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IN THIS ISSUE

The changing European Community	3
Parental leave	4
Development aid	4
Positive action to help women	5
Women and banking	7
Consumer views	9
Court of Justice	11
European Parliament	
September session	12
October session	14
Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry	17
Facts, Institutions and Laws	19
June '84: European Elections	38
Militant activities	39
Research, Meetings and Books	61

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THE CHANGING EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

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Individuality, diversity, variety. Women have always refused to be labelled, typecast and stereotyped, knowing that to accept this would make it easier for society to leave them admired but disregarded on a dusty shelf.

Nevertheless, women make a characteristic and recognizable mark, an imprint all of their own, on events and life.

The forthcoming European elections will be providing a fresh opportunity to make the most of this curious duality.

With all their individuality, diversity and variety, women will be speaking up in the debate, putting over their viewpoints, taking up stands and throwing in their lot with the party of their choice, in the imaginative, positive, creative and supportive style that they display in their everyday lives.

Many of the amounts of money cited in "Women of Europe" are calculated in "ECUs". These "units of account" make it easier to work out the equivalent in each Member State. One ECU is equivalent to APPROXIMATELY: 45 Belgian or Luxembourg francs, 2.27 Deutschmark, 2.54 Dutch guilders, £0.56, 8.17 Danish crowns, 6.85 French francs, 1,357 Italian lire, £0.72 (Irish) and 78 Greek drachmas. It is a subject we shall be discussing in greater detail.

Parental leave: a draft directive

The European Commission has drawn up a proposal for a directive on parental leave and leave for family reasons. The aim is to ensure that workers are allowed to take off at least a minimum period to look after young children and cope with emergencies in the family.

Care will be taken to see that the new directive is in line with the European Community directive on equal treatment for men and women in employment (76/207/EEC), in that everyone who works is entitled to parental leave and can be sure of returning to the same job without loss of any social security benefits.

According to the text drafted by the European Commission, an allowance would be paid during parental leave, possibly out of public funds rather than by the employer. The introduction of such an allowance is a recommendation, not an obligation, since the economic situation within EC countries varies so widely.

The final text of the proposal for a directive is being forwarded to the Council of Ministers of the Community and European Parliament in late autumn.

Development: the long debate

Early in October, negotiations opened in Luxembourg on renewing the Lomé Convention. Over the next 18 months, representatives of the European Community and the 63 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries will be discussing the provisions that are to regulate their future relationships.

According to Mr Edgard Pisani, the European Commissioner responsible for development, this is a great challenge, for "there can be no future for Europe if most of the Third World is condemned to suffer endlessly from under-development or malnutrition". It is Europe's duty "**to offer more and better**" to its partners in the Third World, says Mr Pisani.

The aim of the negotiations is to make cooperation even more effective and encourage ACP countries to take their own steps towards development. Priority is being given to food problems. Mr Pisani argues in favour of "food strategies" tailor-made to the needs of each individual country, designed to promote rural development and increase food production.

"The debate is on making better use of outside help and the form that this help might most usefully take", stresses Mr Pisano. The Community would like to see a dialogue on the development policies which the ACP countries want to conduct with its support. Aid must be used to create a new future. Mr Pisani concludes: "By conceiving, proposing and implementing a major North/South policy, Europe can leave its imprint on the world scene and display a true awareness of its interests. The forthcoming renegotiation of the Lomé Convention will provide an opportunity to find out whether such a policy can and will exist."

Mr. Tindemans, the Belgian Foreign Minister, has come out in support of the new policy proposed by Mr Pisani, emphasizing that food aid is not enough. "The war against hunger has our full approval ... Many things need to be reformed, especially the traditional structures ... If women have such a low status that few can read or write, how can we hope to explain the ways in which agricultural productivity can be improved?".

"POSITIVE ACTION" TO HELP WOMEN

The Greek Ministry of Employment and the Commission of the European Communities, in conjunction with European Parliament, have held a colloquium on "positive action in favour of women".

Taking place in Athens in late September, the colloquium was a response to the need to clarify what "positive action" implies; the concept has been defined neither by the Community Action Programme on equal opportunities nor by the 1976 EEC directive.

At the request of the European Commission, positive action already undertaken by some of the Member States was discussed, analyzed and compared with experiments along the same lines elsewhere, particularly in the United States, Canada and Scandinavia. A consolidated report was drawn up by the Brussels National Centre for the Sociology of Social Law directed by Professor Eliane Vogel-Polsky. It is a subject at which we shall be taking a far more detailed look.

Evangelos Yiannopoulos, Minister of Employment, opened this forum for politicians, senior civil servants and experts on the subject of equal opportunities.

Speaking for the European Commission, Peter Gommers, Director of Employment in the Directorate-General for Social Affairs, pointed out that positive action had become an even more pressing need as a result of current economic conditions and the introduction of new technology.

Ms M. Devaud said that the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women within the Community, of which she is chairman, is in favour of a flexible legal instrument at Community level to promote positive action.

Maria Lisa Cinciari-Rodano, chairman of the European Parliament Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe, agreed that positive action could only be encouraged by the passing of an EEC directive.

Simone Veil, chairman of the European Parliament Legal Affairs Committee, said that positive action is not "discrimination in reverse" but the remedying of long-standing injustice by offering psychological and financial support to the women who have suffered from it.

Yvette Roudy, the Minister responsible for Women's Rights in France, explained the reasoning underlying the recent French law on equality at work. There are, she said, two basic elements: the creation of new rights and the introduction of facilities for the dissemination of information and negotiation.

Eliane Vogel-Polsky, Professor of Labour Law at Brussels Free University and the author of the consolidated report, suggested a very broad definition of positive action: "a plan of action designed to achieve a specific result: to increase the number of women and other 'second-class citizens' - the young, the handicapped, ethnic minorities, immigrants - at every step in the hierarchy of office and the organization of a company's production and services".

Positive action is a strategy and, as such, we must evaluate the field in which it is to be applied, the machinery and resources, obstacles, etc.

Ms O. Quintin, the head of the Bureau for problems concerning women's employment and equality (European Commission) noted that various forms of positive action have already been launched in several Member States as a result of article 2.4 of the 1976 EEC Directive on equal treatment. An EEC legal instrument would be a feasible and helpful way of backing up equality policy under difficult economic circumstances.

Experience acquired by other countries was described by Inga-Britt Törnell, the Ombudsman for equality between men and women in Sweden, and by Mary Fillmore, a women's status counsellor in the United States.

In Sweden, said Inga-Britt Törnell, heavy civil sanctions have been laid down by law, the onus of disproving alleged discrimination being placed on the employer. The law places an obligation on all employers to promote equality in the workplace. In the U.S., said Mary Fillmore, effective results could be achieved only by obtaining the cooperation of women workers themselves as well as the unions and management. It is a very common practice to call in an "equality adviser", a consultant who has received specific training at a university, business institute or management college.

Winding up the general discussions, Ivor Richard, the member of the European Commission with responsibility for Employment and Social Affairs, echoed the concerns expressed by Chryssanthi Antoniou-Laïou, the chairman of the Greek Council for equal opportunities for men and women, who had said that the information networks should strengthen the resolve of governments, employers, unions and women's organizations by providing them with facts and figures.

Mr Richard stressed that the budget restrictions introduced in today's crisis should not be used as an excuse for a laissez-faire attitude. The European Commission intends to continue placing high priority on positive action, including action in schools and vocational training. He announced that the Commission would be working on a plan to create a practical legal framework for positive action and stressed how important it is for the public sector to set a good example.

Following the colloquium, the Athens office of the European Commission took advantage of the presence of so many highly qualified speakers to arrange a two-day information seminar on the theme, at which for women's groups, senior civil servants, union leaders, journalists and employers were briefed on "positive action for the advancement of women on the jobs market".

The talks and the debate that followed evidenced one very keen concern expressed throughout the colloquium: that everyone required to implement positive action should be made more aware of the issue.

Women and banking

"Women and job desegregation in banking" is not one of those run-of-the-mill reports that are as hard for the reader to plough through as for the author to write, but an enthralling account of a "research and action programme" in one of Belgium's leading banks, conducted with financial support from the European Commission.

What is a "research and action programme"? According to Marcel Bolle de Bal, the scientific director of the project, "any empirical research implies a change in the environment under review". In this specific instance, the aim was not just to give a detailed picture of how women stand within one bank and pinpoint the obstacles to promotion but also to plan practical ways of overcoming those obstacles, working closely with the departments concerned.

Over a period of two years the author, Monique Chalude, was involved with the men and women and their problems, both in the head office of the bank and in its provincial headquarters. Drawing on the experience, this sociologist by training and specialist in women's employment has produced a detailed report of outstanding quality.

The bank she came to know so well is highly reputable and at the same time dynamic. It employs 10,000 people, 33% of them women. Such an outward looking enterprise might well be expected to have accepted the principle of equality between men and women long ago. In practice, however, there is a good deal of grit in the machine that makes it run less smoothly than it should.

There is the weight of tradition. As recently as 1963, the internal regulations stated that "on joining the bank, every female employee undertakes to tender her resignation on her marriage". That requirement was abolished twenty years ago, but its traces are still perceptible in attitudes.

There is the weight of habit. At the time of recruitment, both men and women are asked whether they can type. It is only natural that women "who can" are assigned to the administrative side, whereas men, "who can't", are sent to the commercial side of the bank, where career prospects are better. In practice, both men and women are sat in front of a typewriter "to learn how", but a woman who is reluctant to acquire the skill is told to keep on trying, whereas a man who finds it hard is more readily relieved of the task.

There are also unconscious attitudes to contend with. With her knowledge of psychology, Monique Chalude was alert to those little give-away utterances by management staff, such as "I respect women, I have a model wife and mother at home...".

The research was followed up by action: consciousness-raising, personal involvement, making it a "conditioned reflex" to take women into account. As the author explains, the work of the team was based on numerous discussions with individuals at which information was gathered but at the same time they were guided towards greater awareness of the problem. When the interviewers came up against a measure of resistance they went no further, reassuring the other person rather than seeking a confrontation. At their next meeting, they would start up again from where they left off. In many cases, the individual had in the meantime thought about the contradictions in his own attitude and resolved them, and they could go on from there.

As quoted in this report, various conversations reflect the many sticking points that are beyond the scope of rules and regulations. In one discussion, for example, the woman researcher asked an executive about the ways a man can improve his chances of promotion. The interviewee mentioned such things as having a drink with a department head, being a member of the same clubs and playing a friendly game of tennis with him. "What about women, how can they better their promotion prospects?" A prolonged silence ensued. Next day, the executive confessed that he had never given the matter a thought.

What needs to be done? In part three of the report, Monique Chalude sets out in detail the action and the results achieved in three pilot branches of the bank and its head office. The plan described here is for a bank, but it could well be applied to other concerns:

- designate a person to be in charge of the plan;
- study the problem and marshal the supporting facts and figures;
- involve management staff;
- establish targets and deadlines;
- make top management more aware of the issue.

During this "research and action programme", Monique played a very similar role to that of the "women's careers consultants" to be found at work in the United States. In tackling what actually happens in a company, its need to achieve greater efficiency and its traditional attitudes, closer attention should be paid to details which are not as minor as they may seem. For example, a simple factor like the layout of desks in an office may have its effects. If the women are relegated to a corner and tied to the keyboard of a computer or typewriter, they will have no opportunity to keep abreast of what is going on in the department, whereas the men may be sitting near the person in charge, within earshot of his discussions, comments and views.

Monique Chalude's report, in French or in its English translation, deserves to be read, for its implications are far wider than the environment of the bank which it discusses. The problems that arise there arise in almost every company, and the action undertaken provides a good example of what might be done elsewhere.

Nevertheless, implementing the "research and action programme" method needs tact and care. Marcel Bolle de Bal, who is not only the scientific director of the project but also the head of the Centre de Sociologie du Travail at Brussels Free University, suggested the creation of a "steering committee". Meeting twice monthly, this committee consisted of two representatives of the bank and the two members of the University research team. Through this ad hoc body, important matters could be clarified, such as the confidential nature of certain items of information, feasible strategies and contact with the bank's employer/employee consultative committee.

Useful address Centre de Sociologie du Travail de l'U.L.B.
44 avenue Jeanne
1050 Brussels

The report on women in banking was part of a pilot experiment in research and action undertaken in 1978 by the London School of Economics in cooperation with the German Marshall Fund.

The plan covered four European Banks (in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom) with financial support from the European Commission and was one aspect of the Action Programme for Equal Opportunities (point 12: elimination of job segregation).

Useful address European Commission
Bureau for Employment and Equal Treatment for Women
200, rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels

The European Social Fund: a review of 1982

The annual report on the activities of the European Social Fund in 1982 has pointed to the growing gap between the resources available and applications for help being forwarded to the European Commission. Although the funds were increased to 1,577.85 million ECU, 42.4% higher than in the previous year, the overall value of applications rose to 2,88.20 mn ECU.

During the course of the year, vocational training and retraining projects aimed at women in particular were supported to the total amount of 27.35 mn ECU. The breakdown by country was:

	Amount, in million ECU	Percentage
Belgium	0.45	1.7
Denmark	-	-
Germany	15.60	57.0
France	6.35	23.2
Greece	0.47	1.7
Ireland	0.54	2.0
Italy	2.08	7.6
Luxembourg	0.01	
Netherlands	0.45	1.7
United Kingdom	1.40	5.1

Consumer views

The Consumers' Consultative Committee (CCC) has submitted a report to the European Commission entitled "CCC Analysis and Proposals for a Consumer Policy in Times of Crisis".

According to the Committee, the failure of both national and Community policy measures run through since 1973 in an attempt to overcome the crisis may be attributed to inadequate diagnosis (the crisis being structural rather than short-term) and the disparate or even conflicting nature of policies. In some cases, the remedies proposed have been on the supply side, in others they have been monetary, and in yet others the policy has been to stimulate demand.

