

THE WREE-VIEW OF

WOMEN

FOR RACIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY

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IN THIS ISSUE:

**Seminar: Elections
& the WBR**

**Child Abuse/
Animal Abuse**

**"Jewish American
Princess"**

INF Treaty: Next Steps

**Mideast Women Issue
Joint Statement**

**Palestinian Women
Under Occupation**

**Being Female in 1988
One Teenage View**

**Should Women Join
the Military?**

**Portrait of NEA
President**

**A Play for Children
... and much more**

BLACK HISTORY ~ WOMEN'S HISTORY



"...Let's face it. What's hurtin' the Black folks that's without, is hurtin' the white folks that's without. If the white folk fight for thyself, and the Black folk for thyself, we gonna crumble apart. These are things that we gonna have to fight together. We got to fight in America for ALL the people ... and I'm perfectly willing to make this country what it have to be."

- Fannie Lou Hamer
1917-1977

Why WREE? Why Me?

MEET ANNA CRUZ, A WREE SISTER

by Elizabeth Murrell (Fax)

1954 was quite a year from beginning to end. The first atomic-powered submarine was launched in January; on March first five members of the House of Representatives were wounded by Puerto Rican independence supporters; Sen. Joseph McCarthy held the notorious hearings on alleged Communist influence in the army; racial segregation in public schools was officially declared illegal, violating the 14th Amendment. And on December 2 Sen. McCarthy was denounced by the Senate for contempt and insults to the Senate during army investigations, and Anna Cruz, a newlywed young woman in her twenties, arrived in New York City from Puerto Rico.

Life was not easy. The mother of four living children (3 girls and a boy), Anna worked in a laundry for 10 years where she became a union member. During this period Anna was the sole provider of her family. She even had to use some of her meager wages to pay baby sitters while she worked. After the birth of her youngest child, she found it necessary to go on welfare.

A fire in the tenement house in which she lived had the effect of activating Anna politically. She and four other tenant families decided to remain, and they were forced to take the landlord to court to get the necessary repairs made as a result of the fire.

Something worthwhile sometimes develops out of an adverse situation. After the fire and the positive court action undertaken by Anna and her neighbors, they decided to come together as an organized group. Thus a Tenants Association for 16th Street between 7th and 8th Avenues was born. As a result of this association's action, an irresponsible landlord was jailed and forced to live up to the law. The success of this first action encouraged many tenants. This small group then became active in the Chelsea Coalition for Housing, a larger neighborhood organization.

Anna continued her activities, and worked also with the Chelsea Intergency Council and Action Center. She became a member of the board of directors of the Mobilization for Youth Legal Services and of other affiliated organizations.

In 1977 Anna attended the historic first convention of WREE, held in Chicago, and became a member. Anna says this affiliation broadened her knowledge and understanding of the value of joint protest for women's rights. She could see more clearly the role that racism and classism played in housing and other spheres of life in the United States. Sadly she has witnessed the gentrification of her neighborhood—the departure of poor people, minorities, the elderly, “to God knows where.” Today children's voices are no longer heard playing games on West 15th and 16th Streets, old neighbors have been forced to move and the majority living there now are mostly the “moneyed yuppies,” she says.

Anna's activities did not stop with the tenants and neighborhood associations. She was active in the “Free Angela Davis Committee” and other progressive groups. In 1987 she was one of the WREE delegates attending the World Congress of Women, held in Moscow in June. This important congress was attended by more than 3000 women from every corner of the world, including little known countries and islands.

Anna returned home resolved to work even more zealously for WREE and other causes for the people.

Anna says that Angela Davis had been and continues to be an inspiration to her and to her children (she has 7 grandchildren). She has Angela's book at home and her children love it and constantly read it. This modest grandmother is a tireless worker for peace and justice and the rights of all women. She urges: “Women should join WREE as our goals are for all women regardless of race, religion, or class.”



NY WREE joins the “March for Racial Justice” in New York on January 18. Above: Sania Metzger, Sally Chaffee Maron, Joy James, Margo Nikitas, Naomi Schott, Berthal Leshinsky. Below: A daughter-mother team, Natalie and Rose Jones carry WREE banner to City Hall.

To All WREE Women! AMERICAN FAMILY CELEBRATION

Joyce Miller, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), announced plans for a major demonstration to be held in Washington, D.C.

Join us
In celebrating our families while

WORKING FOR CHANGE

“Family issues have always been a major priority in the labor movement,” Miller said. “This is not just a woman's issue, but a concern to all Americans. Action must be taken and our voices must be heard. THE AMERICAN FAMILY CELEBRATION: WORKING FOR A CHANGE will be hailed as a major step in that direction.”

Miller noted that the event will differ from most, calling it a “family gathering—part rally, part street fair, with entertainment for children as a special feature. It will be a day that the entire family can share.”

For more information, contact your local CLUW chapter or local WREE chapter.

- Family and Medical Leave • Comprehensive Health Care •
- Quality, Comprehensive Child Care • Economic Justice & Security •
- Services for the Elderly • Improved Educational Opportunities •

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Saturday, May 14, 1988
Noon-5 P.M.

Sylvan Theater

Near the Washington Monument

Bring the Family. Bring the Kids.

Food, Entertainment, Speakers, Games

CLUW's American Family Celebration: Working For Change



Anna Cruz (left) and some U.S. delegates to World Congress of Women in Moscow visited a sports stadium last June. With Anna are Lois McClendon, PA; Mary Reljic, IL; Jorgene Seleyo, PA; and Beryl Fitzpatrick, IN.

EDITORIAL



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Us in Today's World

In recognition of Black History Month and in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we have chosen to use a statement by Dr. Vincent Harding as the editorial for this month: it says what we feel is important to remember when commemorating Dr. King's birthday—that Dr. King was not a "dreamer" but a fighter: that his legacy is one of struggle and determination.

What shall we do with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.?

That may seem to be a strange question to raise about a man who has been dead almost 20 years and whose birthday we celebrate as a national legal holiday today. From one perspective, it would appear we've already done all that his friends, family and supporters were pressing for; we can now place him in the national pantheon of heroes and leave him there—formally honored and celebrated, but essentially ignored and denied.

This is the easy, undemanding thing to do with Dr. King now: Smooth away his very rough, nonconformist edges, deny the continuing relevance of his hard and challenging words and deeds, refuse to remember the disconcerting power of his calls to active, dangerous civil disobedience in the cause of peace, justice and social transformation. In other words, we can fantasize him into a kind, gentle and easily managed religious leader of a friendly crusade for racial integration.

Yet if we make such a choice we would not only demean and trivialize Dr. King's memory and meaning but also we would rob ourselves and our children of a magnificent opportunity to grapple with truth. To begin, we could face the fact that he was assassinated, gunned down before he was 40 years old, sacrificed to the violence he tried so hard to wean us from.

If we want to deal honestly with Dr. King and with our nation, we could tell our children—and admit to ourselves—that the man who was shot on the motel balcony in Memphis was not the same man who had stood in the pleasant sunlight at the March on Washington in 1963.

He had been changed by his own persistent search for truth. His concern for justice, his compassion for the poor, his commitment against war, his belief that Vietnamese, Russians and Cubans are no less children of the loving God than we are: all this had led him to become perhaps the most controversial—and J. Edgar Hoover thought, "the most dangerous"—national leader in this land.

The Martin Luther King of 1968 was calling for and leading civil disobedience campaigns against the unjust war in Vietnam. Courageously describing our nation as the "greatest purveyor of violence in the world today," he was urging us away from a dependence on military solutions. He was encouraging young men to refuse to serve in the military, challenging them not to support America's anti-Communist crusades, which were really destroying the hopes of poor nonwhite peoples everywhere.

This Martin Luther King was calling for a radical redistribution of wealth and political power in American society as a way to provide food, clothing, shelter, medical care, jobs, education and hope for all of our country's people.

Indeed, his last organizing action was an attempt to create what he called a "nonviolent revolutionary army" of the poor of all races—along with their friends of all colors and classes—to challenge the nation. He was convinced that this was the only way to turn his beloved America into a place where human compassion rather than fiscal profit would be the "bottom line."

This was the Martin Luther King who was assassinated in 1968. Indeed, many of us who worked with him are convinced that his increasingly challenging words, actions and intentions in those last years were central to why he was assassinated—not because he believed in black and white children holding hands.

Now we face the question: What shall we do with this Martin Luther King? Can we hold our children's hands and tell them about his last dreams for the eradication of poverty, for free medical care for all, for decent housing, for jobs and justice for all God's children? Can we look at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant and missile silos and Nicaragua and tell our children that Dr. King wanted us to see our brothers and sisters among Socialists, Communists, Democrats, Republicans, among all people and nations who were committed to working for peace?

Can we hold each other's hands, and, instead of asking, "Are you better off today than you were four years ago?" ask instead Dr. King's question: "Where are our brothers and sisters who are locked out, pressed down, broken, homeless, jobless, denied dignity—how can we really be better off until they are?"

In other words, what shall we do with Martin Luther King? Is he a true hero who challenges all of us to re-examine our individual and collective lives, commitments and goals? Or is he a dead public-relations symbol, a faint echo from an embarrassing past, an object of pious prayers, unthreatening stories and easy words?

Strangely enough, facinatingly enough, hopefully enough, the central question of his life or death is now in our hands. And it has become a question of our own life or death as well. For how we handle the fundamental human issues that obsessed Martin Luther King will largely determine not only his future as a hero but our own destiny as a nation.

Vincent Harding is an associate of the Rocky Mountain Peace Center in Boulder, Colo., and professor of religion and social transformation at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver. His article appeared on the Op Ed page of the N.Y. Times in January 1988, and is printed here with his permission.

In Memoriam

Statement presented at the Memorial for Harold Washington at the Mayor's Commission on Women's Affairs in Chicago.

The National Council and members of Women for Racial and Economic Equality want to express to the Commission on Women's Affairs and to all the people of Chicago our deep grief and sympathy on the untimely death of Mayor Harold Washington.

The death of Mayor Washington is felt as a sharp blow by women across our country who saw in Mayor Washington a true friend and supporter of equality for all people. Mayor Washington did more than all prior administrations in Chicago to promote and advance the contributions of women to the city, both in direct government appointments and in the communities. He understood that the progress of women is one of the best indexes of the progress of a society.

The ranks of the fighters for equality have been weakened beyond repair, but we know we join you in rededicating ourselves to struggle all the harder for the program for which Mayor Washington fought so well. The open government which he succeeded in bringing to Chicago has been like a fresh wind for millions of women and others who were essentially disenfranchised under the old machine system. They will not now give up what they fought so hard to win.

Women for Racial and Economic Equality is based on the idea that true equality for women cannot be separated from equality for those who have been the victims of racism and economic inequity. Jobs; child-care; health care; decent, affordable housing; quality education and a peaceful world in which to raise our children are all fundamental to women's equality. Mayor Harold Washington not only understood the unity of all struggles for equality, but provided inspired leadership to all who fight for this unity. We will miss him greatly.

WREE:

National and Editorial Office
130 East 16 Street
New York, NY 10003
(212-473-6111)

President:

Cheryl Craig

WREE Int'l Secretary
& WIDF Permanent
UN Representative:

Vinie Burrows

Membership Secretary:

Sally Chaffee Maron

The WREE-VIEW of WOMEN:
Editor: Norma Spector
Managing Editor: Margo Nikitas

HELP!! We Are Homeless

WREE has lost its lease (after 8 years) and is hunting desperately for new offices at a rent we can manage. We'll let you know our new address as soon as we know it!

Moving costs are staggering. Help WREE in this crisis. Any and all contributions most urgently needed.

WREE's Program of Activities and the Base of Our Work Is:

THE WOMEN'S BILL OF RIGHTS

1. The right to live in peace means nuclear disarmament, nonintervention by the U.S. in other countries, and an end to militarization of our economy and society.
2. The right to live in a peace-oriented society, redirecting the military budget to a budget for human needs and converting military production to civilian production.
3. The right to employment at a living wage, including affirmative action to end discrimination, equal pay for equal or comparable work; paid parental leave and safe working conditions.
4. The right to organize without interference into trade unions to enable the labor movement to represent the interest of all workers.
5. The right to a decent standard of living through Social Security benefits, pensions and a guaranteed income.
6. The right of every child to nurturing and full development including federally funded, nonracist, nonsexist childcare and public education from preschool through college.
7. The right to a federally funded national health care system, based on preventive medicine to include pre- and post-natal care, geriatrics, and industrial medicine.
8. The right to reproductive freedom including federally funded birth control and abortion upon demand, sex education, and an end to experimentation and sterilization abuse.
9. The right to live in decent affordable housing including government-funded construction and subsidies.
10. The right to a safe environment, free from toxic wastes and industrial pollution.
11. The right to a culture that reflects our multinational history and multilingual character and to a society free from racist and sexist violence and degrading images of women.
12. The right to participate fully in the democratic process guaranteed by the Constitution, especially the right to vote.

Plays for Children

by Pamela Houston

Plays that focus on social issues have long been absent from the world of children's theater. WREE sister Paula Bower, a Manhattan elementary school teacher, is working to remedy this situation. To date, she has written several exciting plays for children to act in and see, on topics such as apartheid, Fannie Lou Hamer, and the Howard Beach (NY) racist murder.

Bower believes that it is essential for children to come to terms with issues of racism, oppression, and injustice. Many people fear, however, that the very young are unprepared to cope with such complex and serious subjects. This does not have to be true, Bower says, if we help children to assimilate the issues on their own level, in ways that are easy for them to understand. Bower sees drama as an especially good medium for accomplishing this goal. Acting helps the children to visualize the issues and thus make them more concrete.

Rehearsing the children is an important part of the communication process, says Bower. She stops to ask the children how they think they might feel if they were in the shoes of the play's characters, living under apartheid, for example. She asks them to explore what they think would be good solutions to the problems of injustice. Bringing in the ideas of Martin Luther King, Jr., she tries to help them see why simplistic solutions to racism are ineffective.

Paula Bower has had her plays performed by and for first and second graders in the New York City public schools, particularly as part of the Black History Month celebration. She has also put on performances of the play "Apartheid Is Bad" at City College. The same play has been videotaped for Channel 6 Cable Television. It has been aired as an educational film geared toward teachers.

Response to her plays is "extremely enthusiastic," she says, from students, teachers, and parents alike. Parents have either agreed with the political message behind the plays, or have been unfamiliar with the issues. In this latter case, the plays have served as a vehicle for stimulating parental, as well as stu-



Paula Bower

dent, involvement. Some opposition to the plays has come, however, in the form of a ban on the Black History Month celebration. The new district superintendent apparently feels that this activity detracts from the primary goal of promoting academic achievement. This is not an opinion shared by Bower and many other educators. Momentum is currently being gathered to reverse this decision.

Paula Bower would like other educators and people with children's groups to have access to her plays. They have proved valuable educational tools, especially since there are limited resources for children with regard to dealing with social issues, racism and other social problems. The plays are also not subject to strict interpretation and can be adapted for diverse skills and age levels. Anyone desiring access to the various plays can write to Paula Bower, 625 Linden Ave., Teaneck, N.J. 07666.

FANNIE LOU HAMER

BY PAULA BOWER

Act I

(A sign says "Sunflower County, Mississippi, Court House")

Fannie Lou Hamer: My name is Fannie Lou Hamer. I want to register to vote.

Clerks: If you want to register to vote, you must pass this test.

(They hand her a thick pack of papers, a literacy test.)

