

# The WREE-VIEW



BULLETIN OF WOMEN FOR RACIAL & ECONOMIC EQUALITY  
VOL. 5, No. 1

January-February 1980

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NEED OUR JOBS...AND DIGNITY" ● WREE OPPOSES DRAFT  
● and more**



# The WREE-VIEW

WOMEN FOR RACIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY



## WREE ClearingHouse account by a woman auto worker

### "We need our jobs . . . and dignity!"

by Dina Heisler

Helena Quick was an Assembler in the Chevrolet Motor Plant at Tonawanda, N.Y., when foreman Don Naples walked up and placed his hands on her rear. Helena immediately told him to "keep your goddam hands off me." Two hours later Helena was fired.

The story of Helena Quick's desperate struggle to keep her job, despite continuous sexual and racial harassment, began nine days before that incident, on January 22, 1979, the day Helena was placed under the supervision of Don Naples and Richard Kingsley. Up to then, Helena's first twenty days had been spent on the assembly line where she'd been praised for the high quality of her work. Naples and Kingsley set out to prove otherwise.

When Helena took her case to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, the Commission then referred it to the WREE Clearinghouse on Harassment of Women in Blue Collar jobs.

Here is Helena's own account of what happened.

January 22

On this particular day, Don Naples put me on the case line with another man. This happens to be his regular job, so he tells me. While this man is breaking me in, Don is watching me continuously. In the meantime, this man is telling me that it will take a while to get used to this job—it's confusing to remember what part goes where and what tools to use—but it's important to be accurate as well as picking up speed along the way. So eventually Don moved this man before I can really get the hang of the job. The man told me that since he is not too far away from me, I can let him know and every chance he gets, he'll come and help me out.

After a while, the line started moving faster. Don returned to watch me after he speeded up the line to make it seem to everyone as if I cannot keep up. He did this because I was doing so

well by myself. The other man came and helped me because it was impossible for any human to keep up. I told that man that Don speeded the line up so I cannot keep up. He told me that sometimes it seems as if they do.

So Don moved me away from that job after he felt that he pushed me enough and also to make it look as if I cannot do the job. He put me on the other v6 line in hopes that I would get mad because it was a very dirty job. I did the job very well, just to let him know that I am capable of doing this job, dirty or not. Don still continued to watch.

While I was on break, I spoke with the other man I was working with before. He told me that I was right—Don did speed that line up. He had checked and it was twenty one more engines an hour coming through. In fact, it was too hard for him so he refused to work until they slowed the line back down.

January 23

Don Naples put me back on the v6 case line but this time, the job is more complex than before. He is still trying to give me a hard time by playing with my patience. (He stands behind me to arouse my anxiety.)

This job consists of doing six or seven different techniques. A man was assigned to break me in on the job and I started to get the hang of it. The man couldn't stay with me long because Don told him to leave me alone. Don has not, from the first day I worked for him, liked the idea of any man speaking with me—he would move them plus make things difficult.

Anyhow, an hour later, the line appears to be moving faster. It is very difficult to keep up and Don is still watching me. The other man was standing around and he would help some but not much because Don was still standing by me and had already told the man to let me do it by myself.

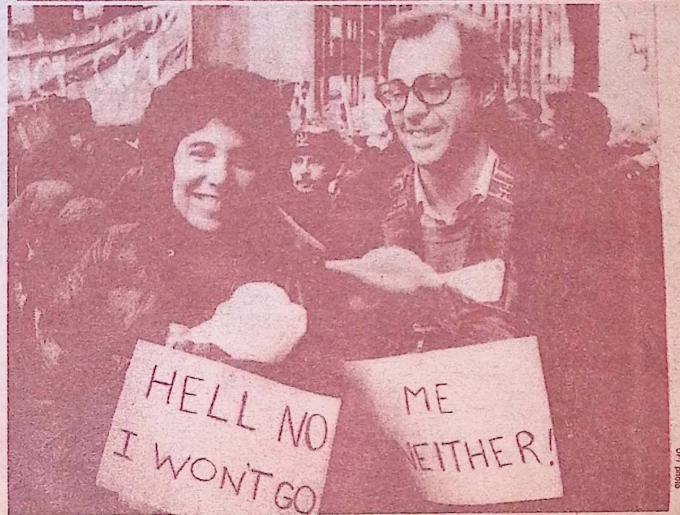
About two hours later, Don put me back on the other v6 line. All the time he is trying to make it seem as if I cannot handle the work.

January 24

Don had me working in the pistons and rods section all day while he watched. The regular worker in that department was absent that day. She

returned the following day and told me that everyone over there told Don they wanted me back because I was the only one of all the people that worked that job that did it right. Don

(cont'd on p. 10)



WREE OPPOSES THE DRAFTING OF WOMEN

Women for Racial and Economic Equality is strongly opposed to the drafting of women and men into the armed forces, as well as to all other preparations for war. It is evident that war in a nuclear age stands in fundamental contradiction to the needs and hopes of all people.

War means the disruption of the lives of women, young and old, the agony of mothers who lose their children and loved ones, the impoverishment of our living conditions, the debasing of the quality of life, and the diverting of our energies from the fight for what we and our families need.

The hysteria being built up over Iran and Afghanistan to legalize the draft and extend it to women this time threatens our civil liberties and will set back our struggle for equality immensely. The drive to war requires the suppression of all opposition to the status quo. In such a climate the first casualty will be the struggle to achieve racial equality of Black and other minority women.

Since in a nuclear war there is no survival, it is clear then that the intent of the draft is to whip up a war hysteria and prepare the American people to accept so-called limited intervention in other countries. But have we forgotten so soon the cries of napalmed children and the dehumanization and deaths of American soldiers in Vietnam?

We do not see the fight for women's equality in a vacuum. Women and men do not want to die together in war, but live together in peace. Equality to destroy our sisters and brothers in other countries will not move our struggle for equality at home one inch forward.

We call on all women and women's organizations to join with peace groups and all anti-war peoples to defend this call to war.

PEACE IS ESSENTIAL TO THE FIGHT FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY

## WOMEN FOR RACIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY

WOMEN SUPPORT THE WORKERS ON STRIKE AT LONDON HARNESS & CABLE CO. WHO HAVE BEEN ON STRIKE SINCE OCT. 7th, 1979.

- 90% OF THE WORKERS ARE BLACK PEOPLE. • 80% OF THE WORKERS ARE WOMEN. • AVERAGE WAGE \$3.10 AN HOUR.
- UNHEALTHY AND CROWDED WORKING CONDITIONS. • OIL DRUM FIRE KEEPS THE STRIKERS WARM ON THEIR 24 HOUR, 7-DAY A WEEK PICKET LINES. • FIREWOOD IS URGENTLY NEEDED TO KEEP THE FIRE GOING. • WE URGE THE COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT THE STRIKERS BY BRINGING FIREWOOD TO THE PICKET LINE LOCATED ON WISTER ST. JUST EAST OF GERMANTOWN AVE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL:

848-9343 AFTER 4 P.M.

Philadelphia WREE placed this ad in the *Germantown Courier* on January 23, in support of the strikers at London Harness and Cable Corp.

One woman striker told how she had to pay the Ace Employment Agency \$90 for the job at London back in April 1979 and had a starting rate of \$2.90 per hour. After a down payment of \$25 the company deducted \$5 per day from her paycheck until the balance was paid. She said she was one of the lucky ones who wasn't fired before the 30 day probationary period expired. She also discovered that men are hired at 5 to 10 cents an hour more than women and that many male employees who have managed to stay at London for a number of years are making far more than most of the women workers.

Most women work in the basement and must stand all day, on a concrete floor at homemade wooden tables eaten by termites and other vermin. Ceiling leaks requiring buckets, falling plaster, mice and roaches create health and safety hazards, say the workers.

The aisles are so close together and cluttered with boxes, the women on the picketlines said, that cuts, bruises and torn clothes are everyday occurrences. Workers are now demanding that safety should be paid for by the company.

## Lie detector plan upset

Under pressure by WREE and other local women's and civil rights' organizations, the Detroit Police Department axed its plan to use lie detector tests on rape victims. Lois St. Aubin, chairperson of Michigan WREE, commenting on the victory, said, "One day of cooperative action between all groups plus our terrific Councilwomen Henderson and Mahaffey brought about the demise of this form of indignity to women."

Lie detector tests for rape victims have been abandoned in many major cities. A Chicago rape squad investigator questioned the reliability of such tests. A New York detective pointed out that polygraph tests are not admissible in court.

Most of the big city police departments, including Detroit's, point out that the use of the polygraph on the victim would discourage women from reporting rape. Through the pressure of women's groups, police departments are

moving away from badgering the victims in cases of rape. In Los Angeles, a three-year statute bars reference to a woman's past sexual activities as evidence in a rape trial and consequently the L.A. Police Department does not use the polygraph test.

Dear Reader:

We sent a letter to all our readers appealing for help to print 6 issues of our paper in 1980. We wish to thank each one who responded (but don't wish to spend postage money).

So this is our way of expressing appreciation to the sisters who have contributed to *WREE-VIEW*—and a plea to the rest of our readers to help us get together the \$5000 we need. In the next issue of *WREE-VIEW* we will list the names of our contributors & their cities.

With Gratitude,  
The *WREE-VIEW* Staff



# EDITORIAL



## Peace Is Our Issue

International Women's Day, March 8, takes on a new urgency this year. Born out of the struggle of women garment workers in the United States in 1908 and proposed as an international day in 1910 by Clara Zetkin, a socialist and leader of the German women's movement, it symbolizes the worldwide striving of working women for the basic needs of life, foremost among which must be Peace. In the U.S. particularly, women must speak out against the resurgence of militarism that threatens every hard-won gain of the past 70 years.

In his January State of the Union message and subsequent call to register American women and men for the draft, President Carter has once again tipped his hawkish hand.

Brushing aside all considerations of international cooperation and our hopes for peace in a nuclear age, Carter clawed at the fragile edifice of detente, built over a decade with painstaking care.

In place of reason, the Carter administration offers provocation:

a massive increase in the military budget (\$20 billions more than originally requested for 1981 alone)

a push for military bases in the Persian Gulf area and further preparation of a "quick-strike" interventionist force in the Middle East

millions more in "aid" to the counter-revolutionary tribal groups in Pakistan

postponment and possible renegeing on the strategic arms limitation treaty (SALT II) signed by Carter last spring

an all-out attempt to wreck the Moscow Olympics and to withdraw the passports and otherwise do in any U.S. athletes who disagree

the call for registration for the draft

an attempt to get Congress to give greater license to the CIA for carrying out covert actions such as those that led to the current situation in Afghanistan

a boycott on grain and other useful trade with the Soviet Union (using food as a weapon), while calling for the green light for sales of military equipment to China.

Mail to the White House and mass media against such a lunatic policy must be running high, as evidenced by the increased numbers of letters being printed in the Letters to the Editor columns of the major press. "Blind anti-Soviet prejudice, a refusal at all costs to reveal or face the truth about the Soviet Union and socialism... infects our public and private lives like a plague..." protests one reader to the *New York Times* on February 12. "Ask the common people of this country—the mothers, fathers, grandparents of youth facing

a draft, the unemployed... the teachers, librarians, musicians, artists..." writes another. "If one presidential candidate would run on a 'Peace in the World' platform, he would win the election overwhelmingly."

WREE women agree. Claiming the oil and other resources of sovereign nations around the world and declaring these to be U.S. "spheres of vital interest" is not the road to peace. Nor is training women to launch missiles of death and otherwise run a beefed-up war machine the path toward equality.