In this context, a consumer policy is by no means a luxury but a vital stimulant for the economy, promoting economic and political cohesion. Consumers must be given credit for their relentless fight against waste, high prices and shoddy quality, etc.

The Committee has urged a change of direction for the organization of the economy and society. It has come out in favour of greater market transparency, action to combat the inflationary practices of businesses, the protection of consumers against being pressurized into entering into contracts, the improvement of the quality of goods, services and the environment, an energy and environmental policy, the recycling of waste, the encouragement of more rational consumer attitudes and measures to counteract intra-Community protectionism.

Useful address European Commission
 200, rue de la Loi
 1049 Brussels

Pro arte

What can the European Community do for its creative artists - such as its writers, composers and painters - and its interpretative artists - actors, musicians, singers and dancers, for instance?

Anyone concerned with what is being done for them will find supplement 6/82 to the Bulletin of the European Communities enlightening. Discussing ways of strengthening Community action in the cultural sector, it points out that, in working for culture, the Community is not infringing on the responsibilities of individual countries nor those of international organizations.

Within its sphere of responsibility, the Community can encourage the free exchange of cultural assets, make every effort to improve the living and working conditions of those working in the arts, encourage a broadening of audiences and help to conserve the architectural heritage.

In these various fields, the action on which the Community has embarked will be successful only if the cultural workers themselves take an active part in the debate and clearly express their own concerns to the authorities. It is of interest that Mr Gaston Thorn, President of the European Commission, insisted on making the cultural sector his personal concern from the time he first took office.

Useful address European Commission, Secretariat-General
 Mr Grégoire - Cultural Questions
 200, rue de la Loi
 1049 Brussels

Shorter, better organized working hours

The European Commission has sent the Council of Ministers a "draft recommendation on the reduction and reorganization of working time", initiated by Ivor Richard, the Commissioner for Social Affairs.

This document is one step towards implementing the Commission's global strategy on the struggle against unemployment. Although the spearhead of that strategy is the effort to encourage investment and industrial reorganization, a fairer allocation of work is also seen as a vital move towards eliminating unemployment as quickly as possible.

The recommendation calls on national governments to pursue a two-fold aim:

- the reduction of individual working hours, combined with the reorganization of working time on a wide enough scale to boost employment;
- more stringent safeguards against systematic recourse to overtime.

In most EEC countries, the European Commission notes, the question of reducing working hours is being raised in collective bargaining. In Belgium, France, Italy and the Netherlands, legislation has been brought in and/or national labour agreements have been, or are being, negotiated with a view to shortening the working week and releasing more jobs.

EUROPEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

Denmark

The European Commission has decided to summon Denmark before the Court of the European Communities on the grounds of its non-compliance with Community legislation on equality for men and women.

The Commission's first complaint is concerned with the Danish law on equal pay passed in 1976 to implement the EEC directive of 10 February 1975. Whereas the directive defines equal pay as being "for the same work or for work to which equal value is attributed", Danish law refers only to the concept of "the same work". When this was queried by the Commission, the Danish Government explained that the Danish language makes no distinction between the two terms. The Commission disputes this interpretation and points out that there are cases in which such a difference exists.

The second complaint regards the Danish law on equal treatment in access to employment. Passed in 1978, it provides for equal treatment only within the same workplace. The Commission argues that this leaves a loophole: an employer with two or more establishments could maintain discrimination in different workplaces.

Maternity leave

Under German regulations, an extra four months (partly funded out of health insurance scheme) may be taken to supplement the 14 weeks' maternity leave, before and after childbirth. A father wanted to take advantage of this facility because the mother of their child wished to return to her job. The insurance scheme refused to grant the leave on the grounds that it could be taken only by women. The father felt that this was discriminatory and went to the Hamburg Social Affairs Tribunal, which in turn referred the matter to the Court of Justice. Does the German regulation, it asked, contravene the 1976 Council directive on equal treatment for men and women?

An exception?

One of the exceptions allowed by the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 is the employer with a work force of not more than five. A company involved in a dispute referred to the Belfast Labour Tribunal claimed that, being so small, it did not have to comply with clause 8 § 3 of that Order. The Belfast court put the following questions to the Court of Justice of the Communities as a result:

- Does the Directive of 9 February 1976 (on equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment) confer rights of a Community nature that may be claimed by individuals within Member States?
- If so, does this directive forbid an employer's discrimination on the grounds of sex, whatever the number of people he employs?

Useful address Court of Justice of the European Communities
Case postale 96, Plateau du Kirchberg
Luxembourg

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

September 1983 Session

The first session after European Parliament's summer recess was marked by political themes and by thinking as to the future of Europe. The development of a "European Union" with political as well as economic aims was raised in the course of an extraordinary sitting in which Mr Karamanlis, the President of the Greek Republic, addressed Parliament; appropriately, it is the turn of the Greek Government to appoint the president of the Council of Ministers of the Community during this half year.

Striking a resolutely European note, Mr Karamanlis expressed the view that the Ten should acquire the financial resources to conduct their policies and improve the decision-making system now being slowed down by misuse of the veto. He called for a return to the democratic practice of majority voting. True unification of Europe is the only solution whereby the Ten can uphold the independence of the super-powers.

Mr Karamanlis regarded it as a happy coincidence that he should be speaking to Parliament on the very next day after the passing of a resolution drafted by the institutional affairs committee on the future "European Union".

By an overwhelming majority (201 votes for, 32 against and 72 abstentions), Parliament accepted the resolution coordinated by Altiero Spinelli, the author of the preamble, with only minor changes. This very detailed resolution tackled the life of the future "Union" by producing six reports on its legal, economic, social, budgetary, institutional and foreign policy.

Some of the MEPs saw the plan as inadvisable and not very realistic and refrained from voting, as in the case of by the French Gaullists (Progressive European Democrats group). Those voting against the resolution were the French and Greek Communists, all except two of the British Labour Party MEPs and almost all the Danes (the only one voting in favour being the Liberal MEP, Haagerup, while his two fellow-Liberals abstained).

Except for two of their members, the French Socialists abstained, as did the group of European Democrats (made up almost entirely of British Conservative MEPs). The Christian Democrats, whatever their nationality, supported the resolution almost unanimously.

An analysis of the voting pattern by nationality shows that Italian, Belgian and Luxembourg MEPs formed a compact group in favour of the resolution, joined by the Dutch, only one of whom - Liberal MEP Berkhouwer - abstained. Of the Germans, only two Socialists failed to cast a positive vote.

This venture, launched by the "Crocodile Club" (taken from the name of the restaurant where MEPs used to meet in Strasbourg) has now reached a decisive stage. The committee's next step is to draw up a draft framework treaty for consideration by European Parliament and then national parliaments. Some MEPs feel that this ambitious and complex plan should be a vital plank in the platform of the 1984 European elections.

In the course of the debates, European MPs raised several dramatic and topical issues: renewed hostilities in the Lebanon, the war in Chad, events in Chile and above all the shooting down of the South Korean Boeing by Soviet fighter aircraft.

The debate on the destruction of the South Korean Boeing took place only two days after the meeting of the Council of foreign ministers in Athens. At the end of the meeting, the Ten did no more than express their "emotion" and the Greek foreign minister refused to "condemn" the outrage formally. This Greek reservation was strongly criticized by certain MEPs, especially the British Conservatives. Gérard Israel, a French European Progressive Democrat, deplored this sort of "provincialism" on the part of the Greeks, saying they failed to appreciate that the interests of Europe as a whole should be first and foremost in a case as grave as this. Even a Greek MEP, the Social Democrat and former Finance Minister Ioannis Pasmazoglou, dissociated himself from his Government, although he did not go so far as to support the call for a European Parliament vote of "political censure" against that Government.

The resolution as finally adopted deplored the fact that, under the Greek presidency, the Ten were unable to take up a joint stand against the USSR. The resolution denounced the Soviet Union and called for the isolation of Aeroflot from international civil aviation.

On the subject of the Lebanon, European Parliament asked the President of the Council to convene an urgent meeting of the Ten to seek an immediate general truce and a negotiated settlement over the longer term.

Discussing Chad, Parliament hoped that the Ten would confirm their support for the present government. It is not just a matter for France, pointed out Simone Veil (Fr, Lib), a sentiment shared by her Socialist compatriots but not by French Communists, who voted against what they saw as an inappropriate resolution.

The widow of the former president of Chile, Salvador Allende, was present when Parliament discussed the deteriorating situation in Chile, following the short-lived hopes of a more liberal regime when Chilean exiles were allowed to return and the Democratic Alliance was set up. Parliament expressed its pleasure at these developments but called on the Chilean Government to end such undemocratic practices as torture, political arrests, assassinations and the violation of the most elementary human rights. Chile did not deserve these sad and useless years, said Paolo Barbi (It), chairman of the European People's Party.

Addressing the Socialist group by whom she had been invited, Mrs Allende said that now more than ever international support was urgently needed for the restoration of democracy in Chile.

In the period leading up to the negotiation of the third Lomé convention between the European Community and African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, Parliament held a wide-ranging debate, introduced by a report by Ulrich Irmer (Ger, Lib). A Socialist from the same country, Katharina Focke, said that the keynote of these new negotiations should be encouragement for self-reliance among these developing countries. In common with many of her colleagues, she called for the continuation of adequate funding. Her analysis was supported by Mr Pisano, the European Commissioner responsible for development.

Discrimination

In a written question to the European Commission, Ernest Glinne (Bel, Soc) pointed to an odd instance of discrimination in Belgium, where under certain circumstances "bourgmestres" (mayors) and "échevins" (aldermen) retain their pension rights if they are men but forfeit them if they are women.

For example, if their annual salary is roughly below £3,000, both men and women may receive a pension of about £4,600 out of public funds. If, on the other hand, their earnings top £6,000, men are entitled to a pension of £3,700 but women's pension rights are suspended.

In its reply, the Commission said it would be asking the Belgian authorities to clarify the matter.

October 1983 session

During the October session of European Parliament, a special Council of Ministers in Athens was being attended by both finance and agriculture ministers to pave the way for the European Council meeting of heads of state and governments on 5 and 6 December. The agenda of the ministerial meeting included the reform of Community funding and agricultural policy. In the course of the meeting, conflicting news filtered through about the suspension of the payment of advances to Community farmers.

Parliament was highly concerned and demanded an explanation, which they received first from Christopher Tugendhat, the Commissioner responsible for the budget, then from Gaston Thorn, President of the European Commission, and finally from Poul Dalsager, the member of the Commission with responsibility for agriculture.

Mr Tugendhat confirmed the decision that the payment of advances against certain farm products was to be suspended and listed the products affected. This "precaution", he said, was being adopted by the Commission as an administrative measure so as not to deplete the Community kitty and to ensure that agricultural markets could run smoothly while protecting consumers' interests. The suspension, moreover, was only for ten days. The Commission would then be looking into other measures to tide the Community over until the end of the year.

Next day President Thorn pointed out that farmers who had not received the advances normally paid at the time of exporting their products would be receiving the amounts due later and would not suffer any loss of income. Mr Dalsager, who had just returned from Athens with Mr Thorn, explained that there was no question of suspending export subsidies; payment was merely being made on proof of delivery of exported farm products rather than on proof of despatch.

Parliament was not altogether convinced by these explanations, especially as it was already upset by the Commission "no" to Heinrich Aigner (Ger, PP), who had proposed that a packet of butter be given away free with every two bought. The idea had the majority but not unanimous support of Parliamentarians, some MEPs feeling that it would make little impact on the butter mountain. This view was shared by Poul Dalsager: the operation would be costly but not very effective.

European Parliament is also concerned with the campaign to arouse public awareness of the fast-approaching European elections. In reply to an oral question, Mr Natali, the European Commissioner whose responsibilities include information, explained what the Commission was doing to inform the public: a programme of visits, publications and a "multi-media" plan. Vera Squarcialupi (It, Com) enquired what is being done to involve women and young people and Mr Natali said that various films are being produced specially for them.

A suggestion from the Gaullist MEP, André Bord, that all election results should be centralized in Strasbourg could not be accepted, said Mr Natali, even though he "liked the idea". While acknowledging the role of this city in European integration, he pointed out that the Commission would be unable to set up such an expensive, complex operation.

European Parliamentarians were interested in other elections as well, those in Turkey on 6 November and Argentina on 30 October.

A joint resolution on Turkey endorsed by five of Parliament's political groups was adopted almost unanimously, although many shades of opinion were expressed in the course of the debate. Jas Gawronski (It, Lib), for example, said that the November election was a step in the right direction but could not be hailed as a genuine return to democracy. Kai Uwe von Hassell (Ger, Christian Democrat), was more optimistic. A report on human rights in Turkey is about to be published by European Parliament's Political Affairs Committee.

The Argentine election also gave rise to cautious optimism among Parliamentarians, who passed a resolution calling for closer links, especially economic, between Argentina and the European Community if its general election leads to a move towards the restoration of democracy.

The issue of relations between the European Community and Latin America had already been broadly debated, the starting point being a report by Jochen van Aerssen (Ger, PP). The fundamental importance of Latin America to Europe was acknowledged by all MEPs, although the emphasis differed from speaker to speaker: some were more concerned with Latin America's debts, others with encouraging regional projects or the spread of democracy. Efforts were flagging, thought Parliament, and a shot in the arm was urgently needed. For instance, GRULA - the group of Latin American ambassadors in Brussels, had not met for some time. Contact should be revitalized by the introduction of an overall development plan formulated with due regard for the individual nature, needs and potential of each Latin American country.

Coming back to Europe, Parliament returned to the problem of youth unemployment, in response to an interim report by Heinke Salisch (Ger, Soc). There are now five million young people without jobs, she said, and a deadline must be set for dealing with the problem.