Narrators: Fannie Lou Hamer could not pass the test. She went to school for only 6 years. There were 20 children in her family. They worked hard picking cotton 12 hours a day.

Clerks: You did not pass the test. You cannot register to vote. Now go away!

(Fannie Lou Hamer looks sad. She turns and looks at the narrators.)

Narrators: When Fannie Lou Hamer went back to work, her boss said,

Boss: I don't want Black people to vote. You're fired!

Narrators: Because of Fannie Lou Hamer and her friends, a new law was passed. Then it was easier to register to vote.



Act II

(A cardboard bus is in front of the narrators and other children. The narrators are in front, the other passengers are behind them. They all face the audience.)

Narrators: In 1963 Black people had to sit in the back of the bus when they rode from state to state. The Freedom Riders said,

Freedom Riders (narrators and other passengers): We want to sit together on the bus! (They all turn at once facing the front of the bus. They walk along, holding the cardboard bus. They sing.) Black and white together (to the tune of We Shall Overcome).

Prejudiced people: Go away. Go away. (They throw paper rocks at the bus.) (Freedom Riders stop at the bus stations. The station managers hold a sign which says WINONA, MISSISSIPPI. BUS STATION. WHITES ONLY. The Freedom Riders sit down in the station.)

Station Managers: Get out of here! Can't you read this sign?

Freedom Riders: We're tired. We have the right to be here. We will not go away!

Station Managers: Then we will call the police. (They pretend to call the police.)

Police: (Come running with night sticks.) This station is for white people only. Get out of here or we will arrest you!

Freedom Riders: We will not go away!

Police: Then you are under arrest!

Freedom Riders: (sing) We shall not, we shall not be moved. (3X)

Just like a tree that's standing by the water,
We shall not be moved.

(Police hold up cardboard which has bars on it like a jail. They pull the Freedom Riders from the bus station over to the jail. They pretend to beat the Freedom Riders with their night sticks. When they get to the jail the Freedom Riders sing)

Freedom Riders: We are not afraid (to the tune of We Shall Overcome)

(Fannie Lou Hamer stands a little bit away from the other people so the audience can see the police beat her. She falls to the floor and the police continue to pretend to hit her.)

Narrators: Fannie Lou Hamer was hurt very badly. Because of Fannie Lou Hamer and her friends, a new law was passed. Black people and white people could sit together on the bus when they rode from state to state.

Act III

(Turn the cardboard bus around so it now says NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION, 1964. The narrators hold the sign and the crowd is in the back right behind the narrators. Fannie Lou Hamer comes up with a few other people.)

Fannie Lou Hamer: We want to come to this convention.

Crowd: NO! NO!

Fannie Lou Hamer: We work hard from morning to night. But the boss doesn't pay us much money. Our children are hungry. When we want to vote they take away our jobs. When we want to sit with our friends on the bus, they take us to jail and beat us. I am sick and tired of being sick and tired! We want our freedom NOW! We want good schools and good jobs. We want to vote. We want to be mayors, congressmen, and governors. We want our freedom NOW!

Narrators: Because of Fannie Lou Hamer and her friends, Black people from Mississippi went to the next convention. Black people can register to vote. Black people are mayors and congressmen. Thank you, Fannie Lou Hamer.

One child: Please help us sing Fannie Lou Hamer's favorite song, "This Little Light of Mine."

All: (Sing 2 verses of This Little Light of Mine.)

This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine (3X)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

We've got the light of freedom
We're gonna let it shine. (3X)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

National Women's History Month will be observed in thousands of communities and classrooms this March with the theme, "Reclaiming the Past, Rewriting the Future." For the past 10 years city councils, state governors, and the Congress of the United States have joined local school districts in proclaiming March as National Women's History Month.

"Just a decade ago, the idea of women's history was virtually unknown in most schools," said Mary Ruthsdotter, co-founder of the National Women's History Month. "When we first went to our school board in 1977 with the idea for a Women's History Week they thought it was a good idea, but asked if there was really enough to say to fill a whole week." The re-emergence of interest in women's history has proven that there is, in fact, a wealth of history ready to be rediscovered. Multi-cultural women's history expands the traditional focus of attention. It includes the outstanding individuals and events that have contributed greatly to the development of this nation. It also includes the information that has been handed down from our own grandmothers and great-grandmothers about the daily lives of women and their families as they lived through the various periods of American history.

A decade ago most school children would have told you that women had never been great scientists, artists, musicians, athletes, business operators, or successfully involved in politics or community affairs. Today, children of all ages are much more aware of the many contributions women have made to the development of this nation throughout its history. Consequently, children of the eighties, both girls and boys, perceive a much wider range of possibilities open to them as adults. Those possibilities are based more than ever on individual talents and preferences, rather than rigid, gender-typical choices.

The efforts of educators and historians throughout the country to "Reclaim the Past" will have an impact on us all. Every field of endeavor—arts, sciences, business, athletics, technology, politics and community involvement—will expand and grow as males and females of the next generation apply their multiple skills and talents to "Rewrite the Future." For more information and materials: National Women's History Project, PO Box 3716, Santa Rosa, CA 95402, or call (707)526-5974.

Being Female in 1988

One Teenage View

by Kyle York Spencer

Recently, I was at a high school party and a boy came and sat down next to me. We began to talk. I was animated because I was having a good time.

"You're a bit hyper," he said. "My girlfriend's hyper. Sometimes I have to give her a smack to calm her down." He smiled. Then he laughed, saying, "She always thanks me. She knows I'm right."

After my initial shock, I hastily responded that I surely didn't need a beating and I walked away. His words had angered me; yet somehow I wasn't entirely angry at him because I reasoned that someone somewhere had given him the signal that it was acceptable and appropriate to say this. I pitied him and I pitied the girls who were attracted to him. Why hadn't someone confronted this guy before he met me? Why didn't I confront him?

I find it easy to blame men for many of the difficulties women face today. Certainly, men who make sexist jokes, label all women as "ditzes," weak, and irrational, and view women as sexual conquests are not our friends. Moreover, women reinforce this behavior when they laugh at these jokes, accept these labels without question, and let men take advantage of them. These women speak, and, whether we like it or not, they speak for us. These women are telling men, "Hey, it's okay!"

When I look at my unpleasant experience with that guy who felt the need to hit his girlfriend when she was "hyper," I am again reminded that we women are to blame too.

At 17, I feel as though I am waking from a deep sleep because I am becoming increasingly aware of the many innuendos of male talk. Frankly, I find it extremely disturbing. There are too



many degrading comments about women present in the everyday speech of so many males, degrading comments that we readily laugh at and shrug off as "cute." But as women it's our obligation not to ignore these comments, but rather to stand up and say, "No, I won't accept that!"

This is difficult, though, especially for those of us who are younger, and less secure. It's awkward to interrupt a conversation by announcing that a comment was really anti-woman. Plus it takes a lot of guts, especially when you're the only one who recognizes it. Furthermore, many men deny the hidden meanings of these subtly sexist remarks.

By remaining passive in these instances we may be more popular around certain men. But we're also failing to stand up for ourselves. This weakness is precisely why so many men persist in subtle and not so subtle sexist behavior. By not asserting ourselves we women are continually placed in the subservient role. By allowing these "putdowns" we

deny ourselves and our self-worth. We will continue to perpetuate these problems if we don't act now. For those of us who are still young and are preparing for the competitive workforce, it's even more important to be assertive. By asserting ourselves now, realizing, "Hey, we don't need to take that," and acknowledging our self-importance we can more effectively fight for economic and social equality in our future.

So the next time you are faced with one of these unpleasant situations do yourself and your fellow sisters a favor. Don't accept it. Stand up and clearly denounce the words as an insult to females, and acknowledge to yourself that you don't deserve that treatment.



Student Essay Contest

A high school student essay contest seeking suggestions for constructive approaches to problems of U.S.-Soviet relations has recently been announced by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.

The topic title is "What Cooperative Projects Between the United States and the Soviet Union Would You Propose to Help End the Nuclear Arms Race?"

The contest is open to all high school students. Prizes to be awarded are: 1st Prize \$1500; 2nd Prize \$1000; and 3rd Prize \$500. All essays must be submitted by May 15, 1988! These prizes will be awarded July 31. The winning essays will be published by the Foundation and will be made widely available for use by newspapers, magazines and broadcasting networks.

Essays will be judged on the basis of knowledge of subject matter, originality of ideas, development of point of view, insight, clarity of expression, organization, and grammar. The 1000-1500 word essays should be sent to: Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, 1187 Coast Village Road, Suite 123, Santa Barbara, Ca. 93108.



Other Options?

THINKING OF JOINING THE ARMED SERVICES?

by Natalie Jones

As a female veteran of the Armed Services, I have been asked to speak to you about whether the military is an appropriate option for young women.

The paramount issue is the reality that the military is required to enforce the foreign policy dictates of the current administration. What that can mean for a member of the armed services is that she could become either directly or indirectly responsible—in war or "peace"—for the deaths of innocent people and the destruction of their property and land.

Many people, including myself, have chosen to serve in the Coast Guard because (although during time of war the Coast Guard becomes part of, and serves alongside of, the Navy) in peace time the Coast Guard's primary missions have been search and rescue, aids to navigation, environmental protection, and drug interdiction. Unfortunately, due in part to federal budget cuts, the Coast Guard has been more aggressively pursuing its military readiness role. Consequently, joining the Coast Guard in the hope that one could serve in a primarily humanitarian branch of the armed forces is quickly becoming less of an option.

If you have been contemplating service in the armed forces, you face one of the most serious questions you will ever have to ask yourself. Because of its importance, I will restate what I believe to be the fundamental question:

Do you ever want to face the possibility of being either directly or indirectly responsible for the injury or death of another person or for the destruction of their world?

You might be saying to yourself, "Women aren't allowed in combat, so I don't have to be concerned." While that is currently true, it may not always be the case; and although women aren't allowed in combat, they are deeply involved in combat-support jobs. This places them squarely in a position to share responsibility for the actions of the military.

You may not realize it now, but you do have many options for your future; the Service is only one. Have you talked with people about the Service and the other options available to you? Have you talked with family, friends, teachers, and/or guidance counselors? Have you talked with people in the Service (not recruiters)? And, more importantly, with people no longer in the Service?

If you would like to speak with me, you can contact me through the WREE office.

If you cannot find anyone to talk to or if you need more information to make your decision, I hope that the following discussion of the common reasons young people go into the Service and the realities they need to be apprised of will help.

In my experience, young people go into the Service for one of more of the following:

- to get away from home
- to learn a skill
- to get money for school
- to travel and gain experience

If you are going into the Service to get away from home, I cannot state strongly enough that personal problems are typically not alleviated by the Service. They are magnified!

The following points are important to consider for anyone contemplating joining the Service, especially for someone trying to get away from personal problems. After leaving boot camp, depending upon the branch of Service you are in, you have about a 50-50 chance—or less—of going to a job that will interest and motivate you.

Going to a job that's interesting and motivating helps you keep track of your personal goals, as well as giving you the confidence and positive outlook to follow through with them. Going to a job that's boring, or a deadend, can distract you from your goals by negatively affecting your attitude and confidence. For anyone going into this situation without well-defined goals, the results can be devastating.

Boredom and unhappiness under any circumstances can lead to trouble.

What I've seen it lead to in the military are alcohol and discipline problems, which can lead to a less-than-honorable discharge and to unwanted pregnancies.

Many of these problems can be avoided by:

- knowing what you want from the Service;
- recognizing that if you don't get what you want immediately, you can try other avenues or make the best of where you are;
- recognizing the power of peer pressure. If the people around you are negative, bored, and unhappy, don't spend your free time with them. They will move you away from your goals;
- recognizing that the military is not in operation for your personal benefit. If your goals coincide with theirs, you could get what you want. If your goals don't coincide, you will have to work just that much harder to make sure you come away with something of value for you.

Please take the time necessary to research, discuss, and think seriously about this decision. Once you have enlisted, the decision of whether to stay in or leave the Service is no longer in your hands.

Child Abuse, Animal Abuse, and Criminality

A psychological Triad of Violence

By Mary K. Rodwell

One might ask why a person with a long history of work in child welfare finds herself in the midst of an issue dear to the hearts of those concerned with animal welfare. Cruelty to animals and child protection at first do not appear to have much in common, but our activist histories have overlapped before and appear to have the potential of doing so again. In 1874, The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) took action on behalf of Mary Ellen Wilson, a young child who was being brutally mistreated by her father and stepmother.

The officials removed the child from her home on the grounds that she was an animal in need of protection. This action of the ASPCA was the beginning of a national crusade against child abuse.

Today our paths are again crossing, based on a concern that somehow there is a connection between child abuse and cruelty to animals. My interest in a possible relationship grew from the results of a small research project designed to define severely emotionally disturbed children. Consistently, professionals and families told us of children's bizarre behavior toward small animals. This was sometimes found in conjunction with violence against other persons such as smaller children, peers, parents, and therapists. One child burned a cat and was found attempting to smother a baby. Another child had a habit of choking cats and setting fires. Still another covered cats with towels and stomped on them. This child also hit and bit his siblings. Injuring dogs with firecrackers was sometimes combined with threats to kill parents or therapists.

Interestingly, many of the children had been removed from their homes, and adopted by other families because they had been abused. Others, while still with biological parents, were in treatment because of having been victims of abuse. This led me to think that there might be a link between the abuse of a child, the child's abuse of animals, and the potential for that child, as an adult, to abuse others.

Few scientific studies have focused on the connection between cruelty to animals and aggression against humans and many of those have produced mixed results. One report tells of the historical recognition of a link between cruelty to animals and other forms of violent, antisocial behavior. According to the researchers, serial murders are highly correlated with animal abuse, usually before age 25.

One of the earliest studies found a high correlation between violent crimes and cruelty to animals, fire setting, and bedwetting. Others tested this violent crime triad with sex offenders, finding slightly different results. For them, one or more of the triad of animal cruelty, fire setting, and bedwetting was related to a highly abusive home environment. I, too, unwittingly discovered that abuse by parents is related to a child's cruelty to animals which, if not curtailed, can lead to violence toward people.

Many reasons can exist for adult cruelty to animals: a need to control the animal's behavior; retaliation for the animal's behavior; hatred or fear of the animal; the need to shock, impress, or retaliate against other humans. If these cruel behaviors were to occur in isolation, intervention aimed at stopping the acts and charging the adult with a criminal act deserving of punishment would probably be sufficient to stop the abuse. But the abuse of animals does not appear to occur in isolation. Data indicate that adult animal abusers (and aggressive criminals) have had five or more childhood acts of cruelty to animals. Animal abuse seems to start in early childhood and, if not stopped, carries on into adulthood. Adults and children who abuse seem to share a history. This history is one of parental neglect, brutality, or rejection. They grow up not caring about animals or humans, con-



"Bernie" was a 6-week-old kitten when he was found critically burned by an adolescent boy. Veterinarians had to perform skin grafts.

vinced of their own lack of worth, and not capable of recognizing the worth of animals. They may victimize animals and other humans out of need to escape being a victim themselves. Rather than ignoring their behavior, making excuses for their history of family problems, and overlooking the possible connection between family violence, violence to animals, and subsequent aggression against people, we must act for our own protection. By protecting children and animals from abuse, we may be protecting ourselves.

Those who work in child and animal protection must join together. This collaboration should begin by increasing support for more research. The linkages between violence to animals and violence to humans must be defined more clearly, and ways to prevent such violence discovered. Efforts must be made to educate the public about the connections. Cruelties

against animals committed either by children or adults should never be overlooked. Most importantly, none of us should remain silent about what we might see. Know what laws exist, and use them to intervene in any instance of maltreatment.