We have a deep moral revulsion against using our energies to produce ever more refined instruments of mass destruction. In addition, production of useful, consumer goods creates hundreds of thousands more jobs than war production.

We oppose spending for war because it means the social budgets slashed most drastically are those that most affect women and children and the elderly poor.

"Peace through strength" and "U.S. world supremacy" are the bywords of the Carter administration. Rejecting this road, WREE women have been marching alongside the great multitude of Americans, male and female, young and old, who oppose militarism and war. Peace through solidarity with the working women and men of our and other nations must be the first priority of the women's movement as we stand at this crossroads heading into the 80's.

Women are a mighty force for peace. In unity with all those who are concerned with outrageous inflation, increased racism, the drafting of our sisters, brothers, children, we can and should play a big role in the upcoming elections. Together, we can help turn the present situation around, back toward sanity, detente and peace.

WREE-VIEW readers are urged to start the fightback today: write to congresspeople opposing registration and demanding a turn toward peace.

## Our Sisters say...

Dear Sisters:

Where have I been? *WREE-VIEW* seems to have exploded, suddenly, into a right-on working-class periodical. This clearly reflects what is going on in the organization it represents. Makes me feel good all over.

Lots of business to transact, herewith: enclosed please find a bunch of foreign stamps. I promise to try to remember that you prefer the whole envelope or 'cover' rather than just the stamp. Will do better next time.

Enclosed also is my membership renewal, a bit early, and a small contribution. Finally, here's notice that I sent \$10 to the Women's Div. of the African National Congress, to buy diapers for the babies of South African refugees.

I had to cut out these various coupons with extreme care, so as not to ruin the stories overleaf, as I want to pass the magazine on to a couple of people.

*Popping Pills in Bangladesh*, about the murder of babies there, was haunting. More terrible to read about than mass bombings, especially for any woman who has ever been a nursing mother. And the list of Nestle products to be boycotted should be printed on palm cards to carry when grocery shopping, like the list of J.P. Stevens drygoods that should be avoided.

Congratulations, thanks, and keep up the great work!

Jane Hodes  
Los Angeles, CA.

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to thank you for your most gracious and sympathetic help when I telephoned you the afternoon of the 5th. It really takes the edge off one's problems to hear a friendly voice.

I am very interested in finding out more about your organization, and perhaps joining. If you can send me any information, and an application, I would appreciate it. In the past I have put up with much sexual harassment as a bartender in N.Y.C., and also as a painter trying to sell my work. Maybe I can be of help to someone else with what I've learned in the process.

I'd also like to send along my thanks to Vicki Erenstein [WREE attorney] for taking the time to speak to me over the phone.

Wendy Collins  
New York, N.Y.

Dear friends:

The enclosed contribution is in memory of Alice Miller [WREE member who died of cancer last December]. Alice and I spent a month together 16 years ago as guests of the Soviet Women's Committee. It was an unforgettable experience and I think inspired us both to work for peace.

A damn shame: I am angry about this—no expertise in cancer, only in killing.

Sylvia Fink Kleinman  
Norwood, N.J.

Dear Sisters at WREE:

I have had a thought for an action unless someone has already thought of it. Could WREE organize the women all over the country to write to state and national Congresswomen to formally take a position in opposition to registration and the draft. As wives, mothers, sisters, aunts, cousins, sweethearts and housemates we must all feel some concern over this dragnet the president seems concerned to catch the people up in. (Actually, we might need to protest it in relation to the drafting of women too, because there's talk of that as well.)

Already I have begun to write to all of our Congresspeople suggesting that there are NO just causes today over which our country must go to war... and it is more sound and reasonable to provide quality education and decent jobs instead for our young people.

It is really important to take a position on this issue. We have two sons, both of whom are between the ages of 18 and 26—I surely take a position along with other women who have raised their voices in protest against their sons being used as cannon fodder in wars of opportunity, greed and power to enhance the ruling class. Most wars are also racist in nature. I say war because there would be no other reason for registration and/or draft.

I am interested to know your response at the WREE National Office. Surely it has much to do with racial and economic equality.

Respectfully—  
in struggle & sisterhood  
Gerri Peck  
Portland, OR

[See editorial above. Ed.]

Dear Sisters,

We want to thank WREE for its support of the Mile Long Human Billboard for Justice on October 11th. Thanks in part to WREE's turnout, the demonstration was highly successful in alerting large segments of the New York public to the relationship between J.P. Stevens and The Seamen's Bank for Savings...

The demonstration also served as a continued warning to the corporate and financial community that anyone heavily tied in with Stevens' interests will be held accountable by growing segments of the labor movement and the public for the unlawful anti-union, anti-human rights policies and actions of that company.

Again, on behalf of ACTWU and the J.P. Stevens workers, a hearty thank you to the many fine people of WREE.

Fraternally,  
Ray Rogers  
Corporate Campaign Director  
Amalgamated Clothing and  
Textile Workers Union

### WREE-VIEW STAFF

Sally Chaffee  
Dina Epstein Heisler  
Betty Hughley  
Christine Marx  
Margo Nikitas  
Marjorie Silver  
America Trinidad

Dear Friends:

In the article *Popping Pills in Bangladesh*, Sherman Austin states that lactation is a natural contraceptive—this is an untrue statement. We may not agree with everything the medical profession tells us, but lactation is not a natural contraceptive; witness pregnant mothers, carrying infants. Ask your own friends and, also, please check with medical people.

Rose Touralchuk  
Buffalo, N.Y.

Dear WREE:

I especially like your articles on childcare and the Clearing House Survey. I also like the international approach. Please send me one (blue/green preferably) child care poster.

Cathie Shimabukuro  
Portland, OR.

## OUR PROGRAM DEMANDS

1. An end to unemployment and inflation.
2. The right to a decent job.
3. Equal pay for equal work.
4. An end to discrimination in hiring and promotion.
5. Special legislation to protect and safeguard the health, safety and comfort of women on the job.
6. Organization of the unorganized.

ECONOMIC SECURITY FOR WOMEN CANNOT BE GUARANTEED WITHOUT:

7. Universal, federally funded child care.
8. Comprehensive, federally funded health coverage.
9. Maternity leave with pay.
10. An end to forced sterilization and experimentation.
11. The right to abortion.
12. A guaranteed annual income.
13. Quality education for our children.
14. Decent housing.

Our ultimate aim is the passage of a **WOMEN'S BILL OF RIGHTS**, a program of legislative demands, which guarantees economic independence and social equality.

child care  
AN ECONOMIC NECESSITY

International Year of the Child 1979

You can now buy WREE's beautiful child care poster for \$1.00 (reduced from \$2.50). Specify blue/green or red/yellow.



# The failure of our schools

by Cecilia Pollack

A new Ford Foundation study presents the alarming statistic that more than 50 million adults in the U.S. are illiterate or barely literate, unable to address letters or read bus schedules.

This shocking revelation should come as no surprise after the experience in local school districts throughout the country. Take, for instance, the New York City school system.

"About 45% of the students of the New York City public high schools drop out before completing their high school education." This was the incredible finding of the long-delayed Dropout Report, a study ordered by Chancellor Macchiarola, and prepared by the High School division of the Board of Education. This means that the schools have failed to complete the education of over 40,000 students each year, in New York City alone.

The report continues blandly, "These dropouts, characteristically, have experienced considerable academic failure during their school careers and probably will continue to experience failure after they leave school. . . . To survive, the dropout must often turn to welfare, crime, or hustling on the street." The report should be mandatory reading for those who believe that crime on the streets can be eliminated by more and bigger prisons.

### Illiterate or Semiliterate

The Macchiarola study has some devastating conclusions. It found that "almost 100% of the students who were below grade level on standardized math and reading tests by a combined total of more than seven years dropped out of school." This level of retardation would place them in the category of the illiterate or semiliterate.

In discussing causative factors, the report frankly admits that "... the awareness and commitment does not yet exist among sufficient numbers of administrators and staff that the school system can and should address the educational needs of potential dropouts and actual dropouts who are of school age." This results in what amounts to a "triage system" in which only those students who have a chance of "making it" are helped. The others are left to sink.

The report goes on to summarize the ways in which the schools are dealing with the dropout problem. Among 95 high schools surveyed, 84 reported approaches which varied tremendously, most of them palliative in nature. The schools that offer mini-schools or other significantly helpful programs for dropouts report long waiting lists. Auxiliary services report a waiting list of 4,000 students who assert their desire for an education, but there is a lack of staff and space to accommodate them. The tragic state of affairs in these services is further aggravated by such problems as short-term funding, student ratio, and the lack of commitment of their principals.

In discussing the reasons for students' academic failure, the report cites the current practice of social promotion, in which all students are promoted whether or not they have attained standards of performance. To take effect in 1980, the Chancellor has proposed a new promotion policy which establishes minimum performance standards from kindergarten through the ninth grade. The State will also implement its Regents Competency Tests. Schools, in order to be re-registered by the State, will be required to have 85% of its students pass these tests.

One can imagine the catastrophic results of such a sudden demand for

# INTERNATIONAL

# WOMEN'S DAY



Clara Zetkin, Originator of International Women's Day

competency on unprepared students. The report admits it may result in an increase in the dropout number.

### Fundamental Changes Needed

The proposed measures are inadequate to meet the gigantic dimensions of the failure of our public school system to educate almost half of the high school population. While the report is candid about uncovering the size of the dropout problem, it does not offer the deep-seated and fundamental changes necessary for a solution. Such a solution requires reversing the underlying racism which is at the heart of the dropout problem. It requires the eradication of "IQ thinking" which categorizes children into good or poor learners according to their "innate intelligence," as measured by discredited tests of intelligence or standardized achievement. The destructive practice of "ability grouping" or "tracking" must be eliminated, and low performance must be understood as low level of preparation, to be remediated, rather than low level of ability. Racist materials must be cast out and racist staff attitudes must be changed.

Would the vested interests within the educational establishment allow such healthy and fundamental changes or permit such a basic clean sweep to take place? That possibility is remote. It is up to the parents, trade-unionists, and working people of all races and ethnic origins to struggle together against educational racism and to work toward a failure-free school system for all children.

## Let the Olympics live!

by Sally Chaffee

The winter's day was cold and crisp as the Parade of Nations opened the 1980 Winter Olympic Games at Lake Placid. The athletes represented countries with differing social systems, languages, customs, and cultures, all united as one people by the language of sports. In a world sadly subject to the power politics played by corporate oil interests and big business, the spirit of the Olympics brings the nations closer to peace through healthy sportsmanlike international competition.

The future of our planet is crucially dependent on peaceful competition, but the President of the United States calls for a boycott of the Summer Olympic Games in Moscow. The entire world is victimized by Carter's drive to keep the Olympics out of Moscow. Most sorely hurt are the athletes themselves.

### Discrimination in Sports

The United States government has never supported amateur athletics: training, development, and financing of athletes is left up to private individuals and groups. Dr. Ken Foreman, coach of the U.S. women's track and field team, said recently, "Historically, the U.S. government never has heard the cry of help for its athletes. Now the athletes are to be used as political pawns."

In contrast to the U.S. Winter Olympic Team, which has one Black participant, the U.S. Summer Olympic Team has a large number of minority competitors, and, of course, many female competitors. For them, the Olympics is not only the culmination of years of hard training in their sport, but also years of personal struggle against racism and sexism. Women, particularly minority women, struggle doubly in athletics—first, to prepare physically for competition and, second, against racial and sexual discrimination.

