength and passion, but for the most part her face maintained a vacuous, lost or naive expression; the stereotyped female. It was useful for one or two pieces, but it drew away from the strength of her dancing in other ones, and became a bit tiring to watch.

The choreography Margie produces is intriguing and well-composed. She danced seven pieces and five were her own compositions. The other two were by John Goodwin and Linda Rabin. John Goodwin composed the first piece, *Estuaries*, which was an innovative number contrasting abrupt movements with flowing ones. The other, by Linda Rabin, called *Premonitions*, was boring to start with and the message (if any) was as vague as Margie's expression. The piece picked up towards the end with some strange, ungraceful moves that were very powerful.

For two of her pieces, Margie added the use of props. In *Woman*, *La Lune*, she

skilfully manoeuvred a large piece of material and the effect was good. The sudden appearance of a life-sized doll in *Learning How to Die* -- an eerie piece -- was fascinating. From there not too much happened. There were infinite possibilities of movement with the doll, but none were explored. Margie gave us some great facial expressions from behind the doll and did some clutching and stroking of it, then finished. A bit disappointing.

One piece, called *Waltzing Matilda*, had some unusual and twisted movements that Margie was able to turn into a startling piece of dancing.

The show on the whole was tight. Margie's costume changes were quick, so the audience wasn't left waiting; just long enough to absorb the previous number before the next began. Her choice of music was appealing and varied and was produced smoothly.

Margie's performance ended with *Mercy*, a two-part piece. The beginning was again vague but the latter part was a joyous, flowing piece of choreography in which Margie made the imagery of a river very clear. She pulled and threw herself about the room as she streamed on with the music. An incredible piece to end the show with.

Margie's need to converse with her audience succeeded in many of her pieces. She danced tirelessly, speaking to everyone with her movements and expressing her feelings with her dance.

Margie Gillis is a performer to spend time with. If you missed her this time, wait for her next visit to Vancouver. You will see a performer with feeling and energy, and be completely entertained.

Film festival coming up

On April 19 and 20, 1980 there will be a Feminist Film Festival in Toronto.

It's being held at the Funnel Experimental Theatre, 507 King St. E. and is organized by a collective of women filmmakers and film enthusiasts.

Women across the country are invited to submit their films before April 1, 1980. We are interested in all types of Super-8 and 16mm films, amateur and professional, shorts, documentaries, animation, home movies, etc.

Contact: Sue Golding,
180 Delaware Ave, Toronto

BULLETIN BOARD

EVENTS

ANOTHER EVENING FOR WOMEN ONLY, Saturday February 16 at 2133 Granville (& 6th). Watch for posters with more details at Ariel & the Women's Bookstore.

ART EXHIBITIONS BY WOMEN:

DEBORAH CLAPTON & MARGARET WITZCHEN, Paintings and Sculpture, at the Artists Gallery, 355 Hamilton St, Vancouver. Feb. 18 (8:30pm opening) through Mar. 7. Gallery hours: Tues-Fri, 10-5pm.

FIONA KING, Watercolours, at the Women's Art Gallery, #6-45 Kingsway Vancouver, Feb. 1-29. Gallery hours Mon-Fri, 9-5pm, Thurs 9-8pm.

VALERIE PUGH, Ceramic Sculptures, at the Architectural Institute, 970 Richards, Vancouver. Jan. 17-Mar. 1. Gallery hours: Mon - Fri, 10-4:30pm.

WOMEN'S BUILDING BENEFITS:

Feb. 16 - Valentine Day Dance Benefit at Teamsters Hall, 490 E. Broadway from 8:30pm. Women only. Adm. $3. Tickets available at VSW, Ariel Books or Women's Bookstore.

March 9: Concert/Variety Show Benefit at Robson Sq. Media Centre Theatre at 8pm. Adm. $4 employed, $2 unemployed. Entertainers lined up at press time: Ferron, Carol Street, Brass Tacks, Marg Verral, Kay Jackson. Ask for tickets at the women's bookstores, or VSW.