Elimination of violence in American society is probably the only way to truly prevent mistreatment of both people and animals. We can begin by trying to break the cycle that connects children with abuse, and abused children with aggression against animals and people.

Mary K. Rodwell teaches at Virginia Commonwealth in Richmond, Va. A longer version of this article first appeared in "For the Animals," Vol. 1, No. 1, newsletter of People for Animal Rights.

Is This Related to the Story Above?

Perhaps using small animals for experiments in labs hardens some doctors to the suffering of small babies in hospitals. Informal estimates by concerned doctors and nurses indicate that physicians withhold anesthesia in half (!) of all major surgery performed on prematurely born infants, according to an article by Earl Ubell in *Parade*.

Dr. Fritz Berry, specialist in pediatric anesthesiology at the Children's Medical Center at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, says, "With new techniques, we can anesthetize preemies as we do any patient with an unstable circulatory system. But some doctors fear that if given anesthesia, these children will die."

Studies done at Children's Hospital in Boston show that killing their pain may help these babies live. Doctors gave one group of babies a muscle relaxant plus nitrous oxide, a mild anesthetic. The others received fentanyl, which puts patients to sleep. They found that the latter group had fewer problems with breathing and heart stability; that without full anesthesia, the babies experienced great stress and pain.

Despite these findings, many doctors continue to withhold anesthesia because as Dr. David Swerdlow, Children's Hospital in Philadelphia, says: "We really have no way of knowing just how much is really safe and effective too. It is better to survive and perhaps feel discomfort than die and not feel any discomfort."

How many mothers would allow their baby's body to be cut open without deadening the pain? But, as of now, no law compels a doctor to follow the wishes of an infant's parents. If the doctor feels that anesthesia might impose too great a risk, the anesthetic will be withheld.

To the Editor:

Your article on infant pain and its belated recognition by the medical community (*Science Times*, Nov. 24) suggests that unanesthetized surgery has been limited to newborns and that the practice had largely ended by the late 1970's. However, surveys of medical professionals indicate that as recently as 1986 infants as old as 15 months were receiving no anesthesia during surgery at most American hospitals.

Nor has unanesthetized surgery been the only pediatric practice to expose infants to excruciating pain. Postoperative pain relief and analgesia for severe burns, cancer and similarly painful conditions have also been widely withheld from babies and small children.

The indifference of practitioners to their patients' pain has been especially prevalent in neonatal intensive-care nurseries, where analgesia is frequently omitted during such procedures as surgical insertion of chest tubes, arterial catheterization and intubation — procedures for which adults would demand and receive pain relief.

Research now indicates that infants not only feel the severe pain of such procedures, but they can also be

Two dogs were bludgeoned and shot by officers of the Metropolitan Topeka Airport Authority (MTAA) at Forbes Field in Topeka, Kan. on June 6 in order to prevent President Reagan and his wife Nancy from viewing the dogs mating, reports *The Nation* magazine. The two dogs, one black and one grey, were mating in the tall grass off to the side of a taxiway, at least 2,000 feet from the runway on which Air Force One was scheduled to land that day. An anonymous witness saw two MTAA officers approach the dogs; the witness told *The Topeka Capital-Journal* that "I could see the officers from the knees up. I saw the uniformed officer, with the full force of a large man, strike these dogs [with nightsticks or hammers] about five or six times." The officers returned over an hour later, shot the two dogs, loaded them into the back of a truck, and then incinerated the bodies. MTAA deputy director Marvin Hancock stated that the Secret Service, in an apparent effort to preserve the decorum of the Presidential arrival, had ordered airport security personnel "to get them [the dogs] out of there." Attempts to separate the copulating dogs had failed, said Hancock; "Since we had Air Force One on final [approach], we had to dispose of the animals," he said. Appearances, rather than safety, seemed to be the operational priority among airport security and Secret Service agents that day, as the dogs posed no danger whatsoever to the President or anyone else. A local resident, Emily Maack of Topeka, told reporters that she suspected the slaughtered dogs may have been her two farm dogs, Speck and Lady, who had been missing for several weeks. In his article in the October 3 issue of *The Nation*, Alexander Cockburn examines the incident in depth as an example of "instilled veneration to authority". Reflects Cockburn, "... we would do well to ponder the implications of the saga, for it spells out in homely syntax the social and spiritual consequences of the imperial presidency and of the Rambo culture engendered in the Reagan era."

The ANIMALS' AGENDA
DECEMBER 1987

The New York Times

damaged by it physically and perhaps psychologically. A major reason why these cruel and dangerous practices have gone unchallenged for so long is that parents have not been told about them. The consent forms parents sign to authorize surgery and other invasive procedures do not mention the possibility that pain relief might be withheld, and physicians rarely volunteer this information.

For centuries, the Roman Catholic Church, with its strong right-to-life ethic, has maintained that surgery without pain relief was such an extreme treatment that it could be justifiably refused, even if the alternative was death. Nevertheless, for decades physicians have inflicted such treatment on infants without knowledge or consent of their families.

Physicians may, as you say, claim that they withheld pain relief from infants for "the purest of reasons." However, they have apparently not felt comfortable enough with either their methods or motives to discuss them with parents who may have had a different perspective on what constituted their children's best interests.

HELEN HARRISON
Berkeley, Calif., Nov. 27, 1987

The writer is author of "The Premature Baby Book."



INF Treaty a First Step — but Necessary!

A nationwide coalition of 111 major organizations, including WREE, has strongly endorsed the U.S.-Soviet agreement to eliminate short and intermediate range land-based nuclear missiles.

The coalition, which includes many of the nation's major religious, labor, environmental, citizen, and arms control organizations representing millions of Americans, applauded the INF Treaty for advancing the mutual security interests of both nations.

The joint statement reflects broad grassroots support for a major nuclear arms agreement—and represents a groundswell of people's demand for the INF Treaty as a first step toward a world free of nuclear weapons.

The coalition members, many of whom opposed previous Reagan administration nuclear weapons plans, intend to work with key Senate leaders and the administration to mobilize public and congressional support for the treaty.

We strongly endorse the Reagan Administration's agreement with the Soviet Union to eliminate intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe. The resulting treaty, which will eliminate all intermediate-range nuclear missiles, advances the mutual security interests of the United States and the Soviet Union.

We applaud the precedent that this agreement will create—a treaty signed by a Republican administration, certified by that administration as mutually advantageous and adequately verifiable, and approved by a Democratic-led Senate. Such a treaty will enhance the prospects for future and more significant agreements that would substantially reduce the huge stockpiles of strategic nuclear weapons. We intend to mobilize public and congressional support for the treaty.

Even as we endorse the INF agreement, we will work to ensure that this treaty not be used as a smokescreen for abandoning existing U.S.-Soviet agreements on strategic weapons, particularly the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, for moving toward deployment of a Star Wars system or for slackening the endeavor to complete successfully the negotiations on the central strategic nuclear arms systems that gravely threaten the world.

Without limits on strategic offensive and defensive weapons, an INF agreement can be easily circumvented by replacing the destroyed weapons with new strategic weapons. We urge therefore that the administration utilize the INF Treaty as a step toward agreement on strategic nuclear weapons and space weaponry.

Major individual signers include United Steelworkers of American President Lynn Williams, League of Women Voters President Nancy Neuman, Sierra Club Chairman Michael McCloskey, Committee for National Security Founder Paul Warnke, YWCA President Glendora Putnam, National Council of Jewish Women President Lenore Feldman.



The WREE VIEW of WOMEN page 6

The "Legislative Bulletin" of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) points out that "the treaty must be ratified by the Senate. The Armed Services, Foreign Relations, and Select Intelligence committees will be holding hearings. The treaty may not get to the Senate floor until March, so there is very little time to strategize and follow up on both your senators.

"We know already that there is some support for the treaty in the Senate, which includes moderately conservative Republicans. What we don't want is passage of—or even a decent level of support for—"killer" amendments which would gut or otherwise cause the Soviets to repudiate the whole treaty. Such amendments are almost certain to be introduced by hard core rightwingers.

"With all these issues, the arguments for and against, we need to educate ourselves, our communities, and our congresspeople. Council for a Livable World and Physicians for Social Responsibility are already working on packets of materials we can all use."



RADIO PROGRAM FOR/BY/ABOUT WOMEN

Is there a distinctly "women's" approach to working for nuclear disarmament? What in their common experience compels women to seek each other out as allies? Public radio producers Helene Rosenbluth and Nan Rubin explore this

moving question in an exciting new 2-part radio series "Women's Summit for Peace."

In June 1987 they travelled to the Soviet Union for the World Congress of Women, a follow-up to the tremendously successful International Women's Conference held in Nairobi. Over 3000 women from 160 countries attended the congress. The sole issue: *women and disarmament*.

Recorded in Moscow, these remarkable half-hour programs look behind the question of *what* women are doing for disarmament, to focus on *why* this issue is so important. "We came to see that women share a similar outlook, a special commitment to making the world safe from nuclear disaster," said Rosenbluth. "It is this unique women's approach that is reflected in 'Women's Summit for Peace.'"

Part one, "The Global Approach," presents a powerful range of these experiences, as women from such diverse societies as Turkey, Great Britain, Czechoslovakia, Zimbabwe and the United States reveal the depth of their commitment to work for a safer world.

Part two, "The Soviet Connection" takes a closer look at the unofficial ties growing between Soviet women and women from the United States. Rosenbluth recalls, "We saw that women from both the Soviet Union and the United States are aggressively creating opportunities to meet each other. This interaction is becoming an important factor in changing the image of who we are dealing with at the negotiating table." "We are not going to change each others' society," states Zoya Zarubina of Moscow, "but we can coexist. We must. We have no alternative."

"Women's Summit for Peace" will be available for broadcast on International Women's Day, March 8, 1988. It will be distributed free to public radio stations both on tape and over the public radio satellite system.

For further information, contact; Nan Rubin, Project Director, P.O. Box 18755, Denver CO 80218, 303/830-7737.

MIDEAST WOMEN UNITE FOR PEACE IN GULF

The insane 7-year Iran-Iraq war is bleeding those countries to death. The Reagan administration supports first one side, then the other—with military hardware, intelligence reports, diplomatic aid, and now warships and bombs in direct violation of the War Powers Act. U.S. ships in the Gulf and N. Arabian Sea are believed to be carrying nuclear missiles!

Any day, any minute, the Persian Gulf could erupt into a massive conflagration and the U.S. Congress is not moving to prevent it.

The War Powers Act requires the President to inform Congress within 48 hours of any action "he" takes that involves our armed forces—not even the whole Congress, just members of the armed services and foreign policy committees. The Act then allows Congress to decide if U.S. forces can remain for 60 or 90 days.

Weak as it is, the Act bothers Reagan; he cannot tolerate any legal or constitutional restrictions of his agenda. But that dangerous Act weakens, restricts, and undermines the constitutional mandate that only Congress may declare war.

Our sister organizations in the Middle East—transcending the madness of their own irresponsible government—have issued a joint statement on the Gulf war and point the direction for the unity needed by all the peoples of the Middle East.

We, the representatives of the women of Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Turkey, Pakistan, and Israel express our deepest concern about the continuation of the Iran-Iraq war and its dangerous consequences.

U.S. imperialism is using the Iran-Iraq war as an excuse — which threatens the safe flow of ships in the Persian Gulf, and might lead to the possible involvement of other Gulf states in the war — to stabilize its permanent presence in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. At the same time, the U.S. imperialism and its allies in Western Europe and Israel create the conditions for the continuation of the Iran-Iraq war by selling arms to both sides. Scandalous disclosure of the *Irangate* affair demonstrated but a small part of the hypocritical policy of the United States towards the Persian Gulf war.

The shipping of millions of dollars worth of the U.S.-made arms to such countries as Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey is another step in the direction of protecting the imperialist interests of the arms manufacturing concerns at the expense of the deprived people of these countries.

We, the signatories of this joint statement expressly demand:

- An end to the destructive Iran-Iraq war and beginning of negotiations for the settlement of the present conflicts.
- An end to the U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf and the Indian ocean.
- An end to the process of militarization of Pakistan, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia.
- Turkey's membership in the NATO military pact and the presence of dozens of U.S. military bases in that country constitutes a direct threat against all people and the national liberation movements in that region. We demand that the U.S. bases in Turkey be dismantled.

Democratic Organization of Iranian Women
Democratic Union of Pakistani Women
Democratic Organization of Saudi Arabian Women
Democratic Women's Movement in Israel
Iraqi Women's League
Organization of Democratic Women in Turkey



Palestinian Women Organize Under Occupation

The following article was written before the current wave of Palestinian strikes and resistance to the Israeli occupation and the deadly replies of Israeli guns and bullets. But even before these actions, life under the occupation was violent and oppressive. How do our sisters in Gaza and the West Bank cope with their oppression? Jane Power writes from her one-to-one talks with Palestinian women in the Occupied Territories. Her article is a brief picture of women struggling to maintain their families and their unity.

by Jane Power

For people who have spent all their lives in the USA, foreign occupation can be hard to picture: our last overlords were the British. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the 20 years of occupation by Israeli forces has a daily impact on the lives of Palestinian women and the work of their organizations. Imagine yourself and the people you love in this situation—and see the difference a strong women's organization can make.

Life Under Occupation

Young men in uniform, carrying automatic rifles, saunter through your streets. At any time they can arbitrarily demand your identity card. If your answers aren't properly submissive, they may beat you, humiliate you, arrest you. Or, if they're nervous (remember, most of them are very young), they may shoot you dead. You know it can happen, because from time to time it does.

If you have a child even 7 or 8 years old, you know she or he may any day be taken from school, from home, from the street, to be detained, interrogated, perhaps beaten, kept with a black bag over the head, shot. For what offense? Showing your national flag, being nearby when someone throws a stone, being on the street. A whole prison is full of teenaged boys.

If anyone in your family is accused even of throwing a stone, soldiers may come at any hour to seal up your house or blow it up or bulldoze it. It doesn't matter how many generations your family has lived in this house, or how long you saved up to build it. "We have to do it without waiting for a trial," explains the U.S.-born Israeli civil rights officer. "If we didn't do it at once, they wouldn't see the cause and effect."

As for cultural life, your newspapers are tightly censored, the radio and television stations are Israeli. Your uni-



A Palestinian family near their ruined house

versities are closed on any pretext for months each year.

Palestinian women under occupation still suffer their own society's heritage of limited opportunities for education and thus for work. At the same time, by expelling the farmers from their land, the Israeli occupation has shattered the economic base of that society.

For most employed Palestinians,

men or women, hours are very long, wages very low. There's no social security or health insurance—and health care, where it's available at all, is very costly. There's no child care or public kindergarten system. The children suffer: almost one baby in 20 dies before its first birthday.

Building a New Independence

For a decade broad organizations of

grassroots committees have brought together urban and village women and women who, driven from their homes, live in refugee camps.

Starting in 1978 with what is now the Federation of Palestinian Women's Work Committees (FPWWC), four major federations of Palestinian women have developed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Because they respond to the similar needs of members, their programs are similar. They are both nationalist and feminist.

Palestinian women want more ability to learn about and analyze events and more occupational choice, so they want to be able to read and write. They want vocational training—secretarial skills or handicrafts—so they can contribute to their family budget. They want access to health care, and they want to know how to keep their families healthy—and they want a little time to themselves. They want help in securing the necessities of life on pathetically inadequate budgets. They want labor rights in the workplace and democratic rights in the unions. They want to develop as human beings, as Palestinians, and as women.