At West Texas University, for example, although women comprise 21% of the school's athletic pool, they receive only 14% of athletic scholarships, travel expenses, and coaches' salaries.

A January 1980 conference at Howard University in Washington, D.C.,

"Minority Women on the Move... in Sport," identified problems facing minority women athletes such as racism, lack of representation of Black women on all levels in sports (athletes, coaches, administrators), lack of representation on sports committees and programs, lack of money, equipment, and facilities, and the exploitation of athletes and disregard for their education.



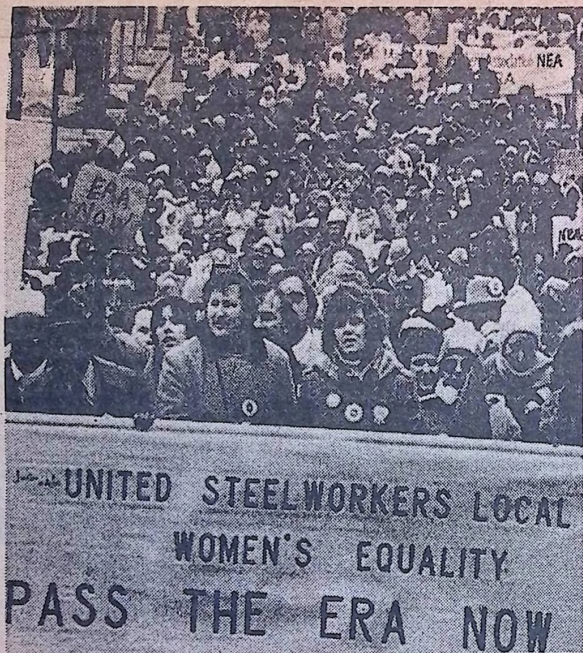
OLYMPIC HOPEFUL Sprinter Evelyn Ashford

### Olympics Best Chance for Women

Men in amateur sports usually have better opportunity than women for training and more lucrative contracts waiting for them as professional players, as coaches, or as sports administrators. For a woman, amateur competition like the Olympics is often her best chance to express herself through her sport.

The Olympics must not be a political tool used in a negative, divisive way. The Olympics can create a spirit of peace and friendship all over the world. We saw that among the countries represented at the opening ceremonies of the Winter Games; we hope to see representatives of the same countries at the Summer Games in Moscow.

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More than 8,000 trade unionists, members of civil rights groups and women's organizations from 20 states converged on Richmond, the capitol of Virginia, on Sunday, January 13 to demonstrate their support for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

The rally was called and organized by LERN (Labor for Equal Rights Now) a coalition of Virginia labor unions, as part of its ongoing campaign to push the Virginia state legislature to ratify the ERA.

### Wide Support

The rally was attended by representatives of every major labor union in Virginia, and the marchers carried signs identifying themselves as electrical workers, steelworkers, miners, pipefitters and boilermakers, meatcutters, railway and airline clerks, auto and construction workers, hospital and postal workers, teachers and telephone workers.

Blacks and whites, young and old, men, women and children marched together under the cold, grey January sky to let Virginia know that labor is organizing in support of ratification of the ERA.

Steelworkers' Local 8888, only recently certified as bargaining agent for the workers at the huge shipyard in Newport News, Va., sent a large delegation to Richmond. "We don't see it as a women's issue," the head of the local's political action committee said.



# Viva Puerto Rico Libre!

by Helen Rodriguez, M.D.

The second International Conference in Solidarity with Puerto Rican Independence met in Mexico City from November 30 through December 2, 1979. The first conference was held in Havana in 1975. Close to 400 delegates from 100 countries and dozens of international organizations attended. It was convened by a broad group of international organizations under the leadership of the World Peace Council.

This conference opened with triumphant greetings to the four Nationalists who, after a quarter-century imprisonment in the United States, continue the struggle with heroism. Lolita Lebron, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Oscar Collazo, and Irving Flores received a standing ovation.

WREE was represented by Helen Rodriguez, who also was part of the Puerto Rican delegation. Rodriguez was chosen to lead the delegation of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) which also included Laura Borlanos, Secretary of the National Union of Mexican Women, and Norma Hidalgo, International Secretary of WIDF. On behalf of the WIDF Rodriguez said:

"This year WIDF will be 35 years old. Together with other democratic organizations its 129 national organizations in 114 countries participate in the endless struggle for the rights of women and children wherever people are under foreign domination and suffer colonial oppression, discrimination, or attacks on their fundamental rights.

## WOMEN ORGANIZE ROUNDTABLE

Under the initiative of the Mexican companeras a roundtable on the solidarity with the women of Puerto Rico was held. Despite a late announcement and difficulty in obtaining a room, there was literally standing room only. Women from nearly all the countries represented met to discuss the problems of women under imperialist domination or beginning the process of liberation.

The following day Olga Aviles of the Sandinist movement in Nicaragua presented the conclusions of the women's meeting to an enthusiastic reception. The roundtable recommendations dealt with the impact of the multinationals on women as workers and the ecology of the Third World countries, particularly Puerto Rico; and the



Vieques citizens look as their beautiful island is bombed by U.S. Navy.

need to demilitarize the world and to remove nuclear weapons, again with emphasis on Puerto Rico; and the end to the military occupation of Vieques. The women also called for a week of solidarity activities with the women and children of Puerto Rico to include October 19, which is Lolita Lebron's birthday and the date of Columbus' arrival at Puerto Rico.

The conference ended on a joyous note with work plans to carry back to each nation for continuing activities in solidarity with Puerto Rico and with a plan to establish a permanent international solidarity committee with an office in New York to facilitate the implementation of the resolutions.

## PUERTO RICO WOMEN VICTIMIZED

"We are above all sensitive to the situation of Puerto Rican women and children. We know that all indicators of women's status—such as income, which is 50% of that earned by men; maternal mortality, double that of white women; housing, highly inadequate; illiteracy, double that of men—point to the same fact: Puerto Rican women are triply op-

pressed—as workers, as members of a colony, and as women. It is her consciousness of one or another aspect of her oppression that has maintained her firmly in the ranks of fighters and made her a bulwark of family and culture. That's why she has been so bitterly attacked in her role as mother and worker.

"An example of this attack is a pamphlet distributed among factory owners in Puerto Rico urging them to establish family planning services at the workplace. It shows a diagram of a pregnant woman whose protuberant abdomen encloses not a fetus, but a cog wheel. It

is obvious that to factory owners women are nothing more than a means of production whom the control. The population control that the United States is carrying out in Puerto Rico is nothing more than an extension of this attack against women and through them against the nation.

"The superexploitation which began in the 40s with the Operation Bootstrap program by the government headed by Munoz Marin brought Puerto Rico new U.S. industries. It was then that the women coffee gatherers, housewives living in miserable conditions, domestic workers tired of abuses and starvation wages joined the industrial working force, becoming more than 40% of all workers. Needless to say, no day care centers were built as part of industrial development.

"Silently the U.S. began its program: sterilization of women in private clinics with money from Rockefeller, Ford, Mellon, Milbank, and other foundations and then more openly in clinics of the collaborating government to reach the highest sterilization rate of women ever—over 35%! Perhaps that rate is only exceeded by that among Native American women, a people the U.S. government has clearly designated for total extermination. We strongly repudiate the abuse of sterilization.

"We are equally indignant at the desperate situation of the children who are growing up in the midst of corruption, with drug addicts soliciting school children and dumping pornography on them. Only unemployment and the indignity of the official dole called public welfare awaits them."

The WIDF then went on to demand the full implementation of Resolution 1514 of the UN General Assembly which demands the complete transfer of power to the colonial people.

## Afghan women gain equality



to the tribal groupings who have set up bases and are operating from the borders of Pakistan.

What has one year of people's rule brought about in the lives of Afghan women? The new government has instituted a genuine land reform program to divide hereditary land holdings among the more than 14 million impoverished Afghan peasant families that constitute 90% of the population. Government decree has swept away the heavy burden of peasant debts. Feudal practices, such as the wearing of the veil, arranged marriages and payment for brides have all been abolished. Countless women are achieving literacy due to the increase in the number of schools in the countryside and defense by the government of women's rights. Medical care is also improving through the establishment of more rural clinics.

Minorities are receiving special attention as the government puts a priority on publishing educational materials in hitherto "forgotten" languages.

Women are an important part of the revolutionary government's plan for grass-roots involvement of the people in the affairs of state. They are encouraged for the first time to attend political meetings and their rights are defended in cases where individual family members would keep the women tied to the narrow circle of household work.

As might be expected, the main opposition to these indispensable reforms has come from the owners of the expropriated lands, the enemies of women's rights, including literacy and freedom to choose their own marriage partners. The leaders of the so-called "Afghan rebels," who have drawn some confused individuals into their failing drive to restore the old privileges, openly admit that they have been receiving U.S. and Chinese military and financial aid from their bases in Pakistan. Soviet aid, on the other hand, is being given to the people's government, that has brought such tremendous gains to the women of Afghanistan.

## Women's Center in Havana

by Venetta Lambropoulos

In Mirabel, a beautiful area of Havana, there is a modern, comfortable, 3-story building that is the Regional Center of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF).

The Center was established in 1977 with the main objective of contributing positively to the work of the national women's organizations of Latin American and Caribbean countries. Educational courses are offered at the Center that help the students understand the fundamental issues that are of concern to women in these countries. The WIDF believes that those women who are involved in the women's movements of their countries—the "middle leadership"—need assistance from and communication with the central leadership so they can carry out the necessary work for their organizations.

The middle leader's role is very important because she is the one who has direct contact with large numbers of women who need help. She must be able to address groups, clarify issues, give direction, and report problems accurately. She must be able to interpret the situation in her country and in the world, in a way the women of her organization can understand.

She also needs to know how to relate specific problems of the women to those of the society, and to find ways to unite the women in practical methods of work, of organizing, and of relating to other organizations.

The courses at the center last 3 months and cover the main points of the WREE-VIEW Page four

WIDF program: attainment, application, and defense of the rights of women and children; and winning and safeguarding national independence, peace, and universal disarmament. Each of these is developed in conjunction with the problems of the region. The courses are also designed to teach methods and forms of leadership within a women's organization, in its functional, cultural, recreational and sports activities. Practical organizational skills are taught, as well as such necessities as public relations and writing.

The courses invite the active participation of the students, with full exchanges of opinions and experiences. The educational process is enhanced by speeches, lectures, and debates touching on such topics as the history of the women's movement, the agreements that guide relations among countries of the continent, etc., and by visits to Cuban work and study centers, child care centers, and other sites of interest.

A Documentation Library at the Center contains much information about the region, the women, and their problems. The U.N. also has provided the Center with a wealth of materials related to conditions of women in different countries.

Forty-five women from 14 Latin American and Caribbean countries attended the first two terms.

Women who "graduate" from the Center have been inspired and equipped to enter the struggles in their countries with confidence and new-found ability and energy.



## "A beautiful biography . . ."

WREE's first publication—Fannie Lou Hamer—is finding a good response. The first printing is sold out and a second run has been printed. This eloquent biography of a heroic fighter for racial equality is now in the Columbia College and the Chicago Public Libraries as well as the Amistad Research Center (part of Dillard University in New Orleans), one of the largest collections of Afro-American history in the U.S. A Chicago local of the UAW has bought 50 copies, as did District 11 of the United Electrical Workers. It is being sold in commercial and university

A brilliant, beautiful and most humanly warm biography has been written of Fannie Lou Hamer, the Black civil rights activist of Mississippi. It was written by Ms. Susan Kling of Chicago, herself an activist in the areas of human liberty.