ON THE AIR

THE LESBIAN SHOW'S February program:

Feb. 7 - No Theme, Theme Show, a few of the best
Feb. 14 - Lesbians Over 40
Feb. 21 - Lesbians and Therapy, reports from the Alternative Therapy conference held in January
Feb. 28 - Lesbians and Music, featuring Therese Edell

The Lesbian Show, on Co-op Radio, 102.7 FM, Thursdays from 7:30-8:00pm.

The Lesbian Show, on Co-op Radio, 102.7 FM, Thursdays from 7:30-8:00pm

WOMANVISION'S February program:

Feb. 4 - Lecture by Mary Daly, scholar radical theologian and author
Feb. 11 - Women in the Arts
Feb. 18 - Interview with Madeline Boscoe, a member of the recently formed Toronto based Health Sharing Collective
Feb. 25 - The News Show

Womanvision, on Co-op Radio, 102.7 FM Mondays from 7:00-8:00 pm

TALKING LAW
THURSDAYS 8:30-9:30 PM
CO-OP RADIO - CFRO FM
on February 14th

Northern
Women
&
Economic
Development

on your dial at: 102.7 FM
sponsored by the
Legal Services Commission

GROUPS

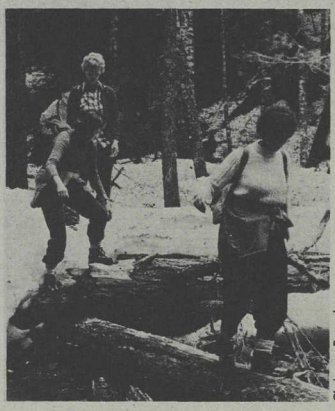
A.A. meetings Monday nights at 7pm. For information call Chris, 876-1285.

LESBIAN INFORMATION LINE is open to calls two nights a week, Thursday & Sunday, from 7-10 pm. Call 685-4519.

LESBIAN MOTHERS DROP IN meets Sundays at 2pm at the Women's Bookstore, 804 Richards, Vancouver. For info, call Laurel (525-1336) or Lynn (734-9784).

SECHELT WOMEN interested in contacting other women in the area and looking at starting a women's centre in that area, contact Gayle (885-2626) or Anne (885-5029).

Are you a SINGLE PARENT? Having hassles from welfare? A self-help group is forming. For information, call 931-8154, 7pm-6am.



Cleslina van Bemmel

COURSES

The CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM COLLECTIVE wants to train women to help teach constructive criticism. If you are interested in teaching or would like to be a facilitator for your collective, call Karen (253-5654) or Paulette (255-0523). First meeting is Feb. 24, 7:30pm at #1-1841 Charles St, Vancouver.

PEOPLE'S LAW SCHOOL offers these FREE law classes:

Feb. 14 - Wrongful Dismissal for Non-Union Employees at Britannia School, 1001 Cotton (off Commercial)
Feb. 21 - Step-Parent Adoptions, at Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood House, 535 E. Broadway
Feb. 25-27 - Medical Patients' Rights, at Britannia School, 1001 Cotton
Feb. 28 - Juvenile Court, at South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, 6470 Victoria Dr. (at 49th Ave.)

THREE WEEKEND WORKSHOPS in constructive criticism, bioenergetics, peer counselling, gestalt process, for self-help, for community, for struggle. Feb. 15-17, Isobel Kiborn and Tom Sandborn (women & men); Mar. 14-16, Sally Batt and Isobel Kiborn (women only); Apr. 11-13, Isobel Kiborn and Tom Sandborn (women and men). Fee is $50 (negotiable). To register, call Michael (876-0600) or Carol (254-4910). Child care available. All fees go to help build the Rape Relief House.