Organizing Under Occupation

Coordinating their efforts, the federations operate literacy and vocational classes, nurseries, and kindergartens. They organize doctors, nurses, and other health workers who volunteer to spend their days off in villages giving examinations and care. They set up buying programs for medicines and basic necessities. Jointly, they celebrate International Women's Day, and they reach out to create bonds with feminist, liberation, and philanthropic groups around the world.

How does a women's union look? A large house in a West Bank suburb of Jerusalem holds a day care center of the FPWWC, the oldest and largest of the women's unions—a large and well-established representative of the many spread throughout the occupied territories. Inside the one-story stone building, a swarm of toddlers in red-and-white smocks are learning colors, hygiene and their own personal value as human beings.

Centers like this one, and the organization that operates it, frighten the Israeli occupying authorities—with good reason, for here the women and children of an occupied people are building self-respect and practicing the skills that will enable them to live as equals in modern society.

Force vs. Organization

But the Israeli forces still have the physical power. Recently they expelled the husband of one women's committee leader for being a trade union organizer.

Another leader, pregnant with her first child, was imprisoned last February and mistreated so badly that she lost her baby; she was kept in prison without medical care for another three weeks.

Amnesty International has taken up the case of Amal Wahdan, who has not been allowed to leave her West Bank town since July 1986. Wahdan is on the national board of FPWWC, and both she and her husband (also under town arrest) have been very active in their trade unions.

Public employees feel another form of pressure. A FPWWC member and teachers' union leader has been permanently dismissed from the schools run by the military occupation forces—which employ 80% of employed West Bank teachers.

Faced with occupation, tradition, and repression, the Palestinian women's movement in the occupied territories has taken the initiative. With only need, determination, and principles, they are building democracy and self-reliance and solidarity.

URGENT CABLE FROM WIDF — ACTION NEEDED

WOMEN FOR RACIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY
130 EAST 16 STREET
NEW YORK NY 10003

APPEAL RED CROSS TAKE URGENT MEASURES TO FIND WHEREABOUTS THIRTY CHILDREN ABDUCTED FROM DUHAISHA PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMPS BY ISRAELI MILITARY.
PROTEST AGAINST MASS MURDERS AND BEATINGS OF PALESTINIANS.
DEMAND LIFT CURFEW.
SUPPORT PALESTINIANS LEGITIMATE RIGHT TO HOMELAND.

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION

NICARAGUA

I haven't seen your Land
but I have seen the deer
Cold and beautiful
by the roadside
I haven't seen your Land
but I have seen
The children
Selling themselves for cigarettes
in Colombia
I haven't seen your Land
But I have seen hunger's death grin
In my house
and in my mother's eyes

I haven't seen your Land
but I have seen fear and hurt and wonder
In young faces
I haven't seen your Land
I haven't seen lonely flowers
and mountains covered with red birds
I haven't seen your Land
Yet more and more
I can see nothing else.

Lenny Cohen
New York City

Sanctions Against S. Africa — NOW!

Last year, Congress passed limited sanctions against South Africa over President Reagan's veto. While this was a victory made possible by tremendous grassroots pressure, it still fell far short of what is really needed: *comprehensive, mandatory* sanctions. In fact, the crisis in South Africa continues to intensify, with the Botha regime continuing to kill, jail and torture Black South Africans including church leaders, trade unionists, and children.

Despite this worsening situation, Reagan continues to oppose additional sanctions. Nevertheless, Rep. Ron Dellums and Sen. Alan Cranston have introduced legislation (HR 1580 and S 556) for comprehensive sanctions. It will be a difficult struggle to get these passed and every bit of help is needed. We urge you to contact your congressional representatives and demand they cosponsor the Dellums/Cranston bills. The pressure and opposition against South African apartheid must not be allowed to become "last year's news."

Group Studies Election Strategies

by Margo Nikitas

It was exciting to take part in one of the workshops at the Seminar on "The Women's Bill of Rights and the 1988 Elections," and to explore together the obstacles that tend to hold WREE members back from playing a greater leadership role both in WREE and in the general struggle for equality. The very process of sharing our thoughts helped our understanding of how collective work can empower each of us.

The participants spoke from differing backgrounds and experiences and, typical of working women, they had positive outlooks in their desire for social change. Many emphasized a need to draw clear links between their personal concerns and political life.

"I'm inspired by seeing my personal connection to a larger picture, a larger goal," said Numina Naajeya, a new WREE sister from Buffalo, NY. "I want to be able to work on issues and with organizations that personally encourage me. I want to be able to break down the myths I've been told, to develop deeper insights."

Numina gave the Women's Bill of Rights as an example of a larger goal. She said she would like to see what's happening with our program throughout the country, how this intertwines with the work of other groups, and how together we can bring these issues to the general public.

"The issues we work on should be—like the Bork nomination—those that affect people, that oppress us, and threaten to set us back," said Joanne Robinson of Westchester, NY. Joanne, a WREE sister and member of the Westchester Peace Action Coalition and the National Rainbow Coalition, also stressed the need for commitment, "to be clear that once we take on a program, we'll see it through." She thought the programs should be judged, too, on how good they are as tools for building membership, helping our organization to grow.

Joanne Amusa, St. Louis, Mo., WREE, also belongs to the Coalition of Labor Union Women and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Joanne felt that ordinary people—grassroots working women—have a right to know what are the forces that are affecting their lives, so our programs should not just be an exercise. We need to measure how effective our program, the Women's Bill of Rights, is by how much of an impetus it provides for legislation and for real social and political change, she felt. Bringing large numbers of working women into WREE will insure that our movement for social change is linked to legislative and electoral activities, said Joanne Amusa.

WREE and the 1988 Elections

We can overcome the fear of being able to bring people together and to influence politics by becoming involved

ourselves, commented Joanne Robinson. We should especially encourage young people to get involved in voter registration and education, using the issues of the Women's Bill of Rights.

There was general agreement that we should start by emphasizing the most important issue in our neighborhood or workplace. As people see that they can win or gain strength on one issue, they can advance on others.

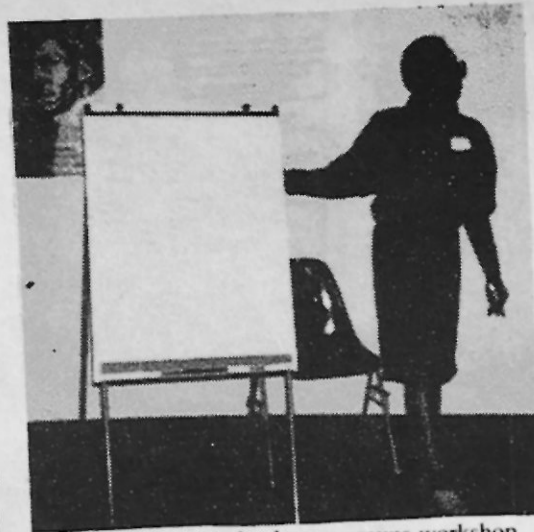
Some good suggestions emerged:

- that WREE chapters send out a political questionnaire to candidates, make their replies into a report card and send it out to the members and friends as a campaigning and voting guide.

- that we identify neighbors and friends who would support the WBR and invite them to work with us on the 1988 electoral campaign and to join WREE.

- that we identify the individual problems that people we know are concerned with, and we keep a record of legislation and candidates' positions on these issues, for example, educational differences in schools, based on racism and class and gender discrimination.

- that we work with other groups and help them to identify and act on their issues.



Joyce Duncan leads plenary groups workshop on racism.

- that we encourage women to join the campaign of good people running for office, and to run for office themselves.

WREE's leadership should be in a process of constant growth, all agreed, as new members are encouraged to integrate their ideas and activities with the rest of the membership. In the course of activity and discussion, new leaders will develop. This will bring forward more women who can in turn encourage others to help develop a stronger movement for a people's agenda, for the Women's Bill of Rights.

Housing & Health Workshop

By Gloria Quinones

Housing Panelists: Ruth Young, homeless mother of five; organizer of Parents on the Move (tenants in a Brooklyn welfare hotel); and staffer of Housing Justice Campaign.

Joan Manes, coordinator of a Brooklyn branch of the Metropolitan Council on Housing; and director of Data Analysis and Research for Literacy Assistance.

The issues for this workshop were defined as: 1) the lack of housing and homelessness constitute a single crisis rooted in a policy that does not regard housing as a human right. This policy is reflected in cutbacks in federal funds for construction of low- and moderate-income housing; 2) laws that allow landlords rent increases beyond tenants' incomes even as rent subsidy programs are slashed; 3) permissive coop and condo conversion laws that bring windfall profits to real estate speculators and the banks while forcing out low-income tenants; 4) warehousing of apartments and buildings by private landlords and the city government; 5) flagrant landlord harassment of tenants; 6) the landlord/tenant courts' and housing agencies' inability to reconcile landlords' greed with tenants' needs and incomes.

Joan Manes summarized it well when she noted that tenants and the

homeless have common interests: one has been actually displaced and the other is in imminent danger of being put out into the street.

The obstacles to solving the problems were defined as: 1) our laws and social institutions do not recognize housing as a basic human right; 2) funding for housing construction, rehabilitation, and rent subsidies has been cut back in order to increase the military budget and support reaction around the globe (e.g.) the contras in Nicaragua; 3) the trend toward turning public housing projects into coops in every large city; 4) absence of laws against warehousing; 5) absence of a coordinated national strategy to provide decent affordable housing for every family and individual in this, the most advanced, richest country in the world.

The Strategies

The strategies the workshop agreed on started from the premise that we must take advantage of the extensive recent media attention to the lack of decent affordable housing and the growing numbers of homeless. Housing activists and community leaders must come together to:

- unite around the principle that in this day and age housing should indeed be recognized as a basic human right.

- conduct a consistent educational campaign in the community about the causes of the crisis and lobby for passage of HR 19, the Conyers "Jesse Gray Housing Act."

- organize tenants and the homeless to attend housing justice rallies and demonstrations to demand—together—decent affordable housing for low- and moderate-income people.

- mobilize public actions to demand that vacant city-owned buildings be made available to house the homeless permanently, instead of being given away to private luxury housing developers or for the development of shelters.

- demand that all candidates in the 1988 elections address the issue of

What Was It

By Sally Chaffee Maron

On the weekend of October 31, 1987, WREE women Florida to St. Louis, from Boston to San Diego, met in WREE's Women's Bill of Rights and the 1988 elections Center of the United Nations and was hosted by the United

After early morning coffee, bagels, and fresh fruit, racism led by Joyce Duncan of Harlem WREE. Joyce had discuss how we are all affected by racism economically racism in relation to low wages and division among voters, particularly among minorities; reactionary politics; of stereotypes and stigmas. The conclusion the women reach loses. The task is to create conditions in our society where and lead fulfilling lives.

Lee Levin, Vice-President of the Coalition of Labor Union address. She stressed the importance of working for change based demand for strong family support. (See article, this p

Following the keynote address, the seminar broke into mative Action, Childcare and Education, Housing and He each subject relates to the Women's Bill of Rights. Each w strategies to achieving equality and justice in each area.

Later that day, the seminar participants were joined reception of song, poetry, and speakers from Central Ame Yanira, a young Salvadoran mother living on the West tortured by a "death squad" force acting in the United S brought to mind the common struggle of the people of Cer

At the reception, WREE made a special presentation tions of the Southwest Africa People's Organization (SW (ANC). The money had been collected in June 1987 dur by women from Namibia and South Africa.

At the Sunday session of the seminar, the participant to carry out the campaigns for the Women's Bill of Right gave a stimulating and inspiring talk on the Women's B tion (see the editorial in the November/December issue o of the seminar focused on building chapters, specific f Rights such as the Violation of the Rights of Women, i and techniques of fundraising. The Pittsburgh Chapter o office, plans to use the results of these workshops as the t

On these pages are a sampling of the contents of keynote address, and of one of the Sunday group sessions

housing and homelessness and put forward their programs to deal with the crisis; and work to support only those who support affordable integrated housing for low- and moderate-income tenants.

- study how other cities, states, and nations are dealing with housing as a means to evaluate how we can improve our local and national policy and programs.

Health Care Workshop

The other half of this workshop dealt with health and health care. A brief summary of the content of this discussion will indicate the kind of coverage this topic received.

The panelists and members of the workshop defined the problem to be that the cost of health care is so high it can cost a family the loss of its home. Like the need for housing, decent affordable health care is not seen as a basic human right. As a result, the cost of health care escalates and so does the infant mortality rate, and so does the health standard of our elderly diminish. We need to evaluate our health policy and programs to determine how to provide national health services and care, coordinated federally as well as in relation to state and local services and programs; to set national health care standards; to reduce and eliminate the trend toward privatization of federally subsidized health facilities; to establish preventive health care, industrial health care, environmental health care, etc., as the right of every person living in this country.

The workshop, like the others in the series, was spirited, informative, and comprehensive. Some of the workshops were taped, and interested readers may inquire if tapes of a particular workshop are available for distribution.



Three members of the Housing & Health Workshop: Joan Manes, Gloria Quinones, and Ruth Young

What's It About?

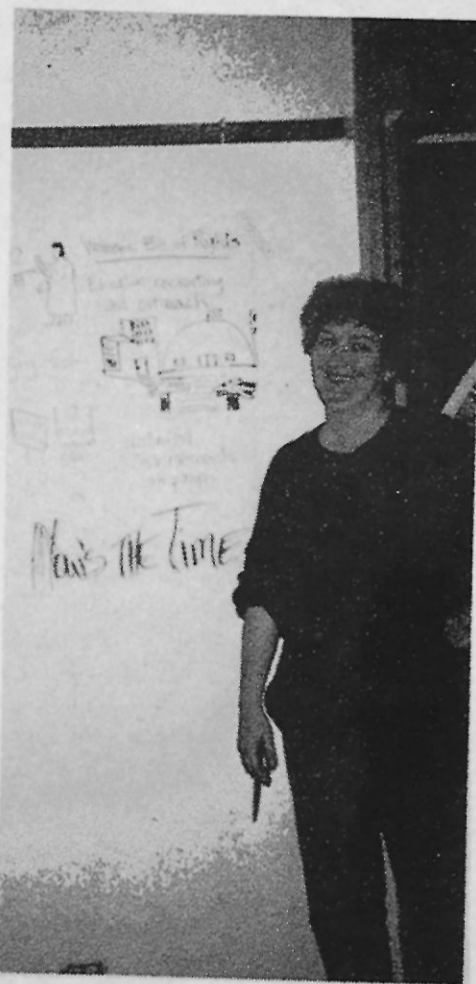
WREE women from all over the country, from Miami, Florida to San Diego, met in New York for a working seminar on the 1988 elections. The seminar was held at the Church of the United Methodist Women's Office. At the beginning of the seminar, Joyce had all the participants work in groups to discuss, economically, politically, and socially. They explored issues such as: the disenfranchisement of eligible voters; segregated schools; and the perpetuation of racism. One of the issues women reached is that in a racist society, everyone is affected where every man, woman, and child can gain

benefit from the election of Labor Union Women (CLUW), gave the keynote address for change to show Washington that there is broad support for this page.)