Here is a Black woman, grandchild of slaves, a sharecropper's daughter from the most powerless group in our country who challenged the might men, the racial supremacists and won great victories. Here is a life filled with the dynamics of events and circumstances of the struggles of the 1960s and 70s. Here is the story of a Black woman whose tasks in life were to go out into the fields and pick cotton. By her struggles and those of her friends, Black and White, she compelled a change in U.S. politics and especially in Mississippi political life. She was to be seated, along

with others of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, as the official delegation to the Democratic Party Convention of 1968. That last sentence does not contain the steps to get there: the beatings, the Klan raids, the loss of jobs and the huge harm to her family. She bore the scars to her grave.

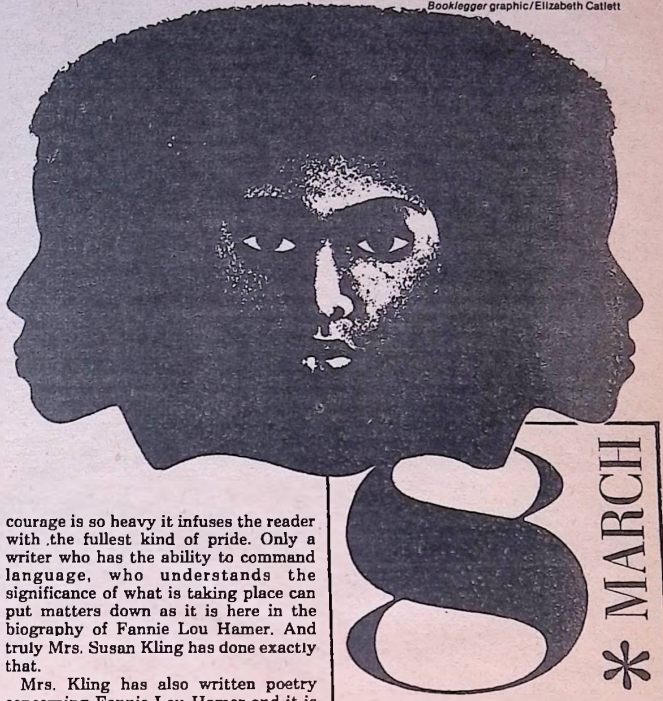
The author tells this life story with all of the warmth, the tensions, the importance and true human drama it fully deserves. She is a master-artist in offering the necessary details that make a full, complete tapestry of life. We only hope that Mrs. Kling, who does so magnificently here in the truly great biography of Fannie Lou Hamer, will continue in future and further works. Fannie Lou Hamer's struggles, her cries in prison when she is beaten, her anxieties, her tensions, her pride in standing up as a woman, as a Black person and as a human being all come out. These reviewers have seldom read a biographical work filled with so many vital words, vibrant pictures, true, realistic scenes. When Fannie Lou Hamer confronts the race supremacists at the court house where she would register to vote we know that she faces death itself but she is determined to face them nevertheless. The bravery comes true. The

courage is so heavy it infuses the reader with the fullest kind of pride. Only a writer who has the ability to command language, who understands the significance of what is taking place can put matters down as it is here in the biography of Fannie Lou Hamer. And truly Mrs. Susan Kling has done exactly that.

Mrs. Kling has also written poetry concerning Fannie Lou Hamer and it is included almost as a preface to her work. It is filled with compassion, understanding and true knowledge of the meaning of the struggles of Fannie Lou Hamer. Both the poem and the biography prove overwhelmingly that it is indeed possible for one person to set down the meaning of another person's life.

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Booklegger graphic/Elizabeth Catlett



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The biography of Fannie Lou Hamer is indeed an inspiration for present thought and action. She said frequently and yes eloquently that she lived her life for all people without reference to gender, ethnic grouping, or creed. Even now it is a guide for all of us.

## Victims of Valium

by Marjorie Silver

In the past year doctors in the United States have routinely prescribed Valium to about 20% of the adult population for the treatment of anxiety and tension associated with stress. Of those receiving the prescription, some 70% were women.

Valium, a class of tranquilizer known as benzodiazepines, was introduced, along with Librium, in the early 1960s and ever since has been pushed by the pharmaceutical industry. Hoffman LaRoche, the world's largest pharmaceutical manufacturer, makes over \$300 million profit annually on sales of the drug. The industry bases much of its advertising on a sexist picture of the woman patient as a nag and annoyance to her husband and children, a repeated irritation to her doctor—a person who cannot cope with life's problems. Physicians are convinced by the promotional campaigns that Valium will help their patients cope. Actually, Valium blocks normal coping mechanisms, alters brain function, and causes depression and insomnia.

### Dangers Covered Up

The pharmaceutical industry has conveniently ignored the addictive qualities and subsequent withdrawal agonies of Valium. Moreover, the Food and Drug Administration has failed to educate doctors and consumers about the dangers of Valium and has not asked for remedial advertising, nor set up any monitoring system.

At a senate hearing on Valium last September, several witnesses testified that they were easily able to get as much Valium as they wanted and were never told of the drug's powerful addictive potential, nor that it should not be taken with alcohol or barbituates.

Worse still, the patients were not warned of the horrendous withdrawal symptoms: physical pain, delusions, hallucinations, convulsions, paranoia, inability to eat and sleep, loss of memory and concentration, inability to feel emotions, and attempts at suicide.

Valium is believed to be addictive in as little as two to five weeks on a normal therapeutic dose. It may be prescribed for a brief time period for crisis situations only. Valium should never be prescribed for the average stress of daily living. And, as we see, drugging the victims of our societal ills can only aggravate the problems.

## OSHA under attack

by Sally Chaffee and Marjorie Silver

The U.S. Department of Labor just released a detailed report on workers' injuries, illnesses and fatalities for 1978. The rate of lost time injuries and illnesses among manufacturing workers increased 9.8% over the previous year, the largest increase since 1970 when the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) was passed. The number of lost-time injuries and illnesses reached the dismaying number of over one million; that is, one out of every 20 manufacturing workers in 1978 suffered a lost-time illness or injury.

On the average, the time lost for each illness amounted to 15 work days with most of the workers receiving only 30 to 40% of their regular income due to weak state compensation laws.

The report also stated that there are almost two million workers who are severely or partially disabled by occupational disease. Their lost income in 1978 amounted to \$11.4 billion.

Another finding of the report reveals that a worker who is disabled for life from an occupational disease and who is able to prove that the disability is linked to his occupation received an average of \$9700 in lifetime benefits—compared to \$77,000 he would have earned for the rest of his working life if he had not been disabled.

OSHA was expected to cut down the rising accident rate, but the law that empowers this agency is limited: only 5 to 10% of industrial accidents are covered by OSHA regulations.

The agency has been attacked by its big business enemies as enormously expensive and a waste of money. A recent study by an organization affiliated with Ralph Nader, however, concludes that the benefits of OSHA regulations outweighed the costs by \$2 billion in 1978.

But maintenance of even the present level of safety is in danger. Senator Richard Schweiker (R. Pa.) has introduced a bill—the proposed federal



SHARON GROFF  
1960-1979

"OSHA Improvements Act of 1980" (S.2153) that, contrary to its name, substantially weakens workers' rights in the areas of occupational safety and health. In an analysis of the new OSHA bill, the New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health has determined the following:

The bill makes U.S. inspection of workplaces easy to avoid, and penalties would be so inconsequential that employers would feel no coercion to improve conditions. For example, suppose that for a year a company incurs no employee death from on-the-job injury and few occupational injuries resulting in lost work days. Then that company will be designated a "safe employer," and this qualifies that company for exemption from future safety inspections! OSHA must trust such a "safe employer" to supply its own safety record.

Further, the proposed OSHA Act exempts a company from penalties if the company establishes an advisory committee and safety consultation programs. However, an advisory committee under OSHA has no legal authority. Thus, a company that does not correct a hazard pointed out by its advisory committee is not subject to penalty for willful violations of the OSHA act.

Steelworker Sharon Groff was 19 years old when she was killed last August—her neck was broken when her hair became entangled in the shaft of a machine she was cleaning. She worked for the Gerett Division of Western Industries in Menominee Falls, Wisconsin.

There was no inspection of the safety conditions in her plant until after her death. A subsequent OSHA inspection found 11 violations, including Sharon's machine.

Virginia Bormann, president of Steel Workers Local 8822, representing the Gerett workers, said, "Thanks to OSHA, our local union has finally been able to force the employer to provide our membership with a relatively safe and healthful workplace." Bormann says that she knows from experience that "OSHA is the only effective means at the disposal of the American worker to protect his or her life on the job."

### Employers' Dirty Tricks

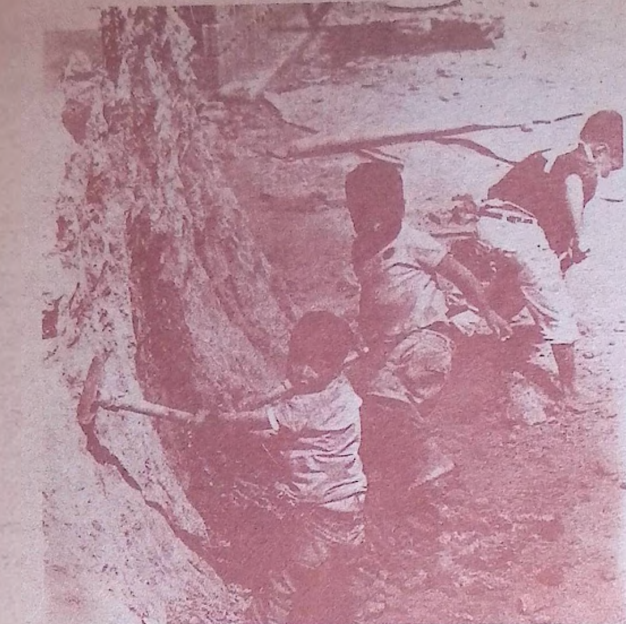
The bill increases an employer's incentive to under-report injuries to worker's compensation agencies, in order to maintain its "safe" status. Employers often pressure workers not to seek workers' compensation for job-related injuries and illnesses, and frequently force disabled workers back to work for "light duty" work before they are physically able.

According to Senator Schweiker (R-PA), a sponsor of the bill, the proposed OSHA Act seeks to limit OSHA's "policeman role," replacing it with "employer and employee self-initiation to improve workplace safety and health." Yet, can we realistically expect an employer to submit a safety record exposing unsafe or unhealthy conditions in its own workplace? On the contrary, the 1980 OSHA bill would provide further incentive for the employer to falsify records, and less incentive for voluntary cooperation and compliance.

Where does your Senator stand on OSHA? Since hearings on the 1980 bill begin in February, there still may be time to let the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources know where you stand. Contact this committee at 4230 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 202-224-5375 or 224-4062.



# Child labor is



by Margo Nikitas

In ancient tales, it was fate that could compel a parent to eat his own children. Today, in U.S. fields and factories, the millions of children whose minds and bodies are consumed in life-stunting toil have a right to ask if it is fate that compels their destruction. A society that cares has the right to demand the protection of these young energies, our future hope, from the hazards of premature exhaustion in wage labor.

What are the dimensions of child labor in the U.S. in 1980? What are its causes? Who are its victims and how can they be protected?

What follows is a preliminary probe into an issue we feel is of growing concern to the women's movement as we enter this Year of the Family.