TRAINING GROUP IN RADICAL THERAPY, a six month course meeting once a week and led by Tom Sandborn - developing feminist, gay liberation and anti-capitalist perspectives on counselling therapy and personal change. Write Box 65306, Stn. F, Vancouver or call 876-0600 for more information. Fee is $50/month (negotiable) donation to Rape Relief House, an independent, anti-rape centre and refuge for women in crisis.

MEETINGS

Vancouver Rape Relief is sponsoring an IN-MOVEMENT DISCUSSION of 1) Our Strategies & Analysis and 2) Accountability, Tuesday, Feb. 19 at 7:30pm. #4-45 Kingsway, Vancouver. Childcare (call ahead: 872-8212) and refreshments provided.

IWD ORGANIZING COMMITTEE meetings are held every Tuesday evening at 7:30pm at 45 Kingsway. The theme for this year will be Our Bodies Our Selves/ Control of Our Bodies. Planning is still in the initial stages - come and get involved.

Vancouver's OUTDOOR CLUB FOR WOMEN has the following outing scheduled: Trip to Saltspring Island, Yawaca Outdoor Centre, open to members and guests, Feb. 29-Mar. 2. Cost $24/ members $26/non-member. Call the club at the Vancouver YWCA, 683-2531 local 249. Registration is limited. Catch the Outdoor Club meeting Feb. 12, 7pm in the Board Room of the Y.

WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE sub-committee meeting, March 29, 10am at 45 Kingsway. This sub-committee and all interested women will be organizing our provincial action for Mother's Day in May. Contact person is Bet Bateman, RR#1, Winlaw, B.C. VOG 2J0.

WOMEN IN TRADES meeting Sunday, Feb. 24 2-5pm at 4465 Quebec St, Vancouver. All interested women welcome.

CONFERENCES

A CONFERENCE ON REFUGEES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA is planned for the week of March 15-22 by Oxfam, Canadian Aid for Southern African Refugees, CUSO and Southern Africa Action Coalition. A photo display of women under apartheid is scheduled. $10 employed, $3 unemployed and students. Call Krenza Lai (743-1712) for more information.

MIDWIFERY IS...A LABOUR OF LOVE, a conference organized by the Maternal Health Society and CALM (Campaign Assn. for the Legalization of Midwifery), Feb. 29 & Mar. 1 at the Sheraton Landmark Hotel, 1400 Robson St, Vancouver. For details and registration, call 736-4637 or 826-6588.

The 2nd B.C. STUDIES CONFERENCE, which will include a women's studies session, will be held at SFU Oct. 30-Nov. 1/81 and proposals for conference papers are now being invited. Deadline for submission of proposals is May 15/80. Contact H. Johnston, Dept. of History at SFU.

THE FEMALE ATHLETE, a North American conference about women in sports and recreation, is being held Mar. 21-23 1980 at SFU. It is open to workers in the field, as well as all women. Topics include Strength Training for Women, Women and the Marathon, Sports Legislation Affecting Women and Feminism and Sport. Contact Continuing Studies at SFU (291-4565) for more information.

VSW

Vancouver Status of Women provides free assistance to low income women with their income tax and child tax credit. Simply call our office (736-1313) and set up a time to come in.

If you work full-time, you have a hard time making it into VSW during our office hours. For this reason, we are extending our hours. Beginning Feb. 19 we will be open every Thursday evening until 9pm. There will be a staffperson in the office, and you'll have access to our information, referral and library resources. Pass the word along.

VSW QUARTERLY MEETING, Tuesday March 18 7:30pm, at Kits Library, 8th and MacDonald, Vancouver.

BULLETIN BOARD

JUST OUT

I CHANGE WORLDS, an autobiography of journalist Anna Louise Strong, "a hero for the left and superb reporter on its heyday in Seattle." $7.95 pb + 75¢ handling from The Seal Press, 533 11th East, Seattle WA 98102.

NO LIFE FOR A WOMAN, a film about the lives of women in single industry resource towns. 26 min., NFB, produced and directed by Bonnie Kreps. Contact your local National Film Board office.