Parliament asked the European Commission and the Council of Ministers to produce a "Community-wide programme" that would guarantee training and employment for the 16-25 age group. Strong support for Heinke Salisch came from the Left, whose representatives - such as Paule Duport (Fr, Soc) - recommended shorter working hours as one way of reducing unemployment.

The MEPs sitting on the right held different opinions. Elmar Brok, a German Christian Democrat, argued that general economic growth was the only way of providing jobs for the young, whereas Madron Seligman, a British Conservative, stressed job mobility.

Another subject of great economic importance was discussed in Parliament: the status of film making in Europe, faced as it is with competition from outside Europe and from television. Marie-Jane Pruvot (French member of the Liberal group) painted a pessimistic picture of film making and distribution in Europe and found that her views were shared by most fellow MEPs.

The resolution adopted by Parliament draws conclusions from her analysis. It calls for the continuance of national aid for film makers and (in an amendment suggested by Raymonde Dury (Bel, Soc) tax concessions for production investment. Parliament also took up another amendment proposed by Raymonde Dury, who said that the United States is not the only culprit in the matter of the stranglehold over film distribution: larger European countries also compete with smaller countries.

European Parliament asked the European Commission to take steps to achieve a more satisfactory relationship between cinema and television and called for a European film festival. The idea was agreed by most MEPs, but some - the British Conservatives in particular - thought there are too many festivals already and too few films.

In the field of education, Parliament accepted recommendations drafted by Elmar Brok (Ger, European People's Party) to promote greater cooperation among experts in the Member States on school textbooks. The aim is to prevent the perpetuation of national prejudices in the way European history is taught. Not all MEPs were in favour of such "harmonization". The members of the Movement against Danish Membership of the European Community opposed the recommendation as a matter of principle: the Community, they argued, has no competence to deal with this matter. Other MEPs objected to the motion on different grounds, such as Luc Beyer de Ryke (Bel, Lib), who said that "nationalism kills but ignorance of one's nation's past mutilates".

Health protection was also a matter of concern to European Parliamentarians, who adopted two motions tabled by Vera Squarcialupi (Italian, Com).

The first was on cosmetics, especially sun tan lotions. Parliament called for more detailed labelling so that any potentially harmful substances could be identified.

The second concerned pesticides. Every year there are 500,000 cases of poisoning from pesticides occur, 10,000 of them fatal. Half of the cases of intoxication and two thirds of the deaths occur in the Third World. Parliament called for more stringent controls over packaging and labelling. Export regulations should reflect this problem. Ka Konstantina Pantazi (Greek Socialist) suggested setting up an advisory service for Third World countries to explain more clearly the dangers associated with the products and the ways in which they should be used.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY
INTO THE SITUATION OF WOMEN

The Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe has been pressing on with its work with a view to the debate during the plenary session of European Parliament in January 1984.

In the course of a meeting held in Brussels in September, various documents were discussed, including draft reports by Ka Konstantina Pantazi on the status of women in Greece, Doeke Eisme on women and health and Mechtild von Alemann on women's vocational education.

A working document produced by Vera Squarcialupi on women migrants and migrants' wives was adopted and approval given to the text of the accompanying resolution.

There was lengthy discussion of budget problems. Since austerity will be the keynote of the Community's 1984 budget, how can women's status best be defended? In view of growing female unemployment, the Committee members felt that every effort must be made not to blunt the impact of the Programme of Action on equal opportunities and to support information measures.

On the subject of the European Social Fund, the Committee of Inquiry noted with satisfaction that the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment had recommended the inclusion of a specific item for women in the Fund budget. Discussions are now being held between the Council of Ministers and Parliament and it is hoped that the suggestion will be agreed.

The status of women in Europe will be debated in plenary session of European Parliament in January 1984, not in the November 1983 session as announced in issue 31 of "Women of Europe".

Tuesday, 17 January 1984, is the date set for the Resolution drafted by the Committee of Inquiry.

Maria Lisa Cinciari-Rodano again chaired the Committee of Inquiry's meeting in Brussels in mid-October.

Simone Martin submitted her report on small and medium-sized enterprises, in the presence of Mr Deleau, chairman of the committee for the "European Year of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises". In view of the European colloquium being held on this theme in Strasbourg in early December, Simone Martin's report placed great stress on the position of women.

Providing as they do about thirty million jobs, Europe's small firms are vital social partners; in promoting equality for women at work, the contribution that they can make should not be overlooked. Wives who help their husbands in small businesses play an important role in the economy and there should be full recognition for their status. An appropriate occupational statute should be drawn up and thought given to training opportunities for women who have to help their husbands in their work without having been formally trained to do so.

The adaptation of working time is a topical issue with which Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul is concerned. The European Commission has now sent a recommendation on the subject to the Council of Ministers of the Community (see section on "the Changing European Community"). Reviewing that recommendation, Ms Wieczorek-Zeul welcomed the proposals for a shorter working day but regretted that no binding legal instrument was suggested to Member States. The report was adopted as a whole and the proposed motion approved, as in the case of the texts proposed by Simone Martin.

The meeting decided to reconvene on 3 November to complete their discussions of the reports and also in late November to prepare the text of the final resolution and consolidated report to be debated by European Parliament in January 1984.

Over the past few months, European public opinion has been aroused as to the fate of young wives in India. If a girl does not bring a large enough dowry with her on marriage, she may be treated as a scapegoat and slave in her husband's family; it is not uncommon for a young wife to die "accidentally". In the region of New Delhi alone, the official statistics state that there are 500 such deaths a year.

European Parliament expressed its strong feelings on the subject to the Indian Government, and as a result the Indian Ambassador announced that steps were to be taken in conjunction with women's groups (see "Women of Europe", nº 31).

UNITED NATIONS

The permanent base for the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women has been officially inaugurated in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic).

Delphine Tsanga, president of the boards of trustees, paid homage to the Dominican Government and pointed out that the Institute would be helping both men and women to build a better society by contributing towards women's progress.

The Institute's main task will be to work for women's full participation in economic and social development. In its efforts to achieve its aims it is to cooperate closely with United Nations bodies, non-governmental agencies and educational establishments as well as governments.

FACTS, INSTITUTIONS AND LAWS

BELGIUM

Indirect discrimination

At the request of Mr Hansenne, Minister for Employment, a report on indirect discrimination has been drawn up by the Committee on Women's Employment.

The concept of indirect discrimination is fairly vague but it has been used for many years now in legal instruments. To clarify the concept, the Committee chose a few practical examples. The most revealing arises in the regulations on unemployment and insurance against sickness and disability. The amount of unemployment benefit varies depending whether or not the unemployed person (whether married or co-habiting) is the head of the household. Nowhere does the law state that this must be the husband, of course, but in real life 95% of unemployed women are not treated as heads of household.

"This discrimination is all the more striking," points out the Committee in its report, "in that men and women pay the same social security contributions whatever their marital or family status. It is when it comes to reallocating the funds received that the interests of married or co-habiting unemployed women are adversely affected."

Faced with the issue of indirect discrimination, representatives of employers and workers react in diametrically opposing ways. The employers argue that it would serve no purpose to incorporate a precise definition into the law, especially as the problems of the status of women in the economy are sometimes specific: is that status what they want themselves or is it what they have been forced to accept? Each case should be considered on its merits in ascertaining whether or not indirect discrimination exists; case law would gradually develop through precedents.

The unions take another stand: since it is so hard to interpret the law, they say, there must be a clear definition of the concept. Their suggestion runs: "indirect discrimination exists when a law, regulation or practice, while pursuing an apparently non-discriminatory end and being impartially administered, in practice leads to differing treatment of persons depending on their sex".

Useful address Commission du Travail des Femmes
 Ministère de l'Emploi et du Travail
 51-53, rue Belliard
 1040 Brussels

Georgette Ciselet

Change the law: this was the lifelong goal of Georgette Ciselet, who died late this summer at the age of 83. One of the first women to be called to the bar, in 1930 she wrote a book on "woman - her rights, duties and claims - an outline of the legal position of women inside and outside Belgium". The book was to be an agenda for her life's work. Elected to the Senate, she helped to reform the legal status of marriage and give women access to the judiciary and the profession of notary. Georgette Ciselet was also the first woman member of the Council of State, Belgium's constitutional court.

Desegregation in the schools

Since the start of the school year in September 1983, desegregation has been the rule in all official educational establishments, a measure brought in to comply with the EEC directive on equal treatment for men and women with regard to access to vocational training.

In the private sector (mainly Catholic education), an identical measure has been agreed with the educational authorities.

Single-sex establishments are now under an obligation to accept an applicant of the other sex if no other establishment offers the chosen education or training within a given geographical area.

These and other provisions are part of the Government plan for the advancement of the status of women drawn up by the "women's unit" of the Premier's staff. The adaptation of working time, unemployment, social security and tax reform, the participation of women in political life and the nationality of married women and their children are the main points of the plan.

Useful address Madeleine van Raemdonck, Miette Pernot

Cellule "Femmes", Cabinet du Premier Ministre
16, rue de la Loi
1000 Brussels

Women mining engineers

The Belgian Government has decided to amend a 1971 law forbidding women to work underground in mines and quarries. Since the risks run by mining engineers is minimal, it has now been agreed that women members of the profession may do any job underground that may be necessary in the pursuit of their calling.

Dr Barbara McClintock awarded Nobel Prize for medicine

This year's Nobel Prize for medicine and physiology was awarded to Barbara McClintock. At the age of 81, she is the third woman Nobel prizewinner for medicine, after Rosalyn Yallow (1977) and Gerty Cori (1947). She is, however, the first woman to have won this prize alone, since the other two shared the honour with their fellow scientists.

For 40 years, at the famous Cold Spring Harbor biological laboratory in the United States, Barbara McClintock has been cultivating and cross-fertilizing maize plants to find out the secrets of genetic differences. For instance, she discovered genetic elements endowed with mobility, sometimes called "jumping genes", although not until the past decade was the scientific community able to confirm Dr McClintock's theory and acknowledge her pioneering work in the field.

DENMARK

Pressing for equality

In Denmark, 14 posts as "equality counsellors" attached to regional labour departments have been created. Their terms of reference are to further equality on the labour market in the spirit of the law on equality for men and women in their working lives.

The counsellors have now had a chance to look back over their first year of existence and reflect on what has been achieved. In the light of the reports from the 14, a consolidated report has been published by the Directorate of Labour, which comes under the Ministry for Employment.

During their first year, their efforts were naturally directed towards the training and employment of women. The consolidated report suggests several ways of broadening the range of training opportunities for women. Having established good links with the schools, the counsellors have been encouraging girls to think about non-traditional as well as conventional careers. With this in mind, practical courses introducing students to traditionally male occupations have been arranged.

It should be pointed out that the counsellors were chosen for their sound knowledge of economic realities in the regions to which they were to be assigned. It was only logical, then, that the focus should be on women who had already been in employment but had lost their jobs through redundancy. The overall report states that courses have been arranged specifically for such women, in cooperation with the unions.

Useful address Arbejdsdirektoratet
 Adelgade 13
 1304 Copenhagen

Careers of the Future

The Danish Council for Equal Opportunities has brought out two booklets describing women's jobs of the future, one on cabinet-making and the other on electrical engineering.

In its efforts to make the labour market less compartmentalized, the Council found that girls are being given inadequate information. The documentation available for young people is presented in such a way that girls fail to identify with the people working in various industrial and craft careers. For instance, the photographs almost always depict men going about their chosen trade.

This led to the idea of a series of booklets designed and produced specifically for a female readership. The two that have just come out explain in detail what the work involves and offer down-to-earth information on what girls should have studied at school, how long the training takes and the financial aspects. Each booklet contains an interview with a girl who has opted for the career in question.

Useful address Ligestillingsrådet
 Frederiksgade 21, 1
 1265 Copenhagen

Jobs for women

In June 1982 the Folketing - Danish Parliament - passed a job creation law, the aim of which was to provide the resources to reduce unemployment.

The idea underlying this law is to bring new and lasting jobs into being by giving substantial grants out of public funds over a three year period to encourage the launching of new enterprise, both public and private.

Under the job creation law, the grants are subject to two conditions: the activity in question must be of value to the community, to which it would not otherwise have been available; and the goods or services produced must not have the effect of distorting competition.

The law has been in force only in February 1983, but job creation schemes planned with women in mind are already being implemented. For example, a bookbinding project has been approved and launched. The idea is to bind books and documents for institutions such as hospitals and schools. The preliminary phase of the project is a five week preparatory course, after which the women start actual production work. Each day starts with a discussion of the previous day's work and how the current day's workload should be tackled. The project leader, Lili Hansen, says that the women are happy to have a job and to be making something useful that has to be completed by a given deadline.

The other project designed to provide jobs for women has not yet come into being but, after going through all the channels, is about to be approved and funded.

The scheme involves the construction of mobile site shelters and the making of quality souvenirs, museum models in cooperation with municipal museums, devices for the handicapped, etc.

As an introduction to full production work, the women will be attending courses at a day college for three months, where they will have a balanced curriculum of theory and practical work. This method will ease the transition between joblessness and being in full-time employment.

The two schemes described are intended to help young unemployed women in the 20-25 age group without any specific job training and with little experience of the working world.

In both schemes, the concern has been not just to provide the conventional type of job but to enable working women to meet their overall commitments associated with their children, housing, family and personal problems.

Useful address Danske Kvinders Nationalråd
 Niels Hemmingsensgade 10
 1153 Copenhagen

FRANCE

Women's cultural life

The Ministry of Culture's research department has conducted a survey on the cultural practices of the French (published in a 438 page report by Dalloz, Paris, 1982).

The survey shows fewer differences between male and female behaviour than might have been expected. Taking it all in all, women play almost as active a part in non-working pursuits as men. The pattern has changed since 1973: in 1981, it was observed that women are increasingly involved in certain activities: individual sport, for instance, taking part in public festivals and attending political meetings.