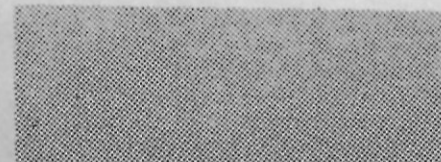
The seminar broke into workshops on Peace, Jobs with Affairing and Healthcare, and Civil Rights, particularly jobs. Each workshop focused on issues, obstacles, and solutions in each area.

Participants were joined by over 100 guests for an international seminar from Central America, southern Africa and the Middle East. The West Coast, who was recently kidnapped and held in the United States, spoke. Her moving account vividly described the role of Central America for democracy and freedom. The presentation of \$5000 each to the women's organization (SWAPO) and the African National Congress was made during a WREE-sponsored cross-country tour.

Participants focused on how to build WREE and how to use the Bill of Rights and the 1988 elections. Alva Buxenbaum presented the Women's Bill of Rights and the current political situation (the WREE-VIEW). The working groups discussed specific future campaigns on the Women's Bill of Rights, improving the WREE-VIEW of WOMEN, the WREE chapter of WREE, working with the national WREE as the beginning of a WREE organizing manual. Excerpts from one of the workshops, excerpts from the sessions on WREE work and campaigns.



Randa Shannon explains her workshop's chart as she reports to plenary session.



A workshop in action: (Back to camera) Phyllis Eilenfeldt, Joann Amusa, Jane Power, Rudean Leinaeng, and Sally McNichol.



CLUW Leader Sets the Tone

The keynote speaker at the Seminar was Lee Levin, executive administrator of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). Her presentation was not only filled with pertinent information, but was an inspiring call for unity, dedication, and support. We regret we haven't the space to reprint the entire speech; we offer here some of the highlights.

We at CLUW, do not believe there are working women's issues nor do we believe that there are working men's issues, rather all issues that impact on any segment of the workforce is a worker's problem whose resolution will enhance life for all working people.

Having said that, there are a variety of concerns that working women are leading the labor movement and, in fact, the electorate in articulating the demands of workers.

The wages women bring home accounts for 20% to 40% of a family's income. Yet, a woman still earns only 65% of what a man earns.

There are three reasons for the wage gap, and none of them have to do with the market.

First, work done by women and minorities is underpaid because the work is done by women and minorities.

The battle against gender, and race-based wage discrimination is not a drive to equalize all wages. Rather, the focus is on getting employers to pay workers based on the value of a worker's contribution to the company and not on the basis of sex or race.

The second cause of the wage gap is job segregation. 77% of all working women are employed in clerical, service, sales, factory or technical jobs—traditionally female occupations.

There are indications that as gender- and race-based wage discrimination is rectified, more women will apply for nontraditional work. The state of Minnesota, the first state to implement pay equity, saw a 17% increase in the number of women applying for "male" jobs in just one year.

Also, unions must continue to insist on developing job training and promotional opportunities for all workers.

The third cause of the wage gap is that most women work in unorganized nonunion worksites. Statistics show that the larger the number of women in a bargaining unit, the more likely that unit will vote for representation.

Fifty million women work. About 7 million are members of unions or represented by unions. While that number is small, it still makes up one in every three new union members organized today.

Unions have been waking up to this reality. The unions that are growing, and there are some, are unions that have recognized the importance of both women and minority members.

Women who are union members earn 30% more than their nonunion counterparts. Black women, on average, earn \$92 more a week if they hold a union card. Hispanic women earn \$68 more a week.

We, in CLUW, want to bring the benefits of a union contract to all working women. A contract not only assures you higher pay, it also provides a mechanism to address issues such as sexual harassment, job security and jobs and promotional development.

We, in CLUW, as well as the labor movement, firmly believe that the bottom line to a healthy family is an economically secure family.

This not only covers wages, it includes continuing the struggle for quality public education, vigorously lobby-

ing Congress for passage of the Kennedy minimum wage law.

The minimum wage is \$3.35 an hour. A full-time, year-round worker earns \$6,968 a year. Poverty level for a woman with child is \$7,133; 5.4 million women work for minimum wage or less; 83.3% of the women earning minimum wage or less are white, 13.7% are Black and 5.6% are Hispanic.

12.4 million American women are living in poverty. Of these, 4.4 million are in the workforce. More than half of those working are mothers of children under 18.

In short, Sisters, I am calling for a national policy on families. The American Family Celebration will address these needs. All of us in this room know what they are: family and medical leave, quality universal child and elder care, saving our schools, and social and economic justice and security.

CLUW is a member of the Alliance for Better Child Care. We have drafted



Lee Levin

a bill which will be introduced in Congress in the upcoming months which would establish standards and mandate development of facilities for child care.

Unions have also addressed the struggle against racism. After many years, we understand that employers use one group of workers against the next to keep wages low.

We recognize that employers are now using workers in other countries against workers in the U.S. and we will not be blinded by their efforts.

My purpose today was to discuss women and the 1988 political agenda.

I have done that by laying out the issues that are most important to us—happy, healthy and secure families. All this talk about family should not imply that we adhere to a single definition. Families today come in many sizes, shapes, and arrangements. Family is what each of us considers it to be.

The labor movement and the Coalition of Labor Union Women will be very active in 1988. Our issues are the concerns of all workers: a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, the opportunity to develop a quality, loving relationship with our young, the opportunity to sustain a quality relationship with our elders, universal dependent care, the promise of a healthy lifetime, and if not, the availability of quality, low-cost health care.

We have struggled, valiantly I might add, under the rightwing assaults of Reagan and his cronies.

His policies are in disarray. The teflon has chipped, the mirror cracked.

The American public is joining with us in our struggle for economic justice and security. I am proud that the labor movement is leading the fight.

M.L.KING BIRTHDAY RECOGNIZED WORLDWIDE

Around the world, January 15, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday is considered the day of solidarity with the people of the U.S. WREE is heartened by the greetings we receive from our sisters on that day. Here's a small sampling:

GREETINGS OF SOLIDARITY FROM NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF WOMEN ON JANUARY 15TH IN YOUR STRUGGLE FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE.

ELSIE WATSON
LONDON, ENGLAND

LE CONSEIL NATIONAL
DE L'ASSOCIATION
DEMOCRATIQUE
DE FEMMES DU MAROC
VOUS PRESENTENT
LEURS MEILLEURS VOEUX
DE SUCCES DANS VOTRE
LUTTE POUR L'EQUALITE,
LE PROGRES SOCIAL
ET LA PAIX

DEAR FRIENDS: TRANSMIT YOUR FRIENDLY GREETINGS ON THE OCCASION OF INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH PEOPLE OF USA. WE SIDE WITH YOU IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST EXPLOITATION AND ARMS RACE FOR PEACE AND SOCIAL EQUALITY AND PROGRESS FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S WELFARE.

DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

EN ESTE ANIVERSARIO DEL NATALICIO DE MARTIN LUTHER KING, DESTACADO LUCHADOR DE LOS DERECHOS CIVILES, LA JUSTICIA Y LA PAZ EN ESTADOS UNIDOS, LA FEDERACION DE MUJERES CUBANAS, EXTIENDE UN CALUROSO SALUDO SOLIDARIO A TODAS LAS MUJERES QUE DENTRO DEL MONSTRUO IMPERIALISTA, LUCHA POR UN MUNDO DE PAZ Y JUSTICIA SOCIAL.

FEDERACION DE MUJERES CUBANAS

How Women Fare in a Socialist State

Congress is preparing to act on the (watered down) "Family and Medical Leave Act" (HR 925 and S 249) and the "Act for Better Child Care Services" (HR 3660), and the labor and women's movements are gearing up for the fight to win these basic rights.

We know from studies by trade unions and child care advocates that the U.S. lags far behind other industrialized countries (e.g., France, Sweden, etc.) in providing these services. We decided to ask our sister organization in the German Democratic Republic how they deal with such problems in a socialist state. The following information was sent to us by the Democratic Women's League of Germany:

More than half of the 8.5 million working people in the German Democratic Republic are women. In some branches of industry, production is mainly in their hands. This is true at the nationally owned leather goods factory in Schwerin in the northern part of the GDR. The factory has 2000 employees; 70% of them are women whose average age is 25.

A factory with young women on its payroll sooner or later has to face their pregnancies. In the GDR a woman who gives birth to her first child is entitled by federal law to twelve months paid leave, called the "baby year" (six months on full pay and another six months on a slightly reduced wage). A woman who gives birth to her third child is entitled to 18 months paid leave.

Although the mothers stop working for twelve months, they continue to be employees of the factory and enjoy all the rights of employees, including health insurance and free medical treatment. They can return to the factory at any time, and there is hardly a woman who does not resume work after the twelve-month absence. According to the GDR Labor Code, the manager of the firm has to see to it that the mothers can resume exactly the same work they

did before or that they get other jobs fitting their qualifications.

Such measures make life much easier for working mothers and their families. For the factories, however, these measures cause a number of problems.

The managers of the Schwerin leather goods factory had quite some problems with these new measures for working mothers. But the law must be applied, and it is a good law. In order to prevent experienced workers from leaving the factory because they could not reconcile their jobs with their home duties, management had to provide working conditions that were in the interests of both the mothers and the factory.

The management and the trade union discussed the problems and decided to try an experiment. They installed an assembly line operated specifically by mothers with very small children. These women work only normal shifts. Since the experiment was started, two more assembly lines have been put into



Working mothers in the GDR

operation and although there is always a loss of working hours—due to the "baby year" and sickness of children (when children are taken ill their mothers are guaranteed paid leave)—the shift quota is always fulfilled.

The workers at the Schwerin leather goods factory are content with the assembly line work. None of them start

their "baby year" without knowing beforehand where they will work when they return, and that they will be able to cope with the work without having to neglect their families. They return to work teams where they are assured of the understanding of their colleagues, and receive assistance from the company and trade union.

INS drops Randall deportation

Writer Margaret Randall has won her battle to stay in the United States. The Immigration and Naturalization Service had ordered her deportation because of a clause in the McCarran-Walter Act that permits the exclusion of foreigners because they advocate "doctrines of world Communism." Congress removed this provision in late December in an amendment sponsored by Sen. Daniel Moynihan (D-N.Y.) and Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.). Randall was born in the U.S. but in 1967 gave up her citizenship and took Mexican citizenship.

RECLAIM THE TEST SITE

March 11-20, 1988

American Peace Test nonviolent occupation and blockade at the Nevada Test Site

Join thousands of people to take back this beautiful, wild land teeming with life, this holy land of the Shoshone, and liberate it. We will stand in the path of the forces that drive testing onward. We will challenge ourselves, as people of conscience, to demonstrate the best that is in us. We will reveal the height of the moral force we bring to bear to end testing.

GET INVOLVED NOW!

Form an Affinity Group in your area. We can offer nonviolence training and information about terrain, climate, equipment needs, logistics, etc.

Start fundraising now to send your group to Nevada. We can offer help with suggestions.

Get involved in planning the action. The API will be forming committees to make decisions about and organize parts of the action: nonviolence training, health care units, equipment, outreach, legal support, logistics, blockade, occupation, 3/12 rally, etc. We all need to work together. We need the brilliance of everyone's thinking.

ACTION OFFICES
 WEST: API 1275 Monroe, Eugene, OR 97402 - (503) 484-2877
 EAST: API Box 40255 Calder Square, State College, PA 16805 - (814) 355-8023

TESTING ALERT NETWORK HOTLINE IN LAS VEGAS: (702) 363-7780

by Martha Stephens

Nearly 40% of Cincinnati residents are Black, but for the past two years Blacks have had only one representative on Cincinnati's 9-member City Council. The November 3 election failed to add any new Blacks to the Council, even though there were two well-qualified Black challengers.

Cincinnati progressives, however, see this as a defeat that may in time lead to a longer-term victory in the way the Council is elected. Since 1957 all 9 members of the Council have been elected at large, with the conservative white majority able to elect the entire Council. The November 3 outcome may give fresh credibility and momentum to Cincinnati's Fair Ballot Coalition, which has been working for two years to place an amendment before the voters to have the Council elected by Proportional Representation, a system which virtually assures all political constituencies representation in proportion to their numbers. The efforts of the Fair Ballot Coalition have already been endorsed by 18 Cincinnati organizations working for the rights of minorities, women, workers, and gays, including the Rainbow Coalition, the Charter Party (a local "good government" party long associated with P.R.), AFL/CIO, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, NOW, the Council of Christian Communities, the NAACP, the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers, the New Jewish

The WREE VIEW of WOMEN page 10

CINCINNATI ELECTIONS LESSONS TO REMEMBER

Agenda, as well as certain Democrats and Republicans in elected office.

Women Made Gains

In other races in Cincinnati, minority candidates made dramatic gains. Thirty-eight-year-old Nadine Allen became the first Black woman in history to win a judgeship race in conservative Hamilton County, and the first Black of either sex to defeat a white judicial opponent. Allen, a Democrat, paid special respects to her white campaign chairman (and bailiff of her court), Virginia Rhodes, a member of the Rainbow Coalition and a Jackson activist who herself had surprised Cincinnati in 1985 when she came in first in her first race for the Cincinnati School Board.

The second triumph for Cincinnati Blacks and progressives was the winning of a seat on the same School Board by Afro-American Charles Hughes, also a Rainbow activist and head of its Political Action Committee. Hughes travelled tirelessly to Cincinnati events and forums to talk about his plans to improve neighborhood schools, establish health clinics, and address the severe problems of excluded and disaffected

children both Black and white. (Hughes is a juvenile counselor whose wife, Essie Hughes, is president of the local Rainbow Coalition.)

Another Afro-American Rainbow leader, Sara Gardner, was a first-time contender for the Cincinnati Council, slated with the Charter Party. She garnered 14,282 votes in a race where 37,749 votes were required to win, a strong showing for an individual who had campaigned on a very small budget, spending less than a quarter of what her opponents spent, and who was unknown in the wider community when she began. Gardner worked 18 years for Revlon and was a past president of Local 8 of UAW, AFL/CIO. From 1983 to 1986 she was an organizer for the public employee division of the Ohio Teamsters, the only Black female organizer in the state. In a town hit hard by the loss of 4900 jobs in neighboring Norwood, with the closing of its GM plant in August, Gardner argued for programs for displaced workers, health programs for the poor, and "aggressive help for unemployed youth."

Even though Gardner was the first worker to run for the Council in many

years, she was not endorsed by the local labor council. She did receive, however, a long list of endorsements by union locals. She was assisted in her campaign by a small but intense group of loyal volunteers. The movement for Gardner was led by a construction worker, Maria Pesante, who worked full-time at her job and also cared for five children while directing the campaign.

The make-up of the Cincinnati City Council changed by only one seat. Democrat James Cissell, who had come to be viewed by some as a captive of downtown development interests and who may have angered some Democrats by joining in a Council coalition with Republicans, was defeated, and his seat was won by 65-year-old Bobbie Sterne. Sterne had lost her place on the Council to Cissell in 1985, a year when all three women then on the Council were defeated. Five new women challengers all fought in vain to unseat a male on November 3. Sterne is a Charterite and a proponent of P.R. and her return to the Council may represent—if not paradise—a small step regained for progressives and the fight for P.R. in a city with one of the most underrepresented minority communities in the country.

Martha Stephen teaches at the University of Cincinnati and edits a progressive magazine in Ohio.

ANTI-SEMITISM IS NO JOKE

by Pamela Houston

Is the term "Jewish American Princess" amusing, or is it anti-Semitic? A recent "Conference on the Impact of Current Stereotyping of Jewish Women" was sponsored by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) in an attempt to answer this question. Speakers from the AJC's Women's Issues Committee addressed reports of an increase in vicious "humor" that demeans and stereotypes Jewish women. This humor is most frequently seen in the form of graffiti, greeting cards, jokes, and other verbal attacks on the so-called "Jewish American Princess (JAP)." Committee speakers charge that this humor represents serious anti-Semitism.