## How Many Child Laborers?

You can find it in any library—this past year, nearly 5 million 14 to 17 year-olds worked for wages in U.S. agriculture and industry. Child laborers, from 5 years of age constitute 1/3 of the nation's farm labor force. Hundreds of thousands of them are not included in the official statistics. There are also uncounted hundreds of thousands of children victimized in shops and factories in all our major cities. Some are the children of poor white workers, but the overwhelming majority are children of Black Americans and of legal and "undocumented" aliens—Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Chinese and other Asians.

That the evil exists is testified to by Assistant Secretary of Labor Donald E. Elisburg in "Return of the Sweatshops," *U.S. News & World Report*, Jan. 14. He comments that it would be a "tremendous weapon" against the employers of an estimated 700,000 alien workers in urban sweatshops if we were to enforce a section of the labor law that prohibits the sale of any goods across state lines that have been produced with the help of child labor.

Likewise in agriculture. "Not only is child labor in agriculture still with us," writes Joan Papert Press, chairwoman of the Triangle Friends of the United Farm Workers (Durham, N.C.), in a letter to the *New York Times* in November, "it is legal and on the increase." Ms. Press points out that an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act recently lowered the minimum age of children in agriculture from 12 to 10!

## Sweatshops Are Flourishing

Let's turn first to the least publicized area of child labor, the area we thought was done away with in the early part of this century or certainly with the passage of the child labor laws in 1938—children in the factories and other non-agricultural industries.

Last fall, agents of the U.S. Department of Labor were sent out to enforce federal minimum wage-and-hour laws by raiding small shops of the garment industry. Ostensibly, these raids were to

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serve as an object lesson to the biggest labor-law violators. But they harm the alien workers more than they do the employer. For him, discovery means only a court appearance and an insignificant fine. For the workers, however, it means the loss of their livelihood. But another effect of the drive was to expose the ugly underbelly of U.S. industry: its return to the era of sweatshops and child labor.

## Chinatown Sweatshops

"There's going to be another Triangle fire down there," said Joe Denahy of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), as reported by the *New York Daily News* on December 30. "There'll be a lot of people killed, I know it," he said, referring to New York's Chinatown garment factories huddled in the shadow of Wall Street. The Triangle Company was a 1911 sweatshop in New York, where hundreds of women were working at sewing machines when a fire broke out, and 146 lost their lives.

The *Daily News* reporter found the lights on the rickety old staircase of the Golden Dragon broken. What would happen in case of fire? At Celestial Sportswear, a hellish atmosphere prevailed, with 100 women, young and old, bent over machines in a long narrow room with no ventilation. In the dark, dirty workrooms of 500 Chinatown garment factories, some 18,000 immigrants are employed. The shops, like those in major cities across the country, employ every nationality of recent immigrants—including a large number of Puerto Rican and other Hispanic workers. Many of the owners are in gross violation of both state and federal laws governing minimum wage, overtime payments, and child labor practices, not to mention the most elementary health and safety codes.

The air of these workrooms is thick with lint that irritates and clogs the throat and lungs. Small children sit at the feet of their working mothers, while other children are hard at work, lugging huge bundles of finished garments into service elevators and waiting trucks. Big name manufacturers sew their own and other brand labels onto the garments and market them in the best-known department stores at premium prices to an unsuspecting public.

The women and children work from early morning until late at night, for wages as low as \$1.50 an hour. Then mothers and children carry unfinished garments home where the stitching and sewing continues, sometimes through the night. The long hours and the child labor involved are not reflected on the time cards, which the employer punches to read 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.

These, in the main, are union shops of the ILGWU (International Ladies' Garment Workers Union). This conservative union leadership does practically nothing to guarantee wage levels and working conditions. Such victimization is possible only because undocumented aliens work under threat and fear of being discovered and deported.

Another highly profitable industry reported to be in violation of child labor laws is "fast foods." teenage labor is producing the profits of the giant McDonald's and other chains. The teenagers are worked long hours at the mercy of their managers, in unbelievable conditions.

Other industries under suspicion of violating child labor laws, according to the Labor Department, are construction, motel and hotel, restaurant, retail stores, and janitorial service contractors. The hazards to children from unregulated labor are as great in these industries as they are in garment. Instances of maiming and death because of violations of hazardous-occupation regulations have been cited in a report by Rudolph A. Oswald, an economist in the Research Department of the AFL-CIO (see *New Generation*, Summer 1971). These include: a 16-year-old who had his right arm amputated below the elbow as a result of catching his hand in an electric meat grinder; a 17-year-old whose left leg was torn off when he fell onto the rotary table of an oil well drill, and who died without regaining consciousness; a 15-year old who fell off a warehouse roof he was repairing and was fatally injured. Oswald found that a considerable number of children are forced to work excessively long hours, despite federal regulations restricting the hours of 14- and 15-year-olds to 3 a day and 18 a week when school is in session.

Employer groups continue to press for their "right" to exploit child labor, proposing, for example, the establishment of a sub-minimum wage for youth, or allowing 14- and 15-year-olds to work during school hours. And, not too many years back, in hearings before the Labor Department, representatives of the Appalachian lumber dealers claimed it was absolutely necessary for them to be granted an exception from federal law so that they could employ minors in logging operations—the most hazardous of all major non-agricultural industries.

## Sweatshops In The Fields

There are migrant child workers in almost every state. The greatest number of migrant families, however, work for the longest periods of time in the three "base" states of Texas, Florida, and California. There are 38 states in which substantial numbers of migrants live and work for periods of from three to six months each year. Migrants are employed for shorter periods in ten other states.

In addition to the children of migrant workers, there are children of "settled-out" rural families—poor white, Native American, Italian, or other nationalities—who participate in local agricultural work.

Since 1949, when the Fair Labor Standards Act was amended to prohibit all children from working in the fields during school hours, children of any age have been put to work before and after school, on weekends, holidays, and during vacations. And, enforcement being

The facts on child labour throughout the world released by the International Labour Office at the beginning of the International Year of the Child, 1979, came as a shock to many. More than 52 million working children was too large a figure to ignore.

And it may turn out to be too small. A report to be published this year by the ILO, summarizing available information and special research carried out in ten countries of Africa, Latin America, Asia and Southern Europe, shows how easily these figures can be understated. In many places, workers under 15 or who are still attending school are not included in the labour force. In others, it is the occa-

lax or nonexistent, children still do work even during school hours. In some states, like Maine, summer vacation is extended to coincide with the end of potato picking (Oct. 15), and rosters are kept in Aroostock County of the children available for fieldwork.

Even the present laxity is not enough for the growers' associations. Groups like the 100,000-member Farm Bureau, hoping to widen the loophole in the child labor law that permits unrestricted work on family farms, have put forward the slogan "make the family the employer." Using all the political power that the exploitation of children has secured for them, they lobby against all programs of legislative reform and services for child laborers.

In state legislatures throughout the country, specific exemptions are granted to growers and ranchers, excusing them from any fines they might incur for the employment of illegal aliens under slave labor conditions. And, in his White House Paper of December 20, President Carter issued both a rural development study and his new immigration proposals. It says not one word about this nation's nearly 5 million agricultural laborers in rural areas where almost 35% of the poorest population live. But the President did assure the multi-billion-dollar agriculture industry that steps would be taken to guarantee them a sufficient number of foreign migrant families to exploit.



NYC Photo No. 149



# still a fact

ional and agricultural workers under age who are left out. And since child labour is usually clandestine, all parties are reluctant to reveal its existence. This is why in a country like Italy, newspaper calculations of the number of children working can be five or ten times the official estimates. . . . A survey carried out a few years ago in Portugal among workers of the engineering industry showed that over 40 per cent of the women and over 30 per cent of the men had started to work between the ages of 11 and 13. In India, a survey of 5-year-old workers showed that 24.7 per cent had started to work between the ages of 6 and 9.

## Hazards Of Fieldwork

Those with first-hand experience of migrant child workers know the effects of their oppression. WREE interviewed Ms. Cassandra Stockburger, chairwoman of the National Organization for Migrant Children, Inc., who has lived and worked with migrant families for several decades. We learned of the extreme physical and social deprivations of migrant children, and the hazards to them of today's mechanized agriculture.

In addition to the traditional damage to young bodies that occurs during the long hours of stooping, bending, and lifting in extreme temperatures, Ms. Stockburger speaks of the added dangers from tractors, trailers, trucks, fork lifts, and dozens of other specialized machines. "Scalpings, mutilations of limbs, and crushing of bodies of infants and little children left near the machines are not unheard of," she writes in "Children and Farm Labor" (*New Generation*, Summer 1972). "Added to the menace of machines are deadly pesticides. Some are so lethal that droplets on the skin can kill. . . . No one dares predict what cumulative effect such exposure will have on young children."

Ms. Stockburger recounts the findings of a committee of pediatricians who examined migrant children in Texas. "We stopped and examined children at random," testified Raymond M. Wheeler, M.D., in Hearings of the Senate Subcommittee on Migratory Labor on July 20, 1970, "and almost every child had some preventable physical defect. . . . The younger children, especially, were undersized, thin, anemic, and apathetic. The muscles of their arms were the size of lead pencils—a sign of gross protein malnutrition. Many had evidence of multiple vitamin deficiencies and almost without exception, their skins were rough, dry, inelastic, with the characteristic appearance of Vitamin A deficiency." The doctors were also alarmed by the "back, hip and lower extremity pain" in young children which resembled degenerative osteoarthritis, usually found in older people. This they attributed to many hours of stooping labor.

## Radical Surgery Needed

Ms. Stockburger said the conditions of child farmworkers had changed very little in the past 25 years since she first began her work. Of the lenient laws that do exist, violations are rampant, she said, and told of seeing countless numbers of children working the fields in California on days when the Labor Dept. agent was ill or not checking. Legislation has been passed requiring

Do you hear the children weeping, O my brothers,  
Ere the sorrow comes with years?  
They are leaning their young heads against their mothers,  
And that cannot stop their tears.  
The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,  
The young birds are chirping in the nest,  
The young fawns are playing with the shadows—  
The young flowers are blowing toward the west—  
But the young, young children, O my brothers,  
They are weeping bitterly!  
They are weeping in the playtime of others,  
In the country of the free.

—Elizabeth Barrett Browning

the minimum wage, she said, but, again, the law is not enforced. Although appropriations for the education of migrant children have increased from \$9 million in 1967 to over \$200 million in 1980, still these funds reach only half of the children who need them. Also, due to inconsistencies in local programs and to the impossibility of continuity in an educational program for students who are constantly moving, and because so many children are fatigued from hard work, and are malnourished, and whose housing conditions are abysmal, 90% of migrant children drop out before finishing high school.

As for reducing child labor, the move now is to ease up on any penalties to the growers, said Ms. Stockburger. Ms. Stockburger also described the incredible resistance of farmers in Washington and Oregon to the 1974 amendment to the Labor Standards Act that prohibits child labor under 12 years old. The growers were granted an injunction against enforcement of the new law on the grounds that it was unconstitutional to prevent them from exploiting the labor of the very young.

In a 1977 Status Report on Community Services for Children of Migrant Farm Workers, Ms. Stockburger told of returning after 15 years to migrant labor camps in Indiana and California. "Wherever I went, the story remained the same," she comments in the study. "Child labor still exists. Housing remains dismal. Health services are woefully inadequate. Educational opportunity is limited. Job and income security are nonexistent.