An analysis of the findings reveals that the determining factors tend to be the age and occupation of women far more than the amount of spare time at their disposal.

Age seems to be the main criterion. Women born before or during the war come from a generation in which mass education for girls was not yet a reality. Many women now in the 55-60 age group had no opportunity to stay on at school or go on to vocational training or higher education. The post-war generation of women have benefited from freedom of access to specialist education and the raising of the school leaving age to 16. Higher standards of school education for girls have clearly encouraged them to take an interest in outside pursuits at a later age. An additional factor has been the consciousness-raising of feminist schools of thought, which has encouraged young women to acquire a stronger cultural identity than their predecessors.

"Women's emancipation," states the report, "became firmly established only when growth in the school population (quantity) was combined with ideas as to the role of women in society (quality)."

Most of women's non-working pursuits take place in the home, the television and radio being the main home-based cultural media. Average weekly TV viewing for working women without children is 14 hours, for working women with children 14.4 hours, for non-working women without children 22.6 and for non-working women with children 18.5 hours.

As for reading, three out of four women read at least one book in the year before the survey and, taken as a whole, they read 20 books a year. Women are more likely than men to lend or borrow books in their own circle of friends and family.

Useful address Ministère de la Culture
 Direction du Développement Culturel
 Service des études et recherches
 2, rue Jean Lantier
 75001 Paris

Firewomen

Desegregation has been the official policy among firefighters since 1976. Even so, there are only 30 women in the force of 17,000, including 3 officers recruited by a special competitive procedure. Fifteen of the 30 were trained this year as part of a pilot course arranged by the directorate of fire and emergency rescue services in the Department of the Somme, under the auspices of the Ministry for Women's Rights.

When the course was announced, a hundred women applied. The young women completing the course underwent medical and physical fitness tests before being screened to determine their aptitude for work as ambulance drivers, heavy vehicle drivers and radio-telephone operators.

Useful address Madame Danièle Engelbach
 Déléguée régionale du Ministère des Droits de la
 Droits de la Femme
 Préfecture de la région Picardie
 80026 Amiens Cedex

Introduction to information technology

This summer, 200 information technology workshops were set up in France to make the public more aware of developments in this new field. Under the title of "holidays for the future", the scheme attracted fewer girls and women than men - about 30% of attendance. It is of interest that girls are just as interested in computers as boys up to the age of about 14.

Commenting on these findings, Yvette Roudy, the Minister of Women's Rights, said: "Women must not allow the gap to widen in this way. Their presence must be felt wherever micro-computing is being introduced and popularized, they must take their proper place and play their part, they must try out all the facilities available, they must take up all the training in new technologies on offer at every level and not be satisfied with tapping on the keyboard".

Useful address Ministère des droits de la femme
 53, avenue d'Iéna
 75016 Paris

Mothers in trouble

Women on their own, women with children, account for about two thirds of the 800,000 women in difficulties. One of their hardest problems is finding somewhere to live. The "Association d'Aide au Logement des Mères Travailleuses en difficulté" - an association helping working mothers to find housing - has had the idea of making use of a levy on employers, known as the "1% construction tax", to solve the problem.

Companies paying this levy have priority in obtaining housing for their employees. By acting as a go-between among landlords, tenants, employers and the authority responsible for collecting the tax, the Association has already helped out a hundred or so women.

Useful address A.L.M.D.
 4, rue de Crimée
 75019 Paris

G E R M A N Y

Maria Schlei dies

Maria Schlei has lost her ten-year battle against cancer. Her exceptional courage will long be imprinted in the memory of all the men and women who knew her.

After starting work as a salesgirl, Maria Schlei had the guts to go back to school and train as a teacher. Encouraged by her friends in Berlin, she entered the political scene where she rose to positions of the highest responsibility through her merits: she was a member of the Bundestag (the Federal Parliament), a secretary of state to the Federal Chancellor and finally the minister responsible for economic cooperation with the Third World when the Social Democrats were in government.

When she was in ministerial office, Maria Schlei was concerned with far more than just spending her budget. One of her preoccupations was to uphold the interests of Third World women in all development aid. It was due to her that aid projects were reviewed to determine their potential impact on women's status.

Should the law be revised?

According to an interim report from the Federal Government, the law on equality for men and women (bringing German legislation in line with the EEC directive) is better than it is said to be. Taken overall, the results can be seen as positive even though it has not prevented certain forms of discrimination.

The general view in the Bundestag was that no amendment is called for at present, although the law is still "on probation". A decision will be taken later, in the light of experience, as to whether changes should be made.

The Bundesrat - the Federal Council of the regions - was of the same opinion, despite criticism from the representatives of the region of Hesse to the effect that the law is not tough enough, for example on the way in which job advertisements are worded.

We should point out, however, that the European Commission has decided to summon Germany before the Court of Justice of the European Communities on the grounds that it has failed to comply with the February 1976 European directive on equality, on four counts. Firstly, the law introduced in Germany in response to the directive covers neither public officials nor the self-employed. It creates no binding obligation to ensure that job vacancies are advertised in a non-discriminatory fashion. It does not specify the occupations to which the principle of equal treatment does not apply. Finally, the European Commission notes that the four month paid post-maternity leave is granted to mothers only, not fathers.

An appeal to employers

Dr Dorothee Wilms and Dr Heiner Geissler, Education Minister and Minister for the Family respectively, have appealed to employers to combat discrimination against women in the working world. They feel that the stereotyping of roles and sexist behaviour are working to the disadvantage of women in the workplace. Women even find it hard to gain their first foothold in the world of work, not so much because they are assumed to lack competence as because of attitudes towards them.

Dorothee Wilms argues that a special effort is needed to expand the intake of women into job training for employment in both the public and private sector. She would also like to see the schools working harder to prepare girls for working life.

Dr Geissler urges new schemes to ensure that women do not become the victims of technological progress. He has asked an institute in Cologne to embark on research to find the answer to a clear-cut question: when women have to take a break from their working lives to bring up their children, how can they retain contact with the world of work?

Useful address Bundesministerium für Bildung und Wissenschaft
 Postfach
 53 Bonn 1
 Bundesministerium für Familie, Jugend und Gesundheit.
 Postfach
 53 Bonn 2

On the beat

More and more women are competing for places in the police force. In North Rheinland/Westphalia, for example, 73 women are now in uniform out of a total of 903 applicants. In Berlin, Hamburg, Hesse and Lower Saxony, women have also been enrolled in the police force.

Even though the standard of education of women applicants is higher than that of men, the ministers responsible have introduced a quota: 10% of the yearly batch of new recruits may be women.

Fritz Wolf Sellert, who is in charge of police training in Berlin, thinks that women are more ambitious than their male counterparts and they generally achieve higher ratings in training.

In everyday life and in relationships within the force, women police officers earn the respect of their male colleagues for the work they do, in spite of the inevitable ribbing. Women are just as determined as men and cope just as well with conflicts and tricky situations.

Protestant Churches

Irmgard von Maibom is the first woman to be elected president of the Conference of Protestant Church works and associations (Konferenz kirchlicher Werke und Verbände).

Abortion

The regional government of Hamburg has decided that women civil servants are entitled to health insurance payments even in cases of abortion on social grounds. It is generally estimated that 75% of abortions are carried out on such grounds in the country as a whole.

The "social" abortion is a highly controversial topic in Germany. One example is the referral to the Constitutional Court of the case of a woman refusing to pay her contributions to an insurance scheme because the money might be used to pay for such abortions.

For its part, the Government has confirmed its resolve to give more protection to the unborn child. Research is being conducted to find out whether financial support for such abortions is justified.

Postal services

The Federal Post Office is the largest employer of women in Germany. With rationalization and the introduction of new technology, about 18,000 jobs now being done by women may disappear by 1990.

The unions have demanded a job protection agreement and also the joint management of all rationalization matters. An agreement along these lines has been negotiated in other sectors with a high rate of female employment in which there is a serious risk of redundancy because of new technology: the distributive trades, insurance and banking.

Women and politics

According to a survey published by "Journal für die Frau", 55% of women could visualize themselves as accepting political office, 95% of the magazine's readers say they are interested in political life and an equal percentage would like to be able to vote for a woman.

The survey shows, however, that women are particularly demanding as to the qualifications they would like to see for women in the political arena: 26% of those replying say that women politicians should be better qualified and more committed.

Breastfeeding

A mother is entitled to time off from work to breastfeed her baby. This right ends only when the child is weaned, even if is still being breastfed at the age of 2. This was the decision reached by the Hanover labour tribunal in a case involving a woman teacher.

Useful address Arbeitsgericht Hannover
 3000 Hanover

G R E E C E

Women and the Five-year Plan

For the first time, the 1983-87 Five-Year Development Plan contains a section in its introduction on equality of the sexes - an issue that appears to be a major Government concern in the document being laid before Parliament.

The paper describes the discrimination that still exists in the working world (in education, vocational training, choice of careers, advancement, etc.), deplores the lack of a coherent overall policy on the protection of mother and child and lists the planned Government measures:

- elimination of the forms of inequality between the sexes still embodied in legislation and the introduction of measures to improve women's status in society;
- adequate community infrastructure and facilities and an improved system of financial help for women and families;
- a broad-ranging programme designed to abolish sexist prejudice at every level of society by the dissemination of information and publication of literature on equality for men and women.

Military service

"The Defence Minister is considering the introduction of compulsory military service for women and allowing women to enter military academies with a view to careers as officers in the armed forces. Female military service on a voluntary basis in its present form will not be retained in the future."

This statement by Mr A. Drossogiannis, Under-Secretary for Defence, made banner headlines in the Greek press and aroused a good deal of controversy.

Six years ago, during the 1977 summer session of Greek Parliament, a law was passed on military service for women. It was later amended to clarify that national service is voluntary in the case of women. Over the years that followed, many hundred women enlisted for permanent service, mainly in auxiliary services.

At the time, the groups contesting the legislation most hotly were the women's organizations close to the party in power today; they were strongly against the very principle of military service for women.

The women's organizations opposing compulsory national service for women argue along these lines: national service would increase inequality; equality is not being achieved in real life in spite of recent amendments to the law; compulsory military service occurs at the optimum child-bearing age (20 to 32), a factor of vital importance in a country like Greece, which has a severe population problem.

The Defence Ministry has announced that the question of compulsory military service is not high on the list of priorities, at least for the foreseeable future.

I R E L A N D

Ireland votes on anti-abortion amendment

The Irish electorate has voted 2 to 1 in favour of an amendment to the Constitution which effectively bars any measure that might legalize abortion in the future. The amendment - on which just over half the electorate voted - acknowledges equal rights to life of "the unborn" and the mother, and marks a victory for anti-abortion lobbies which began a referendum campaign two and a half years ago.

Both the major political parties pledged their support for the referendum, which was seen as an opportunity to copperfasten the existing statute law banning abortion in Ireland. Supporters feared that the law might have been successfully challenged in the Irish courts or that moves from Europe might force Ireland to introduce abortion.

Opponents of the amendment argued that it might endanger the lives of pregnant women where, for instance, treatment for medical conditions such as cancer is postponed because of the potential danger to the embryo, and that contraceptives like the IUD and the morning-after pill could be outlawed.

No room for women at the top

There have been women police in Ireland for 24 years. There are now 300 in all, including two inspectors and eight staff sergeants.

This has been the first time that an all-female class has trained together. At the passing-out parade for 22 policewomen, Nuala Fennell, the Women's Affairs Minister, said she thought the time was ripe for a reappraisal of the role and working duties of women in the force.

Ironically, the Irish police chief, Commissioner Laurence Wren, took the same opportunity to declare his opposition to women rising in the ranks of the police, saying that although Nuala Fennell would probably like to see a woman Commissioner "I'm afraid she will not be getting any support from me on that score".

Useful address Mrs Nuala Fennell, Minister of State for Justice
Department of Justice, 72-75 St Stephens Green
Dublin 2

Ignorance is bliss?

Well over half the girls under 18 who gave birth in a Dublin hospital last year had no knowledge of their own fertility and its relation to the menstrual cycle, two doctors told delegates at a major international conference on psychosomatic obstetrics and gynaecology in Dublin in September.

The background to their study was the increasing incidence of pregnancy in adolescence over the past decade. Illegitimate births have also increased sharply from 2.8% of the total in 1972 to 6.1% last year. The number of Irish women having abortions in England had risen to 3,647 in 1982.

Doctors Dockeray and Powell of St. James' Hospital, Dublin, which serves a huge proportion of socially disadvantaged women, say their study shows that 62% of the girls had no previous sexual experience, that promiscuity was not a factor, that one girl in four had unmarried sisters who had been pregnant, 55% knew nothing about the menstrual cycle and nearly two thirds had not even contemplated contraception, nor indeed conception. In the group, 64% planned to keep their babies while the remainder were undecided or sought adoption.

Employment Equality Agency

A four year plan of action (1983-86) has been drawn up by the Employment Equality Agency, the official body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Employment Equality Act 1977.

Chaired by Sylvia Meehan, the Agency has decided to concentrate on fields in which large numbers of women are already employed. The Agency's goal is to change the underlying patterns that make for inequality.

The Agency has extensive powers:

- it may assist and advise women bringing individual claims;
- it is entitled to refer to the labour tribunal any case of discrimination in the advertising of job vacancies, incitement to discrimination, discriminatory practices in general and cases in which it would be inappropriate for a single person to make a claim;
- it may conduct official inquiries within the scope of its terms of reference;
- it may take direct action in cases of persistent discrimination;
- it may study problems, formulate codes of practice and recommend new legislation.

Over the next few years, the Agency will place the stress on full implementation of the law. Experience has shown that legal proceedings on the grounds of direct discrimination are not enough; all discriminatory practices should be identified and eliminated by means of a planned and structured approach.