Susan Weideman Schneider, editor of the Jewish feminist publication, *Lilith*, pointed out that the term "JAP" refers to someone who is spoiled, materialistic, and demanding. It must be wondered, she says, why Jewish women are singled out for this derision, since these characteristics are found in people of all groups and both sexes. Schneider cited several anti-Semitic incidents that have occurred on college campuses of late. These were also cited in the current *Lilith's* investigative report on the stereotyping of Jewish women, entitled "JAP-Baiting on Campus." At one university's varsity game, stylishly dressed women were taunted by the university band with chants of "JAP, JAP, JAP." At another university, library tables were found to be covered with graffiti attacking "JAPS" in obscene and violent language.

Although these incidents are clearly anti-Semitic, there has been no community outcry against them. Schneider believes that, had these attacks been directed at Jewish men, they would have been denounced. In fact, committee members say, these swipes and many of the jokes directed against the "Jewish American Princess" are often begun and

Anti-Semitic incidents in the United States increased 12% in 1987, reversing a five-year downward trend. There were 1018 reported incidents last year: 694 instances of vandalism against Jewish institutions and property, from swastika daubings to arson and pipe bombings. The reported number of harassments, threats, and assaults against Jews was 324.

broadcast by Jewish men. By telling and spreading these jokes, they unwittingly encourage anti-Semitic stereotyping. Schneider charges that verbal attacks on Jewish women have actually been increasing in number and intensity in recent years.

Author Francine Klagsbrun (whose analysis of the background of the stereotyping appears in the current *Lilith*, believes that the movement of Jewish women into the workplace and into the mainstream of Jewish life has threatened many men. In light of woman's new drive for achievement, there is no better putdown than to label her a "princess." At the conference, Klagsbrun also addressed the underlying anti-Semitic message contained in the term "JAP." Today, when Jews have made a firm place for themselves in American

Who Says We are a Minority??

Why is it when we are so many and they are so few that we "minorities" can not mount an offensive campaign? Why must we always be on the defensive? Why do we wait until the problem "bursts" upon us to see it? Why do we wait until the problems of homelessness and joblessness and despair hit us?

Is it because the American Dream calls for individual achievements? Haven't we learned through our unions and our community organizations that individual gains come from joint and constructive action? Without our unions would we have gotten paid vacations, public schools, workdays of eight hours? Without anticipating our joint needs would our unions have won health and hospital care? pensions? public housing? unemployment insurance?

At a time when government is closely aligned with big business to take more from us workers in taxes and "givebacks" and with less jobs, isn't now the time to take offensive positions and action? Isn't now the time for us "minorities" to join with each other and become the majority we truly are? The only true minority is the power and money hungry 1% of our population! We workers, employed and unemployed, are the majority—it is we who create the wealth that the 1% claim as theirs!!! We workers are the creators of the steel, the cars, the houses, the clothing, the food. We workers are the sustainers of a lopsided society. It is our wealth and our blood we give so freely to the 1% which gives us a pittance in return, and even that pittance has to be continually fought for and protected.

To stop the 1% from reducing our lives and our world to cinders, we have got to stop squabbling for a piece of the pie because it's all ours! We have to think like a majority and act like a majority and together we can work through our unions to stop excessive corporate and personal profits—profits which are the result of our labor—and to make profits work for us to build low and moderate rent housing, to create jobs, to develop positive and creative public education systems which would make our government truly ours.

When profits are controlled through corporate taxes with no loopholes which in turn our government gives back to us as housing, jobs, education, national health and hospital care—to name but a few benefits; then the fruits of our labors will be ours and with peace and prosperity.

Mamie Jackson
Local 371 SSEU (Retired)
Seattle, WA



life, polite society would not make openly anti-Semitic remarks. "JAP," however, has become an acceptable code word (mainly because women are still fair game for attack), and as a result, nobody protests.

Sherry Merfish, Texas attorney and chair of the Houston chapter of the Women's Issues Committee of AJC, related an incident with which she was confronted several years ago. Seeing a "JAP Handbook" on sale at a Jewish bookfair in Houston, she tried to raise the issue with the Jewish community. Initially, they failed to see the inherent anti-Semitism in the situation. Looking more closely, however, they ultimately came to see that the book was not funny and they were able to view it as anti-Semitic. The Houston Rabbinical Council

passed a resolution to address the matter.

It was pointed out at the conference, that as Jewish women become stronger and more visible, "JAP" jokes are increasingly used to insult them. The speakers drew attention to the fact that in no other ethnic group are women disparaged in this way. Slurs of this type are particularly unfortunate because they can affect women's self esteem. They can be made to feel ashamed of being both Jewish and female.

Schneider, Klagsbrun, and Merfish believe that both the Jewish and general American communities must recognize the seriously anti-Semitic nature of the "JAP" stereotype. They must begin to realize that such jokes are not funny and that they must come to an end.

A Good Read

Winter's Edge by Valerie Minor

The Crossing Press,
P.O. Box 640 Main Street,
Trumansburg, N.Y. 14886
\$7.95

by Peggy Biggi

I can't remember the last novel I enjoyed as much as Valerie Minor's *Winter's Edge*. This beautifully written story focuses on subjects rarely written about in American fiction, older women and the working class community. How refreshing to read about characters so easy to identify with and characters who truly represent the real America.

The novel deals with the friendship between 65-year-old Chrissie and 70-year-old Margaret. It is a pleasure to get to know these women and watch their 30-year friendship survive all the difficulties of everyday urban life, as they overcome the many personal and political differences they have.

Chrissie is a large, plain, outspoken, Scottish waitress. She is a political activist arguing to stop nuclear power, provide day care, end racism and support senior citizens. She believes that politics touches everyone, no matter how much you mind your own business. She is always trying to get Margaret more involved. She complains that Margaret is not in touch with the real world, that Margaret thinks there are only two people in the world, herself and the person she is talking to at the moment.

Margaret, on the other hand, is small, poised, and very reserved. She is the cashier in a newsshop. She raised her three children on her own after her husband walked out on her over 30 years ago. She believes that politics does not answer the problems but causes them. She complains that Chrissie is ruining her health by spending so much time and working so hard on "all of these causes of hers." She wonders what Chrissie is trying to prove.

The plot evolves around an upcoming election for City Supervisor. Jake Carson, a real-estate speculator, is running against Marissa Washington a Black long-time activist. Chrissie's deep involvement in the campaign and Margaret's deep involvement with the local minister threatens their relationship. Chrissie has to deal with her guilt when Margaret inadvertently gets caught up in the violent assaults that break out in the campaign against Marissa.

The story is set in San Francisco's "Tenderloin" area, home for gays, Third World people, the aging, small businesses, many different races, different political groups, down-and-outers, ambitious immigrants, and—oh, yes, prostitutes and muggers. Valerie Minor treats us to an intimate look at life among the working people of Geary Street in San Francisco. She observes the whole community: people of different races, classes, ages, and life styles.

Valerie Minor has written about women in Africa, Latin America, Asia, Europe, and North America. Her fiction focuses on cross-class and cross-culture movement among women. She teaches at the University of California at Berkeley in fiction and media. She travels around the United States and abroad giving readings and lectures.



MEXICAN ENCUENTRO

by Julie Spencer-Robinson

From South America, Central and North America, the Caribbean, and Europe, 1600 women descended upon a small sleepy resort town south of Mexico City for an entire week in October. The occasion was the fourth *Encuentro Feminista*, or Feminist Encounter, of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The *Encuentros*, held every two years since 1981, have their origins in the United Nations Decade for Women. At the 1975 Mexico City conference, a great number of Latin American women were directly exposed, for the first time, to the feminism of North American and European women. And, they realized, this feminism had very little to do with the struggles they faced in their everyday lives as women trying to survive in an underdeveloped region and in an overtly sexist culture. By the 1980 UN Mid-Decade Conference in Copenhagen, Latin American and Caribbean women had decided it was high time to hold their own regional feminist conferences. The first *Encuentro Feminista* was held in Peru in 1981.

The 1987 Mexico meeting was billed as a discussion of "feminism in Latin America today," but this rubric turned out to be, for all intents and purposes, too broad. The women were overwhelmingly interested in the workshops organized around more specific themes, from "Women, War, and Violence in Central America," to "Popular Movements in Latin America," to "Women and the Church." But above all else, they wanted to hear about one another's lives and work: the problems each woman faces in her own society and how she approaches these problems; what her work means to her and the problems she encounters there, and how she manages the "double journey," of holding a full-time job and running a household at the same time.

Perhaps the overriding theme of "feminism in Latin America today" was not entirely appropriate since there were so many women present who would not call themselves feminists, and for whom this was their first "encounter" with feminism in Latin America. One woman, particularly representative of this group, was a cosmetologist from America, as well as the effect that U.S. policy toward Central America has on these women. In very real terms, U.S. presence and the threat of U.S. invasion there presents all Latin American and Caribbean women with a sense of impending danger and, more importantly with the loss of control over their own lives. Central American women deal with a concrete loss of security, with the appropriation of their national territory for U.S. bases, and all Latin American women live with the crushing effects of the current debt crisis.

The politicization of feminism in Latin America today marks a change from the earlier part of this decade, and is a natural outcome of U.S. policy to-

ward the region. Obviously, the militarization and the debt crisis both have a tremendous impact on women's lives. Many who are working in many different sectors of society, are doing so as a direct or indirect result of U.S. policy. U.S. militarization has displaced many families from their land, resulted in the sexual abuse of women and children by troops stationed there, and created a war economy that simply fails to meet the daily needs of the great majority of the people. The debt crisis has served to impoverish an ever-growing proportion of Latin Americans, and women and children are of course hit the hardest. Violence against women, in its many forms, continues to be a problem where Mexico, and she had just attended a cosmetology conference the previous week. The contrasts, for her, were striking.

"At the cosmetology conference," she said, "all of the women looked alike. They were all dressed up in fancy clothes and wore lots of make-up. They had one thing in common: they were all trying to look like they were rich. And I was shunned because I was one of the poorer ones. But here, the women are different. You can't tell who is rich and who is poor. Everyone is treated equally." Although she works in a women's center, this woman did not use the word "feminist" to describe herself. "That word has very bad implications here," she said. "Feminists are seen as man haters; men in Latin America feel very alienated by feminism."

This assessment accurately reflects perhaps the greatest difficulty that the women face: how to strive toward greater dignity, respect, and equality for women, while working at the same time to gain men's support, encouragement, and trust in this struggle. Again and again, women proclaimed that they were fighting in their countries for social justice, economic reforms, and political rights—but that they were fighting for these things alongside men. They were also fighting "machismo," or the chauvinism that is inherent in most of their societies. Yet they must, they argued, fight this chauvinism not just in the man, but also in themselves, for they realized that both genders help to make a society "machista."

To a North American feminist, this desire on the part of Latin American and Caribbean feminists to work with men in their struggle for a more just, humane society—and the degree to which they are successful, as exemplified best by the Nicaraguan women—is most impressive. The Nicaraguan representatives were, in fact, generally treated with great respect and high regard by the rest of the women at the conference.

The extent to which today's highly volatile situation in Central America dominated the general discussions at the *Encuentro* is indicative of the recent politicization of feminism in Latin



PLEXUS

women just do not have the resources—financial or otherwise—to move away from abusive situations.

The women at the fourth *Encuentro Feminista*, however, were working to meet the needs of women in the region. They run soup kitchens in shantytowns, shelters for battered women, literacy programs, and income-generating projects for the poor. They work in health care programs, in women's centers, in refugee camps, and in the government. The *Encuentro Feminista* was an opportunity for these women to share their networks, their resources, and their ideas—and the ideas were especially

plentiful, varied, and innovative.

Sixteen hundred women were at this conference; as many as 2500 are expected at the Fifth *Encuentro Feminista*, which will be held in Argentina in 1989. If the Mexico meeting is any indication, it will be another terrific opportunity to celebrate the courage, the energy, and the commitment of feminists from all over Latin America and the Caribbean.

Julie Spencer-Robinson is Associate Director of the Third World Women's Project at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C.

Journalism and Exile

by Gladys Diaz

I was, until September 11 1973, the president of the Radio Journalists' Trade Union of Santiago, and in 1975 I was arrested by the dictatorship and charged with being the directress of a clandestine newspaper. At the end of 1976 I was exiled.

A comrade complained that it seemed that we were more preoccupied with discussing how to avoid getting a bullet in our heads than discussing what we had to write. This statement surprised me, not because I think that we journalists should focus on the culture of death since, on the contrary, ours is a profession of life, creativity. But during the recent international meeting of journalists held in various parts of the world it was stated that ours is a high-risk profession. Journalists die assassinated by dictatorships, by the mafias of narcotics traffic, by death squads, and by the transnationals of power.

We journalists who, during the years of the government of President Allende, had a militant commitment to our country's popular sectors, were not given the opportunity to offer the best of ourselves in this profession that we had chosen out of love for truth and justice. They wanted to impose on us muzzles, silence, censorship, and self-censorship.

We exercised journalism in fragments, in hiding, and with high personal costs.

Parallel with exile as such, there was also the internal exile of dismissed journalists, those who sought to survive in the most varied ways. A part of those in internal exile were journalists who, in the shadows of clandestinity, supported the construction of alternative forms of journalism that emerged from the Resistance. Modest leaflets and circulars were passed from hand to hand, camouflaged in noodle packages and chocolate boxes, in children's games, etc. It was not easy to print, since the existence of a mimeograph machine could lead to a raid and could be sufficient reason for being ar-

rested and disappearing forever. The people's inventiveness knew no limits then. A mere jam jar, a peeled potato, and a school eraser became artifacts of printing. These were elements that could be quickly destroyed in the face of danger. In this way, too, there was born the newspaper *Vamos Muher* (Let's Go, Women), the voice of the working-class women of the capital's poorest districts.

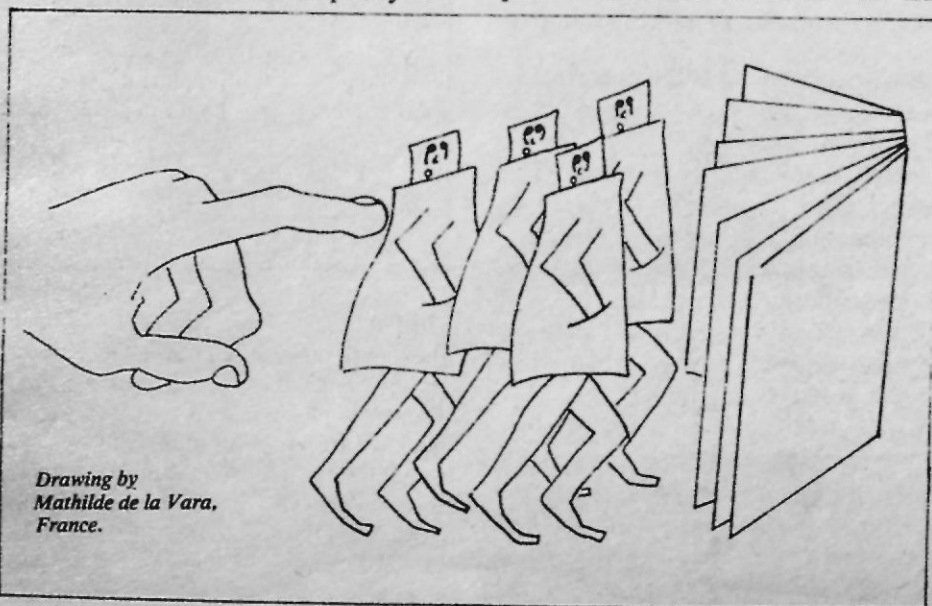
Having an alternative publication in a raided home was highly dangerous, but participating in its elaboration was much more so. For their professional and political participation, various colleagues were shot or assassinated through torture.