"We continue to use band-aids where radical surgery is indicated. And the danger is that this temporizing will mask the inadequateness of the treatment and lead to further complacency and inaction so that children by the thousands will continue to be destroyed."

Racial and national discrimination are significant factors in perpetuating the pool of cheap labor and child labor. "If you're foreign or Black," the employers say to alien and minority labor, "you can't expect to have a good job. You have to start low and work your way up." It is the ability of employers to compel undocumented and minority workers to accept low and even starvation wages that helps sweatshop exploitation to thrive. And it is poverty, families living on sub-marginal incomes, that forces even children into the labor market in order to survive.

At the root of the problem is the power of the monopolies to dictate government policy. Steps toward its solution—better labor laws, more jobs and higher wages, and a third party—demand a well-

organized workforce. At the present time, the hard fact is that the U.S. has the highest unemployment of any industrial country, and unionization is down to less than 20% of the workforce. Vital to the fight against abuse of children must be the demand to organize the remaining 80%.

## Abolish Child Labor

An example of militant union organizing that has achieved unprecedented success is the record of the United Farmworkers Union (UFW). A key demand of this union is payment sufficient to support a family, so that children are not compelled to work. The UFW fights the growers' practice of contracting with the head of a family for the labor of a whole household.

This union has weathered some of the most vicious anti-labor attacks by the growers, and has secured the best contracts in the history of American farm labor.

It is necessary to carry on a struggle on the legislative front as well. The necessity for a mass movement to support legislative demands is a lesson taught by the Civil Rights struggle. Prior to 1965 there were only 6 states that had any appropriations for the education of migrant children. In the wake of the organized fight for equal

rights of Black and other minorities, however, bills were passed by Congress that boosted government spending for all public services, including \$33 million for education of the children of migrant farmworkers.

There is not much legislation directly affecting migrant labor in the hopper at present, but one bill that should be defeated is HR5575. This bill would weaken the existing farm labor contractor law of 1963, which requires all contractors of migrant labor to register with the federal government. Letters of opposition to the diluting of the present law should be sent to all Congresspeople and Senators. *Fuller enforcement of all child labor laws should also be demanded.*

Finally, there is another area of hope in the struggle for the advancement of living standards of working people and our children. That is the movement to build a third party, one that will be based on the militant solidarity of working people to voice our legitimate demands, among which will certainly be the call for an end to child labor.

## rise, child, rise

rise, child, rise  
wipe the dirt from your eyes  
rise, child, rise

you were your momma's last,  
you know  
as she lay on a bare, steel table  
knees raised and held apart  
choking out moans  
with each spasm needed  
to force you out  
in between telling her  
to push and bear down  
bear down and push  
they asked her if she wanted  
to be sterilized.

it ain't gonna hurt more  
it ain't gonna hurt more

afterwards they cut her welfare check  
they told you, "child, money talks"  
it made you old before your time.

when you turned to look  
for heroes

you found them living in the suburbs  
writing 'bout you  
reading 'bout you  
talking 'bout you  
arguing 'bout you  
without even knowing your name.

rise, child, rise

in new york city,  
they sentenced your 13-year-old sister  
to life imprisonment.

never you mind, child  
never you mind.

it ain't gonna hurt no more  
it ain't gonna hurt no more  
soon.

rise, child, rise.

by shermane austin  
New York City





# The politics of cancer

by Margie Albert

"If one thousand people died every day of cholera, swine flu or food poisoning, an epidemic of major proportions would be at hand and the entire country would mobilize against it. Yet cancer claims that many lives daily, often in prolonged and agonizing pain, and most people believe they can do nothing about it."

—Samuel Epstein, M.D., Preface, *The Politics of Cancer* (Doubleday Anchor Book, 1979)

We are in a cancer epidemic—one of every four Americans will get cancer. In fact, cancer is the only major killing disease whose incidence is increasing. The causes of cancer and our methods of dealing with it ought to be the subject of a public debate. Instead most of us speak about cancer in hushed whispers, if we speak about it at all. *The Politics of Cancer* provides essential information and ammunition for the debate that must come if we are to deal effectively with cancer. The book demolishes commonly held myths about cancer. Let's start with the myth that nothing can be done.

**MYTH:** "We don't know why cancer strikes those it does so we can't do anything about it."

It's simply not true that the cause of cancer is unknown. A growing body of experts believe that as much as 80% of cancer is caused by contact with carcinogens (chemical and physical agents that cause cancer) in the environment. We come into contact with carcinogens (1) where we work, (2) in products we consume and (3) in our environment (air, water). Genetic, viral, immunological and perhaps even psychological factors play a part in determining why some people exposed to carcinogens get cancer while others don't. Much more needs to be done to understand this aspect of cancer but clearly we should be getting about the task of removing carcinogens from our lives if we are serious about reducing cancer.

Our approach to health care virtually ignores prevention and this is particularly true—and disastrous—in dealing with cancer. Only 12% of the budget of the National Cancer Institute (lead agency for cancer research) is spent on chemical carcinogenesis. One reason the public isn't demanding removal of carcinogens, except in certain hard-hit communities and industries, is that many people have been led to believe we are curing cancer.

**MYTH:** "Tests on animals that indicate a product, like saccharine, causes cancer are not conclusive. We need proof that it causes cancer in people before we take it off the market."

When an industry is faced with charges that its product causes cancer, the corporations along with their bought-and-paid-for "experts" mount a propaganda campaign against the testing method. They demand proof of cancer in humans and ridicule scientifically established tests on animals. Given the long latency period of many cancers, proof of cancer in humans may take 20 or more years. By then, the victims have little or no hope. The demand for absolute 100% proof that a certain carcinogen affects humans is tantamount to making us all guinea pigs, waiting for the bodies to pile up.

In one of the several case studies in *The Politics of Cancer* we see how a combine of corporations, insurers, company doctors and lawyers covered up the hazards of asbestos for decades. The "Asbestos Pentagon Papers," documents from 1933-45 revealed in a court proceeding, include statements in letters like this from a Johns-Manville Medical Director who said "As long as the man is not disabled, it is felt that he should not be told of his condition so that he can live and work in peace and the Company can benefit by his many years of experience." (author's emphasis)

The bodies of asbestos and other victims are piling up. Why didn't we listen to those who identified the hazards years ago to save health and lives?

**MYTH:** "We can't get rid of the carcinogens in our society. They're useful to us and, anyway, it would cost too much."

Since World War II, the petrochemical industry has introduced many synthetics to substitute for natural products (detergent for soap, for example). Advertising campaigns convince us we can't do without these substances, yet we know little about the awful price we

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are paying. In many cases, we could eliminate the substances without any serious loss in benefits to consumers. Where the carcinogen is truly essential to vital production, we should use our engineering skill to provide maximum safety to the workers and the environment.

This will cost money. But cancer also costs money, a great deal of money. This year, we will spend \$30 billion on cancer care and that figure doesn't put a dollar value on pain and suffering of the victims, families and friends.

Victims of cancer are the subjects of another particularly cruel myth, namely that they are responsible for the disease.

**MYTH:** "Cancer victims often didn't get check-ups in time, or they smoked, or worked with hazardous substances. They have themselves to blame."

This is the familiar "blaming the victim" approach. This myth causes disastrous guilt feelings among victims and their families and is perpetuated in part by slogans such as that of the

American Cancer Society "Control cancer with a check-up and a check." The checks do roll in to the Society, the largest philanthropy in the U.S., but Pat McGrady, former science editor of the Society who quit recently after 25 years, said the slogan is "phoney, because we are not controlling cancer."

Early diagnosis is important in treatment of cancer but can we blame those who don't get the check-up, especially if their medical coverage does not include annual check-ups and other preventive measures? Can we blame the people at Love Canal who lived on top of a deadly chemical dump without knowledge of its existence and now face much higher risk of getting cancer? Can we blame the children of mothers who took DES (diethylstilbestrol) on doctor's prescription (without knowing that it caused cancer in mice) who now should be screened at their own expense for many years to detect cancer?

Even in matters that seem really voluntary, like smoking, the placing of responsibility on the victim is inappropriate. Today, the fastest growing group of new smokers is young teenagers. Can we seriously argue that they are not influenced by the very attractive ads telling them smoking is "in," which we are not willing to ban? We aren't even willing to add the word "death" to the modest warning of danger that appears in small print on the ad.

Buy "The Politics of Cancer"—join the cancer prevention constituency.

# Family needs heard

by Marjorie Silver

In the next three months, special state conferences on the family will be held across the nation to prepare for the Regional White House Conferences on the Family (WHCF) in June and July. WHCF will meet in three sections of the country, in Baltimore for the East, in Minneapolis for the Midwest, and for the West in Los Angeles. Having three conferences, the WHCF November report indicated, means that any "embarrassing" recommendations from one will not be binding on the whole.

The state conferences are open to all interested persons. The purpose is to conduct a comprehensive examination of the problems of the American family, identify the key issues, and propose specific recommendations. They will also elect representatives to the WHCF.

After the regional conferences make their recommendations, a task force of 117 people will meet in Washington in August to bring together the resolutions of the three conferences into a single report. The regional conferences will elect 57 persons to the task force. Of the remaining 60, 20 are appointed by the President, and the others are part of another group.

## Right Wing Hit List

At the state conferences in Virginia and Oklahoma, held at the end of last year, anti-abortion forces, who styled themselves as "pro-family," made their opposition felt, capturing the 8 delegate seats allotted to Oklahoma, and winning 22 of the 24 seats from Virginia. Alerted to this danger, persons attending the New York City conference this January were able to rout the anti-abortion people.

These regressive forces want to see the dissolution of the conferences. They oppose ratification of the ERA, legalized abortion, sex education in the schools, and government programs to help the family. They have stepped up their activity in the political arena, composing a "hit-list" of candidates who support abortion legislation. The Life Amendment Political Action Committee issued such a list of 12 candidates, called the "dirty dozen" by the director Paul Brown. The list consists of Senators Birch Bayh (IN), John C. Culver (IA), George S. McGovern (SD), Bob Packwood (OR), Patrick J. Leahy (VT), John B. Anderson (IL), and Frank Church (ID) and Representatives Robert W. Edgar (PA), Joseph L. Fisher (VA), Morris K. Udall (AR), Harold C. Hollenbeck (NJ), and Robert S. Drinan (MA).

"The anti-abortion people are linking up with other right-wing groups," says Karen Mulhauser, Executive Director of the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL). No matter how they feel about a candidate's stand on other issues, they want the abortion issue to be overriding. "I think it's a very negative approach," said Ms. Mulhauser, "and harmful to our political system."

## Unemployment Danger to Family

It was apparent, however, last November at hearings held in Washington, that concern about the family is widespread. Hundreds of people testified on such issues as child abuse and neglect, lack of child care facilities for working parents, the plight of battered wives, and the impact of pornography on the family. Unemployment was considered probably the most serious problem affecting Americans and their families, particularly Black families. The Rev. Robert L. Pruitt of Washington summed up the problem. "The crisis in America is not Iran or oil, but jobs," he said.

Today it is apparent that the family is not only endangered by unemployment and inflation, but by the drive to war. We would like to hear from you, our readers and members, how you feel about issues that concern the family.

Since many state conferences will be held in the next three months, WREE suggests our readers contact the governor's office in your state to find out when the conference will be held, and try to attend. All persons are entitled to attend, present their views, and vote for delegates.



WREE's vice president Vinie Burrows is not only an actress, producer, and writer. She is also permanent representative to the United Nations for the WIDF. Last month at the UN Burrows combined the two roles:

Dear Ms. Burrows:

Every once in a while a theatre event occurs which illuminates the human tragedy and touches us deeply. Such an event was the programme, "A Child Is Born," which you composed and presented at our meeting in honor of the International Year of the Child.