The number of complaints relating to unequal pay has been falling steadily: from 107 in 1980 to 58 in 1981 and then 24 in 1982. In the light of this trend the Agency infers that the most blatant instances of injustice have been remedied, but there are still many cases in which the principle of equal pay for "work of equal value" needs to be enforced.

The Agency also wishes to continue work, either directly or indirectly, on the studies and research that will support it in its work and provide material for decisions on equality to be taken by the authorities.

Useful address Employment Equality Agency
 36 Upper Mount Street
 Dublin 2

I T A L Y

Statistics

According to figures published by the Italian Statistical Institute (ISTAT), the number of households has risen from 16 million in 1971 to 18 million in 1981, a 16.4% increase, whereas the number of housing units has risen from 15.3 million to only 17.5 million, including second homes.

There are many more women than men: 51.7% out of a population of 56.5 million (51.3% ten years previously), in other words a million and a half more women than men.

Families are shrinking. The "average family" consists of 2.8 people, the 1981 census shows, compared with the 3.1 revealed by the 1971 census. The percentage of families of six or more people fell from 9.75% to 5.4% in the same period, while the number of "single-person households" increased from 2,061,000 to 3,321,000 over the ten years.

A report on women's status

Within the Ministry of Labour, the "Commissione nazionale per i problemi della famiglia" - the national committee for family problems - has set up a "research and working group on the problems of women's status". Its main brief is to work for the principle of parity at work and in society.

Given such a broad theme, the members of the working group have decided to confine their research to women's work outside the home, with special reference to aspects of Law 903 introduced in 1977 on "parity between men and women in matters of work".

Following a detailed review of current laws and regulations, the group has brought out a set of proposed amendments to the law on parity. One of the reasons why Law 903 has been so limited in its application, the group says, is the lack of information on its content. The group has drawn up a draft questionnaire to find out how much women know about the law, and it is being included in a survey on women and employment in Italy conducted by ISFOL, the Institute concerned with the development of vocational training.

The 1977 law was a turning point in Italian legislation on women's employment and on the whole it has had a beneficial effect. One of its great weaknesses, however, is that it sets up no administrative machinery for intervention, the provision of information for women or backing for individual or collective action by women who see themselves as victims of discrimination - in short, nothing that would make them feel less isolated.

As a result, the working group proposes the creation of a new public sector agency, an "equal opportunities commission" responsible for information, monitoring how the law is being applied, stepping in when a dispute arises, forestalling discrimination and doing away with all forms of existing discrimination in the workplace.

Coordinated by Sofia Lanza Spagnoletti, a report by the working group has been published by the Ministry of Employment and Social Security.

L U X E M B O U R G

Parental leave

Under a law passed on 3 July 1975, mothers may take extended leave in the knowledge that their jobs will be waiting for them on their return. Adoptive parents, however, are not covered by the law and have no real guarantee of getting their jobs back. The law as it stands also discriminates against fathers.

In view of these factors, Viviane Reding, a Social Christian MP, has tabled a bill that would allow either the mother or the father to take time off to bring up their children over a certain period and then return to their jobs. Her bill also covers single parents. Unmarried mothers and divorcees are more likely than men to give up their careers to look after their young children, but they can rarely return to the same employer as before or go back to the same step in the ladder.

According to Viviane Reding, either parent should have the right to take such leave at their own discretion. She also feels that parental leave should be the right of adoptive parents. The maximum period is two years and, under her bill, the right would apply only in the private sector. At the end of the period of parental leave, he or she would have priority for re-employment but on the other hand would not have to go through a period of unemployment to qualify for full unemployment benefit.

Useful address Ministère du Travail
 Boulevard de la Pétrusse
 Luxembourg

Reform of retirement pension schemes

The debate on the reform of pension contributions has begun in the Grand Duchy, and the National Women's Council has asked to be represented at the round table meeting between the Government, employers and unions.

The Council hopes that it can put over its views on a controversial subject. On the Economic and Social Committee, a majority of members have already stated their opposition to optional pension schemes for people working on domestic duties, equality for men and women in matters of the survivor's pension and sharing out accumulated pension rights in the event of divorce.

Useful address Conseil National des Femmes
 Mme Adeline Pellegrino, Présidente
 Boîte postale 160
 Luxembourg

A happy event

Following the elections in October 1981, Lydie Wurth-Polfer, 29, became the youngest mayor in the history of the city of Luxembourg. On 11 September 1983, she brought a little girl, Nora, into the world. She did not, however, take the four months' maternity leave to which she is entitled. Ten days after giving birth she was welcoming the Swedish royal couple during an official visit to the Grand Duchy.

NETHERLANDS

Haute cuisine

Last year, a course for chefs numbered only 77 girls among its 1,600 students.

It is hard for a girl to make a start in the career of chef; restaurants almost always employ men to cook. To give women a better chance, the Ministry for Social Affairs and Employment - one of whose responsibilities is emancipation - has decided to increase grants to restaurant owners taking on girls as apprentices.

A business taking on a student cook now receives a grant of 4,000 guilders, but this is to be increased to 6,000 guilders if the student is a girl.

Useful address Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid
 Zeestraat 73
 The Hague

Policewomen and demonstrators

Women make excellent recruits to the "Mobiele Eenheid" - the flying squad, a section of the municipal police force that handles special situations such as protests and demonstrations.

Women have no difficulty in coping with the six weeks training, states a report from the Hague police department, the first to bring women into its flying squad.

It seems that policewomen are more patient than their male counterparts in dealing with demonstrators and restoring calm when people start to get over-excited. The police report recommends that the proportion of women in these special units should be stepped up to about a third of the total so that they do not seem to be in such a small minority.

Useful address Emancipatiecommissie Haagse Politie
 Burgemeester De Monchyplein 19
 The Hague

Dangerous chemicals

According to research by the University of Amsterdam, various chemicals being handled by women may be dangerous to themselves and their unborn children. Annelien Kappeyne van de Coppello, Secretary of State with responsibility for emancipation, is considering making it compulsory to reduce the maximum content of such products.

Cadmium, non-organic lead, mercury and carbon monoxide are on the list of ten or so products cited. The occupational groups at greatest risk work in operating rooms and medical departments in general and also in hairdressing, beauty care, the rubber industry, laboratories and of course the chemical and pharmaceutical industries.

Male and female occupations

Men have greater access to women's jobs than do women to men's: this is the conclusion reached in a report published in "Economisch Statistische Berichten", a journal of economic and statistical information.

The gap between male and female occupations is still wide in the Netherlands. Although it narrowed in the 1970s, this was because men started to move into what had previously been women's domains.

In their survey, the researchers adopted the criterion that a job can be said to be "male" or "female" if more than 60% of the people who do it are men or women respectively. They then found that only 16% of women coming onto the labour market for the first time were in male jobs, whereas a far higher proportion of men were quite happy about taking up women's employment. Men also made faster headway in traditionally female careers - for example, in the field of health - than their women counterparts.

As recently as in 1979, half the women in employment worked in only eight occupations: salesgirls, secretaries, administrative assistants, bookkeepers, mothers' helps, helps for the elderly, social workers and registered nurses.

All-women businesses

In a report entitled "Zicht op vrouwenbedrijven" - a look at women's businesses - the Dutch Emancipation Council has reviewed the ways in which women are creating their own jobs. More and more women are starting up "alternative" schemes, small businesses and collectives. In the Netherlands, cafés, bookshops and even publishing houses run entirely by women are not uncommon. Women lawyers and social workers are specializing in female clients in an attempt to provide a better service for women.

All these new businesses and collectives have one point in common: they pay more attention to the background, position and preferences of the women who work in them.

The survey conducted on behalf of the Council attempted to define the obstacles and support encountered by women in setting up such enterprise. It was found that the "Vrouw en Werk" (woman and work) groups established in many municipalities have played a very important role. Besides arranging practical courses, they give advice and support for new ventures, evaluate the likelihood of success and so on.

Hilde de Haan and Saskia van Beenbergen, who carried out the survey, have outlined the main problems: premises, start-up capital, wages, setting prices, internal organization, job training, etc. A number of lively interviews round off the report.

A happy footnote: the report was printed by "Virginia" in Amsterdam, an all-women printing works.

Useful address Emancipatieraad
 Lutherse Burgwal 10
 2512 The Hague

UNITED KINGDOM

Women willing to serve

A list of 65 women qualified and prepared to serve on public bodies has been sent to Mr Prior, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, by the Northern Ireland Equal Opportunities Commission.

The EOC says the list demonstrates the hollowness of Government arguments that the small number of women serving on public bodies in Northern Ireland is due to the difficulty of identifying individuals suited to public service. It hopes that its "talent bank" will lead to an increase in the low proportion of women (14%) now serving on these bodies.

Useful address Equal Opportunities Commission for Northern Ireland
Lindsay House, Callender Street
Belfast BT1 5DT

Sexual harassment at work

How many women in factories and offices have been harassed by unwanted sexual advances or sexually discriminating remarks from superiors or work-mates? The Trades Union Congress (TUC) believes that "sexual harassment" is prevalent in the workplace.

Bringing the issue out into the open for the first time, it has called on trade unionists to help change the atmosphere by taking up complaints and seeking to insert clauses in collective agreements with employers to end what the TUC sees as victimization.

Sexual harassment is the subject of a leaflet produced by the TUC as a guide on how to deal with the problem. According to the TUC, such harassment undermines attempts to achieve equality for women workers within a workplace and is often linked with depression or physical illness because women fear to complain.

Useful address T U C
Congress House, Great Russell Street
London WC1B 3LS

Invisible women

Women are seriously under-represented in the teaching of physics and chemistry and are almost invisible in certain technical fields, according to a recent report by the Women's National Commission, an advisory committee to the Government covering the main women's organizations in Britain.

There has also been a serious decline in the proportion of women heads in secondary schools (now only 16%), reinforcing the unfair traditional assumption that women are not suited to management and leadership roles.

Part of the trouble is connected with the schools where, on average, girls' level of interest and performance in mathematics, physics, chemistry and computer studies is below that of boys.

The report recommends a strategy for improving the situation by more specialized teacher training, tackling girls' and boys' problems with specific subjects and skills positively and encouraging women teachers to seek the higher posts of responsibility to set girls an example of success.

Useful address Women's National Commission
 Government Offices, Great George Street
 London SW1P 3AQ

Complaints vindicated

Women are increasingly taking their complaints about sex discrimination over pay to industrial tribunals - and winning their cases.

Gaynor Miles, an actress, insisted that she should be paid the same rate as two male comedians in a restaurant entertainment; the Court agreed.

In Northern Ireland, an industrial tribunal awarded compensation to Angela Ballantine, a woman teacher, because she was treated less favourably than a male teacher working in the same school, while a barmaid was awarded arrears of pay amounting to £454 following a successful claim to compare her work with two male colleagues employed on the same job.

Training women engineers

A major initiative, launched by the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Engineering Council to persuade more women and girls to take up careers in engineering, starts in January 1984.

Operation WISE - Women into Science and Engineering - will consist of co-ordinated projects in schools and colleges, with the support of employers, professional institutions, the Department of Industry and the Manpower Services Commission.

At present 94% of all women working in the engineering industry are employed as operators, clerical staff and unskilled grades. The main aim of WISE is to show women the far wider range of opportunities open to them in the higher skills of engineering.

Useful address Equal Opportunities Commission
 Overseas House, Quay Street
 Manchester M3 3HN

Fatherhood, childbirth and work

Little headway has been made towards paternity leave in Great Britain, but a recent survey has revealed a growing demand for paid leave of this kind from both mothers and fathers.

Already 60% to 80% of fathers of all occupations are present during the birth of their child and, according to a sample survey, 90% take time off - usually from their holiday entitlement - when a child is born. In practice, the father forfeits some of his pay or the family as a whole has to give up some of its annual holiday.

The survey was conducted by Colin Bell, Lorna McKee and Karen Priestley of Aston University's Department of Sociology, at the request of the Equal Opportunities Commission. One of its findings was that the main reason why a father would like paternity leave is to give his wife and children practical and emotional support when a new baby arrives. Fathers would also like to create an immediate tie with the baby.

The report suggests that fathers should be entitled to paternity leave, or at least ten working days' holiday, at the convenience of the mother and father.

Useful address Equal Opportunities Commission
 Overseas House, Quay Street
 Manchester M3 3HN

Hard going for women

In its seventh annual report, the Equal Opportunities Commission describes disturbing indicators as to the effects of the crisis on women's employment.

Women's gross earnings have risen from 63% of men's in 1970 to 74% in 1982; over the past five years, however, the change has been only slight while the high and rising level of unemployment is stopping many individual women from pursuing sex discrimination or equal pay cases.

The EOC argues that "individual citizens who have been given a right to equal treatment by Parliament should not have that right diminished because of the prospect of unemployment or other consequences".

The report describes the judgement of the European Court of Justice to the effect that Britain's Equal Pay Act does not provide equal pay for work of equal value, and says that it is the most important legal development of the year and arguably in the lifetime of the Commission.

In 1982, the EOC notes, it gave legal and financial support to more than two thirds of the 236 individuals who applied for help in pursuing discrimination cases in the Courts.

There was, said the report, an increase in the number of complaints about redundancy arrangements which appear to discriminate against women. The EOC was particularly concerned about the vulnerable position of part-time workers.

J U N E ' 8 4 E U R O P E A N E L E C T I O N S
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We shall be pulling out all the stops to report on the activities of women's preparations for the June 1984 European elections. We are not of course advocating a vote for any individual women candidates; we are just circularizing invaluable information from one country to another for all women, whatever their political views.

++ The National Belgian Women's Council - French-speaking branch - has made preliminary contact with chairmen of the Belgian political parties. Speaking on behalf of the 40 or so member associations, it has urged them to place women candidates reasonably high up on the party lists.

Within the Council, the "European" group chaired by Fanny Fuks has drawn up an information programme to help women make up their own minds as to the future of Europe.