Numerous journalists have suffered imprisonment, banishment and exile.

From that modest little sheet printed from a jam jar to the existence of such publications as *Analisis*, *Apai*, *Cauce*, *Fortin*, *Mapocho*, and *Bicicleta* a long road has been traversed. And the protagonists of this advance are the men and women who have struggled all these years against the dictatorship—and the democratic journalists. The struggle for freedom of the press cannot be separated from the struggle for freedom and democracy. These are interdependent struggles. The person who knows this best is Pinochet, and for this reason he has converted—in recent years—the opposition journalism, the journalism of the barricades, into his special enemy.

The free publications do not manage to give work to more than a small minority and those colleagues who have a combat post on these publications live in a state of anxiety and great tension. For this reason they enjoy respect, admiration, and constant solidarity.

After the military coup and for more than 13 years the exiled journalists and many others who are not journalists have been taking it upon themselves to keep international solidarity informed about what is happening in Chile. Hundreds of bulletins, magazines, leaflets, and radio and TV programs have toured the world in the most varied languages.



Drawing by
Mathilde de la Vara,
France.

Portrait of NEA President

by Jane Power

If you're trying to secure a decent childhood and a decent future for youngsters anywhere in this country, don't be surprised if Mary Hatwood Futrell shows up to lend a hand. As president of the National Education Association, Futrell works in Washington—and in almost any town across the country where there are public schools. Arguing, inspiring, slicing through the misstatements of media and politicians, she puts in double time in meetings, interviews, speeches, debates, and writing.

Some of that commitment comes with the job. Futrell leads a 1.86-million-member union of school employees—elementary and high school teachers, bus drivers, librarians, maintenance workers, professors, aides, cafeteria workers, community college instructors, secretaries, counselors, and audiovisual technicians, among others.

NEA members' interests closely match those of the young people they serve—and not just in getting the financial support, the public respect, and the parental cooperation that schools need. NEA policies touch not only on professional issues like pay and censorship, but on issues that affect teachers, students, and everyone else, like fair housing and a nuclear freeze. NEA stands for fair treatment for both sexes and all ethnic and racial groups—in the classroom, in educational materials, in the union, and in the society.

But Futrell's commitment isn't just organizational, it's deeply personal. The chance for education made a big difference in her life, and she wants that chance for every child.

Futrell's father, a construction worker in southwestern Virginia, died when she was five. Though Mrs. Hatwood worked three housecleaning jobs to support herself and her two daughters, classmates still teased Mary about her ragged clothes. But that determination (and independence: Mrs. Hatwood paid off her late husband's medical bills, even though it took eight years) show up in the NEA president of today. Mrs. Hatwood's daughter does whatever has to be done, and does it well. That sense of duty is having its effect in schools across the country.

Mary Hatwood Futrell began standing up for the rights of Blacks—and of women—almost as soon as she began teaching. Speaking out for minority rights got her involved in the local teacher's association in Alexandria, Virginia, in the late 1960s and in her state association in the 70s. She later served on NEA's Human Relations Committee and on the Select Committee on the Education of Black Youth.

President for five years of ERAmerica, Futrell has twice chaired the Women's Caucus of the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession, an organization that speaks for 10 million teachers in 106 countries.

When Futrell took office in 1983, an NEA president served a two-year term, and that was it. That's over.

By the end of Futrell's first term, the 7,500 delegates to NEA's Representative Assembly had amended the organization's constitution, by two-thirds vote, to permit a second term. Futrell ran unopposed. In 1986, the Representative Assembly amended the Constitution again, and last July Futrell was elected to what she says will be her last term. Her successor will have to meet a high standard.

Teachers as Leaders in Schools

A Nation at Risk, the first highly publicized call for education reform, appeared in the spring of 1983, just before Futrell became NEA president. Sitting on such bodies as the Carnegie Commission, deeply involved in NEA efforts to stop scapegoating of teachers, Futrell has taken a leading part in the reform era.

At first, teachers were blamed for many of the shortcomings of the schools. Futrell charged that reformers were trying to teacherproof schools. 'If you are not pleased with the quality of teachers you have, you don't correct it by tying them down with regulations. You correct it by doing better with recruitment, with smaller class sizes, by offering help for teachers who need it.'

"I guarantee you," she told Texas lawmakers, 'that the decisions about money and about policies and programs and education would be much better decision if teachers had a bona fide, respected role in making them.'

By 2000, she predicts, teachers, parents, and administrators will work side by side "to plan curriculum and set policies and goals best suited to the students in their schools."

In 1985, Futrell called on NEA's Representative Assembly to fund a dropout prevention project. Two years later, NEA members in 20 school districts are using NEA Operation Rescue grants to carry out projects they've designed. In 27 other districts, NEA is operating a three-year-old project in which school staff team up to improve instruction.

This July, the Representative Assembly took up another Futrell challenge: to devote \$1 of each member's dues for the next five years to build up the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, which NEA set up in 1969. Futrell suggests the scope of future grants: to improve writing skills, harness new technologies, recruit students into teaching, broaden curricula for rural children, develop programs for four-year-olds, and get parents more involved.

Average pay for a beginning teacher is \$17,000 a year; after 15 years and a master's degree, it rises to about \$25,000. Only 6% of today's college graduates are going into teaching—and 55% of current teachers say they'd like to leave the profession. The result is a predicted shortage of as many as 1.5 million teachers in the next decade.

"Teachers won't stay in a profession where they prepare children for higher education but can't afford to send their own children to college," Futrell points out. She outlines two of NEA's basic targets for reform: "Even the best prepared teachers cannot survive in overcrowded conditions with outdated equipment and inadequate supplies trying to teach a curriculum in which they have had no voice." Further, to staff classrooms with outside "experts" who have no training in teaching "makes a mockery of education reform."

Teachers as Leaders in Society

"The people of America see their factories shut down, their farms foreclosed," Mary Hatwood Futrell told NEA's 1987 Annual Meeting. "They see their debts



NEA President
Mary Hatwood Futrell

build up, as their jobs disappear. They see the first generation of children who are likely to be less well-off than their parents. They see a world becoming more complex, more competitive, and more dangerous as their leaders become more confused and more reactionary...

"I believe the voters of America are becoming more sophisticated. They know now that prosperity does not result from public relations nor is progress built on a smile, a nod, and an anecdote. That is

why we are going to our strength: grassroots organizing. Our election strategy is designed to mobilize citizens who want real answers to real problems in their schools, citizens who want help, not hype."

NEA is carrying this perception into action. Now in the midst of a new six-month process for collecting member opinion, it has swung vigorously into its fourth US Presidential campaign.

NEA political involvement aims at increasing government support for public education. But beyond that is a vision of educators' special mission, a vision Mary Hatwood Futrell describes this way: "We, as educators, must say to America that it is time to restore children to the position of love and respect that they once held. Not just the children in prep schools. Not just the children born to the rich and privileged. Not just well-behaved children or well-fed children. All of America's children deserve our love and respect."

"I believe America is one country, that we are weak or strong together, that if part of us is sick, or poor, or ignored, then our destiny is not realized."

Jane Power is an education writer living in Washington, D.C.

Problems of Education in Puerto Rico

by Elizabeth Murrell

One of the 1987 issues of "Teachers of the World" reviewed the current formal education system in Puerto Rico, from preschool to higher education in colleges and universities, and presented a plan for its improvement. These are some of the points highlighted in the article written by a Puerto Rican teacher:

Puerto Rico, a small island country of 3.5 million people residing on 8000 sq. kilometers, has a very high population density and is currently a military bastion for the United States. Despite this, the people of Puerto Rico are doing everything possible to be an equal member of the Latin American community of nations and to lend support and solidarity to the Nicaraguan people.

The United States influences the education system of this island country. A segment of Puerto Rican people, however, realize their obligation to the peoples of Latin America and to the preservation of their culture. Puerto Rico has two formal education systems. Our concern is with the state school system—preschool through college and university. Puerto Rico finances 66% of the system and the United States 34%, but the present education system does not meet the needs of the Puerto Rican people.

A government ruling promotes private schools. Over 200,000 attend private schools run by churches and military academies serving the upper classes. Even in the public schools, the system fosters an

admirin of U.S. values rather than those of Puerto Rico and other Latin American countries. In addition, English rather than the native language is encouraged; therefore students have difficulty in expressing themselves even in their own language.

The neo-colonial system is geared toward the needs of the United States, the bankers, and their oppressive policies. Puerto Rico has one of the highest rates of drug abuse, alcoholism, divorces, prostitution, crime and social oppression. This can be laid at the doorstep of U.S. rule of the island, which is possible because of the island's size and its inability to defend itself.

TV, cable television and radio stations are controlled and regulated by the Federal Agency for Communication, which influences the content and advertisements, as well as fostering antiworking class propaganda, and the destruction of the language.

For the last ten years Puerto Rican teachers aware of the propaganda have concentrated their efforts toward changing the educational system to bring about a higher quality of education. Their demands are:

- 1) Reform the system to improve the economic and social situation and job security for teachers.
- 2) Introduction of programs in teaching that will develop class consciousness and Puerto Rican content, in order to eradicate prejudice against working people and to combat existing covert, widely spread racism.
- 3) Revive knowledge of Puerto Rican heroes such as Eugenio Maria de Hostos, Ramon E. Betances, Julia de Burgos, etc., and incorporate this in the daily teaching.
- 4) See Latin America as a whole and foster solidarity with compatriots in El Salvador, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua in their struggles against the aggressiveness of the U.S. administration.

The politically aware teachers believe that by establishing an alliance with all Latin American sisters and brothers who have the same objectives, not only will they learn more about Latin American traditions and the real history of the Puerto Rican people, but also they can together deal with mutual problems. In this way, they might establish a Latin American education project to defeat the imperialist penetration of their lives and guarantee a better education for the children of working class people.



Women Political Prisoners Held in "Living Tomb"

by Bob Lederer

National demonstrations have been announced for March 8, International Women's Day, to protest a behavior modification unit in Lexington, Kentucky, holding three women political prisoners. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has labeled the sub-basement isolation facility "a living tomb." Faced with mounting domestic and international criticism, the U.S. Bureau of Prisons (BOP) announced in October plans to close its "High Security Unit"—but not for nine to eleven months. Officials added that this is only to allow time to build a new, larger maximum security women's prison in Marianna, Florida. Protest organizers are demanding the immediate transfer of the women into general population and fighting any effort to convert the new facility into another control unit.

The demonstrations, to be held at Lexington and Pleasanton, California (site of another federal prison holding women activists), were called by the National Campaign to Abolish the Lexington Control Unit, a coalition of women's antirepression, and Puerto Rican independence groups, plus lawyers and family members of the prisoners. Since the unit opened in October 1986, these activists have sponsored letter-writing campaigns, press conferences, poetry readings, and protests, including a large one at Lexington's gates on International Women's Day in 1987. Besides the ACLU, a wide range of organizations, including the United Church

of Christ, United Methodist Church, National Lawyers Guild, and the *Nation* magazine, have denounced the unit, and Amnesty International is investigating it.

The 16-bed unit, sealed off from the larger Lexington prison, holds two non-political prisoners and the three radical activists serving sentences of 35 to 58 years for "conspiracy" or weapons possession: Alejandrina Torres, a Puerto Rican *independentista* who claims prisoner-of-war status; Susan Rosenberg, a North American, and Silvia Baraldini, an Italian national, both active in solidarity with domestic and international liberation struggles.

"Renounce Beliefs to Get Out"

Among the conditions at the modern, hi-tech control unit are: total isolation from all other inmates; no visits except from immediate family and attorneys; constant video surveillance; no natural light; frequent denial of political literature; daily strip searches before and after a one-hour outdoor recreation period. Dr. Richard Korn, an ACLU psychologist who toured the facility, said its goal is "to reduce the prisoners to the state of submission essential for their ideological conversion...or destroy them." Indeed, the political women have been told that their "seditious" politics played a role in their placement there, and only by renouncing their political affiliations could they be considered for transfer out.

Time to Lay Off Mom

If mental health "experts" are to be believed, mothers are to blame for just about every ill in society.

According to psychologist Paula Caplan, mom-bashing is still very much in style with therapists "blaming the mother" in case after case. In fact, she says, a study of 125 clinical mental health articles written between 1970 and 1982 shows the authors holding mothers responsible for 72 different kinds of psychological disorder in their children, ranging from hyperactivity to schizophrenia, premature mourning, and arson. And in all the articles reviewed, says Caplan, "not a single mother was ever described as emotionally healthy...and no mother-child relationship was said to be healthy."

Caplan says the continuing practice of blaming mom stems from "blind allegiance to past theories"; the fact that mothers are "usually more visible to therapists than are fathers"; and the "mistaken belief that because women give birth and lactate, they are better suited for child rearing." That view, in turn, has helped make women the main caretakers of children, while giving short shrift to men's importance in their children's lives. And that combination of elements, says Caplan, creates a "vicious cycle of guilt and discomfort for women."

How do we get therapists to stop dumping on mom—and help create happier, healthier families in the bargain? Caplan has several suggestions, including recognizing the importance and influence of other people in a child's life; encouraging the "nurturant abilities" of boys and men; and just plain giving mothers their due. Writes Caplan in *Psychology Today*: "Our society usually fails to give mothers credit for the good they do, unless they are dead or described in the abstract, as in 'apple pie and motherhood.' Yet mothers, despite their anxiety and guilt, manage to raise millions of reasonably well-adjusted kids. They deserve far more credit for this than they get."