A new no-nuke publication is starting. NORTHWEST RESISTANCE will be a networking journal for dialogue on the ethics, politics and action relating to nuclear environmental crises. Send essays, poems, stories and graphics reflecting a "biospheric consciousness" to 836 W. 13th, Vancouver.

Women Against Violence Against Women has a new leaflet out on sexual harassment in the workplace. For copies or more information, contact WAVAW or Rape Relief at 45 Kingsway, Vancouver or by calling 872-2250.

THE LESBIAN PATH, 37 autobiographical sketches celebrating our diversity and strength, edited by Margaret Cruikshank. The women range in age from 18-70; most have not published work before. $6.95 from Caroline House, Box 161, Thornwood NY 10594.

WOMEN & SOCIALISM: Accounting for Our Experience, a pamphlet which attempts to use both marxism and feminism to analyze women's position in the family and the labour force. Available for $1 from Vancouver Women's Study Group, P.O. Box 46534, Stn. G, Vancouver.

See two recent issues of BRANCHING OUT, Vol. VI, No. 3 and 4 (1979) for a comprehensive look at pornography and censorship in Canada. Available at Vancouver women's bookstores, or from Branching Out, Box 4098, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 9Z9.

Another articles on pornography by Debra Lewis, "Pornography: A tough issue for the left" appears in the Dec 79/Jan 80 issue of Leftwords. Available from Leftwords, Box 69367, Stn. K, Vancouver.

WHEN BIRTH CONTROL FAILS, How to Abort Ourselves Safely, by Suzann Gage - a complete and illustrated guide to self-abortion for the laywoman. Copies from Speculum Press/Self-Health Circle, Inc., P.O. Box 1036, Hollywood, CA 90028.

PASSAGE TO THE GREAT ADVENTURE, A Traveler's Handbook for Counsellors and Educators of Women. A working manual looking at intelligence, emotion, behaviour and language as healing tools. 100pp. $8.95 prepaid from Women's Workshop, Box 7083, Station E, London, Ont. N5Y 4J9.

Recent titles at the women's bookstores:

VANCOUVER WOMEN'S BOOKSTORE, 804 Richards, 684-0523:
Woman and Nature, Susan Griffin, $4.55
Lataka, Audrey Thomas, $7.95
I, Etcetera, Susan Sontag, $3.75
A Not Unreasonable Claim, ed. Linda Kealey, $7.95
Lady of the Beasts, Robin Morgan, $6.25
The Sexism of Social and Political Theory, ed. Lauren Clark & Lynda Lange, $5.00

ARIEL BOOKS, 2766 W. 4th Ave., 733-3511: (now in stock):
Plain Brown Wrapper, Rita Mae Brown, $7.15
Room of One's Own, Virginia Woolf, $2.95
To the Lighthouse, Virginia Woolf, $3.90
Menopause, the Positive Approach, Rosetta Reitz, $2.95
Women on Love, Eight Centuries of Feminine Writing, Evelyn Sullerot ed. $15.95
Nightwood, Djuna Barnes, $2.70

Sustainer donations are keeping us on the map

KINESIS is published ten times a year by Vancouver Status of Women. Its objectives are to enhance understanding about the changing position of women in society and work actively towards achieving social change.

VIEWS EXPRESSED IN KINESIS are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect VSW policy. All unsigned material is the responsibility of the Kinesis editorial group.

CORRESPONDENCE: Kinesis, Vancouver Status of Women, 1090 West 7th Avenue, Vancouver B.C. V6H 1B3.

MEMBERSHIP in Vancouver Status of Women is by donation. Kinesis is mailed monthly to all members. Individual subs to Kinesis are $8.00 per year. We ask members to base their donations on this, and their own financial situations.

SUBMISSIONS are welcome. We reserve the right to edit, and submission does not guarantee publication. Include a SASE if you want your work returned.

DEADLINE: 15th of each month; 20th for event notices.