++ The women's committee of the Deutscher Rat der Europäischen Bewegung - the German council of the European Movement - raised the issue of the forthcoming elections at a meeting called "Frauen fragen Europa" ("women questioning Europe"). In a debate enlivened by the presence of women members of European Parliament, the main subject discussed was women voters' expectations of the next European Parliament in the hopes of a stronger Community.

++ The "Centre féminin d'éducation permanente" (women's adult education centre), in liaison with the press and information office of the European Communities in Brussels, is arranging a "course in women's group organization", showing how to arrange debates and meetings in the run-up to the European elections, although the skill will still be invaluable after June 1984.

++ The German Social Democrat Party - SPD - has already drawn up its list of candidates for the election. At the top of its list is Katharina Focke, already an MEP. The first 30 names in the list, all high enough to be sure of election, include 7 women. In today's Parliament, 7 of the 34 German Socialists are women.

MILITANT ACTIVITIES

**I N T E R N A T I O N A L
O R G A N I Z A T I O N S**

C E C I F

The European Centre of the International Women's Council (known by the abbreviation of its French name, CECIF), has chosen Angelina Hamm-Tonnaer as its president.

Formerly the chairman of the Women's Council in Amsterdam and a member of the Liberal women's Association and the steering committee of the Liberal Party in her city, Angelina Hamm-Tonnaer is in charge of international relations at the National Dutchwomen's Council. In the 1979 European election, she conducted a lively campaign to bring the issues to the attention of women. Today she is a provincial and municipal councillor for the city of Amsterdam.

Useful address C E C I F
 Stadionkade 13
 1077 VJ Amsterdam

The life and death of a dedicated human rights worker

Marianella Garcia, the chairman of the Committee for Human Rights in Salvador, was murdered on 13 March 1983. She was 34 years old.

Her life history has now been published by Feltrinelli under the title of "Marianella e i suoi fratelli". Raniero La Valle and Linda Bimbi, the authors, have used Marianella's own words to tell much of her story, drawing on a recording she made during visits to Rome.

"My history," Marianella Garcia used to say, "is part of the history of a whole people; I may bear witness but I cannot be a historical personage." Right up to her death, she bore witness. Even now her voice is the voice of all those who disappeared and she is still the sister of all the oppressed. The people who come to life in her story are the peasants and intellectuals, workers and priests, nuns and soldiers, enduring a terrifying life from day to day.

She died at 34.

Royalties from the book are to be paid to those in Salvador who are pressing on with Marianella's work of defending human rights.

European family policy

COFACE (the European Community Confederation of Family Organizations) has welcomed the motion passed by European Parliament (see "Women of Europe" n° 31) on European family policy.

"The reason why we have come out in favour of this resolution," comments COFACE, "is that it is an honourable compromise on joint action in a pluralist society. Doubtless each one of us would have liked something slightly different, but it is down-to-earth, pragmatic and resolutely moderate in this time of crisis."

Equal Opportunities in the United States

The German Marshall Fund of the United States is offering internships, covering travel and living expenses, to people wishing to study equal opportunities in the U.S. at close quarters.

To qualify, applicants must be fluent in both spoken and written English, but the most vital requirement is that he or she should be actively involved in women's employment issues, employed as practitioners in government or private organizations and be in a position to contribute to the further development of equal opportunities.

The deadlines for the receipt of applications for the 1984 internships are 15 January (awards announced on 1 March) and 1 August (awards announced on 15 September).

Useful address Barbara H. Henrie
Equal Opportunity Internship Program
The German Marshall Fund of the United States
11 Dupont Circle, N.W., Suite 900
Washington D.C. 20036

Tribune

The International Women's Tribune Center, a New York-based organization, was set up at the time of the World Conference that opened the Women's Decade in 1975. CTIF acts as a focal point for information and technical help for women who take part in development projects throughout the world.

The first issue of the French version of the CTIF bulletin, formerly published only in English and Spanish, has now come out. Under the title of "La Tribune", it is to be published twice a year, in June and December. Each issue will be devoted to one of the topics of concern to women involved in development activities. The issue published in December 1983, for instance, has taken the theme of "women and water".

The annual subscription is \$4, although it is free to women in developing nations.

A point to note: the English-language version of issue 23, 2nd quarter of 1983, "The Tribune", is on the subject of women and the media. It reports on the experience and achievements of women in the field of information and contains many addresses from which to obtain further particulars.

Useful address International Women's Tribune Center, Inc.
305 East 4th Street (Sixth Floor)
New York, N.Y. 10017

B E L G I U M

A "complaints office"

The Belgian women's liaison committee has decided to set up a "complaints office" to help individuals and groups who feel they have not received the equal treatment to which they are entitled.

The office will be concerned with discrimination at work (in such matters as equal pay, access to employment and job training, working conditions and social security) as well as any form of inequality with which women are faced in their private, economic or social life and in tax matters.

In practical terms, the office will collect as much material as it can on the implementation of legislation and regulations so that it can offer help to people and organizations with problems at any time.

It will support them in making their complaints to the appropriate bodies or taking them to court. People with a grievance may be directed towards organizations that are qualified to take up their cases in court. Drawing on the expertise of women lawyers, the office will be able to advise whether or not a situation is in conflict with the law and can take the appropriate steps.

Finally, the office will support claimants once proceedings have been started. In certain cases, if complainants wish - perhaps because they are nervous about their personal position - it may even refer claims itself to the European Commission, industrial inspectorate or magistrates.

Useful address Comité de Liaison des Femmes
 1a, place Quetelet
 1030 Brussels

Lilith

A Dutch-language bimonthly magazine, Lilith is approaching its 30th issue. Lilith, it will be remembered, was Satan's mischief-making wife, and its namesake enjoys stirring things up, unblushingly tackling the topical problems of everyday life. For example, when a man is on the dole, who is the one who changes in the home? Does he help more with the housework? Is he closer to the children? A thesis by Franka De Bruyne on which the article is based cites some interesting findings: when questioned about housework, a third of the unemployed men did not wish to reply and a third said they did more around the home.

To keep the hellfires burning, Lilith needs more subscribers (Fr.220 or 13 guilders a year for six issues) and would welcome a few more little female devils in its collective.

Useful address Lilith
 P/a Julia Rottiers
 Hoogvorstweg 15
 1980 Tervuren

D E N M A R K

Women and social science

To those unfamiliar with the Women's Research Centre in Social Science, its annual report for 1982 (Arbejdsnotat nr. 4/83), published in English, provides an excellent opportunity to make acquaintance.

It was in 1976 that women researchers in various fields such as sociology, anthropology, psychology and law started to cooperate, at first informally. In 1980, the group became a foundation with the main aim of promoting women's research into social science.

The Women's Research Centre has ambitious goals and the determination to carry them out: providing channels for more intensive contact among women research workers, conveying their findings to potential users, strengthening the position of Danish women in the international research community and developing research on women in Europe.

Could this not be a move towards segregating women in social science? The leaders deny this, explaining that it is a good thing to pinpoint questions associated with women so that they can be better integrated over the longer term, just as a body or product is "isolated" in a laboratory for closer scrutiny before standing back and viewing it in the broader context.

Useful address Women's Research Centre in Social Science
 H.C. Andersen Blvd. 38, mezz.
 1553 Copenhagen V

The Danner Refuge

A 3,000 m² building in the centre of Copenhagen is undoubtedly the largest "women's centre" in Europe. The Dannerboligerne, named after its 19th century owner, is exceptional on more than one count: it has a women's library, meeting rooms, work rooms, a women's circle, a "crisis unit" for battered wives, a gymnasium where the art of self-defence is taught, etc.

Helping battered women is a tenet of the women's movement and is one of the services provided by all the Danner Refuge groups. Here nobody is elected to office, nor is there any paid staff, even in the battered wives' unit. All decisions are reached at meetings where groups alone - not individuals - have the right to vote.

Else Christensen, one of the founders of the Women's Research Centre in Social Science, has brought out a report (Arbejdsnotat nr. 5/83), in English, on the work of the Danner Refuge for battered wives and how it is run. It provides plenty of food for thought.

Useful address Dannerboligerne
 Nansensgade 1
 1366 Copenhagen

FRANCE

Tug-of-love children

Ms G. Bertrand is the leading light in the Association Nationale "Défense des enfants enlevés", a French association set up to defend the interests of the estimated 1,000 or more children snatched by the mother or father against the other parent's will. Even when a child is taken from one part of France to another the situation is very complex and often harmful to the child involved, but the position is even worse when children are spirited across frontiers.

In a report that deserves careful reading, the Association cites various examples, such as the recently divorced woman teacher with custody of her children who took them with her when she went to work in a Third World country, or the divorced father who took advantage of visiting rights during the summer holidays to remove his children to the Cameroon to which he had had himself transferred. In both cases, all four parents were of French nationality and the matter could be referred to the courts - although it was not so easy to have their decision enforced.

The psychological and legal problems arising when one of the child's parents is of foreign origin are even more serious. Its removal breaks up ties of affection and friendship in the environment in which it has been brought up, and it is far more difficult to obtain a court order.

"No sexism, no racialism, no nationalism," the Association proclaims, "nor do we propose to defend the father or the mother, to say that either is right or wrong or to take up the cudgels for a French parent against the interests of a foreign parent. What we want is to uphold the rights of the child: its right to continuous filial relationships with each of its parents after their separation, to move freely between its parents' countries of origin."

In the long term, the Association would like governments and international authorities to draw up international or bilateral conventions giving more protection for children's rights. In the short term, it recommends the "prior exequatur" procedure, whereby a parent, whether or not he or she has custody, asks the separated partner to have the court order enforced in her or his country of origin. For the time being, the Association calls for proceedings against a parent failing to return a child to be heard on an emergency basis, with the court being bound to give its decision within a month of the child's removal. If the guilty parent receives a prison sentence of more than two years, it should be possible to issue an international order of arrest, an application for extradition, etc.

A few significant figures: in France, there are about 20,000 mixed marriages and a considerable number of people of two different nationalities cohabiting. The union of one out of three mixed couples ends in separation. The occasion for child-snatching tends to occur during holiday months, with 60% of kidnaps taking place in July and August.

Useful address Association nationale "Défense des enfants enlevés"
 B.P. 405
 07004 Privas Cedex

Women and the future

Founded in 1965, the "Femme Avenir" association now has about 25,000 members. Fired by Gaullist views, it has announced plans to set up "workshops" in every French city in order to keep tabs on local information and forward it to the national centre for publication in the association's monthly bulletin.

It has also undertaken to arrange for the adult training of women contacting the association on the occasion of the recent local elections. Its chairman, Christine Papon, has announced that the organization is to be mobilized for the June 1984 European elections.

Useful address Femme Avenir
 6 Cité Martignac
 75007 Paris

Dialogue between the towns of France

Since it came into being in May 1982, "Dialogue des Villes de France" has been an association aiming at "all women, whether or not they are involved in their local associations or political life, who would like to see a liberal society". Chaired by Monique Pelletier - former Minister for Women's Status in Mr Barre's government - the association arranges one-day training seminars for its members on such topics as relations with the press, analysis of survey findings, verbal expression and specific training for successful candidates at the latest local elections".

Useful address Dialogue des Villes de France
 42 Rue de Bourgogne
 75007 Paris

Women engineers

Colette Mathieu-Batsch has succeeded Josette Cachelou to the chair of the French association of women engineers, A.F.F.I. It should be pointed out that the Association is not directed solely towards women graduates of the national engineering colleges. Its scope is broader: "to make a direct specialist contribution to engineering associations and all organizations, women's or otherwise, professional or non-professional, concerned with the advancement of women through the improvement of standards of training and expertise".

On the Association's schedule is the production of an audio visual for girls in schools and colleges to publicize the fascinating and forward-looking profession of engineering.

A man has been nominated honorary member of the Association, Pierre-Gilles de Gennes, director of a French engineering college, in recognition of his interest in training both women and men engineers.

Useful address Association française des Femmes ingénieurs
 c/o Nicole Becarud
 75006 Paris

G E R M A N Y

A women's press agency

"FrauenPress" is a growing group that acts both as an information service and as a bureau for women journalists. It compiles news of concern to women in every field - internal politics, Europe, health, employment, the family, travel, the Church and bibliographies, for example - and distributes it in the form of a bulletin.

Cornelia Benninghoven, Jutta Brinkmann and Ingrid Rieskamp have pooled their skills and energy to provide accurate, helpful information, backed by facts and figures and often supplemented by a "useful address". FrauenPress is a good way for all women's organizations in Europe to spread the word about themselves in Germany and also to find out what is happening.

Now that we have FrauenPress in Germany and Agence Femmes Information in France, a network is gradually being created in Europe.

Useful address FrauenPress Verlags-OHG
 Hafenstrasse 75 (Postfach 4025)
 4400 Münster

Countrywomen

"Peace and liberty: a responsibility for our nation and for Europe" was the central theme of the general assembly of the Deutscher Landfrauenverband held in Freiburg.

With no fewer than 26 member group's, this countrywomen's association has produced statistics showing that 1.5 million countrywomen attended one or more of the 48,000 information meetings arranged in 1982. It has more than half a million individual members, a fact that lends weight to the views expressed through its chairman, Adelheid Lindemann-Meyer.

The upholding of peace and human rights, the battle against unemployment and poverty, the protection of our natural environment: these are the priorities set by the association for Europe of today. Within the European Community, we have now enjoyed almost thirty years of peace, democracy and respect for human rights. We must not rest on our laurels, however, but adopt fresh strategies to ensure that the Community makes further progress.

In the educational field, the association is seeking better information on the European Community in school curricula, better teaching of foreign languages and the mutual recognition of diplomas. Under the heading of social policy, the association has called upon the Federal Government to make allowance for the autonomous social protection of women in its reform planned for 1984 as well as recognition of the years spent by women on bringing up their children.