—Hawn

Finding Out about Men's Hands

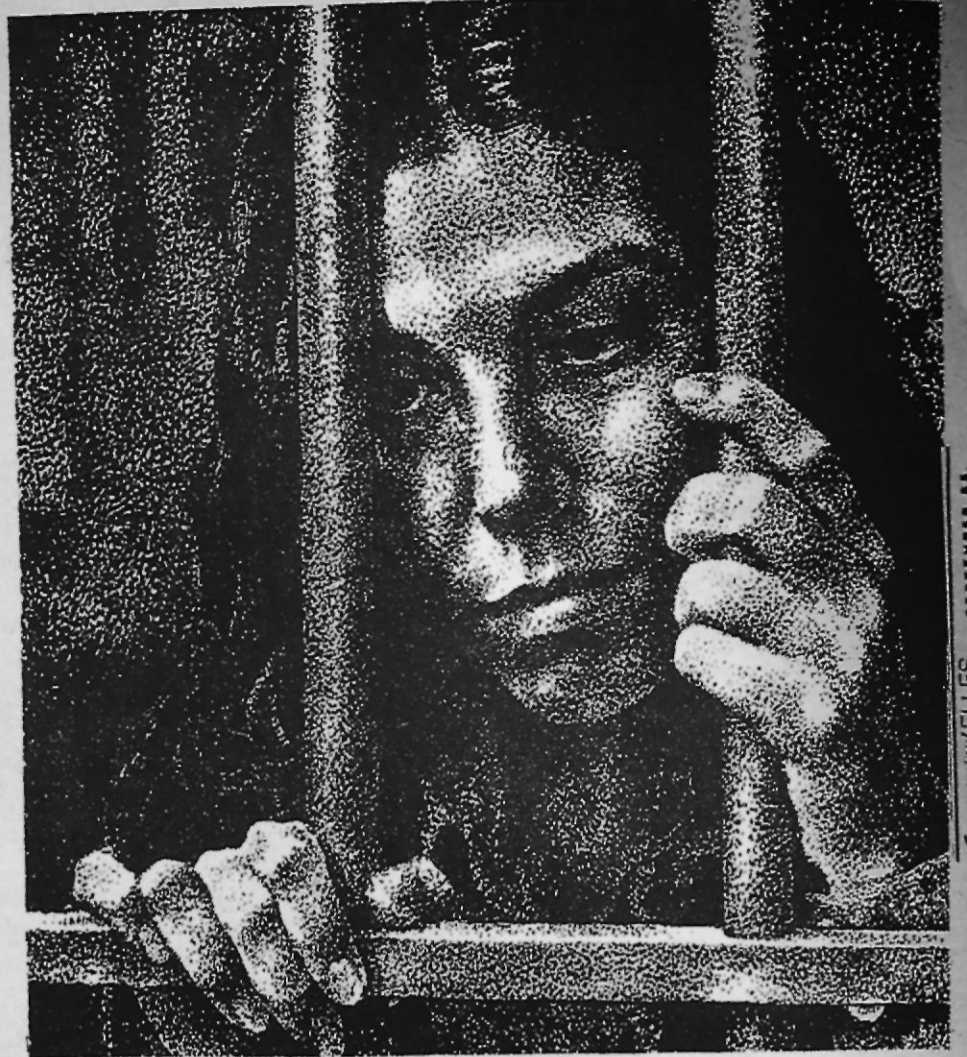
In third grade
when I leaned my head back
in Reading,
the boys plucked a hair from the crown
of my head
with the slow intention of a drunk hand,
and when I turned to glare
at the one pulling out part of me
for that particular sting,
they counted stars on the ceiling
dropping my curled hair
from their angel-smooth hands
causing small and subtle pains
the teacher never noticed
as she looked to the tops of desks
and saw the church of hands
folded and waiting
as if the Sunday solo
was about to begin.

Joy Downing
Portland, OR

Pregnant Woman Denied Medical Rights

In a very disturbing case in Washington, D.C. a pregnant woman who was dying of cancer was forced to undergo an involuntary Caesarian Section in a fruitless attempt to "save" her 26-week fetus. Based on the unsubstantiated chance that the fetus might be viable the patient identified as A.C., died two days later. According to the story carried in the *Washington Post* on November 17, the surgery was listed on A.C.'s death certificate as a factor.

The operation was against the patient's clearly communicated wishes



COMMUNIST ELLES SEPTEMBER 88

A Prison Reading Project makes books and other reading materials available to incarcerated Third World women. Juana Paz, Fayetteville, Arkansas, says, "If you look around, you'll probably find lots of surplus reading matter." She says she can send addresses of women who'd like to have back issues of magazines, textbooks, or paperbacks.

Juana says most prisons accept publications only from a publisher, bookseller or book club, and the return address of any package must clearly identify you as such. That's why she identifies herself as Paz Press.

"Some prisons limit the amount of

publications received per month (to 6 usually) or accept only new books, though newer looking ones usually make it. Books can be mailed Special 4th class for \$1 to \$2 per package of several, depending on size," Juana says.

If you would like to make a one-time or occasional contribution of books (or postage), you can do so through Paz Press at Box 3146, Fayetteville, AR 72702-3146.

However, Juana encourages people to communicate directly with women in prison because this gives the incarcerated woman a friendly contact on the outside, in addition to the package of books.



Peg Averill/LNS/CPF

My Neighbor

She meets me on the steps,
her fist around a broom
and her words after "hello"
are "did your Japanese calendar
make it on time this year?"

Sharon, I want you
to put down your broom
and come in for Jasmine tea—
there's just a patch of land
between us—but we hear
you screaming every night.

Until the crying came
we thought you had cracked,
after the sobbing and slamming,
we hear you tell your husband,
the son of a minister, he isn't to
touch you after coming
back home from her. Listen,

he isn't worth those cries
that come from these walls—
we know whenever we hear
him fix his van by flashlight
at night, that he is a bad actor.

Sharon, stop sweeping,
unlock your fist—you must not
settle for a life miserable
and short as your broom.

Rosaly DeMaio Roffman
Pittsburgh, PA

and the wishes of her family and was carried out over the objections of the woman's doctors. The operation was the initiative of George Washington University Hospital administrators, who got an emergency ruling from the D.C. Court of Appeals in less than six hours. During the "rushed and bizarre" hearings, A.C. was prepped for surgery even before the final decision was given by the court.

This case raises dangerous questions about medical rights and bodily

integrity not only of those who are dying, but of all pregnant women. To quote the *Washington Post* once again:

"We have seen several cases in which a brain dead woman has been kept on respirators so that a fetus might survive. More controversial, we now see pregnant women who are not brain dead, not even terminally ill, being threatened or forced into medical treatment."

The Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights

Our Sisters Say:

Dearest WREE Sisters,

I am always first and foremost a WREE sister because we share the same pains, hopes, and struggles.

I know that the battles pressing on us sometimes appear bigger than Mt. Rushmore (with all its mockery of the Native Americans on whose land America has carved for posterity its monument to their dispossession). Be that as it may: we are one in our struggles. You out there on the frontiers to oppression and we out here in Southern Africa in the outposts of oppression. And the women, we both know, are strong and resilient.

I have missed the sharing of sisterhood we once had with all women from many lands. But we here are fighting the same enemy too—"with banners and babies on our backs!" Tell my sisters in WREE for me, please, to continue these ties of solidarity between them and us. The struggle is a long one; we cannot wage it without sisterhood from other oppressed lands lending a hand. Many young children are in jail. Mothers are also being sent to jail. Families are made homeless—the workers strangled by capital. The strikers get arrested. The struggle continues. Destabilization also continues and capitalism is moving out—leaving dummy corporate ventures and we are not deceived for that game is not new.

I enjoy my work here at the Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies, doing research. Will be attending a conference soon and giving a paper for our Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs. I am growing in my small way and there is still a lot to learn.

But we are together in struggle: Backward Never; Forward Ever!

In sisterhood,
Ona Jiriru
Harare, Zimbabwe

WREE sister Kathy Owen in Fayetteville, Arkansas, wrote to say she could not renew her membership because, "I am very poor. I have no money to give you. Please accept my poems as a gift of my membership. I'll understand if you can't afford to sent the paper to me without cash—but I will continue to think warmly of you. With love and peace." [No sister is ever refused membership because she can't pay dues—editor.]

This is one of the poems Kathy sent:

Being A Woman

For those who wonder
Where all the women went
Who marched for peace,
For equality, for liberation—
I will tell you what I've seen:
Those who had children are very busy
Being a mother or a student-mother
Or a "head of household"
Struggling to get by on whatever
Government handouts can be gotten
"Career women" are busy
Being an executive or a doctor or
A host of other occupations—
Many concentrating on getting ahead
Or living the "good life."
Those who went "back to the land"
Are very busy
Being a farmer or a mother or
A host of other hard working things.
Trying to be all things for all people
Is a very hard task.
Tired and sometimes discouraged
I plod on—
Being a woman does NOT get
Any easier—at any age or time.

Dear WREE:

The Rural Southern Voice for Peace (RSVP) is a network of grassroots people working for social change in the rural South. The main link in this network is the RSVP newsletter, an exciting, bi-monthly newsletter in which people working for peace, justice, ecological change, etc. share their ideas, successes, and experiences. The newsletter focuses on the positive—what it is that people are actually doing to change things. This includes stories of how grassroots people are creating the alternative values, lifestyles, and ecological wisdom needed to build a peaceful world. There are people in hundreds of communities, many of them so small you've never heard of them, who are doing what it takes to change themselves and the world around them.

For an introductory copy of the newsletter, write to RSVP, 1901 Hannah Branch Rd., Burnsville, NC 28714.

STAR WARS

A SHORT COURSE
FOR THE
LEGITIMATELY CONFUSED

"Star Wars: A Short Course for the Legitimately Confused." Powerful, comprehensive and up-to-date. This 35 minute slide show with audiotape comes with its own program-ready packet of materials including articles for background reading, script with annotations, references, bibliography and "cues" for presenters. Developed by Women Strike for Peace in consultation with community groups, the slide show is a clear and compelling look at how Star Wars is supposed to work, why it won't work and why it will increase the danger of nuclear war. Available for \$40.00 post-paid from Women Strike for Peace Educational Fund, 145 S. 13th Street, #706, Philadelphia, PA 19107.



"Recent studies show that girls and young women want more opportunities for sports participation than most communities provide," said Margaret Gates, National Executive Director of Girls Clubs of America, Inc. (GCA). "Through sports, girls gain not only physical fitness and skill, but confidence, self-discipline, and healthy social attitudes."

• Of the 281 events in the Olympic games, 179 are for men only, 86 are for women only, and 16 are for both.

• It is estimated that girls represent only 15% of the participants in organized after-school sports programs.

• Studies have shown that athletic coaches treat girls differently from boys, giving girls 1/8 the sports skill instruction they give to boys.

To assist and promote girls' participation in sports, GCA announces that its Sports Resource Kit, a comprehensive set

of materials for planning effective sports programs for girls ages 6-18, is now available from the GCA National Resource Center, 441 West Michigan St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. The kit, prepared for youth workers, coaches, and program administrators, includes sports manuals, booklets, and a 1/2 inch video, "Sports: Beyond Winning," which promotes teen women's sports involvement.

Some components of the kit, which sells for \$45 may be purchased separately. These include a *Sports Resource Guide*, which contains an annotated directory of the national governing bodies, major sports organizations, and sports support groups available in the U.S., as well as a reading list of recommended materials for understanding issues related to girls in sports.

The publication of the kit coincided with the opening of New Agenda II, a national conference on girls and sports, co-hosted by Girls Clubs of America, the National Association for Girls and Women in Sport, and the Women's Sports Foundation, in Indianapolis in June.

Both the Sports Resource Kit and New Agenda II are part of Girls Clubs of America's ongoing national program, SPORTING CHANCE. Designed and developed to provide a comprehensive approach to sports awareness and participation for girls ages 6-18, SPORTING CHANCE builds on and enhances the excellent sports program currently offered by 99% of all local Girls Clubs.



In a letter to the editor of the NY Times explaining that SDI (Star Wars) is worse than useless as a defense, Herbert Barchoff ends his letter with this most quotable quote: "Although I cannot pinpoint the date, this I can say with certainty: One day we will have total and complete nuclear disarmament—with or without people."



APARTHEID IS WRONG

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AND CASSETTE

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RUBY DEE

PRODUCED BY
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APARTHEID

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Contact: Kathy Selvaggio at 202/667-4284 for information.

Why WREE? Why Me?

MEET ANNA CRUZ, A WREE SISTER

by Elizabeth Murrell (Fax)

1954 was quite a year from beginning to end. The first atomic-powered submarine was launched in January; on March first five members of the House of Representatives were wounded by Puerto Rican independence supporters; Sen. Joseph McCarthy held the notorious hearings on alleged Communist influence in the army; racial segregation in public schools was officially declared illegal, violating the 14th Amendment. And on December 2 Sen. McCarthy was denounced by the Senate for contempt and insults to the Senate during army investigations, and Anna Cruz, a newlywed young woman in her twenties, arrived in New York City from Puerto Rico.

Life was not easy. The mother of four living children (3 girls and a boy), Anna worked in a laundry for 10 years where she became a union member. During this period Anna was the sole provider of her family. She even had to use some of her meager wages to pay baby sitters while she worked. After the birth of her youngest child, she found it necessary to go on welfare.

A fire in the tenement house in which she lived had the effect of activating Anna politically. She and four other tenant families decided to remain, and they were forced to take the landlord to court to get the necessary repairs made as a result of the fire.

Something worthwhile sometimes develops out of an adverse situation. After the fire and the positive court action undertaken by Anna and her neighbors, they decided to come together as an organized group. Thus a Tenants Association for 16th Street between 7th and 8th Avenues was born. As a result of this association's action, an irresponsible landlord was jailed and forced to live up to the law. The success of this first action encouraged many tenants. This small group then became active in the Chelsea Coalition for Housing, a larger neighborhood organization.

Anna continued her activities, and worked also with the Chelsea Intergency Council and Action Center. She became a member of the board of directors of the Mobilization for Youth Legal Services and of other affiliated organizations.

In 1977 Anna attended the historic first convention of WREE, held in Chicago, and became a member. Anna says this affiliation broadened her knowledge and understanding of the value of joint protest for women's rights. She could see more clearly the role that racism and classism played in housing and other spheres of life in the United States. Sadly she has witnessed the gentrification of her neighborhood—the departure of poor people, minorities, the elderly, “to God knows where.” Today children's voices are no longer heard playing games on West 15th and 16th Streets, old neighbors have been forced to move and the majority living there now are mostly the “moneyed yuppies,” she says.

Anna's activities did not stop with the tenants and neighborhood associations. She was active in the “Free Angela Davis Committee” and other progressive groups. In 1987 she was one of the WREE delegates attending the World Congress of Women, held in Moscow in June. This important congress was attended by more than 3000 women from every corner of the world, including little known countries and islands.

Anna returned home resolved to work even more zealously for WREE and other causes for the people.

Anna says that Angela Davis had been and continues to be an inspiration to her and to her children (she has 7 grandchildren). She has Angela's book at home and her children love it and constantly read it. This modest grandmother is a tireless worker for peace and justice and the rights of all women. She urges: “Women should join WREE as our goals are for all women regardless of race, religion, or class.”



NY WREE joins the “March for Racial Justice” in New York on January 18. Above: Sania Metzger, Sally Chaffee Maron, Joy James, Margo Nikitas, Naomi Schott, Bertha Leshinsky. Below: A daughter-mother team, Natalie and Rose Jones carry WREE banner to City Hall.

To All WREE Women!

AMERICAN

FAMILY CELEBRATION

Joyce Miller, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), announced plans for a major demonstration to be held in Washington, D.C.

Join us

In celebrating our families while

WORKING FOR CHANGE

“Family issues have always been a major priority in the labor movement,” Miller said. “This is not just a woman's issue, but a concern to all Americans. Action must be taken and our voices must be heard. THE AMERICAN FAMILY CELEBRATION: WORKING FOR A CHANGE will be hailed as a major step in that direction.”

Miller noted that the event will differ from most, calling it a “family gathering—part rally, part street fair, with entertainment for children as a special feature. It will be a day that the entire family can share.”

For more information, contact your local CLUW chapter or local WREE chapter.

- Family and Medical Leave • Comprehensive Health Care •
- Quality, Comprehensive Child Care • Economic Justice & Security •
- Services for the Elderly • Improved Educational Opportunities •

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Saturday, May 14, 1988

Noon-5 P.M.

Sylvan Theater

Near the Washington Monument

Bring the Family. Bring the Kids.

Food, Entertainment, Speakers, Games

CLUW's American Family Celebration: Working For Change



Anna Cruz (left) and some U.S. delegates to World Congress of Women in Moscow visited a sports stadium last June. With Anna are Lois McClendon, PA; Mary Reljic, IL; Jorgene Seleyo, PA; and Beryl Fitzpatrick, IN.