WORKERS ON THIS ISSUE: Janet Beebe, Cole Dudley, Portland Frank, Morgan McGuigan, Gayla Reid, Ann Schaefer, Diana Smith, Joan Woodward, Michele Morel

Thank you, sustainers. Your contributions give us a powerful feeling of community support, and make the continued existence of Kinesis possible.

If you have not yet made a sustainer donation or pledge, but have sufficient income to do so, we ask you to think about it. Sustainers make a personal commitment to keep Kinesis alive.

Sustainers contribute $50 a year, in a lump sum or in installments of $5 or more. In return, you receive your own subscription, along with any number of complimentary copies for your friends.

Why not fill out this sustainer form and help Kinesis continue?

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

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I enclose my monthly installment of ____

I enclose a lump sum of $50 ____

Clip and mail to:
Kinesis, Vancouver Status of Women
1090 West 7th Avenue
Vancouver, B.C. V6H 1B3

CLASSIFIED

I will do your INCOME TAX or show you how to do your own. I've helped with 1200 returns. It's $5 if you weren't employed in 1979; $10 if you were. Call Cyndia at 251-2534.

PRESS GANG, a feminist printing and publishing collective, is looking for an experienced press operator to work with the collective, full-time and on salary. For more information about the job and our collective, call 253-1224.

SORWUC, Local 1 has moved its office to 814-402 W. Pender St, Vancouver. Phone numbers remain the samé: 684-2834 or 681-2811.

Winners of the recent Rape Relief House draw were: Judy Bekey ($200, premier's salary); George Bogdet ($50, social worker's salary); and Kristin Penn ($15, welfare recipient's salary).

WOMEN ROCK CLIMBERS interested in talking about their experiences for a research project, call Cathy Stubbs at 299-6030.

SINCERE APOLOGIES from us at Kinesis to Emma Lazarus for the enormous changes at the last minute which we made on her prison article in the Dec-Jan issue. We will print another article by Lazarus in an upcoming Kinesis

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MEDIA

This afternoon, complain to Eaton's

Do you find particular TV advertisements, like the gem put out by Eaton's recently, offensive? Does sex-role stereotyping in the broadcast media disgust you? If so, there are a few things you can do.

In the case of the TV advertisment for Eaton's, you could do what VSW member Mona Jurczyk did. She wrote a strongly worded letter to the store, with copies to CBC TV and to VSW. Her letter stated:

"I object most strongly to the TV advertisement for Eaton's, which I saw on CBC TV Sunday, 5th January, 1980.

"The advertisement depicts a woman in an open car being approached by a motorcycle policeman. She is shown to be disorganized, cannot find her driver's licence in her purse, bursts into tears, and passes the kleenex to the cop. The policeman consoles her, tells her to relax and to go shopping at Eaton's!

"My objection is directed to the not-so-subtle message that women (blonde) are disorganized, weepy, and can wheedle their way out of trouble with tears, which men (policeman) fall for, and excuse them of their responsibilities.

"The stereotype of weepy, dizzy blonde women is totally abhorrent to today's women, who hold jobs, raise families, fix cars and are completely competent.

"I would also suggest that police would object to the hidden message that they forgive traffic violations for weepy females and have nothing better to do than go around consoling them.

"Who ever suggested that shopping solved anyone's problem?"

Besides writing, phoning and boycotting Eaton's, writing or phoning TV stations showing the ad, you can also send letters of complaint to the Canadian Radio, Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) Task Force On Sex-Role Stereotyping, CRTC, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N2.

In addition, you can also make a presentation at the CRTC public meeting to be held in Vancouver, Wednesday, February 20 at 7.30 p.m. at the Hotel Vancouver. You needn't restrict your critique to the Eaton's ad. There's lots of examples of sexist ads in the broadcast media which pollute our minds daily.

CRTC suggests that submissions be up to about 15 minutes in length. They should briefly identify the problem of sex-role stereotyping in broadcasting, and most importantly, should focus on specific recommendations for solutions to the problem. You don't have to go as the representative of a group. Individual presentations are of the greatest importance.