Useful address Deutscher Landfrauenverband e.V.
 Godesberger Allee 142-148
 5300 Bonn 2

When a woman is boss

It appears that in Germany some 500,000 women are at the head of their businesses, and 100,000 of the firms they run have a workforce of over 10 and a turnover of more than a million Deutschmark.

The members of the "Vereinigung der Unternehmerinnen" - the association of women entrepreneurs - have decided to tackle prejudice against women in the working world and many have taken the conscious decision to accept an equal proportion of boys and girls as apprentices.

Useful address Vereinigung der Unternehmerinnen
Postfach 511030
5000 Cologne 51

Housewives' union

More than 2,000 women have already joined a newly formed association, the "Deutsche Hausfrauengewerkschaft" (German housewives' union). Under the chairmanship of Ute Alt, it calls for housework to be recognized as an occupation so that everyone who looks after the home, man or woman, will be entitled to social security.

The union is also demanding an allowance for people bringing up children (Gewährung von Erziehungsgeld), support for those wishing to return to work and the development of part-time working.

Useful address Deutsche Hausfrauengewerkschaft
Radaustrasse 7
8900 Augsburg 22

Feminist party

The Frauenpartei (women's party) was not as successful as it hoped during the elections in Lower Saxony, Bremen and Schleswig-Holstein. Its chairwoman, Eva Rath, is undaunted. The book entitled "Küche und Parlament" ("the kitchen and Parliament") which serves as the party manifesto is still selling well. The burning topic of the hour within the party is "how best to take part in the 1984 European elections?".

Useful address Eva Rath - Frauenpartei
Hasselkamp 23
2300 Kiel 1

In the school

The Clara Fey School in Bonn has arranged a three-day seminar for its pupils, teachers and parents on the subject of "women". The dreamchild of Veronika Söntgerath but brought into being by the pupils, the seminar tackled all the issues of concern to today's young people: the media, the working world, development, the armed forces, the family and so on. Women representatives of the political parties, unions, women's groups, writers and artists responded to the invitation to attend. It was an enriching experience for the pupils and sets an example for other schools in the Community.

Useful address Clara Fey-Schule
Rheinallee 5
Bonn

Women at home

"The new Family Code has allayed many of our concerns but it has not dealt with the major financial problems faced by women. When they are divorced or widowed, for example, many have to go to court to claim their rightful due."

The statement is made by the association of Greek housewives, which is calling for amendments to the Code of Inheritance. It is also worried about Government intentions on maximum limits for the State pension for widows, and deplores the fact that the preamble to the 1983-87 Five Year Plan makes no mention of measures for the social protection of homebound women.

The association is campaigning to set up more local groups. It puts out a newsletter, not just for its own members but also for the political parties and authorities.

Useful address Syllogos Ellinidas Nycokyras
 Fidiou 18
 10678 Athens

I R E L A N D

Well Woman Centre

The Well Woman Centre, a Dublin clinic specializing in gynaecology and family planning, has been given a warning from the police: legal proceedings may be taken if it continues to sell contraceptives without a medical prescription.

Under the law as it stands, no contraceptives may be sold without such a prescription and even then only to married couples.

The Well Woman Centre is the first institution in Ireland to provide an artificial insemination service, in the teeth of opposition from the Catholic Church. Ten or so births have resulted from this help so far and many women are now pregnant, with applications from childless couples reaching the clinic at a steady rate.

Useful address Dublin Well Woman Centre
 63 Lower Leeson Street
 Dublin 2

Financial independence

Irishwomen feel that they will not be liberated until they achieve financial independence. This is the opinion expressed by a sociologist, Tony Fahey, speaking at a seminar in Maynooth on the family in Ireland today. Dr Fahey's view was shared by Nuala Fennell, the Women's Affairs Minister, who pointed out that there were 94,800 married women in employment in 1979 compared with only 22,500 in 1961. The average number of children per family has also fallen over the period.

Single mothers

Ally is a charitable organization started 12 years ago by an Irish Dominican priest to provide family placement for single pregnant women.

In its annual report for 1982-83, Ally says that 520 women and girls sought placement during their pregnancies compared with 640 the previous year. Most of its clients are from outside the Dublin area and seek assistance because they are unwilling or unable to remain with their families during pregnancy.

Ally considers that abortion is the reason why fewer people are coming to the charity for help. More young women, however, tell their parents about their pregnancies today and 70% of the parents are supportive. Compared with 36% the previous year, 55% of the girls opted to keep their babies, but Ally says that more emphasis should be placed on post-natal counselling. It also says Irish society is not the uncaring, uncharitable place it was ten years ago.

Useful address Ally - c/o Dominican Priory
 Upper Dorset Street
 Dublin 1

Overweight and feminism

A new kind of slimming club has opened in Dublin. Inspired by Susie Orbach's book, "Fat is a Feminist Issue", the club shows how to treat food as no more than taking in the food one needs and how not to be bamboozled by the norms of beauty put over by advertisers. Weekly meetings for mutual support are held at the Women's Centre in Dublin.

Useful address The Women's Centre
 10 Westmoreland Street
 Dublin 2

High infant mortality among Ireland's itinerants

Ireland's itinerant women may be among the most disadvantaged in the Community. Only 27% of those pregnant attend ante-natal clinics regularly. The infant mortality rate among travelling people, as they are known, is more than twice the national average and the incidence of congenital disease is four times as high. According to one doctor, the average birth weight of their babies is below that of "even the most disadvantaged or underprivileged of the settled community".

Useful address The National Council for Travelling People
 10 Westmoreland Street
 Dublin 2

"La casa matta"

"La casa matta" is a pun on the words for "madhouse" and "casemate", a refuge from shelling - a pillbox. It is the name taken for a property cooperative set up by women for women in Milan, an idea that is likely to catch on elsewhere.

Italy has an acute housing problem, but it is particularly bad for single women, either living on their own or with children to care for. In 1981, for example, the "Istituto Autonomo Case Popolari" - an official body that allocates low rent housing - published regulations containing a clause to the effect that applicants should have been married for two years before being offered a place to live or, in the case of property under construction, have the firm intention of marrying before the housing is ready for occupation. Over the past ten years, however, the number of "single-person households" has risen from 2,061,000 to 3,321,000.

Women on their own are unlikely to have the money to buy a flat in the private sector, and property developers are wary even of those who do have funds.

A group of women weighed up these difficulties and decided to set up their own property company in the form of a cooperative. The first to join the cooperative were women looking for somewhere to live, but they were soon joined by others who saw this as an important political gesture.

There has been a good deal of debate on the relationship between women and housing, town planning, property speculation and the regulations of the Institute, which was asked "should a woman try to find a husband in the two years prescribed by your regulations?".

Once the cooperative had been officially registered it persuaded the Milan local authority to assign a building for restoration, in Via Peschiera close to a park in the city centre. The next step was to get down to work!

Technical requirements had to be reconciled with the needs of the women who were to live in the house, their new style of home and living and neighbourhood tradition. A questionnaire and general debates helped to clarify expectations: 85% of the women were interested in the idea of helping in the design of the building, 75% thought that a bedroom is not just for sleeping but also for studying, reading and doing small manual jobs. The house should be open to people in the neighbourhood, thought 80% of the respondents, while 95% were in favour of setting up a service cooperative for domestic work, child care, catering, etc.

The project is gradually expanding. There are even plans for a gymnasium which can be used by women neighbours, a hostel for short-term women visitors to Milan and a vocational training centre.

There is no miracle solution to the problem of finance; the cooperative has sought out the most economical sources of supply of materials, furnishings and sanitary equipment. On the ground floor there are to be community facilities such as a canteen and a shop. There will be eight flats on each of the upper floors, some for single people and others for families - 45 flats in all. This is only a beginning. Women are already asking why there should be just one and not 10, 100 or 1,000 such buildings.

Useful address La Casa Matta
 Via Bagutta 12
 Milan

A complaint to the European Commission

The "Tribunal of 8th March" - an Italian organization campaigning against the discrimination from which women suffer in every field - has forwarded a detailed complaint to the European Commission regarding the Italian law of 25 March 1983 on the placement of job applicants.

Under a 1970 law, a register of unemployed people was maintained and employers wanting to recruit a given number of new staff were bound to accept suitable applicants highest up on that list. A new bill was introduced in March 1983, however, altering this "numerical recruitment" system: half the applicants sent to the potential employer would be from the top of the list as before, but the other half could be requested by name. Since employers are more likely to specify men, this paves the way for yet another form of discrimination against women.

Useful address Il Tribunale 8 Marzo
Via Colonna Antonina 41
Rome

Italian feminism: the second phase?

Two magazines have been celebrating anniversaries: "Madre" has been in existence for 95 years, whereas "Progetto Donna" has just completed its first year. Together they have organized a meeting in Brescia on the topic of "Italian feminism: the second phase?".

"We feel it is important to see where we stand in the civilization and history of our times," say the organizers, "thinking more deeply about feminism helps us to know more and to evaluate, observe and understand one of the most complex factors of modern times."

Useful address "Madre" - editor, Don Mario Pasini
"Progetto Donna" - editor, Tina Leonzi
Piazzale Stazione 63
Condominio Globo
25122 Brescia

Women, peace and Europe

On the occasion of an annual festival arranged by the Communist newspaper, "l'Unità", the focus of many discussions was women, peace and Europe.

Several women Members of European Parliament were invited to speak: Paola Gaiotti De Biasi (Christian Democrat), Marisa Cinciari Rodano (Communist), Antoinette Spaak (non-aligned) and Anne-Marie Lizin (Socialist). Relationships between the sexes and between social classes, production and reproduction, the worker's movement and the feminist movement were amply debated.

Useful address Movimento Femminile PCI
Via delle Botteghe Oscure
Rome

Europe: Utopia, history and the future

An annual festival of friendship arranged by the Christian Democrat party provided an opportunity for a round table discussion on the theme of "Europe: Utopia, history and the future", introduced by Maria Luisa Cassamagnago with a talk on the possible response of European Parliament to women's concerns.

The panel at the discussion consisted of spokesmen for the various political groupings; not just the Christian Democrats but also Republicans, Communists, Radicals, Liberals and Socialists. Despite the differences in political thought, the speakers converged in calling for greater supranational awareness of the campaign against unemployment and for equality between men and women.

Useful address Movimento Femminile DC
 Corso Rinascimento 113
 Rome

L U X E M B O U R G

Socialist women

At a recent congress of Socialist women, the delegates discussed and passed a motion on the right of women to employment even in these times of economic recession. As a guarantee of this right, those taking part stressed the importance of equal opportunity in education and vocational training.

Other points raised in the congress were an overall reform of the pension system, a fair reduction in working hours, price policy and low rental housing.

The Socialist women at the congress were specifically concerned with the lot of women in distress. It seems that violence within the family is not so uncommon as one might think, as evidenced by the untiring work being done by refuges for battered women. "To defend themselves more effectively against physical abuse, women should more often pluck up the courage to speak out loud and clear about their sufferings within the four walls of the marital home," declared one person at the congress. Helping women to express themselves is a growing concern to which campaigners should pay more attention.

The congress ended with a talk by Lydie Schmit, a member of the organization and chairman of the Women's Socialist Internationale. Describing the position of women in the world economy, she pointed out that women have very little political weight by comparison with their economic contribution.

Useful address Femmes Socialistes
 c/o POSL
 2, rue de la Boucherie
 Luxembourg

NETHERLANDS

Women on the screen

Since February 1982, a working group known as "Vrouw in Beeld" (women on the screen) has been considering the role of women in programmes put out by NOS (Nederlandse omroep stichting, the Dutch broadcasting authority). A symposium at the end of January 1983 provided an opportunity for NOS staff - both men and women - to consider the subject in the light of two surveys, one on current affairs programmes, the other on drama.

The wealth of facts and figures quoted confirm the imbalance at every level. For example, in a number of discussion programmes on topical issues, the women who took part (8) spoke 63 times, whereas the men (46) spoke 291 times, a rough reflection of the proportion of staff on the production side. An even odder finding was the average speaking time: 54 seconds in the case of women, 62 seconds for men. The average times during which speakers were shown on the screen were comparable: 38 seconds for men, 29 for women.

Under the Dutch system, programmes are broadcast by NOS but are produced by six separate agencies (IKON, NCRV, KRO, AVRO, VARA and TROS).

Another very interesting analysis was of two scenes taken from Dutch broadcast plays. Both depicted the rescue of a drowning person, in one case a man and in the other a woman. The aspects considered were production, camera positioning and movement, dialogue, score, relations between the drowning person and the rescuer, etc.

Right from the start, stereotyped ideas showed through. The man was saved by a group of several sailors and made an effort to drag himself on board the rescue boat. The drowning woman, on the other hand, did nothing but moan "help, help!" and the sailor - a single sailor - who was rescuing her finally had to plunge in the water himself. When it came to giving first aid, the man was quickly and efficiently undressed and wrapped in a blanket. The camera showed a close-up of his face and there was little blood. The woman, on the other hand, "benefited" from a lengthy shot, her clothes being literally torn off before the camera drew back to show her whole body and a good deal of blood.

Even the background shots were significant: a violently rough sea for the man, a few clouds and gently rippling water for the woman. And the musical score conveyed the same image: heroic for the man, soft and romantic for the woman.

An account of the symposium published by NOS sets out the thoughts of the work groups and reprints articles appearing in the Dutch press at the time. Practical suggestions are made on the treatment of news, current events, educational programmes and entertainment.

Useful address N.O.S. Dienst Opleidingen
 Alie Horden
 Hilversum

Working with girls

A quarterly publication has come out in the Netherlands for women specifically concerned with girls - working in schools, vocational training and education in general.

Under the title of "Nieuwsbrief Meidenwerk", this newsletter written by women teachers and educators tackles topical issues such as the effects of budget cuts on education, the pros and cons of a teaching career when the prospects are so poor, what to suggest to girls who are out of work, etc.