The programme was notable for several reasons:

First—for the material you selected. By including works of poets such as Kahlil Gibran and Ionna Karatzaferi, and statements of children themselves, you brought us in touch with the fears and deprivations as well as the delights of childhood. Particularly moving was your selection from Sean O'Casey, which enabled us to experience the terror of the mother who loses her baby.

Second—for the conviction and the beauty of your performance. You united a large audience of people representing many national and international organizations and diverse nationalities and many were moved to tears.

Your programme is universal and compassionate and represents a world-view which will be as appropriate in the years to come as it has been in IYC. I hope that many audiences will have the privilege of seeing you.

Thank you for your generous and unique contribution to the International Year of the Child.

Sincerely,

Helaine K. Plaut  
Vice-Chairman, NGO/IYC Committee



# FREE all South African political prisoners

## FREEDOM FOR JAMES MANGE AND THE PIETERMARITZBURG 12!

Fresh in our minds is the barbaric hanging to death of our martyr Solomon Mahlangu, Martha Mahlangu's beloved son; this despite international protests and pleas to spare his life.

Statement of the African National Congress Women's Secretariat on The Sentencing of 12 ANC Members In The Pietermaritzburg Secret Trial.

On November 12, 1979, ANC member James Mange and 11 other young patriots of the liberation forces of South Africa were sentenced at the conclusion of a so-called Treason Trial, conducted secretly in a specially constructed new maximum security court. "These young fighters," states the ANC Women's Secretariat, "are part of a disciplined legal force fighting against colonial domination and alien occupation, against the racist, apartheid regime, for their people's right to self-determination. Like millions of oppressed people in their country, they were fighting for the realization of the aspirations embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law."

### All-White Court's Savage Sentence

The entire trial was illegal. The all-white apartheid court knew they were defying international law and the recently adopted Geneva Conventions—thus

the secrecy, thus the new maximum security court. Still, the court has barbarically sentenced James Mange to death, and condemned the other 11 young ANC members to 14-19 years in the racist South African prisons.

The ANC Women's Secretariat and the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) have called upon us to demonstrate our solidarity in every way possible, in an effort to save James Mange's life and to secure the unconditional release of the Pietermaritzburg 12.

We urge all WREE members and friends to write to President Carter and to your Senators and Congresspeople asking them to put pressure on the South African government to release these young freedom fighters. Also, send a protest letter to P. Botha, Prime Minister, Union Building, Pretoria, South Africa. And please, if you can, send copies of your letters to the ANC (S.A.) Women's Secretariat, P.O. Box 1791, Lusaka, Zambia.

# WREE appeal for the women of South Africa

As the International Year of the Child draws to a close, we make one last appeal to all WREE members to send your Diaper Fund contribution directly to our ANC sisters in exile in Zambia. (A special thanks to our sister in Monroe, Michigan who has been sending \$20 monthly throughout our campaign.)

South African women recently sent WREE the following progress report and appreciation for contributions received in our Diaper Fund campaign.

Dearest Sisters,

May we take the opportunity of the year 1979 coming to an end to reiterate our sincere gratitude and appreciation for the dynamic initiative you had implemented in launching a Diaper Fund Campaign for destitute children who happen to be victims of the abhorred system of colonial apartheid even before they are born.

We thought it appropriate at this juncture to inform you officially that your campaign was very successful as it has created a political impact for our movement. As the year ends, it has introduced many citizens of your country to know our struggle and support it.

The fund has been very valuable in meeting the needs of our children at the Morogora Residential Child-Care Centre as it is now formally named on a temporary basis until the major one is constructed, very likely next year.

You can rest assured, dear sisters, of our appreciation for what you have done and continue doing to lessen our people's oppression by your consistent political and material contribution. Your contribution for the International Year of the Child has been magnificent and made the year meaningful to us, still

chained to foreign domination of a clique of racists.

We wish you all the success in your endeavors to reach your goal of economic equality, peace and social justice in the whole world.

With best regards,  
Yours sincerely,

Florence Mophosho  
Head, Women's Secretariat  
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS  
(South Africa)

# Haitian women's plea

by Donna Walcavage

While the U.S. government debates the granting of political asylum to Haitian refugees, Margarita Fenelon, a 16-year-old high school student is being tortured in Port-au-Prince National Penitentiary.

The Union of Haitian Women in exile has issued an international appeal for solidarity with Margarita, who was arrested on September 15, 1979. The appeal tells her story: "Her captors were secret agents who invited her to accompany them to the telegraph office on the pretext that a telegram had arrived from her parents, who were in exile in Santo Domingo. Instead of taking her to the telegraph office, the agents took her to the National Palace and then to the Port-au-Prince National Penitentiary. Margarita Fenelon was tortured and humiliated and is now in prison. She has still not been brought before a judge as the law requires, and she does not have a defense lawyer."

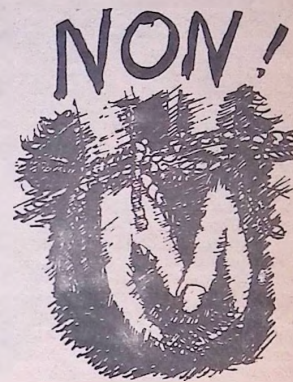
Our Haitian sisters appeal to us to "help prevent this new victim from perishing in the prisons of Duvalier as so many other Haitian patriots and fighters have done." They ask that we all send protest letters and requests for her release to: President Jean Claude Duvalier, National Palace, Haiti.

### Refugees Face Deportation

Temporarily, a court order prevents exclusion and deportation hearings for about 11,000 Haitians living in the United States. But their legal status here is still to be decided.

Endicott Peabody, a lawyer representing the Haitian government, recently told the U.S. Select Committee on Immigration and Refugee Policy, at public hearings in Miami, that "people leave [Haiti] not out of fear of persecution, but because they want jobs in America."

But, according to Ira Kurban, a lawyer representing the Haitian Refugee Center, "A careful analysis of the claims of the Haitians reveals that the majority have fled Haiti not because of poverty but rather because of political repression." That repression maintains Haiti's



labor force as the cheapest in the world at \$1.30 for a 13- or 14-hour day. Let your Senators and Congresspeople know, by writing to them today, that you favor granting of political asylum to Haitian refugees. It is important to let our sisters know that we support their struggles, so send copies of your letters to:

Union des Femmes Haitiennes  
calle Victoria 21  
Colonia Olivar de los Padres  
Mexico City, Mexico

# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



Seed corn is not  
for grinding

ANC (SA) Women's Section  
P.O. Box 1791  
Lusaka, Zambia

Dear Sisters:  
Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ (check or money order) to help buy diapers for the babies of the South African refugees.

In Solidarity,

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

WREE  
130 East 16 Street  
New York, New York 10003

On \_\_\_\_\_ (date) a check money order \_\_\_\_\_ was sent in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to our sisters in the ANC (SA) Women's Section.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



Help for battered women

STOPPING WIFE ABUSE: A GUIDE TO THE EMOTIONAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ABUSED WOMAN AND THOSE HELPING HER  
By Jennifer Baker Fleming  
Anchor Press/Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1979, \$8.95

by Candace Althoff

This is a reference book with a purpose—*stopping wife abuse*. It is valuable not only to the battered woman, but also to her relatives and friends. While covering many issues relevant to wife abuse, e.g., legislation, research, and establishing shelters and support services, it focuses on three crucial problem areas for the abused woman: 1) overcoming the emotional and psychological as well as sexist and racist hurdles when she seeks help; 2) what she can do if she chooses to maintain her relationship minus the abuse; and 3) what she can do if she chooses to terminate her relationship through legal means, including, if necessary, filing charges against the abuser.

Ms. Fleming pinpoints the major emotional obstacle for the battered woman, i.e., making the decision that *she is a battered woman*, by stating that "YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO LIVE IN PEACE." After this realization, the woman (perhaps due to traditional value systems) may find herself thinking that her children need a father no matter how he treats her. But children imitate adult roles, especially those in their immediate environment. The male child identifies with the father and the female child identifies with the mother, and another generation may carry on such abusive relationships.

The psychological hurdles faced by a battered woman, according to Ms. Fleming, are those dealing with her self-confidence, emotional dependence, fear, feelings of helplessness, and isolation. Abused women face a desperate struggle to realize that they are healthy; that it is their husbands or lovers who are sick. Loosening the bonds of emotional dependence and overcoming the feeling of inferiority are not easy tasks, especially when these sexist ideas are not limited to the home environment, but throughout this society.

Legal System Response

Sexism and racism in U.S. society determine how the legal system responds to battered women. "Likewise, a social and economic system based on the presumed superiority of some people to others has determined the way it treats working, poor, and minority people, male and female." Economics, as usual, is a fundamental consideration for the battered woman. As Ms. Fleming states, "The degree to which she is economically dependent upon her husband is the ultimate determinant in whether or not she will achieve an independent existence."

In addition, the barriers to legal recourse may seem insurmountable in a system where the majority of law enforcement officials, lawyers, and judges believe wife abuse is a family affair rather than a criminal act. Ms. Fleming recommends that all lawyers and judges be closely evaluated and their attitudes analyzed.

Battered women who must depend on the welfare system for financial assistance, are likely to find abuse of a different nature. As Ms. Fleming points out, "Remember that many welfare workers reflect society's biases and myths about welfare recipients, and that you may find yourself treated in ways that make you feel demeaned. Be sure to stand up for your rights; try to find out what you are entitled to, and insist that you get it."

Training and Counseling

Should the abused woman choose to maintain her relationship minus the abuse, she has alternatives. She may seek individual counseling which primarily uses assertive training techniques to overcome the passive, powerless feeling that has been encouraged through the socialization process. The second, and probably more successful technique, is couple counseling. This, of course involves a commitment from the husband to end the violence.

If, on the other hand, the battered woman wishes to terminate her relationship, the book presents a wealth of information on how to press charges against an abusive husband. Ms. Fleming is quick to note, however, that "attempting to seek justice by prosecuting your husband is usually time consuming, frustrating, dangerous (if you are living with him), fraught with red tape, and in the end, relatively ineffective." Procedures for prosecution leading up to trial are fully detailed. Chapter III, dealing with the legal system, gives in table form the names of legal actions to be taken and specifies the time requirement, legal assistance required, remedies available, etc. for each action. A spectrum of legal recourse is covered from peace bonds through divorce, separation, criminal procedures, and the laws of arrest.

Ms. Fleming points to "special problems and concerns of minority women who are battered," but she fails to address problems of specific concern to Black women. While she does not fail to include Black women when she lists categories of minority women, she only details problems faced by Native American, Hispanic, and Asian women, military wives, undocumented alien women, and rural women.

Aside from this indeed serious omission, the book is a relatively complete study of how to aid women who are in an abusive situation. The book emphasizes throughout, "as with child abuse, wife abuse cuts across all class, racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines." The primary reason, however, that I recommend every woman familiarize herself with this problem is because research indicates that "up to 60% of all married women are subjected to physical violence by their husbands at some time during the marriage." This means that the odds are that you yourself or a friend or relative is a battered woman. And while it takes one-on-one personal contact to achieve what could well be the difference between life and death for a battered woman, it also takes WREE's work on affirmative action, job harassment, passage of the ERA, and passage of a Women's Bill of Rights to end the racist and sexist exploitation which encourage woman battering.