The Task Force will review all submissions, oral and written. It expects to complete the review and make public its guidelines by mid-1980.

Address your letter about that Eaton's ad to Eaton's Ad Department, 701 Granville, Vancouver B.C., to CBC TV, 700 Hamilton Street, Vancouver, and to us at VSW.

Catch The Lesbian Show

The Lesbian Show of Vancouver Coop Radio has just begun a tape service. You can buy tapes on such diverse topics as: Lesbian perspectives on spirituality; What does a lesbian look like?; Political and non-political lesbians....

If you're a Coop member, the tapes cost only $8 for a one half-hour show. Send queries and orders to: The Lesbian Show, Coop Radio, 337 Carrall Street, Vancouver B.C. V6B 2J4

IN THESE TIMES

Kramer vs. Kramer trivializes single-parenting

Crap vs. Crap. Crap wins

By Joey Thompson

This highly-praised movie is merely another Hollywood fuzz piece. The movie, produced by Stanley Jaffe and staring Dustin Hoffman and Meryl Streep, treats crucial social problems with trivial, easily-rectified but unrealistic solutions.

The movie story - substantially different from the poorly-written book - opens with the beautiful, well-dressed Joanna leaving her progressive, upwardly mobile but insensitive husband, Ted.

Joanna, after hearing several limp lines from Ted about how much she is wanted, needed and loved, rushes out the door in pursuit of life's meaning and an approaching elevator. She leaves her abandoned husband to wonder who will take care of the cherubic and motherless child.

The movie takes off from there - into "moving" scenes which depict a confused and struggling father coping with a beautiful but obstinate young child and his trying job which promises advancement - at least it did until he spends more time with the child than with the job - whereupon he is fired.

Ted, who don't forget was tossed aside because he had no understanding and patience for his over-worked, bored and unappreciated wife, undergoes an unexplained and overnight transformation into: super dad.

Suddenly he becomes the patient and enduring father who, while he has his impatient moments, manages for the most part to nuture a loving, caring relationship with his child.

He has a few encounters with Joanna's "feminist" womanfriend down the hall who tries unsuccessfully to fill him in on why Joanna left. But husband (and many viewers) can only see that the selfish Joanna left a helpless, vulnerable child.

Joanna appears 18 months later. She is seen mournfully watching Billy through the window of a cafe situated across from the kid's school. Convenient, of course.

She watches - tearful, but impecably dressed, and beautiful.

Next, a meeting with hubby to inform him that after months in California "getting herself (and a tan) together" she has returned and wants Billy full-time.

Of course, by then, hubby's relationship with Billy has blossomed and he refuses to let Billy go. A court case ensues. Expensive lawyers are retained.

Tis about this time that husband's company tersely informs him that he hasn't been paying much attention to his important advertising job and he is fired.

But Ted is no teddy bear. And finds gainful employment minutes before the court convenes (unemployed would destroy his chances of gaining custody).

Turns out in court that he had to take a pay cut to $29,000 a year from $32,000. Poor boy.

And lo and behold dear untogether Joanna has also landed a job - paying $31,000 a year - which enables her to buy expensive topfashion clothes, hairdos and make-up.

And here's where the movie really falls apart. How many single parents earn that kind of money?

How many middle-class, well-paid men jump to the opportunity of fathering, mothering, laundering, cooking, cleaning, etc, etc, without the use of a day-care centre, cleaning lady, shrink, etc, etc ?

How many single parented young children who, despite a few temper tantrums and fits of unreason, exude the wisdom denied most adults?

Losing a parent is a traumatic experience for children. Massaging and healing the wounds is a long-term commitment.

Kramer vs. Kramer, written, produced and directed by men, does not portray this.

How many separated folk can afford expensive lawyers, costly court cases?

Hollywood movies aren't real. And Kramer vs. Kramer is no exception.