Useful address Nieuwsbrief Meidenwerk
 2 Jansestraat 19 hs
 Amsterdam

A course on sexism

The secretariat for women workers in the FNV union has arranged a course on sexism: where and how it is encountered, how to react, how to bring other women into an anti-discrimination campaign, the union response to sexism. A booklet has been produced as a summary and reminder of the points made.

Useful address PNV - Sekretariaat Vrouwelijke Werknemers
 Plein '40-'45, n° 1
 1005 AL Amsterdam

A lively feminist magazine

The feminist monthly, "Opzij" (about her, in her (their) way) is remarkably lively despite the difficulties that - as everyone knows - beset the feminist press. Its well designed layout and highly professional photographs set off the many items of news it contains and its detailed discussions.

Leafing through a recent issue, we find a profile of Simone de Beauvoir, a plea for a five hour working day, an interview with resistance fighter Henriette van Traa, the story of an experiment in Groningen designed to improve relations between women and gynaecologists and a long article entitled "a woman friend is more effective than valium".

Useful address OPZIJ - Kloveniersburgwal 23
 Postbus 1311
 1000 BH Amsterdam

Decentralization

The Dutch Women's Council is concerned about the forthcoming decentralization of emancipation policy. Responsibility for aspects of women's rights is gradually being devolved to provincial and local authorities but, according to a recent survey, 82.5% of local authorities do not think that emancipation is an issue deserving a specific policy decision at local level; in municipalities with a population of fewer than 5,000, the percentage rises to 95%.

Although the national authorities have been made aware of the issue because they are sensitive to the political weight of women, Nederlandse Vrouwenraad - representing forty or so women's groups - feels it will be far harder to mobilize authorities at local level.

Useful address Nederlandse Vrouwenraad
 Laan van Meerdervoort 30
 2517 AL The Hague

UNITED KINGDOM

Talking with women immigrants

Women immigrants in Great Britain often find it very hard to adapt to a new culture and know little about their rights in matters such as social security. To help them, "Housewives in Dialogue" has opened a women's meeting centre near King's Cross Station in London, inspired by Solveig Francis and Wilmette Brown. The centre has only four rooms but they are always bustling with life. Legal advice is available, there are talks for black women, an information bulletin is produced and so on. It is all done with little money and a few volunteers. The search is on for larger premises but, even as it stands, the centre is unique of its kind in this district of London.

Union support for sex equality

The Transport and General Workers' Union (T&GWU), Britain's biggest trade union, passed a series of resolutions at its conference calling for positive action in favour of women, the promotion of equal participation by women on all union bodies and the elimination of sexist language.

The Union is now committed to equal participation for women at its conference, on its regional committees and trade groups and on its general executive committee.

Useful address T&GWU
 Transport House, Smith Square
 London SW1

Women and television

Encouraged by the Women's Broadcasting and Film Lobby, an important TV company, Thames Television, has recently set up a positive action programme to train women (or men) for jobs which have previously been virtually the province of a single sex. The main objective is to bring more women into technical and management jobs so far almost entirely occupied by men.

The company has published a booklet setting out its code of practice, requiring managers and those concerned with employment decisions to eliminate sex bias in advertisements or job qualifications.

Useful address Thames Television
 306 Euston Road
 London NW1

A hundredth birthday

A moving occasion: Catherine Bramwell-Booth - granddaughter of the Salvation Army's founder - has reached the age of 100. As alert as ever, she made guest appearances on several television programmes, on which she described the many years during which she bore witness to her faith by serving the have-nots.

Still active in the Salvation Army, Catherine declares that she has no intention of retiring just yet.

Help with divorce problems

One in three marriages in Britain end in divorce today, compared with one in ten thirty years ago. The result is that single-parent families, usually involving the woman, are on the increase.

The Scottish Council for Single Parents runs courses to help with family problems arising from divorce. Though primarily intended for advisors to people going through divorce proceedings, courses in Glasgow have been open to all those who are interested; other courses have been run in Dundee.

Useful address Scottish Council for Single Parents
 39 Hope Street
 Glasgow, Scotland

Promoting Women's Institutes

The National Federation of Women's Institutes is planning a big promotion drive to improve its image and attract new members. An article in the WI journal, "Home and Country", argues that there are thousands of women all over Britain who have never heard of the Women's Institutes or refuse to join "because they think of us as old-fashioned" and interested only "in boiling up cauldrons of jam".

Under the caption "WI: Women in the Community", the Federation intends to show that the Institutes play an important part in public life, education and health and have something to offer to young as well as older members. There will be a promotion fortnight in the summer of 1984 when 9,000 Institutes will "take to the streets" and show what they have achieved in the past year, followed by a national exhibition in London.

Useful address NFWI
 39 Ecclestone Street
 London SW1W 9NT

Women's workplace project

In Yorkshire, women members of the General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trades Union (GMBATU) are taking part in a pilot scheme of informal education or discussion circles.

Groups of women factory, clerical, retail, local authority and health workers meet in their own workplaces at lunchtimes, shift change or other convenient times to discuss topics such as equal pay, their work, the family, women's health or current affairs.

The pilot groups' discussions provide the basis for learning packs which are to be published and made generally available. There will be ten such "starter packs", intended to help groups in their early weeks until they are confident enough to organize meetings on their own.

Response from women participants, the union and managements is enthusiastic. Success is apparent in many forms: greater involvement in trade union education and activity, the fact that shop stewards find it easier to organize members and easier public speaking and writing. GMBATU women members would be interested to learn of the experience of trade unionists and others engaged in similar work in other countries.

Useful address Marguerite Dawson
 GMBATU, Concord House, Park Lane
 Leeds 3

South London Hospital

Has the South London Hospital been condemned? The health authority in the district of Wandsworth has decided to close down the hospital for budgetary reasons, but the Community Health Council is campaigning to keep it alive.

Founded in 1912 by Miss Maud Chadburn, the South London Hospital, with its all-woman staff, cares for patients who prefer to be looked after by women. Its mission is also to train women doctors in a hospital setting. For this twofold reason, it is unique of its kind in Great Britain.

The Wandsworth Community Health Council also points out that a large proportion of patients are Asian women who, for religious reasons, are unwilling to be examined by male doctors.

Useful address Wandsworth Community Health Council
 1 Balham Station Road
 London SW12 9SG

Prostitution

The English Collective of Prostitutes - one of a network now surfacing in other countries - has produced its first publication, "Network". The Collective is campaigning for an increase in social security benefits so that women, whether at home or unemployed, are not forced into prostitution by lack of money.

Useful address English Collective of Prostitutes
 71 Tonbridge Street
 London WC1

Rights of women

ROW - Europe is the short name for Rights of Women Europe Group, which has brought out a guide for women in the U.K. entitled "Women's Rights and the EEC". Clearly and precisely, it explains how to obtain help from the European Social Fund, how EEC legal judgements have extended women's rights under the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts, how to use the EEC system to challenge discriminatory practices and so on.

The collective of feminists that produced the book hopes that no woman will feel herself alone when she is in trouble. Besides practical suggestions, the guide cites many addresses, including feminist contacts in other EEC member states.

The publication costs £3.00 plus 50 p. postage and packing.

Useful address R O W - Europe
 374 Grays Inn Road
 London WC1

RESEARCH, MEETINGS AND BOOKS

Deutschkurse mit ausländischen Frauen (German language course for foreign women) by Helga Heinicke-Krabbe and Alice Münscher is special in that it takes practical situations encountered by women immigrants and uses them as a basis for teaching the language. 190 pp, DM.6.50, pub. by Deutsches Jugendinstitut, Saarstr. 7, 8000 Munich 40 (ISBN 3-87966-187-1).

Violence Against Wives: A Case Against the Patriarchy by Rebecca Emerson Dobash and Russell Dobash covers the history of wife-beating from Ancient Rome up to the present, a guide to understanding reactions in today's society. Based on in-depth interviews with 109 battered women and an analysis of 34,000 police or court records, the focus is on how a violent relationship is created and continued and how help is sought from relatives, friends, neighbours, the social and medical professions and the police. Published by the Free Press, distributed in Great Britain by Open Books Publishing Limited, Room 105, West Compton House, near Shepton Mallet, Somerset, at £11.95 (hardback) + £1.00 postage (ISBN 0-02-907320-0).

Berufziel Fliessband? (occupational outlook: the production line?) by Charlotte Herkommer and Swantje Hanck shows the disadvantages under which women labour in the working world, especially in times of economic crisis, whatever the political system and level of industrialization in their country. Mass production work is not inevitable, however; the authors suggest opportunities for training that are little known to women, although they are accessible. Published by Frauen Verlag, Koblenz, 296 pp.

Volontà e impegno per la parità tra uomo e donna nella nuova Europa (equality for men and women in the new Europe: resolution and commitment). This is the title adopted by the Italian Council for the European Movement in publishing the proceedings of a colloquium on the Community's programme of action for equal opportunities held in L'Aquila in November 1982. The European Movement hopes that the debate launched by the colloquium will be taken up elsewhere and that political and social forces will be encouraged to put their good intentions into practice. Published by Consiglio Italiano del Movimento Europeo, Viale Guido Baccelli 10, 00153 Rome.

Enquête sur les femmes et la politique en France, by Janine Mossuz-Lavau and Mariette Sineau, is based on the findings of a survey conducted in June 1978. It uses the findings to illuminate the differences between the political, cultural and religious attitudes of men and women in France. Among the many parameters taken into account are the politicization of women, now a force to be reckoned with in politics, the strength of tradition and acceptance of change, the imprint of school education, family and marriage, etc. Pub. by Presses Universitaires de France in its "Recherches politiques" series, 280 pp.

Women's Rights in the Workplace by Tess Gill and Larry Whitty is a useful handbook on employment law, negotiating methods, maternity rights, union procedures, training and almost anything a woman needs to know concerning her rights in her job. Pelican, £2.95.

Gelijke behandeling en het personeelsbeleid (equal treatment and personnel policy) by A.M. de Jong tries to find out why so few women in Holland work. A historical review helps to understand recent trends, the position of women in various branches of the company and the apportionment of duties between men and women in the Netherlands. The book also takes a look at possible developments in the law on equality and maps out a plan for firms wanting to conduct their own social audits on equality for men and women. Pub. Uitgeverij Kluwer bv, Deventer, 174 pp.

Self-help and Social Care: Mutual Aid Organizations in Practice by Ann Richardson and Meg Goodman deserves careful reading. The concept of "self-help" is still little known outside English-speaking countries and Scandinavia. Even though the initial idea may be to "help oneself", solidarity among women being what it is, self-help generally broadens to become mutual aid. This books sheds light on the work of voluntary agencies in this field.

As governments seek to level off or even reduce welfare commitments, mutual aid organizations are growing in importance. The authors study in detail how "caring" agencies work but reach mixed conclusions: government and local authorities should give more recognition to the specific role, imagination, devotion and creativity of voluntary agencies, but the latter cannot substitute for statutory welfare agencies. They have neither the resources, stable and trained membership nor in many cases the efficient organization to do so. Policy Studies Institute, London, £4.00.

Incidentally, have you noticed how many of the publications listed here are the outcome of teamwork?

Women and Men's Wars is a special double issue of Women's Studies International Forum. This is a collection of articles by 17 women on a compelling subject: the position on and response to war - analyses, thoughts, memories and personal accounts of women and war. Pergamon Press (U.S.). Distributed in Great Britain by Pergamon Press, Headington Hill Hall, Oxford OX3 OBW. \$17.00. (ISBN 027949X)

Histoire des féminismes français by Jean Rabaut, looks at the history of the feminist movement in the light of research from within and critical observation by an outsider. The account is studded with anecdotes and amusing details on personalities such as Christine de Pisan and Simone de Beauvoir. A book that contains many lessons for today's militants. Pub. by Editions Stock, Paris.

Theories of Women's Studies, by Gloria Bowles and Renate Duelli, starts with a transdisciplinary approach to women-centred research and goes on to analyze its content, form and goals. The book in itself is a radical challenge to male prejudice that regulates the process of learning and knowledge. It highlights the close relationship between research on women and the changes in society to be perceived at international level. 177 pp, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Vocational training and militancy

AnCO, an agency responsible for industrial training in Ireland, has arranged two sets of courses designed to help women interested in working in non-traditional fields of employment.

The reason why this news item appears under the heading of "books" is that the first of the courses is on "Women in Publishing". Produced in consultation with Irish Feminist Information Publications, the course is of particular interest to women already experienced in publishing works produced by organizations and communities. The second of the courses aims at women over 25 who wish to train as semi-skilled technicians.

Both courses start with units on "preparing to return to the working world" and an "introduction to industrial life". The project as a whole is part of the Equal Opportunities Programme being implemented by AnCO.

Useful address AnCO - The Industrial Training Authority
 P.O.Box 456
 27-33 Upper Baggot Street
 Dublin 4

A feminist book fair

The first feminist book fair is to take place in London on 7-9 June 1984. It will be open to the public as well as publishers, booksellers, teachers, schoolchildren and librarians, and is to be in Covent Garden's Jubilee Hall.

There is to be a "feminist book week" at the same time. The fair is being arranged by an independent group of women working at various levels in publishing. Its promoters were represented at the Frankfurt Book Fair this year.

Useful address Feminist Book Fair
 7 Loddon House
 Church St.
 London NW8

Femmes de la Méditerranée is a double issue (n° 22-23) of the journal "Peuples Méditerranéens", describing the desire for change expressed in a hundred different ways by countries of the North and South, with all their cultural, sociological and anthropological divergences. More than a third of the book is taken up by interviews, and it also contains articles on women's status in the Lebanon, Algeria, Spain, Egypt, Italy, Iran, Palestine, Turkey, Tunisia, Yugoslavia and Corsica. 316 pp. Peuples méditerranéens, B.P. 1907/75, Paris Cédex 07.