You can help our campaign to document harassment at the workplace in the following ways:

- 1) Write to us about your own personal experiences or those of your co-workers.
- 2) Distribute our survey at the factory gates, lunchtime and breaktime. Ask your co-workers to fill them out at union meetings and women's committee meetings.
- 3) Collect completed surveys and return to: WREE ClearingHouse, 130 East 16 Street, NY, NY 10003.
- 4) Send for additional surveys and make sure other women learn of the ClearingHouse.

am also seeking help from anyone who is interested enough in helping women like myself put an end to sexual harassment on the job."

This story is just one of thousands. Sometimes the harassment is covert and sometimes racist, but always instantly recognizable to countless women who are now working, or have worked, in blue collar, male-dominated trades. The WREE ClearingHouse exists in order to address these problems. We need to have lots more material before we can pound on the Congressional doors and demand legislation which would protect women in industry from such harassment.



Attend the Mid-Decade Forum

Copenhagen, Denmark, will host two world meetings on women, marking the mid-point of the United Nations designated International Decade for Women, 1975-1985. The conferences will be held July 14-30, 1980; one is the World Conference of the United Nations to which the United States is sending official delegates; the other conference is the Mid-Decade Forum, sponsored by the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations, open to women and men throughout the world.

The World Conference of the United Nations' Decade for Women will attempt to review and appraise the progress for women's equality made during the first five years of the International Decade for Women, and develop an action-oriented program for the next five years, according to Marsela Martinez of the staff of Lucille Mair, UN Women's Conference Secretary General.

The United States delegates to this conference consist of mostly government employees; the selection process drew considerable criticism at a State Department meeting last September,

which was attended by over 500 feminists. Many of the women expressed concern lest the purpose of the conference be subverted. Bella Abzug underlined the U.S. responsibility to "make sure that this conference will be addressing itself to issues affecting women, and will not be manipulated by men in government to raise extraneous issues."

The Mid-Decade Forum, on the other hand, will provide a means for people from diverse backgrounds to exchange information and perspectives on the situation of women, and devise strategies for change. The Forum will not, however, adopt formal resolutions in its own name.

Observers of the international scene predict that the Mid-Decade Forum will delve into more of the nitty-gritty issues than the formal UN-sponsored conference.

This forum is open to all women. If you are interested in attending, contact your local WREE chapter. Plans and reservations must be made well in advance of the conference date.

(AUTO WORKER - cont'd from p. 1)

said no. I continued working on the v6 line until January 30 under a different foreman's supervision.

January 30

I was told that I would be working in the Janitorial Department because the regular employee was absent. Don Naples was again my supervisor.

January 31

The regular janitorial employee returned. Don Naples continued me as a janitorial employee under his supervision. He had already tried on several occasions to upset me. He assigned me to sweeping and cleaning in hopes that I would get upset enough to let my temper out of control. I remained under control and Don did not like the fact that I didn't complain about the job he gave me. He tried to aggravate me more by telling me to wash his windows.

His windows were dirty when I got there. Instead of telling one of his janitorial workers to do his windows before this, he saved the job for me. I know that his windows did not get dirty overnight.

Helena Quick concluded her testimony as follows:

Don Naples has been watching me since I have been in this Department. This man watches me continuously. The WREE-VIEW Page ten

from all angles. Richard Kingsley, my other supervisor, has a habit of getting close to me and telling me I smell good. I always have to move away from him.

I am not, nor have I ever had any intentions of, looking for a man at Chevrolet. I was hired to do a job. My job I can handle but I cannot tolerate the men who have authority and feel that if you want a job, you must solicit to their sexual needs. Don Naples let me go because I would not solicit to his sexual needs and used his prestige to undermine my chances as a Black woman.

In a letter to the editor of the UAW newspaper *Solidarity*, Helena Quick made the point that newly hired workers are the most harassed. "If you refuse to comply with management's advances, they discharge you before you become a permanent employee. It's hard for a new employee to get 90 days' probationary period in because of management's sexual desire for attractive females. . . .

"We women have our families to take care of and we need our jobs—but we do not want to pay the price of giving our bodies to management in order to keep our jobs. I have a great deal of dignity for myself, and I'd rather for me and my children to starve before I would lower my dignity to anyone. I am without a job, due to management's desire, but I



# Teen pregnancy

The United States' teenage childbearing rates are among the world's highest. We also know that teenage childbearing is a serious and growing social, economic and health problem in most countries in the world.

In our nation, more than one million of our over 11 million sexually active teenagers—30,000 of them under 15 years of age—become pregnant every year. These are statistics which must be clearly understood in human terms. That is, teen pregnancy is faced by young persons, with a particularly profound impact on the young mother-to-be, across all racial, economic or social class groupings.

Of these 1 million pregnancies, 27 percent terminate in induced abortions and 31 percent result in out-of-wedlock births; 28 percent result in births after marriages and 14 percent in miscarriages.

For these and many more reasons, WREE fully endorses and supports the resolution adopted by the National Convention of the YWCA last year; and we urge WREE women to support the teenage pregnancy programs of their local Ys.



Resolution Passed by the 28th National YWCA Convention, May 1979

## PROGRAM MODELS REFERRING TO TEENAGE PREGNANCY

**WHEREAS**, teenage childbearing is a serious and growing social, economic and health problem, in all regions and most countries in the world; and

**WHEREAS**, adolescents in the United States have rates of childbearing that are among the world's highest; and

**WHEREAS**, pregnancy is the major cause of female school dropouts in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, with direct correlation between education and employment potential, the teen mother faces an unstable economic future; and

**WHEREAS**, most adolescent mothers cannot complete their education or get jobs without access to child care for their babies; and

**WHEREAS**, only one-fifth of the states requiring health education mandate sex education in the schools; and

**WHEREAS**, adolescent pregnancy has crossed all lines of color, social and economic classes; and

**WHEREAS**, teenage pregnancy only increases the number and severity of already existing problems; and

**WHEREAS**, the YWCA has a commitment to the empowerment of women and teens; and

**WHEREAS**, programs related to adolescent pregnancy can dramatically impact our commitment "to thrust our collective power toward the elimination of racism wherever it exists and by any means necessary"; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the YWCA act as a catalyst with concerned community groups to develop and implement program models concerned with teenage pregnancy, and, be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the YWCA act as an advocate for teens with all levels of government to provide legislative programs for the prevention of pregnancy, the provision of alternatives to pregnancy, and the support services needed by the pregnant teen and the teenage mother



## A woman's indignation

I give you my insights  
my affection, my passion  
The best that's in me  
a gift more precious  
than collector's items  
and other things  
clogging up the attic  
of your mind

What more could one ask  
to feed the starvation  
of a man's soul  
for love and truth  
for happiness  
and comfort

Yet ask you do  
in thoughtless acts  
not for tenderness  
but for abrasiveness  
not for keen understanding  
but for dullness  
not for equality  
but for submissiveness  
not for a loving kiss  
but for flaming rage  
aroused by strong doses  
of insensitivity

Another woman unappreciated  
giving more  
getting less  
forced to fight  
for right  
up against the barricades  
of male domination  
and brutal cruelties  
that turn a loving heart  
to stone . . . this time around

But not the next . . .  
for in the end  
we need each other  
to survive the system  
infinitely more cruel  
and unjust  
than even male supremacy  
which divides our energies  
saps our strengths  
destroys our trust

Foolish man o' mine  
won't you ever wake up  
to what's real  
and everlasting  
in a system gone haywire  
corrupt at the core  
oppressing us both

Our only certainty  
is each other  
and the struggle  
My equality  
is your liberation, too

□ Arlene Tyner  
Phila., Pa.



## WREE sister fights for equal pay

Although the Equal Pay Act prohibits private employers and the government from paying women lower wages than men for jobs involving equal skill, effort, and responsibility, the fact remains that many women, ranging from blue collar workers to professionals, continue to be paid lower wages than their male counterparts simply because they are women. The existence of these widespread wage differentials, in spite of the law prohibiting them, is one reason why WREE, while supporting ERA, has argued for more substantive enforcement measures.

The absence of strong enforcement measures places the enforcement burden squarely on the shoulders of the victims of discrimination. One such victim, who is a D.C. WREE sister, Bea Valdez, was recently joined by two of her attorney colleagues, Kathleen McKee and Carol Horwitz, in filing a discrimination suit charging their employer, Community Services Administration (CSA), with sex discrimination in violation of the Equal Pay Act. As a successor federal agency to the Office of Economic Opportunity, CSA is responsible for developing and implementing poverty programs. Although the Agency prides itself for attracting young and progressive employees, attorneys Valdez, McKee, and Horwitz, who are employed in the General Counsel's Office, were hired in or are currently in positions at grades lower than their male attorney counterparts, although the positions involve substantially equal skills, efforts and responsibilities. The salary differentials between the men and these women range from \$2,000 to over \$6,000 a year. Although the women initially raised the issue within the agency, no corrective action was taken.

### Legal Fees Expensive

WREE sister Valdez explained that many working class women find these statutes offer no protection because the women don't have the money or the access to free legal services to go into

court to enforce these rights. She said that although the three of them are doing most of the legal work on their case, which reduces their attorney costs by 75%, it nevertheless cost them over \$200 just to formally initiate their suit. As further evidence of the exorbitant costs involved, she pointed to a prior discrimination suit handled by their lawyer which was settled before trial in which the victim of discrimination was awarded \$6,000 in back pay and damages, while the lawyer was awarded \$32,000 attorney's fees.

Valdez was unsure whether the case would be settled before trial. However, she felt it might have some precedential value for women who are underclassified in federal agencies. The Equal Pay Act as part of the Fair Labor Standards Act was originally drawn to apply to private industry and was extended to cover federal employment in 1974. In private industry, where pay is not a matter of law as it is in the federal government, the act does not allow a decrease in pay for the higher paid person as a remedy, rather the law requires promotion of the victim of discrimination. However, in the federal sector, where pay is statutorily established by a classification system, it has not been determined what relief the court should provide to a victim where the strict adherence to one statute, and one classification system result in the violation of another statute, the Equal Pay Act. Our WREE sister explained that they will take the position that discriminatory conduct must be corrected even if the only method of correction available violates the classification system.

Because litigation involves such costly and lengthy proceedings, it is not an effective or viable option for enforcing equal rights provisions. It is for this reason that women must struggle for legislation which provides for severe criminal sanctions for discriminatory conduct and which places the burden of enforcement on the government rather than the victim.

## NSWA resolutions on minority women

The struggle of Third World women was given support recently at the Convention of the National Women's Studies Association, held in Lawrence, Kansas, May 31-June 3. Several important resolutions concerning the NWSA's treatment of the questions of race, color and class, submitted by the Third World Caucus, were passed by the organization's Delegate Assembly. Included were guidelines for the making of policies at a national level on internal

education, publications on women, liaison with women's groups of all races which are not part of NWSA here and abroad, disavowal of apartheid and publicizing the status of African women, support for Nicaraguan and other Third World women in their struggles for freedom and self-determination, support for the self-determination of Puerto Rico, support for the struggles of U.S. farmworkers and boycotts of such products as iceberg lettuce, Chiquita

bananas and J.P. Stevens' goods. The Third World Caucus recommended class, racial, and cultural diversity be reflected in all the committees of the National Women's Studies Association.

The passage of these resolutions provides a promising basis of future cooperation between WREE and this important organization of women active in the field of women's studies at U.S. colleges and universities.

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The WREE-VIEW is the publication of  
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subscription is \$5.00

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