It doesn't even scratch the surface of an important social issue. It treats single parenting and divorce with simple-mindedness and ease. Instead of attempting to alleviate single parenting problems for thousands of people, its slick treatment will frustrate and infuriate parents who are often ill-prepared for the formidable task.

The book?

It is worse and doesn't rate more than a sentence. ●

Dorothy Livesay Issue

Room of One's Own, feminist literary journal, has devoted its most recent issue to writer/poet DOROTHY LIVESAY. Copies available for $4 from Room of One's Own, P.O. Box 46160, Stn. G, Vancouver V6R 4G5.

IT'S FUNDING TIME AND WE NEED SUPPORT LETTERS.

In March, funding from the provincial government expires for three services which are central to the women's movement in British Columbia: Vancouver Status of Women, Vancouver Rape Relief, and Vancouver Health Collective. Without renewed support from governemnt, these services will be drastically curtailed.

Women need these services desperately. That's why we are asking you to write letters of support for each of these groups.

VANCOUVER WOMEN'S HEALTH COLLECTIVE

As you know, The Health Collective has been very active within the community in the field of education and preventative health care for women. Increased requests for speakers and facilitators have expanded their services in the areas of public speaking and education groups. In addition, they present informational and practical talks on various aspects of the health industry. Their diaphregm fitting clinics are booked well in advance. Their birth control and pregnancy counselling services continue to be widely used, as is their health information phone line and resource centre.

PLEASE HELP THE HEALTH COLLECTIVE REMAIN ACTIVE IN THE COMMUNITY. WRITE A LETTER IN SUPPORT OF THEIR WORK TO: The Hon. Rafe Mair, Minister of Health, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C. DIRECT THE LETTER TO THE HEALTH COLLECTIVE, so they can send it in to Mair with all the others. Their address: 1501 W Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1W6 736-6696

VANCOUVER RAPE RELIEF

Vancouver Rape Relief needs provincial funding for operating costs and salaries. In Vancouver, this year, Rape Relief has received 437 calls from women in crisis. This reflects but a fraction of the number of assaults taking place in the city. Remember: police estimate that only 10% of rapes are reported. That adds up to a staggering number of sexual assaults within our community.

The second aspect of Rape Relief services is public education. To this end, they have spoken to 209 community groups and professional groups within the past year, and to 5,260 people.

WRITE A LETTER IN SUPPORT OF THE RAPE RELIEF SERVICES. Address your letter "To Whom it May Concern", and send it to Rape Relief offices at 4 - 45 Kingsway, Vancouver, B.C. V5T 3H7. They will forward it to the provincial funding agency. For more details, call them at 872-8212

VANCOUVER STATUS OF WOMEN needs your support, too. SEND A SUPPORT LETTER TO US HERE AT VSW, 1090 West 7th Ave, and address it to Evan Wolfe, Provincial Secretary, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C. We will forward it to him. Vancouver status of Women is applying to Evan Wolfe, Provincial Secretary, for funding from his ministry. Some of our services include: INFORMATION AND REFERRAL. VSW is recognized as the major clearing house for information on individual and group problems faced by women. For example, we maintain a legal referral system (authorized by the Law Society of B.C.) and do individual peer counselling with women who approach us. RESEARCH _ VSW does research and evaluation of legislation submitted at all levels of governemnt. We have submitted briefs, engaged in consultations and otherwise provided a women's perspective on a variety of issues. In addition, our research is used to compile information for distribution in the community. We are, for example, now compiling a guide to the Family Relations Act. ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING AND CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING _ VSW offers numerous groups in these areas. Assertiveness Training, for example, has been offered by VSW this year in conjuction with Vancouver School Board. EDUCATION - VSW regularly supplies assistance to people producing non-sexist instructional materials, and sends speakers to schools, colleges and community groups. PUBLIC RELATIONS: VSW has, over eight years, developed a credible reputation with the news media, and frequently issues statements concerning women's issues. In addition, VSW publishes Kinesis, maintains a large REFERENCE LIBRARY and is active in COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.